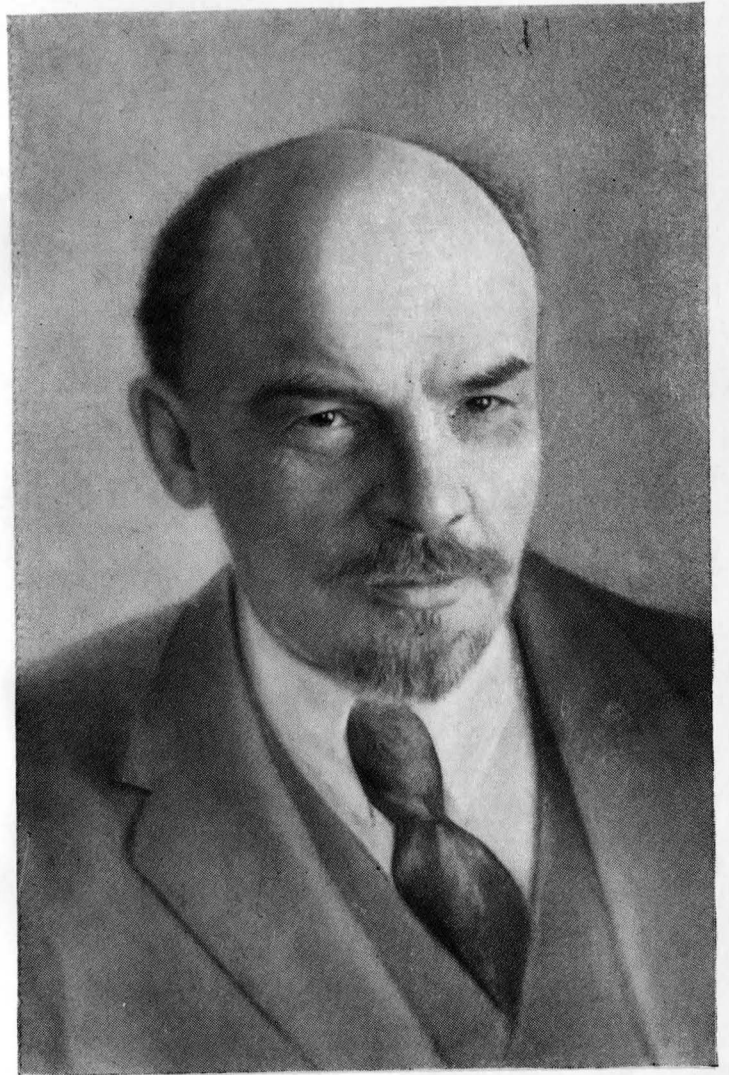


V.I. LENIN

ON BRITAIN



Vladimir Lenin

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V. I. LENIN

ON BRITAIN

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В. И. ЛЕНИН

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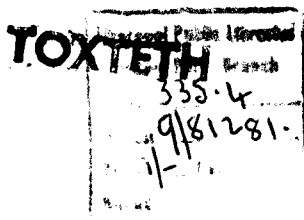
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The present volume contains articles by V. I. Lenin that deal with the British working-class movement, and also works that characterize British imperialism, expose its colonial policy, and the part it played in preparing the First World War and in organizing armed intervention against Soviet Russia in 1918-20. It also contains extracts from or chapters of Lenin's larger works dealing with various aspects of the political life and economy of Great Britain.

The entire material is arranged in chronological order. The translation of the items contained in the present volume has been made from the Russian text as given in the fourth edition of the *Works* of V. I. Lenin published in Moscow by the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the C.C. of the C.P.S.U. The appropriate volume and pages of the *Works* are indicated, on the right, at the end of each item.

Editorial notes, and also a name and a subject index are given at the end of the volume.



CONTENTS

	Page
Corn Tariffs in Britain as Appraised by Romanticism and by Scientific Theory	9
The Tasks of the Russian Social-Democrats (<i>Excerpt</i>)	24
Review. J. A. Hobson, <i>The Evolution of Modern Capitalism</i>	26
Capitalism in Agriculture (<i>Excerpts</i>)	30
What Is To Be Done? (<i>Excerpts</i>)	34
Letter to the Secretary, Labour Representation Committee, England, March 23, 1905	43
Letter to the Secretary, Labour Representation Committee, England, May 20, 1905	44
Notes to "The British Labour Movement and the Trades Union Congress"	46
Preface to the Russian Translation of "Letters by J. Ph. Becker, J. Dietzgen, F. Engels, K. Marx and Others to F. A. Sorge and Others"	47
The International Socialist Congress in Stuttgart	68
Municipalization of the Land and Municipal Socialism	77
Trade-Union Neutrality	83
The Agrarian Question in Russia Towards the Close of the Nineteenth Century (<i>Excerpt</i>)	95
Inflammable Material in World Politics	98
A Peaceful Demonstration of British and German Workers	106
Meeting of the International Socialist Bureau (<i>Excerpt</i>)	110
Conference of the British Social-Democratic Party	118
Old But Ever New Truths	121

