

- INTERNATIONAL -
PRESS
CORRESPONDENCE

Vol. 7. No. 18

10th March 1927

Editorial Offices and Central Despatching Department: Berggasse 31, Vienna IX. — Postal Address, to which all remittances should be sent by registered mail: Postamt 66, Schliesstach 213, Vienna IX. Telegraphic Address: Inprekorr, Vienna.

The Outbreak of the Revolution in Russia
on March 12, 1917 (27th February old style.)

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THE PREMISES FOR THE VICTORY OF THE FEBRUARY REVOLUTION.

The collapse of the tsarist monarchy within the course of a few days was the result of a combination of circumstances of world historical importance. We will dwell on the most important of these:

If the three years of great class battles and the exertion of revolutionary energy by the Russian proletariat in the period of 1905—1907 had not been, the accomplishment of the first stage of the second revolution could not have been brought about so rapidly within the course of a few days. The first revolution (1905) deeply ploughed the soil, uprooted age-old prejudices, roused millions of workers and tens of millions of peasants to the struggle, revealed to each other — and to all the world — to all classes (and to all the principal parties) of Russian society their true character, their true inter-relation of interests, their forces, their capacity for action and their immediate and ultimate aims. The first revolution and the epoch of counter-revolution that followed it (1907—1914) bared the true character of the tsarist monarchy, brought it to the "last extreme", exposed all its rottenness, its baseness, the cynicism and corruption of the tsarist crew led by the monstrous Rasputin, all the brutalities of the Romanov family — these organisers of pogroms by which Russia was drenched with blood of the Jews, the workers and of revolutionaries, these "first among their peers", the landlords who own millions of acres of land, who stick at no cruelty or crime, who go to any lengths to ruin and suppress any number of citizens in order to protect their own "sacred property" and that of their class.

Without the revolution of 1905—1907 and the counter-revolution of 1907—1914 the "self-determination" of all the classes of the Russian people and of the nationalities inhabiting Russia could not have been made so precisely, and the determination of the relationships of these classes to each other and to tsarist monarchy, which revealed itself during the 8-days of the February-March revolution of 1917, would have been impossible. This 8-day revolution was "performed", if one may express oneself metaphorically, after scores of first-class and second-class rehearsals. The "actors" knew each other, knew their parts, knew their places, knew the whole setting thoroughly right down to the most minute shade of political direction and action.

If the first great revolution of 1905, which was condemned by the Gutchkovs and their hangers-on, the Miliukovs, as a "great riot", did after 12 years result in the "brilliant", glorious revolution of 1917, which the Gutchkovs and the Miliukovs describe as "glorious" because it, for the time being at least, has put them into power, it was necessary first to have a powerful, omnipotent "stage manager", who, on the one hand would immensely hasten the progress of world history and on the other hand, produce the unseen forces of world crises, economic, political, national and international. In addition to accelerating world history to an extraordinary degree, it was necessary also to give it abrupt turns so that at one of these turns the blood bespattered cart of the Romanovs could overturn at once.

This omnipotent "stage manager" and accelerator of history was the world imperialist war.

The imperialist war inevitably had to accelerate exceedingly the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and cause it to become acute as it had never been before, and the war itself inevitably had to be transformed into civil war between the mutually hostile classes.

Naturally, in tsarist Russia where disorganisation had reached the most monstrous proportion and where the proletariat is the most revolutionary class (not because of its inherent qualities but because of the living traditions of "1905"), the revolutionary crisis broke out before it did in any other country. This crisis was accelerated by a series of severe defeats which Russia and her allies encountered. These defeats shattered the whole of the old government apparatus and the whole of the old order, roused the anger of all classes of the population, roused the anger of the army, exterminated large numbers of the officers of the die-hard aristocratic and corrupt official type whose places were taken by the young, fresh and mostly of the plebian petty bourgeois classes.

While the defeats in the war served as a negative factor hastening the outbreak, the connection between Anglo-French finance capital and Anglo-French imperialism with the Octobrist-Cadet capital of Russia served as a positive factor in hastening this crisis.

The whole process of events of the February-March revolution clearly shows that the British and French Embassies with their agents and "intelligence service" had long been making desperate efforts to prevent a separate agreement and a separate peace being arrived at between Nicholas II. and Wilhelm II. and made direct efforts to remove Nicholas Romanov. We will harbour no illusions.

If the revolution was victorious so speedily, and as it may appear on the surface at first sight, so "radically", it was merely due to an extremely original historical situation in which various streams and absolutely heterogeneous class interests, absolutely opposite political and social strivings merged together in a most remarkable and "unanimous" manner. On the one hand there was the conspiracy of the Anglo-French imperialists which induced Miliukov, Gutchkov and Co., to try and seize power in order to continue the imperialist war and to conduct it more vigorously, to massacre fresh millions of the Workers and Peasants of Russia in order to secure Constantinople... for the Gutchkovs, Syria... for the French, and Mesopotamia... for the British capitalists; on the other hand there was the profound movement of the proletariat and the masses of the people (the poorer sections of the population of the town and country) a movement which bore a revolutionary character for bread, for peace, and for real liberty.

The revolutionary workers and soldiers razed the corrupt tsarist monarchy to its foundation, neither enthused nor dismayed by the fact that for a certain brief and exceptionally historical moment they will receive the aid of Buchanan, Gutchkov, Miliukov & Co., who desire merely to substitute one monarch by another.

The workers and soldiers of Petrograd, as well as the workers and soldiers of the whole of Russia heroically fought against the tsarist imperialist war. Anglo-French imperialist capital carried on court intrigues, hatched plots, instigated and encouraged the Gutchkovs and Miliukovs, appointed the men before-hand for a new ready-made government which actually seized power after the first blows of the proletarian struggle rained upon tsarism — all for the purpose of continuing and intensifying the war.

(Lenin: "First stage of the first Revolution" — A Letter from Afar".)

THE CHARACTER OF THE FEBRUARY REVOLUTION AND THE TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT THAT FOLLOW IT.

The principal feature of our revolution, the feature which imperatively demands that it should be deeply thought over, is the dual power that has been established in the very first days following on the victory of the revolution.

This dual power is expressed in the existence of two governments: the first, the principal, real, actual government of the bourgeoisie, the "Provisional Government of Lvov & Co., which has all the organs of power in its hands and second, the supplementary, auxiliary "controlling" government represented by the Petrograd Council of Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies, which has not command of the organ of State power

but which relies directly upon the obviously absolute majority of the people, the armed workers and soldiers.

The class origin of this dual power and its class significance are that the Russian revolution of March 1917, not only swept away the whole of the tsarist monarchy, not only transferred the whole power to the bourgeoisie, but has also come right onto the threshold of the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. This dictatorship (i. e. power resting not on law but on the direct power of the armed masses of the population), and the classes mentioned are represented by the Petrograd and other local Councils of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

The second and extremely important feature of the Russian revolution is that the Petrograd Council of Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies, which, judging by all accounts, enjoys the confidence of the majority of the local councils, voluntarily transfers political power to the bourgeoisie and its Provisional Government, voluntarily surrenders priority to it, concludes with it an agreement to support it, limits its own part to that of an observer and controller of the convening of the Constituent Assembly (the date for which has not yet been fixed by the Provisional Government to this very day).

This extremely peculiar circumstance, which finds no parallel in history, has caused two dictatorships to become interwoven into one: the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie (for the government of Lvov & Co. is a dictatorship, i. e. it is a rule based not on the law and not on the expressed will of the people but on power, seized by force by a definite class (viz., the bourgeoisie), and the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry (The Council of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies).

There is no room for the slightest doubt that this state of affairs cannot last for long. One of these dictatorships must disappear and the entire Russian bourgeoisie is exerting all the efforts that it can command to remove and render impotent the Council of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and to establish the single rule of the bourgeoisie.

Dual power is merely the reflection of the transitional period in the development of the revolution in which it has gone beyond the limits of an ordinary bourgeois-democratic revolution, but has not yet reached the point of "pure" dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

The class significance (and the class combination) of this transitional and unstable condition is as follows: as in every revolution our revolution called forth the greatest heroism and the self-sacrifice of the masses in the fight against tsarism and also immediately drew into the movement enormous numbers of the ordinary population.

The petty bourgeoisie are dependent upon the bourgeoisie; they live like masters and not as proletarians (from the point of view of their place in social production) and their mentality follows the lead of the bourgeoisie.

The thing that characterises the present-day policy of the masses in Russia is an unthinking confidence in the capitalists and this is what has sprung up with revolutionary rapidity on a special economic basis, the most petty bourgeois of all European countries. This is the class basis of the "agreement" (I emphasise that I have in mind not so much a formal agreement as a tacit agreement, the actual support of the unthinking and trustful surrender of power) between the provisional government and the Council of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, — an agreement which gave the Gutchkovs a fat slice of real power and the Council — promises, honour (for a time), flattery, phrases, assurances and fine gestures of the Kerenskys.

The peculiar situation existing dictates to Marxists peculiar tactics for the present moment.

This peculiar situation brings to the forefront the task of "pouring gall and vinegar into the sweetened waters of revolutionary democratic phrases". Criticism must explain the errors of the petty bourgeois Socialist Revolutionary and Social Democratic parties, train and rally the elements of the class conscious proletarian Communist Party and relieve the proletariat from the "general" petty bourgeois intoxication.

This, would appear to be "only" propaganda work. Actually however, it is the most practical revolutionary work, for it is impossible to advance the revolution which has come to a stop, which is being choked with phrases and "marking time", not because of outside obstacles, not because of the violence exercised by the bourgeoisie (for the time being Gutchkov merely threatens to use violence against the masses

of the soldiers), but because of the unthinking trustfulness of the masses.