	<i>Page</i>
Hyndman on Marx	130
A Comparison Between the Agrarian Programmes of Stolypin and the Narodniks (<i>Excerpt</i>)	137
In Britain	139
Debates in Britain on Liberal Labour Policy	142
In America	149
The British Labour Movement in 1912	151
Conference of the British Labour Party	153
"Who Stands to Gain?"	155
In Britain (The Pitiful Results of Opportunism)	157
Cultured Europeans and Savage Asians	159
A Great Technical Victory	161
Conference of the British Socialist Party	163
Armaments and Capitalism	166
In Australia	168
Bourgeois Financial Magnates and Politicians	171
Exposure of the British Opportunists	173
Class War in Dublin	176
A Week After the Dublin Atrocities	181
Harry Quelch	184
Civilized Barbarism	187
The Liberals and the Land Problem in Britain	189
The British Liberals and Ireland	193
Constitutional Crisis in Britain	197
The Utopian Karl Marx and the Practical Rosa Luxemburg	201
Under a False Flag (<i>Excerpt</i>)	210
Regarding the London Conference	218
An Illustration of the Slogan of Civil War	221
Bourgeois Philanthropists and Revolutionary Social-Democracy	223
The Collapse of the Second International (<i>Excerpts</i>)	226
British Pacifism and British Dislike of Theory	232
Socialism and War (<i>Excerpt</i>)	239
The Revolutionary Proletariat and the Right of Nations to Self- Determination	244
Letter to the Secretary of the Socialist Propaganda League	253

	<i>Page</i>
Opportunism and the Collapse of the Second International (<i>Excerpts</i>)	259
Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism (<i>Excerpts</i>)	270
The Irish Rebellion of 1916	299
About a Caricature of Marxism and "Imperialist Economism" (<i>Excerpts</i>)	305
About the Slogan of "Disarmament" (<i>Excerpt</i>)	309
Imperialism and the Split in Socialism	310
The State of Affairs in the Socialist International	328
Report on the Current Situation (<i>Excerpt</i>)	336
War and Revolution (<i>Excerpt</i>)	338
The State and Revolution (<i>Excerpt</i>)	349
"Left" Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Mentality (<i>Excerpt</i>)	355
Reply to the Debate on the Report on the Current Situation (<i>Excerpts</i>)	360
Speech at a Joint Meeting of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, The Moscow Soviet, and Moscow Factory Com- mittees and Trade Unions, July 29, 1918 (<i>Excerpt</i>)	363
Speech at a Meeting of the Warsaw Revolutionary Regiment, August 2, 1918	373
Letter to the American Workers (<i>Excerpt</i>)	376
Speech at a Meeting in the Polytechnical Museum, August 23, 1918 (<i>Excerpt</i>)	383
Speech at a Presnya District Workers' Conference, December 14, 1918 (<i>Excerpt</i>)	386
Reply to Questions at a Session of the Petrograd Soviet, March 12, 1919 (<i>Excerpt</i>)	388
Speech on the Organization of a Farm Workers' Trade Union (<i>Excerpt</i>)	390
The Third International and Its Place in History	391
The Tasks of the Third International (Ramsay MacDonald on the Third International)	401
Letter to Sylvia Pankhurst	422
How the Bourgeoisie Use Renegades (<i>Excerpt</i>)	429
Report of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and the Council of People's Commissars (<i>Excerpt</i>)	432
Report to the First All-Russian Congress of Labouring Cossacks, March 1, 1920 (<i>Excerpt</i>)	444

	Page
About Compromises	448
Speech at the Third All-Russian Trade-Union Congress, April 7, 1920 (<i>Excerpt</i>)	451
"Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder (<i>Excerpts</i>)	453
Letter to the British Workers	490
Theses on the Main Tasks of the Second Congress of the Communist International (<i>Excerpt</i>)	497
Reply to the Letter of the Joint Provisional Committee of the Communist Party of Britain	503
The International Situation and the Fundamental Tasks of the Communist International	504
The Role of the Communist Party	526
Report of the Commission on the National and Colonial Questions Affiliation to the British Labour Party	531
Speech at the Ninth All-Russian Conference of the R.C.P.(B.), September 22, 1920 (<i>Excerpt</i>)	545
Speech at a Congress of Tanning Industry Employees, October 2, 1920 (<i>Excerpt</i>)	547
Speech at a Conference of Chairmen of Uyezd, Volost, and Village Executive Committees of Moscow Gubernia, October 15, 1920 (<i>Excerpt</i>)	551
Report on Concessions (<i>Excerpts</i>)	553
Report on the Work of the Council of People's Commissars (<i>Excerpt</i>)	558
The Proletariat and the Peasantry in Russia	560
To Comrade Thomas Bell	562
British Labour Party Policy	565
Interview Given to Michael Farbman, <i>Observer</i> and <i>Manchester Guardian</i> Correspondent (<i>Excerpts</i>)	567
<i>Notes</i>	572
<i>Name Index</i>	605
<i>Subject Index</i>	613

CORN TARIFFS IN BRITAIN AS APPRAISED BY ROMANTICISM AND BY SCIENTIFIC THEORY*

We shall supplement our comparison between the theory of the Romanticists on the main points of contemporary economics and the latest theory² with a comparison between their treatment of a certain *practical* problem. Such a comparison will be all the more interesting in that, on the one hand, this practical problem is one of the biggest, most fundamental problems of capitalism, and on the other hand, in that the two most outstanding exponents of these opposed theories have expressed their opinion on this subject.

We are referring to the *Corn Laws* in Britain and their repeal.³ In the second quarter of the present century this problem deeply interested not only British but also Continental economists; they all realized that this was by no means a specific problem relating to tariff policy, but the general problem of free trade, of free competition, of the "destiny of capitalism." It was a matter of crowning the edifice of capitalism by giving full effect to free competition; of clearing the road for the completion of that "break-up" which large-scale machine industry began in Britain at the end of the last century; of removing the obstacles that were hindering this "break-up" in *agriculture*. It was precisely *thus* that the two Continental economists of whom we intend to speak viewed the problem.

* This item is § VI of Chapter II of V. I. Lenin's *A Characterization of Economic Romanticism*.¹—Ed.

In the second edition of his *Nouveaux Principes* Sismondi added a chapter specially devoted to "laws governing trade in grain" (I. III, ch. X).

First of all, he emphasizes the urgency of the problem: "Half the British people today are demanding the repeal of the Corn Laws, demanding it with extreme irritation against those who support them; but the other half are demanding that they be retained, and cry out indignantly against those who want them repealed" (I, 251).

In examining the problem, Sismondi points out that the interests of the British farmers demanded corn tariffs to ensure them a *remunerating price*. The interests of the manufacturers, however, demanded the repeal of the Corn Laws, because the manufactories could not exist without foreign markets, and the further development of British exports was being retarded by the laws, which restricted imports: "The manufactory owners added that the glut in the market was the result of these same Corn Laws; that wealthy people on the Continent could not buy their goods because they could not find a market for their corn" (I, 254).*

"The opening of the market to foreign corn will probably ruin the British landowners and reduce all rents to an infinitely low price. This, undoubtedly, is a great calamity, but it is not an injustice" (I, 254). And Sismondi proceeds to argue in the naïvest manner that the revenues of the landowners should be commensurate with the service (sic!!) they render "society" (capitalist?), and so forth. "The farmers," continues Sismondi,

* One-sided as may be this explanation given by the British manufacturers, who ignore the deeper causes of crises and their inevitability when the expansion of the market is slight, it, nevertheless, undoubtedly contains the absolutely correct idea that the realization of the product by its sale abroad demands, *on the whole*, corresponding imports from abroad. We bring this explanation of the British manufacturers to the notice of those economists who brush aside the problem of the realization of the product in capitalist society with the profound remark: "They will sell abroad."

"will withdraw their capital, in part at least, from agriculture."

This argument of Sismondi's (and he rests content with this argument) reveals the main flaw in Romanticism, which does not pay sufficient attention to the process of economic development that is actually taking place. We have seen that Sismondi himself points to the gradual development and growth of capitalist farming in Britain. But he hastens to denounce this process instead of studying its causes. It is only this haste, the desire to thrust his pious wishes upon history, that can explain the fact that Sismondi overlooks the general trend of capitalist development in agriculture and the inevitable *acceleration of this process* with the repeal of the Corn Laws, i.e., the capitalist progress of agriculture instead of its decline, which Sismondi prophesies.

But Sismondi remains true to himself. He no sooner approached the contradiction inherent in this capitalist process than he immediately set about naïvely "refuting" it in his endeavour to prove at all costs that the path being followed by the "British fatherland" was a wrong one.

"What will the day labourer do?... Work will stop, the fields will be converted into pastures... What will become of the 540,000 families who will be denied work? Even assuming that they will be fit for any kind of industrial work, is there, at the present time, an industry capable of absorbing them?... Can a government be found that will voluntarily subject half the nation which it governs to such a crisis?... Will those to whom the agriculturists are thus sacrificed benefit by it to any extent? Af-

* To "prove" the unsoundness of capitalism, Sismondi forthwith makes an approximate calculation (such as our Russian Romanticist, Mr. V.V., for example, is so fond of doing). Six hundred thousand families, he says, are engaged in agriculture. When the fields are converted into pastures, no more than a tenth of this number will be "wanted"... The less this author reveals an understanding of the process in all its complexity, the more eagerly he resorts to childish rough calculations.

ter all, these agriculturists are the nearest and most reliable consumers of British manufactures. The cessation of their consumption would strike industry a blow more fatal than the closing of one of the biggest foreign markets" (255-256). The notorious "contraction of the home market" appears upon the scene. "How much will the manufactories lose by the cessation of the consumption of the whole class of British agriculturists, which constitutes nearly half the nation? How much will the manufactories lose by the cessation of the consumption of wealthy people, whose revenues from agriculture will be almost wiped out?" (267) The Romanticist moves heaven and earth to prove to the manufacturers that the contradictions inherent in the development of their industry, and of their wealth, merely express their error, their improvidence. And to "convince" the manufacturers of the "danger" of capitalism, Sismondi dilates on the threatening competition of Polish and Russian grain (pp. 257-261). He resorts to every possible argument; he even wants to touch the pride of the British. "What will become of Britain's honour if the Emperor of Russia is in a position, whenever he wishes to obtain some concession or other from her, to starve her by closing the Baltic ports?" (268) Let the reader recall how Sismondi tried to prove that the "apologists of the money power" were wrong, by contending that it was quite easy to cheat when selling.... Sismondi wants to "refute" the theoretical interpreters of capitalist farming by arguing that the rich farmers cannot withstand the competition of the wretched peasants (cf. quoted above), and in the end arrives at his favourite conclusion, evidently convinced that he has proved that the path being followed by the "British fatherland" is a "wrong one." "The example of Britain shows us that this practice" (the development of money economy, to which Sismondi opposes *l'habitude de se fournir soi-même*, "labour working with one's own hands") "is not without its dangers" (263). "The very system of economy" (namely,

capitalist farming) "is bad, rests upon a dangerous foundation, and this is what one should try to change" (266).