Only by fighting against this unthinking trustfulness (and this can be done only by argument and friendly persuasion, backed by references to actual experiences) can we relieve from the *bacchanalia* of revolutionary phrases and really develop the class-consciousness of the proletariat and of the masses and rouse their determined initiative locally and stimulate them themselves to bring about, develop and consolidate liberty, democracy and the principle of the ownership of the land by the people.

World experience of bourgeois and landlord governments has devised two methods of restraining the people and the oppressed. The first is violence. Nicholas Romanov (I.), Nicholas of the stick and Nicholas II., the bloody, have shown the Russian people the maximum of what can be done by the methods of the stick. But there is another method which has been best applied by the British and French bourgeoisie who have been "taught" by several great revolutionaries and revolutionary movements. This is the method of deception, flattery, phrases, millions of promises and crumbs of fulfilment, concessions on minor points while retaining what is important.

The peculiarity of the present situation in Russia is a dizzily, rapid transition from the first method to the second, from employing violence against the people to *flattering* the people and deceiving them by promises.

From day to day the unthinking trustfulness will diminish, particularly that of the proletariat and of the poorest peasants whose lives (their social, economic conditions) teach them to have no faith in capitalists.

The leaders of the petty-bourgeoisie are obliged to teach the people to have faith in the bourgeoisie. The proletariat must teach them to distrust them.

(Lenin: "The Tasks of the Proletariat in our Revolution", Complete Works. Vol. XIV. part I. p. 40-43.)

ON THE TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT IN THE PRESENT REVOLUTION.

In our attitude to the war, which on Russia's part and under the new government of Lvov & Co., undoubtedly continues to be a predatory imperialist war owing to the capitalist character of this government, the slightest concession must not be made to "revolutionary defence".

The class conscious proletariat may give its consent to a revolutionary war which really justifies revolutionary defence only on the condition that: a) power is transferred to the hands of the proletariat and to the poorer sections of the peasantry which are associated with it; b) abandonment of all annexations is affected, not in word, but in deed; and c) a complete and real break is made with all capitalist interests.

In view of the undoubted conscientiousness of the broad strata of mass representatives of revolutionary defence who consent to the war for reasons of necessity and not of conquest, because they are deceived by the bourgeoisie, it is necessary persistently, patiently and in detail to explain to these masses their mistakes, show to them the inseparable connection that exists between capital and the imperialist war and that it is impossible to bring about a democratic and not a violent peace without overthrowing capital.

The widest propaganda of these views must be conducted among the active armies.

Fraternalisation.

The peculiar feature of the present situation in Russia is that it is a transition from the first stage of the revolution, which placed power in the hands of the bourgeoisie owing to the fact that the proletariat was not sufficiently organised and class conscious, to the second stage, which must place power in the hands of the proletariat and the poorest strata of the peasantry.

The characteristic feature of this transition is that the maximum legality prevails (at the present time Russia is the freest country of all the belligerent countries), the absence of violence against the masses and, finally, the unthinking trustfulness of the masses towards the government of the capitalists who are the worst enemies of peace and Socialism.

This circumstance makes it necessary for us to adapt ourselves to the special conditions of party work among the immensely wide masses of the proletariat who have only just awakened to political life.

Not the slightest support to the provisional government. The falsity of its promises, particularly with regard to the abandonment of annexations must be explained. Exposure instead of illusory "demands" that this Government, the Government of capitalists, shall cease to be imperialist.

Explain to the masses that the Council of Workers' Deputies is the only possible form of a revolutionary government and that as long as this government submits to the influence of the bourgeoisie, our only task can be patiently, systematically and persistently to explain in a manner adapted to the practical requirements of the masses, their errors and the tactics to be adopted.

As long as we are in a minority we will carry on work of criticism and explanation of mistakes, and at the same time advocate the necessity for political power being transferred to the Council of Workers' Deputies in order to help the masses to abandon their errors.

Not a parliamentary republic (it will be a mistake to revert to that from the Council of Workers' Deputies), but a Republic of Councils of Workers', Agricultural Labourers' and Peasants' Deputies over the whole country from beginning to end.

Abolition of the police, the army, and the government officials.

All officials be elected and subject to removal at any time, their salaries not to be above that of the average skilled worker.

The confiscation of all landlords' land. The nationalisation of the whole land in the country, the land to be disposed of by the Councils of Agricultural Labourers' and Peasants' Deputies, special councils of poor peasant deputies to be formed.

The amalgamation of all banks into a single national bank to be controlled by the Council of Workers' Deputies.

Not the immediate "introduction" of Socialism, but for the time being the control by the Council of Workers' Deputies of social production and distribution of goods.

The revival of the International.

Take the initiative in the formation of a revolutionary international in opposition to the social chauvinists and against the "Centre".

(Lenin: "The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution".)

THE RUSSIAN PROLETARIATS' ALLIES IN THE REVOLUTION.

Who are the allies of the proletariat in the present revolution?

The proletariat has two allies: first, the scores of millions of semi-proletarians and small peasants who represent the majority of the population of Russia. This mass must have bread, liberty and land. This mass will inevitably be under the influence of the bourgeoisie to a certain extent — for by the conditions of life they fluctuate between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The cruel lessons of the war, which will become still more cruel the more energetically Gutchkov, Miliukov and Co., will carry it on, will inevitably impel these masses towards the proletariat and compel it to accept its lead. Taking advantage of the present conditions of liberty and of the Council of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies we must now strive to enlighten and organise these masses. One of our most urgent tasks is to establish councils of peasant deputies and councils of agricultural labourers. We must strive to bring it about that not only shall the agricultural labourers set up their own councils, but also the propertyless and poor peasants shall organise independently of the wealthy peasants.

The second ally of the Russian proletariat is the proletariat of all the belligerent countries and of all countries generally. To a certain extent they are at the present time suppressed by the war. But the emancipation of the proletariat from the influence of the bourgeoisie is proceeding with every month of the continuation of the imperialist war, and the Russian revolution will inevitably accelerate this process to an enormous degree. With these two allies, taking advantage of the peculiarities of the present transitional period, the Russian proletariat will proceed towards the conquest, first of a Democratic Republic and the complete liberty of the peasantry over the landlords, and later towards socialism, which alone will give to the peoples exhausted by war — peace, bread and liberty.

(Lenin: "First Stages of the Russian Revolutions", "A Letter from Afar", Complete Works. Vol. XIV. Part I, p. 12.)

The Tasks of the Revolution.

(Formulated by Lenin after the Kornilov Mutiny.)

POWER TO THE SOVIETS.

All power in the State must be transferred exclusively to the representatives of the Councils of Workers' Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies on the basis of a definite programme and the complete responsibility of the authorities to the Soviets. The Soviets must be re-elected immediately, both for the purpose of registering the experience of the people during the weeks of the revolution which have been so rich in content, as well as for the purpose of removing the crying injustices (abnormalities, inequalities in elections, etc.) which still remain uncorrected in certain places.

In all localities where democratically elected bodies still exist, and in the army, all power must be transferred exclusively to the local Soviets and to the Commissars and other institutions which they have elected, but only to elected ones.

Everywhere and without any reserve, with the complete support of the State, arms must be given to the workers and revolutionaries, i. e. to those who have by their deeds proved their capability of suppressing the Kornilov troops.

PEACE TO THE PEOPLE.

The Soviet Government must immediately propose to all belligerent peoples (i. e., simultaneously to the governments, the workers, and to the masses of the peasantry) to conclude an immediate general peace on democratic conditions and an immediate armistice (say three months).

The principal condition for a democratic peace is the abandonment of annexation, but not in the wrong sense that all States will have their lost annexed territories restored to them, but in the only correct sense that every nation, without exception in Europe as well as in the colonies will obtain the liberty and possibility itself to determine whether it will exist as a separate state or unite with any other State.

In making its peace proposals, the Soviet Government must immediately set to work, itself to bring it about, i. e. it must publish and annual the secret treaties by which we have been bound hitherto, which were concluded by the Tsar and which promise the Russian capitalists the plunder of Turkey, Austria, etc. We are further obliged immediately to satisfy the Ukraini-

ans and Finns, guarantee to them as well as to all the other nationalities in Kussia complete liberty, including the right of separation, applying the same to the whole of Armenia, undertake to evacuate that country as well as the Turkish territories, etc., that we now occupy.

LAND TO THE TOILERS.

The Soviet Government must immediately declare that the private ownership of land is abolished without compensation, and transfer the land to the control of the peasant committees until the matter is settled by the Constituent Assembly. The same peasant committees must have place at their disposal for all the inventory of the landlords' estates in order that they may be utilised primarily and free of charge by the poorest peasants.

COMBATING STARVATION AND RUIN.

The Soviet Government must immediately establish workers' control over production and consumption on a national scale.

It is necessary immediately to nationalise the banks and insurance companies as well as the most important branches of industry (oil industry, coal, metallurgical, sugar, etc.). At the same time commercial secrets must be abolished without reserve and the persistent control by the workers and peasants must be established over the insignificant minority of capitalists who are profiteering on government contracts and who evade proper control and a fair taxation of their profits and property.

COMBATING COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY LANDLORDS AND CAPITALISTS.

Nothing has been done to suppress the counter-revolution or even to investigate it, nor can anything seriously be done until power is transferred to the Soviets. No Commission that does not possess governmental power can institute a complete investigation, arrest culprits, etc. Only the Soviet Government can and must carry this out. It alone can guarantee Russia against a repetition of "Kornilov" attempts.

(Lenin: "Tasks of the Revolution", Vol. XIV. p. II.)

The Premises of the February Revolution.