The concrete problem evoked by the conflict of definite interests in a definite system of economy is thus submerged in a flood of pious wishes! But the interested parties themselves raised the issue so sharply that to confine oneself to such a "solution" (as Romanticism does on all other problems) became utterly impossible.

"But what is to be done?" Sismondi asks in despair. "Open British ports, or close them? Doom the manufacturing or the rural workers of Britain to starvation and death? It is, indeed, a dreadful question; the position in which the British Cabinet finds itself is one of the most delicate that statesmen can possibly face" (260). And Sismondi again and again reverts to the "general conclusion" that the system of capitalist farming is "dangerous," that it is "dangerous to subordinate the whole of agriculture to a system of speculation." But "how it is possible, in Britain, to take such measures, effective but at the same time gradual, that would raise the significance (*remettraient en honneur*) of the small farms, when half the nation, employed in the manufactories, are suffering hunger, and the measures they demand doom the other half of the nation, engaged in agriculture, to starvation—I do not know. I think the Corn Laws should be considerably amended; but I advise those who are demanding their complete repeal carefully to study the following problems" (267)—then follow the old complaints and apprehensions about the decline of agriculture, the contraction of the home market, and so forth.

Thus, at the very first impact with reality, Romanticism suffered utter fiasco. It was obliged to issue to itself a *testimonium paupertatis* and itself acknowledges receipt of it. Recall how easily and simply Romanticism "solved" all problems in "theory"! Protection is unwise, capitalism is a fatal delusion, the road Britain has taken is wrong and dangerous, production must keep in step with con-

sumption, while industry and commerce must keep in step with agriculture, machines are advantageous only when they lead to a rise in wages or to a reduction of the working day, means of production should not be divorced from the producer, exchange must not run ahead of production, must not lead to speculation, and so on, and so forth. Romanticism countered every contradiction with an appropriate sentimental phrase, answered every question with an appropriate pious wish, and called the sticking of these labels upon all the facts of current life a "solution" of the problems. It is not surprising that these solutions were so charmingly simple and easy: they ignored only one little circumstance—the real interests, the conflict of which constituted the contradiction. And when the development of this contradiction brought the Romanticist face to face with one of these particularly violent conflicts, such as was the struggle between the parties in Britain that preceded the repeal of the Corn Laws, our Romanticist lost his head altogether. He felt perfectly at ease in the haze of dreams and excellent wishes, he so skilfully composed maxims applicable to "society" in general (but inapplicable to any historically determined system of society); but when he dropped from his world of fantasy into the maelstrom of real life and conflict of interests, he did not even have a criterion with which to solve concrete problems. The habit of advancing abstract propositions and of reaching abstract solutions reduced the problem to the bare formula: which part of the population should be ruined—the agricultural or the manufacturing? And, of course, the Romanticist could not but conclude that neither part should be ruined, that it was necessary to "turn from the path" . . . but the real contradictions encompassed him so tightly that he was unable to ascend again into the haze of excellent wishes, and the Romanticist was obliged to *give an answer*. Sismondi even gave two answers: first—"I do not know"; second—"on the one hand, one cannot but admit; on the other hand, it must be recognized."

On January 9, 1848, Karl Marx delivered, at a public meeting in Brussels, a "speech on free trade."* Unlike the Romanticists, who declared that "political economy is not a science of calculation, but a science of morality," he took as the point of departure of his exposition precisely the plain and sober *calculation of interests*. Instead of regarding the problem of the Corn Laws as one concerning a "system" chosen by a nation or as one of legislation (as Sismondi looked upon it), the speaker began by presenting it as a conflict of interests between manufacturers and landowners, and showed how the British manufacturers tried to raise the issue as the affair of the entire nation, tried to assure the workers that they were acting in the interests of the national welfare. Unlike the Romanticists, who had presented the problem in the form of the considerations which a legislator must have in mind when carrying out the reform, the speaker reduced the problem to the conflict between the real interests of the different classes of British society. He showed that the entire problem sprang from the necessity of cheapening raw materials for the manufacturers. He described the distrust of the British workers who saw "in these self-sacrificing gentlemen, in Bowring, Bright and Co. their worst enemies."

"The manufacturers build great palaces at immense expense, in which the Anti-Corn-Law League takes up, in some respects, its official residence; they send an army of missionaries to all corners of England to preach the gospel of free trade; they have printed and distributed gratis thousands of pamphlets to enlighten the worker upon his own interests, they spend enormous sums to make the press favourable to their cause; they organize a vast administrative system for the conduct of the free trade movement, and they display all their wealth of eloquence at pub-

* *Discours sur le libre échange*.⁴ We are using the German translation: *Rede über die Frage des Freihandels*.

lic meetings. It was at one of these meetings that a worker cried out: 'If the landlords were to sell our bones, you manufacturers would be the first to buy them in order to put them through a steam-mill and make flour of them.' The English workers have very well understood the significance of the struggle between the landlords and the industrial capitalists. They know very well that the price of bread was to be reduced in order to reduce wages, and that industrial profit would rise by as much as rent fell."