In one of his "Letters from Afar" in which Lenin describes the first stage of the first revolution, he deals very fully with the causes and the character of the February Revolution. There are two points which Lenin considered to be the cause of the February Revolution: the distribution of the class forces as a result of the Revolution of 1905 and of the epoch of reaction, and the influence of the war on this distribution. The fact that the years between 1905 and 1914 brought to the surface the class differences was considered by Lenin to be due to the revolution of 1905 and to the influence of the epoch of reaction. He wrote:

"Without the three years of gigantic class struggles and without the revolutionary energy of the Russian proletariat in 1905—1907, the second revolution could not have become an accomplished fact so rapidly, in the sense that its initial stage was accomplished in the course of a few days."

The epoch of the revolution of 1905 and the epoch of the counter-revolution defined very exactly the character of the bourgeoisie and the aims and demands of the proletariat. Lenin said:

"Without the revolution of 1905—1907, without the counter-revolution of 1907—1914, it would have been impossible to define so exactly all the classes of the Russian people and of the peoples inhabiting Russia, it would have been impossible to define the relations of these classes among themselves and between them and the tsarist monarchy, as was done in the eight days of the February (March) revolution of 1917." (Lenin's Collected Works, Vol. XIV, Part 1, pp. 5—6. Russian edition.)

The revolution of 1905 ended in the defeat of the proletariat and the peasantry. As a result of the revolutionary struggles of 1905, power was seized by the counter-revolutionary aristocracy and by a section of the bourgeoisie who formed the so-called June the 3rd bloc. The triumph of this bloc transformed in 1906—07 the whole of Russia into an armed camp. A reinforced Intelligence Department, martial law, field courts martial, formation of military units at the expense of the big landowners on their estates, mass deportations and executions — such were the attributes of the rule of the victorious aristocracy and bourgeoisie. In his analysis of the results of 1905, Lenin pointed out that this military rule of the aristocracy and bourgeoisie, the measures which it took for the protection of its class domination, the bombardment of cities only revealed the class character of the victorious aristocracy and bourgeoisie. They could not go any further. By bombarding cities and carrying on a military campaign in the villages against the peasants, the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie betrayed their class character and landed in a blind alley. The rule of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie was maintained at the point of the bayonet, — they had no further prospect of development. The attempt of the victorious aristocracy and bourgeoisie to bring to their side the mass of the petty-bourgeoisie through the destruction of the communal system was called by Lenin a Bonapartist attempt by which the aristocratic government, already losing its social bearings, endeavoured to get support for its power on new social strata which were developing.

But although there were Bonapartist elements in the policy of the aristocratic government after the revolution of 1905, during the years of reaction, the old class character and the old class rule continued to exist under new forms. The aristocracy retained land monopoly and stubbornly continued to keep up and support monopolist land ownership during the years of reaction. The policy of the autocracy and the bourgeoisie during the years of reaction, when the revolutionary movement of the proletariat and the peasantry was suppressed by field courts martial, punitive expeditions and mass shootings, led only to attempts on the part of the aristocracy, and the bourgeoisie to transfer all the expenditure connected with the existence and support of the bourgeois-aristocratic society onto the shoulders of the peasantry and the proletariat. The by-play with the petty-bourgeoisie, while preserving monopolist landownership by the aristocracy led to the growing bourgeois elements being obliged to have recourse to destruction of the communal system and to robbing the peasant masses of their land in order to re-ensure the existence of big land-ownership and to strengthen their own position. Such a policy was fraught with colossal contradictions. Consolidation of big monopolist landownership (landownership based to a considerable extent on the semi-statute-labour system of farming, a Prussian type of farming, evolving gradually from aristocratic to bourgeois landownership) by the very fact of its existence prevented the development of the productive forces of agriculture in general and became a factor in the exploitation of the growing productive forces of the countryside.

Monopolist big landownership was an obstacle to the growth and development of bourgeois landownership, although at the same time it evolved into bourgeois landownership much more slowly than the groups of peasant bourgeoisie which had come out of the commune. At the same time aristocratic landownership, having retained land monopoly in its hands, was a rival of the growing rural bourgeoisie and relentlessly exploited in its own interests the mass of the peasantry, which constituted the reserve army, not only for the factories, but also for the landowners' farms. Big landowners exploited the peasantry by raising rent for the lease of land, by the statute-labour system, by reducing the wages of agricultural labourers and by diminishing and ceasing to transfer their estates to the peasantry. All this led to the exposure of the true character of aristocratic bourgeois rule brought about by the revolution of 1905; class differences grew more acute and more wide-spread. The aristocratic monopolist landowner was set against the landless and land-poor peasantry. Armed to the teeth, and surrounded by a military guard, the landowners estates and farms were fortresses of the nobility in a sea of petty-bourgeois elements, confronted with the task of destroying big aristocratic landownership.

After the revolution of 1905, in the epoch of reaction, this task became even more acute, setting the peasantry as a whole — the poorest peasantry, the peasant proletariat, the middle peasantry and the bourgeois sections of the peasantry — against aristocratic monopolist-land-ownership. The peasantry as a whole and the growing peasant petty-bourgeoisie were confronted with the task of destroying aristocratic big landownership, and subsequently with the task of destroying and demolishing the State apparatus which supported this aristocratic monopolist land-ownership, which served the interests of aristocratic monopoly. The aristocracy and the bourgeoisie joined forces in their attacks on the proletariat. The bourgeoisie and the aristocracy, who at the tail end of the revolution of 1905 amalgamated their forces into a united counter-revolutionary bloc, supported one another loyally in their struggle against the proletariat. In its struggle against the proletariat, the bourgeoisie made use of the factories, threatening the workers with lockouts, black lists, mass dismissals, increased unemployment. Wherever factories were not a strong enough weapon against the proletariat, the State apparatus of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie was brought into play, causing the destruction of proletarian organisations, arrests of the leaders, deportations and destruction of the organisational foundations of the proletariat. The foremost task of the victorious aristocracy and bourgeoisie was the organisational destruction of the proletarian army.

The Party apparatus — the revolutionary staff of the proletarian army was the first to be attacked by the bloc of the amalgamated aristocracy and bourgeoisie. The State apparatus used its forces to arrest Party workers, to raid and destroy Party organisations and to rob the proletariat of its organisa-

tional apparatus. After the destruction of the Party apparatus the aristocracy and bourgeoisie destroyed, with the help of the State apparatus, the apparatus of the proletariat — the trade unions. All sorts of difficulties were placed in the way of organising new trade unions, trade union workers were arrested and deported. The bourgeoisie, for its part, used the apparatus of the factory for the disorganisation of the proletarian army, — the destruction of its ranks. Black lists were drawn up in the factories. The bourgeoisie declared lock-outs, dismissed all the workers, hiring subsequently others according to its own choice and effecting thereby a mass purging of the proletarian army, clearing it of all revolutionary elements. The real aim of this destruction of the proletarian army by the combined forces of the victorious black bloc was the consolidation of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie. It was essential not only to have power over the apparatus, to keep in one's hands all the means of domination, — it was also essential to use this domination for the increase of employers' profits, for a more intensive exploitation of the proletariat.

All the achievements of the revolution of 1905 in the factories: factory and workshop committees, workers' participation in drawing up estimates and fixing prices, hiring and dismissing labour through the factory and workshop committees, were brought to nought in the epoch of reaction. The economic position of the workers grew worse, the working day was lengthened, the bourgeoisie adopted the system of piece rates, reduced wages, increasing at the same time, by means of piece rates, the quantity of labour extorted from the proletariat. The real aims of the bourgeoisie became as clear as daylight. If one compares the rise in the price of bread during the years of reaction with the wage rise during the same period, it will be found that the price of bread during the period of reaction continually increased whilst wages during the same years continually decreased.

The offensive of the counter-revolutionary bloc against the proletariat exposed the true character of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie. It demonstrated to the proletarian masses the complete amalgamation of the factory and the State apparatus. The aristocratic-feudal society was the obedient servant of the bourgeoisie. The amalgamation between the State apparatus and the bourgeoisie was demonstrated to the proletarian masses, by the whole activity of the aristocratic-bourgeois bloc, which had defeated the revolution. The victorious bloc of the aristocracy and bourgeoisie endeavoured, by amalgamating and intertwining, to increase exploitation and to lower thereby the standard of life of the big army of labour, — it endeavoured to lengthen working hours and to increase production for the benefit of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, to lower at the same time the wages of the workers. Before the eyes of the retreating proletarian army (during the years of reaction) became crystallised with the utmost clarity the substance and character of the victorious bloc of the aristocracy and bourgeoisie. Yet, although the proletariat was retreating and keeping its fighting columns in reserve, it did not relinquish struggle altogether. Whereas the years 1907—1908—1909 witnessed a low tide of the proletarian movement, only small detachments of the proletarian army continuing the struggle on the political and economic fronts, a re-grouping of the revolutionary elements was going on at the same time within the proletarian army, revolutionary energy and revolutionary qualities developed, the proletariat, confronted with the united front of the June 3rd bloc, set itself the task of destroying the domination of this entire regime. Thus, class differences were becoming more acute and were gaining in strength and dimension. The aims of the class struggle became as clear as daylight, the proletariat saw itself confronted by the allied enemy — the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie. Thereby the struggle of the proletariat assumed a two-fold character, dealt a double blow. By destroying the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, by struggling against it, the proletariat was struggling at the same time against the relics of the aristocratic-feudal regime and against the yoke of capitalism. This being so, the proletariat was not only fighting for itself, but also for the large sections of peasantry who during these years came into collision with the entire aristocratic-feudal regime and with the bourgeoisie which had inter-twined with the latter, getting control of the big landowner's through the banks.

The revolution of 1905 exposed the class differences and showed the true face of the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy.

The counter-revolutionary years 1907—1914 were years of class differentiation, of exposure of the class character and class aims of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, which had defeated the revolution of 1905. But these same years were also years of class self-determination, when the proletariat as well as the peasantry were made fully aware of the aims of the class struggle. Thus the re-grouping of class forces was accomplished, as pointed out by Lenin, in the period of 1905—1914. The revolution of 1905 is important not only because it exposed the regrouping of class forces, but also because it demonstrated to the mass of the revolutionary proletariat and peasantry methods of revolutionary struggle, because it familiarised them with mass political actions and because it placed in December 1905 the proletariat before the problem of armed rising and demonstrated in practice how one has to fight against the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, in what manner and how a rising must be organised, showing to the proletariat that a rising is an art.

By exposing the class differences and class character of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie, the revolution of 1905 and the years of counter-revolution exposed also the class character of opportunism and Menshevism, firmly linking up the proletariat and the peasantry with the leading revolutionary struggles of the Bolshevik Party in 1905. The revolution of 1905 gave organisational forms to the proletariat, it created broad mass organisations — the Soviets of workers' deputies, which became organs of the revolutionary organisation and organs of power in the territories seized by the rising. The imperialist war was, in the opinion of Lenin, another factor which accelerated revolution. The world imperialist war is a potential accelerating factor, — wrote Lenin. In another part of his "Letters From Afar" he said:

"With objective inevitability, the imperialist war was to accelerate enormously and to make more acute the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, — the imperialist war was bound to be transformed into civil war between the warring classes." (Lenin Collected Works, Vol. XIV. Part. 1, p. 7.)

The imperialist war was conducted by the Russian aristocracy and bourgeoisie and also by the bourgeoisie and aristocracy of the whole world in their own interests, it was conducted with the forces of the proletariat and the peasantry. The imperialist war made enormous demands on the national economy of Russia, producing enormous changes within it. In order to develop fully its might and strength on the battlefields, the bourgeoisie had to develop this might first of all in the factories, it had to prepare in the factories the might and strength which it developed on the battlefields. The war was carried on by the factories, it demanded the full energy of all the factory forces. The war squandered in the smoke of battle an enormous quantity of the goods produced in the factories, it was in itself a consumer, but certainly not a producer. The war demanded more and more ammunition, arms, in fact all the necessaries of war, — the army of labour had to provide soldiers for the war as well as to create the means of production for the production of war material, that is to say, war was the factor which increased production, but which did not increase the production of means of production in general, increasing only the production of war material.

Far from being productive consumption, the war, whilst extending production, did not return anything to production, — it extended some branches of production and diminished and lowered others, — the whole process of production in the factories was for a destructive purpose. The war filled the pockets of the bourgeoisie with gold, it provided an opportunity for profitable investment of capital, but at the same time war destroyed and undermined the strength of the factories themselves, the feverish production of arms and ammunition destroyed the general production of the factories, it destroyed the basic capital of industry by destroying its means and instruments of production. All this was fraught with a gigantic industrial crisis in the future, it brought with it during the years of war a worsening of the conditions of the big proletarian army. The diminution and deterioration of the means of production coupled with an ever-increasing war market compelled the bourgeoisie to replace the destroyed means of production by human labour power. The army of labour grew continuously during the years

of war, but the position of this army grew worse from day to day. Efforts were made to replace worn out or non-existent machinery by human labour power. This brought with it a longer working day and worse labour conditions. The general position of national economy in Russia during the war resulted also in a general worsening of the position of the proletariat. The war did not only demand enormous efforts on the part of the national economic apparatus, it also demanded an enormous army for the production of the latter. The bourgeoisie could no longer limit itself to the standing army, it enlisted for army service tens of millions of human beings, practically converting the army into an armed people, — it converted the whole population of the country into an army. This deflected enormous numbers of workers from productive labour, by keeping them in the army.

At the same time the army demanded enormous efforts on the part of industry in order that it should be well provided with war material. This in its turn took away whole branches of industry from supplying the everyday needs of the population. All this disturbed the equilibrium — the connection between the various branches of economy. Some branches of industry increased abnormally, others again, being deprived of the means of production and of labour power, were inevitably rushed into crises. The fact that connection between individual branches of economy was severed called forth a whole series of conflicts, — shortage of goods in many branches of industry caused severance of connection between town and countryside, it brought in its wake accumulation of money tokens and a decrease of the very necessaries of life. To the proletariat this meant a lower standard of life. Shortage of necessaries of life resulted in high prices and accumulation of money lowered the purchasing power of money. The earnings of the proletariat during the years of war did not keep pace with the increase in prices of the necessaries of life. Although wages increased nominally, the real wage experienced a catastrophic fall and the general position of the proletarian army was growing steadily worse. The economic position of those detachments of the proletarian army, which were not connected with the war and whose wages the manufacturers were not anxious to raise, rapidly grew worse. To these detachments of the proletarian army, war conditions brought famine, starvation, prostitution and degeneration. The proletariat which was driven to the front did not only carry on war in the interests of the bourgeoisie, it guaranteed the cost of the war by its labour in the factories. At the same time the bourgeoisie was reaping enormous profits from the war, it did not anticipate the coming crisis, it dreamt only of annexations and contributions — the result of a victorious conclusion of the war. Thus war between opposite classes of capitalist society was becoming a reality.

During the years of war the Russian bourgeoisie only thought of annexations and contributions, demanding the annexation of the entire Black Sea coast, the conquest of Constantinople and the Dardanelles, annexation of Galicia, Carpathian Russia, Bukovina, etc. The Russian bourgeoisie did not only draw up a programme of annexations, it also increased its capital, becoming more and more one with the State apparatus and gaining power over it. The bourgeoisie was going through a rapid process of political self-organisation, creating for the pursuance of the war a whole series of various organisations headed by the Rural and Urban Union. But whilst before the eyes of the Russian bourgeoisie there developed a vista of enormous conquests and complete domination over the State apparatus, class differences were growing within capitalist society, a connection was springing up between the proletarian army in the factories and the army at the front. Revolutionary actions and moods were on the increase in both these armies. To both of them the aims of the war were alien and incomprehensible. These two armies did not think of conquests and annexations, but began to think how to avoid war. The slogan "war against war" was beginning to get hold of the proletarian army in the factories as well as of the proletarian army at the front. War against war led to demonstrations, to the growth of the strike movement, to increased collisions between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie; it led to the political aims of the struggle of the proletariat and the peasantry during the revolution of 1905 and during the years of reaction being again inscribed on the banner of the masses — abolition of autocracy, abolition of the rule of the nobility and after that abolition of bourgeois rule and war against the entire aristocratic-bourgeois order.

The imperialist war showed the whole might of the bourgeois world, but it also undermined and destroyed this power. At the same time it made more acute the class differences within the bourgeois world, it welded together the mass army of the proletariat and the peasantry and this welding together of the proletarian and revolutionary peasant army was embodied and expressed in the military army. About 18½ million of the population were enlisted for military service in Russia during the war. Enormous numbers of proletarians and peasants were drawn into the army, were armed and driven into the trenches to fight for interests alien to them. They brought into the army the aims of the class struggle for which they fought in the factories and works. New organisations of the proletariat and the peasantry prevented the bourgeoisie from converting these

millions into an obedient tool for its aims and its domination. By fighting for the achievement of its own aims, the bourgeoisie organised against its own ranks a revolutionary army of proletarians and peasants. By fighting for annexations and contributions and receiving direct profits from the conduct of the war, the bourgeoisie itself added to the acuteness of class differences, organised against itself the proletariat and the peasantry. At the time when the bourgeoisie almost had in its hands the State apparatus and was itself preparing to overthrow the obsolete Russian autocracy, the revolutionary high tide of the proletariat and the peasantry forestalled it. Autocracy was overthrown in the irresistible progress of this torrent which gave power into the hands of the bourgeoisie and then set itself the task to abolish the domination of this bourgeoisie.

The Tenth Anniversary of the February Revolution.

By N. L.—r.

I.

Ten years ago, on March 12, 1917, the Petrograd workers jointly with the peasants in soldiers' uniforms overthrew the tsar, Nicolaus Romanov, and destroyed Russian tsarism, the pillar of European reaction.

The February Revolution was the first breach in the imperialist war. The rising of the Russian workers and peasants in the struggle for peace accomplished a thousand times more for the cause of peace than the hypocritical sermons of Messrs. Kautsky, MacDonald, Bauer and Longuet who preached peace but at the same time refrained from calling the masses to the barricades of civil war. If the Russian working class and its allies, the soldiers and peasants, were the first to rise in rebellion against the imperialist war it was largely due to Lenin's Party of Russian Bolsheviks which soon after the outbreak of the imperialist war issued the slogan of its transformation into a civil war, and welded together under its revolutionary slogans the advanced workers of Petrograd and other towns during the three years of war.

The February Revolution was the reply of the Russian workers and peasants to the imperialist war in which the Russian autocracy was involved. However, the February Revolution did not get Russia out of the imperialist war. It placed the bourgeoisie and its faithful "Socialist" servants, the SRs. and Mensheviks, at the helm of the government. But the Russian bourgeoisie and social compromisers were not inclined to stop the war. They, as well as the missions of the Entente Powers in Russia (the British ambassador and others), regarded the February Revolution as the overthrow of the pro-German tsarist regime and as a means of instilling the spirit of "patriotism" into the Russian army, which was now defending the Russian republic against the onslaught of the Prussian and Austrian royal armies. During the first few months the bourgeoisie played up to the SRs. and Mensheviks as they knew that without their help it would be impossible to keep the armies at the front. The bourgeoisie was not mistaken. Both "Socialist" parties had enormous influence over the masses at the beginning of the revolution and they developed a wide campaign for the continuation of the war. Kerensky visited all fronts, and delivered firebrand speeches for war to victorious finish. The social traitors from the Entente belligerent countries sent their Albert Thomases and other Socialist leaders to the assistance of the SRs. and Mensheviks. The toilers of Russian and Central Europe well remember what consequences this "patriotic" policy brought about. On June 18, the Russian forces started an offensive along the entire Austrian front which caused the death of hundreds and thousands of workers and peasants of Russia, Austro-Hungary, and Germany.