Thus the very *presentation of the problem* is quite different from that of Sismondi. The aims the speaker set himself were, first, to explain the attitude of the different classes of British society towards the problem from the angle of their interests; and second, to throw light on the significance of the reform in the general evolution of the British social economy.

The speaker's views on this last point coincide with those of Sismondi in that he, too, sees here not a particular problem, but the *general one* of the development of capitalism in general, of "free trade" as a system. "The repeal of the Corn Laws in England is the greatest triumph of free trade in the nineteenth century."⁵ "...By the repeal of the Corn Laws, free competition, the present social economy is carried to its extreme point."⁶ Hence, the

* *Die Lage der arbeitenden Klasse in England* (1845).⁶ This work was written from exactly the same point of view *before* the repeal of the Corn Laws (1846), whereas the speech dealt with in the text was delivered *after* they were repealed. But the difference in time is of no importance to us: it is sufficient to compare the above-quoted arguments of Sismondi, advanced in 1827, with this speech of 1848, to see the complete identity of the *elements of the problem* in the case of both authors. The idea of comparing Sismondi with a later German economist was borrowed by us from *Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften*, B. V., Art. "Sismondi" von Lippert, Seite 679. The parallel he drew was of such thrilling interest that Mr. Lippert's exposition at once lost all its woodenness ... that is to say, "objectivity," and became interesting, vivacious, and even fervid.

issue presents itself to these authors as a question of whether *the further development of capitalism is desirable* or should be retarded, whether "other paths" should be sought, and so forth. And we know that their affirmative answer to this question was indeed the solution of the general fundamental problem of the "destiny of capitalism" and not of the specific problem of the Corn Laws in Britain, for the point of view established here was also applied much later in relation to other countries. The authors held such views in the 1840's in relation to Germany, and in relation to America,* and declared that free competition was progressive for that country; with respect to Germany one of them wrote, as late as the sixties, that she suffered not only from capitalism, but also from the insufficient development of capitalism.

Let us return to the speech we have been dealing with. We pointed to the fundamentally different point of view of the speaker, who reduced the problem to one of the interests of the different classes in British society. We see the same profound difference in his presentation of the purely theoretical problem of the significance of the repeal of the Corn Laws in the social economy. For him it is not the abstract question of which *system* Britain should adopt, what path she should choose (as the question is put by Sismondi, who forgets that Britain has a past and a present, which already determine that path). No, he forthwith presents the question on the basis of the *given social-economic system*; he asks himself: *what must be the next step* in the development of this system following the repeal of the Corn Laws?

The difficulty in this question lay in determining how the repeal of the Corn Laws would affect *agriculture*, for as regards industry its effect was clear to everybody.

* Cf. *Neue Zeit*, the recently discovered articles of Marx in *Westphälisches Dampfboot*.⁷

To prove how this repeal would also benefit agriculture, the Anti-Corn-Law League offered a prize for the three best essays on the beneficial effect the repeal of the Corn Laws would have upon British agriculture. The speaker briefly outlined the views of the three prize-winners, Hope, Morse, and Greg, and at once singled out the last-named, whose essay most scientifically and most strictly followed the principles laid down by classical political economy.

Writing mainly for big farmers, Greg, himself a big manufacturer, showed that the repeal of the Corn Laws would thrust out of agriculture the small farmers, who would turn to industry, but would benefit the big farmers, who would be able to rent land on longer leases, invest more capital in the land, employ more machines and get along with less labour, which was bound to become cheaper with the fall in the price of corn. The landlords, however, would have to be content with a lower rent because land of poorer quality would drop out of cultivation, as it would be unable to withstand the competition of cheap imported grain.

The speaker proved to be quite right in regarding this forecast and open defence of capitalism in agriculture as the most scientific. History has confirmed his forecast. "The repeal of the Corn Laws gave a marvellous impulse to English agriculture. . . . A positive decrease of the agricultural population went hand in hand with increase of the area under cultivation, with more intensive cultivation, unheard-of accumulation of the capital incorporated with the soil, and devoted to its working, an augmentation in the products of the soil without parallel in the history of English agriculture, plethoric rent-rolls of landlords, and growing wealth of the capitalist farmers. . . . Greater outlay of capital per acre, and, as a consequence, more rapid concentration of farms, were essential conditions of the new method."*

* This was written in 1867.⁸ To explain the rise in rents, one must bear in mind the law established by the modern analysis of

But the speaker, of course, did not confine himself to recognizing Greg's arguments as being the most correct. Coming from the mouth of Greg, they were the reasoning of a Free Trader who was discussing English agriculture in general, and was trying to prove that the repeal of the Corn Laws would benefit the nation as a whole. After what we have said above it is evident that these were not the views of the speaker.

He explained that a reduction in the price of corn, so glorified by the Free Traders, meant an inevitable reduction in wages, the cheapening of the commodity "labour" (more exactly: labour power); that the drop in the price of corn would never be able to compensate the workers for the drop in wages, firstly, because with the drop in the price of corn it would be more difficult for the worker to save on the consumption of bread with a view to buying other articles; secondly, because the progress of industry cheapens articles of consumption, substituting spirits for beer, potatoes for bread, cotton for wool and linen, and, by all this, lowering the worker's standard of requirements and living.