The workers and peasants wanted peace, but they also wanted more than that. They overthrew the monarchy in order to appropriate to themselves the 70 million dessiatins of land which belonged to the 30,000 land magnates. They wanted to free themselves from the heavy tax burdens which went to cover the foreign debts, the maintenance of colossal army, and the upkeep of the nobility. They overthrew tsarism in order to give the workers an 8-hour working day, in order to put a stop to unlimited speculation, in order to replace the State apparatus

of the aristocracy and the bureaucrats by a government of workers and peasants.

The SRs. and Mensheviks, the blood relations of the Scheidemanns and the Austrian Social Democrats, the political fellow thinkers of MacDonald, Renaudel and Vandervelde did all in their power to limit the scope of the struggle and to retard the onslaught of the masses. They told the peasantry to wait for the decisions of the Constituent Assembly. The workers they told that the industry of the "revolutionary country" must be safeguarded. Casting about phrases about the necessity of depriving the capitalists of 100% of their profits, the "Socialist" ministers did nothing to stop the speculation and lockouts to which the bourgeoisie resorted in retaliation to the introduction of the 8-hour working day on the part of the workers. On the authority of the Soviets, which were in their hands during the first six months of the revolution, the SRs. and Mensheviks shot down workers' demonstrations (the July days in Petrograd), dispersed the peasant committee which dared to confiscate lands belonging to the landlords, without awaiting the "lawful" decisions of the Constituent Assembly.

The workers and peasants overthrew the monarchy, but the country was ruled as before by the generals, manufacturers and tsarist officers. The old army officers remained as before. As events evolved, the forces of reaction were becoming more aggressive and the traitorous role of the "Socialist Parties" more obvious. The notorious "Kornilov rising", Kornilov's march on Petrograd, may be considered as the culminating point in the offensive of the reactionary forces.

Luckily the counter-revolutionary attack was repelled by the workers and uniformed peasants under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party. The Kornilov rising opened the eyes of millions of peasants to the correctness of what the Bolsheviks had been telling them ever since the first day of the revolution, viz., either the workers and peasants must overthrow the Provisional Government with its "Socialist" lackeys and establish a Soviet Government, which would bring peace to the people, land to the peasants, and the factories to the workers or the revolution will be defeated by the coming into power of the reactionary generals, who are dissatisfied with the social compromisers, who cannot decide to crush the movement of the working and peasant masses with armed force.

The agitation of the Bolsheviks, the betrayal of the "Socialists", the open insurrection of the monarchist generals have done their work. Seven months after the first revolution, the workers and armed peasants, under the leadership of Lenin's Party, accomplished the second, the October Revolution, and placed the Soviets in power. The Soviet Government decreed in the first 2—3 days of its existence what the S. Rs. and Mensheviks could not decide to do in the course of 7 month's rule.

II.

The tenth anniversary of the February Revolution is a reminder to the workers of these countries in which the war ended in revolution of what traitorous role their Social Democratic leaders played in it. Did not the Eberts, Scheidemanns, Müllers, Bauers and Renners act exactly as our Mensheviks and SRs. did? Did they not restrain the workers from establishing a Soviet Government in Germany and Austria, although the

proletariat in these countries is stronger than in Russia? Did they not promise the workers that industry would be socialised without the German and Austrian "October"? Did they not tell the workers that State power can be obtained by gaining the majority in the Reichstag and in the Landtags? Did they not incite the masses against the Spartacists just as the SRs. and Mensheviks incited the masses against the Bolsheviks? Did not Noske shoot down the revolutionary proletarian vanguard just as Kerensky fired on the workers during the July days in Petrograd? The difference between the Russian Social traitors on the one hand, and the Austrian and German on the other, consists in the fact that the former did not succeed in staving off the October Revolution, because at the head of the toiling masses of Russia there stood a tempered Bolshevik Party, whereas the Austrian and German social traitors successfully fulfilled their role as saviours of capitalism and hangmen of the Revolution.

And now, ten years after the February Revolution, we ask every proletarian who trusted Scheidemann, Müller, Bauer and Renner, who did not follow Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg (who were killed with the knowledge and desire of the social democratic leaders in 1918—19): who was right, Liebknecht and Luxemburg, the followers of Lenin, or the social democrats?

In Russia where the workers did not follow the counsels of the SRs. and Mensheviks, we are now building Socialism and a Socialist culture is arising.

In Germany (to take one example), we see ten years after the February Revolution a return to power of the classes which ruled under Wilhelm, we see ministers there (Keudel) who participated in the Putsch of the German Kornilov, Kapp. Instead of the socialised industry which was promised by the Social Democrats, there are in Germany 2,000,000 of unemployed, the

9-hour working day and unprecedented reduction of social insurance, particularly of insurance to mothers and children.

Instead of the promised conquest of power, the proletariat of Germany is witnessing the gradual squeezing out of the Social Democrats by the monarchists from those few government offices in which they faithfully served the bourgeoisie. We do not mention here such surprises as the return to the royal family of former estates and other property.

On seeing this, let every Social Democratic proletarian ask himself the question: was not the working class of Germany deceived in 1918—19? Were not the Communists right in calling upon the workers to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat?

And today, on the tenth anniversary of the February Revolution of the workers and peasants of Russia, we reiterate to the Social Democratic proletarians, our class brothers. In 1918—19 you made a mistake in believing your leaders. In Germany and Austria you did not venture to proceed from "February" to "October". In Italy, France, Great Britain and other countries, you have refrained from any decisive action. Let us now together make good this mistake. Let us unite under the banner under which the proletariat in Russia has accomplished its October in 1917. Let our slogan on the tenth anniversary of the February Revolution of the Russian workers and peasants be:

Onward, towards "October", towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, towards the power of the Soviets!

Let our slogan on this tenth anniversary of the February Revolution of the Russian toilers be:

Hands off the U. S. S. R., the first proletarian dictatorship in the world!

Long live unity of the workers of the U. S. S. R. and of the whole world!

The Russian Revolution of February 1917 and the German Revolution of November 1918.

By August Thalheimer, Moscow.

The tenth anniversary of the Russian revolution of February 1917 very naturally suggests a comparison with the German revolution in the November of the following year. How was it that the former could lead in eight months to the defeat of the bourgeoisie by the working class, and by the peasantry which was allied with it and under its leadership, and to the establishment of the Soviet Government, while the latter after no more than two months (in January 1919) already began to regress and finally ended in the bourgeois Republic and the maintenance of the capitalist Order? This question very naturally arises in the mind of the German worker and especially of the German Communist, all the more so at a time when the bourgeois Republic represents the domination of the big capitalist monopolies, the predominance of the steel trust, the chemical trust, the big banks, etc.

We propose here to go briefly into this question from the standpoint of the experiences and tasks of the German working class. It is quite obvious that in November 1918 the German working class had no less power in their hands than the Russian workers had in February 1917; indeed, they had more. For not only were they numerically far stronger; they were also far better organised. When, on November 9th, the army made common cause with the working class, the German bourgeoisie was absolutely powerless and defenceless. If, instead of gaining the victory, the German proletariat was defeated, the reason must lie in the first place in the proletariat itself. The German proletariat itself abandoned the power it held; it itself assisted in restoring the bourgeoisie to power.

These are facts. But how was such a thing possible at all? The instrument for the restoration of the bourgeois rule was, as is known, the Social Democratic and trade union leadership. That, too, is an indubitable fact. These leaders, however, could never have succeeded, if they had not been believed and trusted by a great portion of the workers when they asserted that the victory of the working class lay in the direction they indicated and could far more easily be gained in that way than in the way indicated by the Communists. That

this belief was false has been proved by facts. It is, however, of the very greatest importance for the German working class to realise fully in the greatest detail, by what mirages they were led astray, when, instead of gaining the promised land of socialism, they found themselves back in the deserts of most concentrated form of capitalism ever known in any country.

The first illusion was the belief that only a bourgeois Republic could ensure peace, whereas a Soviet Republic would lead to renewed warfare, to war with the Western Powers and to civil war in the country. Now, it is certainly just as probable that the capitalist States would have tried by all possible means to persecute a German Soviet Republic by one intervention after another, as they actually did in the case of Soviet Russia. Nor is it less probable — being quite certain, indeed — that the defeated German bourgeoisie would have followed the example of the Russian bourgeoisie in combining with the French, British, and other capitalists against the workers of Germany, that they would have moved heaven and earth to gain their ends, and would have continued the outer and inner warfare to the utmost limit of their strength.

Undoubtedly therefore, a German Soviet Republic would have had (and will have) no easy time of it in the first few years of its existence. But what actual results have the German workers gained by allowing themselves to be persuaded to shirking this life-and-death struggle for their own emancipation? A world at peace? The laying of the war spectre for ever? Precisely the contrary. The armaments of the capitalist States are incomparably greater at present than they were either at the beginning or at the close of the world war. The competitive struggle between the capitalists of the individual countries has been aggravated rather than modified. No seriously thinking person can fail to recognise to-day, that the capitalist world is again steering towards an imperialist world slaughter, which means that untold millions of proletarians are again to be sacrificed for capitalist interests in a war which would

entail many times more victims than those of any civil or revolutionary war.

This is one result of the fact that the German workers permitted themselves in 1918 to be scared into abandoning a "fight to the finish" for their emancipation. That which they wished to prevent by avoiding civil and external war, now threatens them on a far larger scale in the form of another capitalist war.

The second great illusion was the expectation that the Entente would relieve and succour the starving and exhausted people, whereas a Soviet Republic would allegedly mean further hunger and devastation. Certainly, however willing the working population of Soviet Russia was to extend brotherly assistance to the German workers, a proletarian revolution would necessarily have entailed certain sacrifices and caused some hunger and devastation. But how is it now, if the German working class stop to consider their condition? Have they not suffered hunger, misery, and devastation throughout these eight years, are there not two millions of unemployed in the streets, have not the capitalists forged the workers' fetters more firmly than ever?