Thus we see that *apparently* the speaker establishes the elements of the problem just as Sismondi does: he *too* admits that the ruination of the small farmers and the improv-

differential rent, namely, *that a rise in rent is possible simultaneously with a reduction in the price of corn.* "When the British corn tariffs were abolished in 1846, the British manufacturers believed that they had transformed the landowning aristocracy into paupers. Instead, they became richer than ever. How did that happen? Very simply. Firstly, the renting capitalists were now compelled by contract to invest 12 pounds sterling annually per acre instead of 8 pounds as heretofore. And secondly, the landlords, being strongly represented in the Lower House, granted themselves a heavy subsidy for the drainage and other permanent improvements of their lands. Since no total displacement of the worst soil took place, but at the most a temporary employment of such soil for other purposes, the rents rose in proportion to the increased investment of capital, and the landed aristocracy were better off than ever before." (*Das Kapital*, III, 2, 259.)

erishment of the workers in industry and agriculture will be the inevitable consequences of Free Trade. It is here that our Narodniks, who are distinguished also for their inimitable skill in "citing," usually stop quoting "excerpts," and with complete satisfaction declare that they fully "agree." But these methods merely show that they failed to understand, first, the tremendous difference in the presentation of the problem, which we indicated above; second, that they overlook the fact that the radical difference between the new theory and Romanticism *only begins here*: the Romanticist turns from the concrete problems of actual development to dreams, whereas the realist takes the established facts as his criterion in definitely solving a concrete problem.

Pointing to the forthcoming improvement in the conditions of the workers the speaker went on to say:

"Thereupon the economists will tell you:

"Well, we admit that competition among the workers, which will certainly not have diminished under free trade, will very soon bring wages into harmony with the low price of commodities. But, on the other hand, the low price of commodities will increase consumption, the larger consumption will require increased production, which will be followed by a larger demand for hands, and this larger demand for hands will be followed by a rise in wages."

"The whole line of argument amounts to this: *free trade increases productive forces*. If industry keeps growing, if wealth, if the productive power, if, in a word, productive capital increases, the demand for labour, the price of labour, and consequently the rate of wages, rise also. *The most favourable condition for the worker is the growth of capital. This must be admitted.** If capital remains stationary, industry will not merely remain stationary but will decline, and in this case the worker will be the first vic-

* Our italics.

tim. He goes to the wall before the capitalist. And in the case where capital keeps growing, in the circumstances which we have said are the *best* for the worker, what will be his lot? He will go to the wall just the same. . . ." And quoting data of British economists the speaker went on to explain in detail how the concentration of capital increases the division of labour, which cheapens labour power by substituting unskilled for skilled labour, how the machines oust the workers, how big capital ruins the small industrialists and small rentiers and leads to the intensification of crises, which still further increase the number of unemployed. The conclusion he drew from his analysis was that free trade signifies nothing but freedom for the development of capital.

Thus, the speaker was able to find a criterion for the solution of the problem which at first sight seemed to lead to the hopeless dilemma that brought Sismondi to a halt: both free trade and its restraint equally lead to the ruin of the workers. *The criterion is—the development of the productive forces*. The presentation of the problem on a historical basis at once made itself manifest: instead of comparing capitalism with some abstract society as it should be (i.e., fundamentally with a utopia), the author compared it with the *preceding stages* of social economy, compared the different stages of capitalism as they successively replaced one another, *and established the fact that the productive forces of society develop thanks to the development of capitalism*. By applying scientific criticism to the arguments of the Free Traders he was able to avoid the mistake usually made by the Romanticists who, denying that it has any importance, "empty the baby with the bath water"; he was able to pick out the sound kernel in it, i.e., the undoubted fact of enormous technical progress. Our Narodniks, with their characteristic wit, would, of course, have concluded that this author, who had so openly taken *the side of big capital against the small producer*, was an "apologist of the money power," the more

so that he was addressing Continental Europe and applying the conclusions he drew from British life to his own country, where at that time modern machine industry was only taking its first timid steps. And yet, precisely this example (like a host of similar examples from West-European history) could help them study the thing they are not at all able (perhaps they do not wish) to understand, namely, that to admit that big capital is progressive as compared with small production is very, very far from being "apologetics."

It is sufficient to recall the above-quoted chapter from Sismondi and this speech to be convinced that the latter is superior both from the standpoint of theory and of hostility towards every kind of "apologetics." The speaker described the contradictions that accompany the development of big capital much more exactly, fully, straightforwardly and frankly than the Romanticists ever did. But he never descended to uttering a single sentimental phrase bemoaning this development. He never uttered a word anywhere about any possibility of "turning away from the path." He understood that by means of such phrases people merely cover up the fact that they themselves are "turning" away from the problem they are faced with by life, i.e., the given economic reality, the given economic development, the given interests that spring from this development.

The above-mentioned fully scientific criterion enabled him to solve this problem while remaining a consistent realist.