A German Soviet Republic would to-day undoubtedly be in the midst of a vigorous evolution, while by means of its highly developed technic it could have accelerated the rise of Soviet Russia as well.

The third great illusion was the hope that Socialism might be reached step by step in a peaceful and democratic way. "Socialism is on the Advance", men like Ebert and Scheide-

mann announced on countless posters when they were engaged in perpetrating the fraud of the Socialisation Commission and at the same time let loose Noske and the Whites on those workers who refused to be deceived by this swindle and who knew that there cannot be any question of socialism until the capitalists are struck down, their political power completely destroyed and the revolutionary power of the working classes established as the leader and ally of all working elements.

The smooth, peaceful, democratic path recommended by Ebert and Scheidemann did not serve for the advance of Socialism but for the progress of concentrated capitalism. And most of the small concessions made by the capitalists in 1918 and 1919 in factory and social legislation, to prevent the workers from a general assault, have in the meantime been taken back.

By these three illusions the German workers of 1918 and 1919 allowed themselves to be deceived, and thus it was that the German revolution in November 1918 took such a completely different course from that of the Russian revolution of February 1917. But experience exists for us to learn by, especially when it is an experience we have to suffer to our own cost.

The Russians, too, have learnt by experience. Prior to 1917 there was 1905, the year of the first Russian revolution, which also ended with a defeat of the workers. The more the German workers profit by the lesson taught them in the 1918/19 period, the sooner we shall see the day, when they advance beyond the bourgeois to the proletarian revolution, the day which makes their victory lasting and complete.

The Louis Blanc Episode in the February-March Revolution.

By B. Goryev.

The author of this article was one of the most prominent among the Mensheviks of the 1905-1917 epoch.

In 1917, he was a member of the C. C. of the Mensheviks and editor of their central press organ, the "Rabotchaya Gazeta" (Workers' Gazette). This fact adds interest to his retrospective remarks on the year 1917, contained in the following article. Ed.

The attitude of the Right Socialists, the Russian Mensheviks, and the Social-Revolutionaries throughout the whole revolution from March to November 1917, is of more than merely historic interest. It was quite in accordance with law, for in the first place it had a famous forerunner in the person of the French Socialist Louis Blanc, the first Socialist to take part in the bourgeois provisional Government which arose from the revolution of 1848 (in reference to which it was certainly not without reason that one of the first articles published by Lenin after his arrival in Russia in April 1917 was entitled "The Louis Blanc Episode"), and secondly it found imitators in the German Social Democrats of all shades on the occasion of the last German revolution. The significance of this attitude lies in the fact that so-called "Socialists", Socialists in words and petty-bourgeois Democrats in deeds, should have taken upon themselves the defence of a bourgeois republic, appearing objectively as agents and executors of a bourgeois policy (in which connection they evinced all the vacillation and inconsistency peculiar to the petty-bourgeoisie), and finally openly opposing the revolutionary proletariat.

Let us call to the mind of the reader the most important stages of the first revolution of the year 1917 and the rôle played therein by the Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries.

Though, not formally joining the Coalition Government until two months after the commencement of the revolution, they already acted in the spirit of that Coalition right from the very first days. The formation of the provisional Government headed by Prince Lvov and Milyoukov was the outcome of and understanding between the bourgeois Provisional Committee of the last State Duma, that caricature of a Parliament,

on the one hand, and the Petrograd Workers' and Soldiers' Council on the other, the latter being led by the Mensheviks and the Social-Revolutionaries, who based their authority on the yet inadequately developed consciousness of the masses. The leaders of the Soviet promised to support the Provisional Government in so far as it should carry out a revolutionary and democratic programme.

The most urgent question of the moment, however, the question of a continuation of the imperialist war in the interest of Anglo-French and Russian capitalist exploiters, was passed over in silence in the agreement, which proves that in the entire struggle between the executive committee of the Soviets and the Government for a predominant influence on the army and for its democratisation, the compromising leaders of the Soviet possessed neither a clearly-outlined programme nor the necessary revolutionary courage in regard to the main question of the Russian revolution, the question of the war, being indeed completely in the hands of the bourgeoisie.

By its famous manifesto of March 14th/27th, the Soviet declared that its aim was "Peace without Annexations or Contributions", but that, so long as the war lasted, it would call upon the people for the military defence of the revolution against German imperialism. This ambiguous formula, which on the one hand afforded a certain degree of hope to the tormented and peace-craving soldiers at the front, on the other hand opened the way to the bellicose bourgeois imperialism, which had placed itself at the service of the French and British Ambassadors.

Both when, in his note to the Governments of the Entente, the Foreign Minister Milyoukov practically annulled the manifesto of the Soviet and revealed the imperialist desires of the Government quite openly, and when this step called forth a powerful and elementary outburst of indignation on the part of the masses of workers and soldiers in the capital and Milyoukov was forced to retire, the representatives of the Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries officially entered the Government, thus allaying the awakening revolutionary distrust of the masses. At the same time, however, the multi-millionaire,

Terestchenko became Foreign Secretary in the place of Milyoukov, and was able, under the protection of the new Socialist Ministers, the Menshevik Zeretelli, and the Social-Revolutionary leader Tchernov, to follow the example of Milyoukov in accepting instructions from the Ambassadors of the Entente Powers.

The Socialists had entered the Government, but the imperialist war went on. Nay, more than that, for Kerensky, a Social-Revolutionary and former member of the Duma, who was very popular among the petty-bourgeois masses, and who had already been made Minister of Justice at the time of the formation of the first Milyoukov Cabinet against the decision of the executive committee of the Soviet was now appointed Minister of War in the place of the unpopular capitalist Gutchkov. He began to use every means to make the army willing to continue the war, a task in which he was assisted by the army-commissaries, selected by the Government and the Soviet from among the ranks of the Right Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, and by the army committees which, as originally formed, consisted of intellectuals. In this manner the abortive and altogether criminal offensive of the Russian army on June 18th (July 1st, n. st.) was prepared; it ended in a terrible defeat and in the commencement of the collapse of the army.

Meantime, the further development of the revolution and the attitude of the Government — in which the "Socialists" played the part of duped innocents, preventing, by their participation in the Coalition, even a moderate criticism by the Socialist Parties — did not fail to have their full effect, and the same was the case in regard to the sabotage of the big capitalists and the increasing decay of industry, and finally in regard to the war itself, the end of which was not yet nearly in sight despite the deafening internationalist talk of the compromising Soviet leaders and in spite of their participation in the Stockholm Conference of the Socialists of various countries. All the time, the Bolsheviks, headed by Lenin, were carrying on a clever, revolutionary and truly internationalist agitation. Gradually the workers and soldiers, and subsequently even the peasants, began to be disappointed with the policy of the compromising Socialist parties and to turn to the Bolsheviks and the Left Social-Revolutionaries who were then proceeding with them.

Already on the occasion of the magnificent demonstration of May 1st, the breach between the petty bourgeois attitude and the revolutionary proletarian feelings of the masses was apparent. A number of Bolshevik standards and flags were to be seen. And though at the First All-Russian Congress of the Soviets, in June 1917, the small delegation of the Bolsheviks was still swamped by the numerous delegations of the petty-bourgeois parties, the street demonstration which took place during this session plainly showed the sympathies of the majority for Bolshevism (as was likewise confirmed by the new elections of the Petrograd Soviet and the elections for the Factory Committees). The Bolsheviks, moreover, were joined by the sailors of Kronstadt, Helsingfors, and the entire Baltic Fleet, who had several towns, such as Zarizyn, in their hands.

After the attacks on the front which were so fatal for the compromisers, the embitterment of the masses of soldiers and workers against the Coalition Government began to grow apace, culminating in the armed demonstration in Petrograd on July 3rd and 4th (16th and 17th) under the cry of "All power to the Soviets!" This caused a furious outburst on the part of the reactionary elements, the destruction of the premise of the Bolshevik "Pravda", the arrest of Bolsheviks, the forcible disarmament of the proletariat of the capital, and the increasing boldness of the former Tsarist officers. General Kornilov,

appointed Commander Chief by Kerensky, demanded and put through the introduction of capital punishment at the front. Kerensky began to play the part of a dictator, though he was really a pawn in the hands of his bourgeois colleagues. And throughout this period the official leaders of the Mensheviks and the Social-Revolutionaries continued to take part in the Coalition. They also participated in the "State Deliberations" organised by Kerensky in August with representatives of the bourgeoisie and with reactionary officers, deliberations at which General Kornilov already appeared in the rôle of a future Cavaignac, a destroyer of the revolution.

A threatening omen for the compromisers, however, was the one day general strike as protest at Moscow where the "State deliberations" were held, a strike organised by the Moscow Trade Unions, in which the influence of the Bolsheviks was already predominant. The strike was so comprehensive that there were neither trams nor cabs, and the "Socialist" delegates from Petrograd and other towns were forced to proceed on foot from the station to the conference premises, carrying their luggage in their hands.

The masses turned openly away from these "Socialists". Meanwhile, the reaction, which thanks to the miserable and cowardly policy of the compromisers and thanks to their shortsightedness had once more gained ground, ventured to show itself more and more. General Kornilov prepared an anti-revolutionary coup, his aim being that of destroying the Petrograd Soviet by means of troops from the front and of setting up a military dictatorship. In this conspiracy Kerensky played a very dubious rôle.

The Kornilov coup ended in defeat and aroused a great blaze of revolutionary enthusiasm among the broad masses of the proletariat and the army. In the army and navy, red terror set in against the reactionary officers. The frightened compromisers attempted a swing to the Left. The Bolsheviks had to be released from prison. Resolutions were adopted against the Coalition. But it was already too late. The masses had had enough of the compromisers. No one would listen to them in the meeting. At the Soviet, and partly also at the municipal elections, the Bolsheviks were victorious. The central press organ of the Mensheviks, the "Rabotshaya Gazeta", which at its inception had had a circulation of 100,000 copies, in September had a circulation of only 10,000 or 15,000 copies. The slogans of "All Power to the Soviets!", "Peace and Land for the Peasants", "Labour Control Over Industry!", raised by the Bolsheviks, had become general slogans.

The Bolsheviks made open preparations for an armed upheaval and managed gradually to obtain the leadership, both ideologically and politically, not only of the workers, but also of the entire garrison of the capital.

And one autumn morning, on November 7th, when in the "Democratic Council of the Republic" or "Ante-Parliament" invented by Kerensky, the Menshevik and Social-Revolutionary leaders were making "Parliamentary" speeches along with their bourgeois colleagues, they were unceremoniously bundled out by detachments of soldiers and workers, who had meanwhile succeeded in occupying the strategic positions of the city and who were now besieging the Winter Palace in which the Government was sitting. The same night the Ministers were arrested. Kerensky fled. The "compromisers" began to prepare for a fresh fight — this time quite openly — against the victorious proletariat.

The February Days 1917.

Lenin said that three fundamental political forces measured their strength in the February days: tsarism, the stronghold of the capitalists, the landed proprietors, the old bureaucracy and the officer-class; the bourgeoisie and landowners of Russia in the October-cadet phase, to whose skirts clung the petty bourgeoisie; and the Council of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the leader and organiser of the proletariat and the peasantry. The February days dealt a blow to the autocracy from which it never recovered. The bourgeoisie during the whole of the February revolution made assiduous efforts, by allying itself with autocracy, to avoid revolution, and when this was seen to be impossible they did their best to turn the proletarian-peasant movement to their own advantage. The proletariat and the peasant-soldiery were the fundamental motive-force of the February revolution, that force which swept away tsarism and transferred all power to the hands of the bourgeoisie. The autocracy endeavoured to resist the revolution, although its first rumbles — the first strikes which preceded the February revolution — were not correctly appraised by the representatives of the autocracy. The Tsaritsa wrote, in a letter of February 25th, 1917: "The strikes and disorders in the town are more than exasperating... this is a movement of hooligans — boys and girls running about the streets and shouting out that they have no bread, simply to create excitement — workers trying to prevent others from working. If it were really cold they would all be sitting quietly at home." (Letters of Nicholas and Alexandra Romanov, vol. V, p. 218.)

Nicholas II received information of the revolutionary activities beginning in the capital both from the President of the State Duma and from the General Staff. The tsar responded to the alarming news from Petrograd by sending an order to Prince Galitzin, President of the Council of Ministers, to take the "most decisive measures for the suppression of the revolutionary movement and the revolt among some of the regiments in the Petrograd garrison." The autocracy tried to make a stand. The Petrograd authorities, in the person of the President of the Council of Ministers, were given dictatorial powers, and a special mixed military detachment under the command of General Ivanov was prepared to march on Petrograd from Headquarters. Nicholas himself told General Ivanov of his appointment to the command of the battalion and gave the order that the Council of Ministers was to fulfil all injunctions of the General, and the Chief of Staff of the Higher Command was given a special order to place at the disposal of General Ivanov, in the capacity of Junior Commanding Officers "reliable, trustworthy and intrepid assistants drawn from the General Staff." The Council of Ministers in Petrograd met several times to discuss the question of their further behaviour. General Ivanov's detachment never got to Petrograd. On the way there General Ivanov saw that the movement was beginning to assume a mass character and that it would scarcely be within his power to deal with the rising. Arriving at Tsarskoya Syelo, Ivanov tried to get into touch with the Tsarist, but was forced, under pressure from the revolting garrison at Tsarskoya Syelo, to surrender and his detachment was soon dispersed. Neither were the efforts of the autocracy to offer resistance in Petrograd itself particularly brilliant. Their conflict with the rising convinced the representatives of the Higher Command in Petrograd of the necessity, if not of making concessions to the revolution, of smashing it by a well-conceived manoeuvre and cutting off from it a section of the petty bourgeoisie. The State Duma, represented by Rodzyanko, entered from the very beginning into parleys with the Government, trying to get a series of concessions from the latter, and putting into practice the programme of the Progressive bloc, so as to avert revolution. Rodzyanko, the President of the State Duma summoned the Grand Duke Michael to Petrograd and the latter exerted all his energies to persuade Nicholas II to make concessions and thus to save the monarchy in Russia. The representatives of the valiant allies also participated energetically in the revolution, coming forward with a series of declarations both at the front and in Petrograd. The position taken up by the Allies was identical with the tactics of the President of the Duma, Rodzyanko, the Grand Duke Michael and other representatives of the bourgeoisie. General Williams, the British military representative at the

front, pointed out in a special letter to Nicholas II the necessity of making a concession and affording the national spirit an outlet in the form of freedom of speech for the State Duma. The British and French ambassadors in Petrograd, Buchanan and Paléologue, remained up to the very last moment in closest touch with the representatives of the old authorities. At the height of the revolutionary wave Paléologue, as he himself writes in his reminiscences, had a meeting with Maklakov, the representative of the Cadet party, and discussed with him the position of affairs. When the attempt to make Nicholas II, ruler of the Romanov dynasty, see reason and to force him to make some sort of concession could be brought off neither by the Russian bourgeoisie nor by the "Allies", the latter were confronted with another problem — the salvation of the representative of Russian autocracy and his safe transfer to England. Parleys on the journey of Nicholas to England began in Headquarters immediately after his abdication. The representative of the Allied Command at headquarters even offered his services as escort for the abdicating emperor to Tsarskoya Syelo.

The failure of the parleys between Grand-Duke Michael and Nicholas II left the Petrograd authorities face to face with the revolution. The revolutionary movement was growing from hour to hour and there was no force strong enough to resist it in Petrograd. According to War-Minister Belaiev, Rodzyanko conceived the idea of turning the fire-brigade on to the insurgents and flooding out the revolution. But neither water nor the bayonets of the tsarist government could avail against the revolution. At the last moment, not more than one thousand, five hundred bayonets were found to be at the disposal of General Habalov, in command of the Petrograd troops, which led the struggle against the revolution. On the evening of February 27th the Government troops were confronted with the question of the proper position for them to take up in the capital, and how to hold out till the arrival of General Ivanov's detachment. On the same evening the Winter Palace was occupied by the Government troops, and the question arose as to whether to occupy the Palace or the Admiralty. While the Chiefs were arguing this point the Grand-Duke Michael arrived and, on grasping the situation expressed himself in favour of occupying the Admiralty. All the strategical advantages were on the side of the Admiralty: the site made it possible to fire straight on to the three thoroughfares leading up to it — Voznesenski Avenue, Gorohovaya Street and the Nevski Prospect — thus commanding the approach to three railway stations. But the attempt to concentrate in the Admiralty was also doomed to failure. Stores and ammunition were lacking and the war apparatus seemed to melt away. In the end General Habalov was left alone with the generals who remained true to him. There was not even any surrender of the Government troops to the insurgents, they simply abandoned their arms and fled, leaving the generals face to face with the revolution.

The collapse of the machinery of State left not only the old generals, serving the autocracy up to the last, face to face with the revolution — the Russian bourgeoisie also was placed in this position. The development of revolutionary activities among the workers and soldiers at once attracted the attention of the Russian bourgeoisie. They neither desired nor expected the revolution, and the first thought that entered the minds of the members of the Duma when the waves of the insurgent proletariat and soldiery began to sweep over it was, as Shulgin wrote in his reminiscences: "Bullets, bullets — that's what we need! For I felt that nothing but the language of bullets could be understood by the street-rabble, nothing but leaden bullets could drive back to its den the wild beast that had run amok — the wild beast that was his Excellency the Russian people. Our worst fears had been realised — the revolution had begun."

Shulgin, a member of the IV. State Duma belonging to the progressive bloc, uttered two truths this time: the bourgeoisie did not desire the revolution, the bourgeoisie tried with all its might to avoid revolution and the bourgeoisie would have liked to fight the revolution, but found no strength within themselves to do this. At first the bourgeoisie did everything to avoid revolution. They tried to come to terms with the government behind the backs of the insurgent people while the

streets of the capital where filled with the demonstrations of the proletariat and the soldiery; they tried to get concessions from the Government, to disintegrate the revolution, to reinforce the machinery of state and to suppress the Detachments remaining true to the revolution. They carried on continuous rleys with the authorities in Petrograd, they summoned the Grand-Duke Michael in haste to Petrograd, they sent telegram er telegram to Nicholas II at Headquarters, demanding the tting into practice of the programme of the progressive bloc.

Nicholas II, remaining deaf to the demands of the bourgeoisie it was decided in Petrograd to take revolutionary action, and, as related in Rodzyansko's memoirs, to suggest the declaration of Grand-Duke Michael as de facto Dictator, so as to save the revolution. Rodzyanko tells how a meeting was held on the 27th February, between himself, the Grand-Duke Michael, Dmitrukov, Secretary of the Duma, and Savin and Nekrassov, members of the Duma, at which the Grand Duke was told that the only way to save Russia was for him "to take upon himself the de facto dictatorship for Petrograd, force the Government to resign and demand by wire direct a manifesto from His Imperial Highness nominating a responsible government. The Grand-Duke's lack of determination," adds Rodzyanko, "prevented this plan from being fulfilled." (Rodzyanko, "The State Duma and the Revolution of February, 1917".)