"Do not imagine, gentlemen," said the speaker, "that in criticizing freedom of trade we have the least intention of defending the system of Protection." And he went on to point out that under the contemporary system of social economy both Free Trade and Protection rested on the same basis, briefly referred to the "breaking-up" process of the old economic life and of the old semi-patriarchal relationships in West-European countries carried through by

capitalism in England and on the Continent, and indicated the social fact that under certain conditions Free Trade *hastens* this "break-up".* And he concluded with the words: "It is in this sense alone, gentlemen, that I vote in favour of Free Trade."⁹

Written in the spring of 1897

Vol. 2, pp. 230-42

First published in *Novoye Slovo*, Nos. 7-10, April-July 1897

* This progressive significance of the repeal of the Corn Laws was also clearly indicated by the author of "Die Lage" *even before the repeal took place* (l.c., p. 179) and he specially stressed the influence it would have upon the consciousness of the producers.

THE TASKS OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS

(Excerpt)

The proletariat alone can be the *vanguard fighter* for political liberty and for democratic institutions, firstly, because political oppression affects the proletariat most severely; no improvements take place in the condition of that class, which has no access either to the supreme authorities or even to officials, nor has it influence on public opinion. Secondly, because the proletariat alone is capable of bringing about the *complete* democratization of the political and social system, as such democratization would place this system in the hands of the workers. That is why the *merging* of the democratic activities of the working class with the democratic aspirations of the other classes and groups would *weaken* the democratic movement, would *weaken* the political struggle, would make it less resolute, less consistent, more ready to compromise. On the other hand, if the working class is *singled out* as the vanguard fighter for democratic institutions, this will *strengthen* the democratic movement, will *strengthen* the struggle for political liberty, because the working class will *spur on* all the other democratic and political opposition elements, will push the liberals towards the political radicals, will push the radicals towards an irrevocable break with the whole political and social structure of contemporary society. We said above that all *Socialists* in Russia should become *Social-Democrats*. We now add: all

true and consistent *democrats* in Russia should become *Social-Democrats*.

Let us illustrate what we mean with the following example. Take the civil service, the bureaucracy, as a special category of persons who specialize in the work of administration and occupy a privileged position as against the people. We see this institution everywhere, from absolutist and semi-Asiatic Russia to cultured, free and civilized Britain, as an essential organ of bourgeois society. The backwardness of Russia and her absolutism have their counterpart in the *complete lack of rights* of the people as against the government officials, and the *complete* absence of control over the privileged bureaucracy. In Britain powerful popular control is exercised over the country's administration, but even there that control is *far from being complete*, even there the bureaucracy retains not a few privileges, is not infrequently the master and not the servant of the people. Even in Britain we see that powerful social groups support the privileged position of the bureaucracy and hinder the complete democratization of this institution. Why? Because its *complete* democratization is in the interests of the proletariat alone; the most progressive strata of the bourgeoisie uphold certain prerogatives of the bureaucracy, and are opposed to the election of all officials, to the total abolition of electoral qualifications, to officials being directly responsible to the people, etc., because these strata realize that such complete democratization will be used by the proletariat *against* the bourgeoisie.

Written in exile at the end of 1897

Vol. 2, pp. 312-13

First published as a separate pamphlet in Geneva in 1898

REVIEW

J. A. HOBSON, *THE EVOLUTION OF MODERN CAPITALISM*

Translated from the English, St. Petersburg, 1898;
published by O. N. Popova, price 1 rb. 50 kop.

Hobson's book is strictly speaking not a study of the evolution of modern capitalism, but a series of sketches dealing with the most recent industrial development, based mainly on British data. Hence, the title of the book is somewhat broad: the author does not deal with agriculture at all and examines the economics of industry far from completely. Like the well-known writers Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Hobson is a representative of one of the advanced trends of British social thought. His attitude towards "modern capitalism" is critical; he fully admits the necessity of replacing it by a higher form of social economy and treats the problem of doing so with typically British reformist practicality. He arrives at the conviction of the need for reform in the main empirically, under the influence of the recent history of British factory legislation, of the British labour movement, of the activities of the British municipalities, etc. Hobson lacks well-knit and integral theoretical views that could serve as a basis for his reformist programme and elucidate specific problems of reform. He is therefore strongest when he deals with the grouping and description of the latest statistical and economic data. On the other hand, when he deals with the

general theoretical problems of political economy, he proves to be very weak. The Russian reader will even find it strange to see a writer with such extensive knowledge and practical aspirations deserving of full sympathy, helplessly fussing around with questions like, what is "capital," what is the role of "savings," etc. This weak side of Hobson's is to be fully explained by the fact that he regards John Stuart Mill as a greater authority on political economy than Marx, whom he quotes once or twice but evidently does not understand or know at all. One cannot but regret the vast amount of unproductive labour wasted by Hobson in an attempt to get clear on the contradictions of bourgeois and professorial political economy. At best he comes close to the solutions given by Marx long ago; at worst he borrows erroneous views that are in sharp contradiction to Marx's attitude towards "modern capitalism." The most unfortunate chapter in his book is the seventh: "Machinery and Industrial Depression." In this chapter Hobson tries to analyse the theoretical problems of crises, of social capital and income in capitalist society, and of capitalist accumulation. Correct ideas about production and consumption being un-co-ordinated in capitalist society, about the anarchic character of capitalist economy are submerged in a heap of scholastic arguments about "saving" (Hobson confuses accumulation with "saving"), amidst all sorts of Crusoeisms ("suppose a man working with primitive tools discovers an implement, . . . consumes only half of his consumptive goods," etc.), and the like. Hobson is very fond of diagrams, and in most cases uses them very ably to give graphic illustration of his views. But the idea of the "mechanism of production" given in his diagram on page 207 (Chap. VII) can only elicit a smile from the reader who is at all acquainted with the real "mechanism" of capitalist "production." Hobson here confuses production with the social system of production and evinces an extremely vague understanding of what capital is, what its component