The impending revolution could not be averted by fleeing for help to the Grand-Duke. The capital was swept by a mighty revolutionary wave, and the bourgeoisie were continually forced to reckon with the demands and aspirations of the insurgent proletariat and peasantry. When the bourgeoisie failed to get the progressive bloc's programme put into practice by legal means, the idea arose among their representatives to achieve de facto that which they had been unable to achieve through official channels. "We must act secretly and rapidly," said Guchkov, "without asking anyone's permission... without consulting anyone. If we act together with "Them", it is certain to be the worse for us... "They" must be confronted with the accomplished fact... Russia must be given a new Ruler... all that can still be rallied must be rallied around this new standard... for resistance... and to do this we must act with rapidity and decision."

"What practical suggestions have you to make?"

"I suggest going immediately to the Tsar and asking him to abdicate in favour of the Crown-prince." (Shulgin, "The Days", p. 194, 2nd edition.)

Such was the plan put forward by Guchkov at the very moment when the Taurite Palace was being swept over by the waves of the insurgent proletariat and peasantry. The bourgeoisie endeavoured under the pressure of the revolution to catch at every opportunity and to gather all their remaining strength together in a last desperate effort. Shulgin and Guchkov left Petrograd by stealth and got into Pskov, where they wrung his abdication from Nicholas II. But this abdication was of importance and interest only to the representatives of the bourgeoisie, being worth no more than the paper it was written on to the proletariat and the peasantry, who, by their actions in the streets of Petrograd, and the impetus of their mass-attack, swept Nicholas II from the throne. The proletariat and the peasantry had not risen in revolt to preserve the dynasty or the monarchy, they had revolted with the definite aim of abolishing the autocracy altogether in Russia, therefore it was that when the bourgeoisie at last got the long-awaited Manifesto of Abdication, and it looked as if they were in sight of complete triumph and the full realisation of their conspiratorial programme, Rodzyanko, President of the Duma, informed General Russki, in command of the Northern Front: "It is of the greatest importance that the Manifesto of Abdication and handing over of authority to Michael Alexandrovich, (Grand-Duke Michael) should not be published until such time as I shall inform you. As matters stand the revolutionary movement has been with the greatest difficulty kept within decent limits, but the situation is still far from normal and civil war is well within the bounds of probability." Rodzyanko understood perfectly the spirit prevailing in the broad masses of the workers, peasants and soldiers. Not for nothing had he, in the beginning of the February revolution, displayed tremendous energy and shown himself to be the most effective orator at mass meetings in the halls of the Tauride Palace, before the assembled workers and soldiers. "We were all taken by surprise", said Rodzyanko over

the telephone to General Russki," by a revolt in the army the like of which I have never before seen. But of course these were not soldiers, but simply peasants taken from the plough who found this a good opportunity for declaring all their demands. The crowd rang with the phrases "land and liberty!", "down with the Dynasty!" "down with the Romanovs!", "down with the officers!", and officers were being beaten up all over the place. The workers also began to join in this and the acme of anarchy was attained."

Under pressure of the urgent demands of the proletariat and peasantry, Rodzyanko found it wiser to give in on this point, and to surrender the dynasty, arguing with the utmost justice and precision that the great thing was to keep the power in his own hands at all costs. This was the fundamental point. By surrendering the dynasty and keeping the power in his own hands he would be able afterwards to revive both the dynasty and the monarchy. "To declare the Grand-Duke Michael emperor would be to throw oil on the flames, and a merciless destruction of all that can still be destroyed would begin. We should be letting the last vestiges of power slip through our fingers and there would be no one to calm down the national excitement. By acting according to my suggestion, on the other hand, the possibility of the Dynasty returning is not excluded." (Shlyapnikov "1917", vol. 2, Appendix 8.)

Giving in on the question of the dynasty to the pressure of the insurgent workers and soldiers, Rodzyanko and the whole bourgeoisie in his train seized firm hold of power. From the very beginning of the workers' and soldiers' mass attack on the Duma a State Duma Committee was set up, as early as the 27th of February. On the 27th and 28th of February this Committee embarked upon addresses exposing and elucidating the object of its formation. The State Duma Committee set itself the task to seize power and restore "order to State and Society". The Committee's task consisted in organising not the revolution but counter-revolution; it might have been summed up as the restoration of order, in other words the restoration of the uninterrupted effectualness of the machinery of state, the return of the soldiers to barracks, the restoration of the authority of the officers, the return of the workers to the factories, and the seizure of the whole machinery of state by the bourgeoisie. With these objects the Provisional State Duma Committee not only issued appeals stating its aims, but did energetic work, sending their representatives as commissars into all the Departments of State. By the 28th of February commissars from the State Duma had been placed in all the most important State Departments: the Home Office, the Post and Telegraph, the War Office, the Board of Agriculture, the Board of Commerce and Industry, the Treasury Office, the Department of Ways and Communications, the Petrograd Police, and so on. All the points of vantage in the machinery of state in the capital were seized by the bourgeoisie. The Provisional State Duma Committee waged an energetic campaign of agitation endeavouring to win over the military power in the capital and to rally round itself the bourgeois organisations in the provinces. The members of the Duma made speeches before the military powers and the military representatives of the bourgeoisie, the whole meaning of which could have been reduced to one thing — the restoration of discipline, the continuation of the war, the restoration of authority to the officers. In this way the bourgeoisie tried to get the machinery of war into their own hands. In order finally to command the military apparatus the State Duma Provisional Committee summoned to Petrograd Kornilov, a general well-known to them, intending to lay on his shoulders the task of clearing Petrograd of the revolutionary forces. At the same time the Provisional Committee sent appeals to the provinces, where the course of the February revolution was the same as in the capital, where the old authorities were disappearing and being swept away by the onrush of the revolution, and the bourgeoisie was organising itself, seizing the local machinery of state and hastening to set up connections with the Provisional Committee of the State Duma, i. e. rallying round the central power of the bourgeoisie to form a single body. The bourgeoisie, by seizing the machinery of state, endeavouring to lay hands on the machinery of war, rallying the middle classes of the whole of Russia round itself and thus keeping in its hands all the machinery of state, both central and local, endeavoured to attach to itself the petty bourgeoisie, imbued as it was with chauvinism and patriotism, using it as a catspaw to reinforce and solidify their own seizure of the

machinery of state. The bourgeoisie waged an extensive campaign from the very beginning of the revolution for the continuation of the war, for the fight to a finish. Having got hold of the machinery of state within the country they tried to reinforce their involuntary victory by enlisting the aid of their Allies. In the very thick of revolutionary events a representative from Rodzyanko had addressed Paléologue, the French ambassador, with the object of learning the attitude of France to the results of the revolution. From the first days to their seizure of power the representatives of the bourgeoisie had kept up the closest contact and understanding with the representatives of Great Britain and France. The latter demanded from the Provisional Government an official declaration of loyalty to the Allies and to the Treaties concluded with Nicholas Romanov. For the representatives of the bourgeoisie such an obligation was also profitable and necessary, inasmuch as it bound the Allies to the Bourgeois Government and made it possible for the bourgeoisie in Russia further to reinforce itself.

The underlying forces of the February revolution were the proletariat, the peasantry and the Petrograd troops. The proletariat mobilised during the three days of the revolution a vast army of workers, and got all the workers in the capital out into the streets. On the 23rd of February, according to police figures, the workers in 50 enterprises went on strike, 87,534 persons participating in the movement; by the 26th of February the police organs could no longer reckon up the number of workers on the evening of the 25th of February, and connections with the police were broken off, and by 5 o'clock on the 27th of February nothing remained in the hands of the supporters of the old régime but the Police, the Admiralty, the Winter Palace, the telephone station and the Peter-Paul Fortress. The most striking thing about the proletarian movement was its extraordinary rapid growth and its unanimity. The proletarian army poured out into the streets in vast masses.

In a few days all the workers in the capital had converted themselves into a revolutionary army, the movement had assumed mass-proportions, mass political demonstrations were being held, accompanied by conflicts with the government troops, great resistance was being shown, the masses participating in

the demonstrations refusing to leave the streets under the pressure of the Government troops, endeavouring to offer resistance to them, endeavouring themselves to take the offensive. From the first steps the movement bore a frankly political character. The proletariat hurled the slogan: "Down with the autocracy!" right in the face of the autocracy itself. The object of the proletarian attack was in itself a political object — the struggle with the autocracy, the abolition of the autocracy at all costs. The numerical strength, the high level of consciousness and the firmness in the proletarian battalions infected the already disintegrated soldiery. The worker-peasant elements in the army were irresistibly attracted to the proletarian demonstrations. Troops turned on to the demonstrators were unable to resist the proletarian pressure, and went to pieces, discipline relaxed, here a regiment, there a division, broke away, tore themselves from the hands of the Government and either became completely absorbed in the masses of the insurgents, or went over in a body to the proletariat. Things were decided by the army going over en masse to the proletariat. The peasant army, with its small working-class element felt the irresistible attraction of the labour movement, followed in its train and, by going over to the working-class sealed the fate both of the autocracy and the bourgeoisie. The revolutionary forces, in spite of the desires and endeavours of the bourgeoisie, abolished the autocracy and raised the bourgeoisie — that very bourgeoisie that was fighting the revolution with all its might — to state-power. The revolutionary labour movement in Petrograd set up the Council of Workers' Deputies as its directing centre almost simultaneously with the organisation of the Provisional Committee of the State Duma. The members of the Petrograd Committee of the Bolshevik Party and the members of the Bureau of the Central Committee of the Party carried on, during the organisation of the Council of Workers' Deputies, energetic organisational work among the insurgent workers and peasants, setting themselves the task of organising the movement, developing it on a national scale and turning it into the final struggle with tsarism. The Bolsheviks pointed out to the insurgent masses the direct tactics of taking possession of the army. The Petrograd Committee of the Bolshevik Party recommended the working-class to avoid armed offensives, endeavouring rather to attract the army into the Movement by mass demonstrations.

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