parts are, what the classes are into which capitalist society is necessarily divided. In Chapter VIII he adduces interesting data on the composition of the population according to occupation, and on the changes in this composition in time, but the great flaw in his theoretical arguments on "machinery and the demand for labour" is that he ignores the theory of "capitalist surplus-population" or reserve army. Among the more happily written chapters of Hobson's book are those in which he examines the position of women in modern industry and modern towns. Quoting statistics of the growth of female labour and describing the extremely bad conditions under which this labour is performed, Hobson justly points out that the only hope of improving these conditions lies in the squeezing out of domestic labour by factory labour, which leads to "closer social intercourse" and to "organization." Similarly, on the question of the significance of towns, Hobson comes close to Marx's general views when he admits that the antithesis between town and country contradicts the system of collectivist society. Hobson's conclusions would have been much more convincing had he not ignored Marx's teachings on this question too. Hobson would then, probably, have emphasized more clearly the historically progressive role of the large towns and the necessity of combining agriculture with industry under the collectivist organization of economy. The last chapter of Hobson's book, "Civilization and Industrial Development," is perhaps the best. In this chapter the author proves by a number of very apt arguments the need to reform the modern industrial system along the line of expanding "public control" and the "socialization of industry." In estimating Hobson's somewhat optimistic views regarding the methods by which these "reforms" can be brought about, the special features of British history and of British life must be borne in mind: the high development of democracy, the absence of militarism, the enormous strength of the organized trade unions, the growing in-

vestment of British capital outside of Britain, which weakens the antagonism between the British employers and workers, etc.

In his well-known book on the social movement in the nineteenth century, Prof. W. Sombart notes among other things a "Tendency Towards Unity" (title of Chapter VI), i.e., a tendency of the social movement of the various countries, in its various forms and shades, towards uniformity and along with it a tendency towards the spread of the ideas of Marxism. In regard to Britain Sombart sees this tendency in the fact that the British trade unions are increasingly abandoning "the purely Manchester standpoint." In regard to Hobson's book we can say that under pressure of the demands of life, which is increasingly corroborating Marx's "prognosis," progressive British writers are beginning to realize the unsoundness of traditional bourgeois political economy and, freeing themselves from its prejudices, are involuntarily approaching Marxism.

The translation of Hobson's book has substantial shortcomings.

Written in April 1899

Vol. 4, pp. 84-87

Published in May 1899 in *Nachalo*, No. 5

CAPITALISM IN AGRICULTURE

(About Kautsky's Book and Bulgakov's Article¹⁰)

(Excerpts)

After proving the technical superiority of large-scale production in agriculture (we shall present Kautsky's arguments in greater detail later on when we examine Mr. Bulgakov's objections) Kautsky asks: "What can small-scale production set off against the advantages of large-scale production?" and he replies: "The greater diligence and greater care of the person working, who, unlike the hired labourer, works for himself, and the low level of requirements of the small independent farmer, which is even lower than that of the agricultural labourer" (S. 106); and by quoting a number of striking facts concerning the conditions of the peasants in France, Britain and Germany Kautsky leaves no doubt whatever about "overwork and under-consumption in small-scale production." Finally, Kautsky points out that the superiority of large-scale production is also expressed in the striving of farmers to form *associations*: "associated production is large-scale production." Everybody knows what a fuss is made by petty-bourgeois ideologists in general, and the Russian Narodniks in particular (for example, the above-mentioned book by Mr. Kablukov), about the small farmers' associations. The more significant, therefore, is Kautsky's excellent analysis of the role of these associations. Small farmers' associations are, of course, a link in economic progress, but they express a *transition to capitalism* (Fort-

schrift zum Kapitalismus) *and not to collectivism*, as is often thought and asserted (S. 118). Associations do not diminish but enhance the superiority (Vorsprung) of large-scale over small-scale production in agriculture, because the big farmers enjoy greater opportunities of forming associations and take greater advantage of these opportunities. That communal, collectivist large-scale production is superior to capitalist large-scale production is—it goes without saying—most definitely admitted by Kautsky. He dwells on the experiments in collective husbandry performed in Britain by the followers of Robert Owen,^{*11} and on similar communities in the United States of America. All these experiments, says Kautsky, *show irrefutably* that the collective conduct of large-scale modern agriculture by co-operative members is fully possible, but that for this possibility to become a reality "a number of definite economic, political and intellectual conditions" are required. The small producer (both artisan and peasant) is prevented from adopting collective production by the extremely weak development of solidarity and discipline, by his isolation, and by his "proprietary fanaticism," which is found not only among West-European peasants but also—let us add—among Russian "community" peasants (recall A. N. Engelhardt and Gleb Uspensky¹²). "It is absurd," Kautsky states categorically, "to expect the peasant of *contemporary society* to adopt community production" (S. 129).

The small peasants, according to an investigator of rural life in Westphalia quoted by Kautsky, pile an enormous amount of work on their children, so that their physical development is retarded. Wage labour has no such seamy

* On pp. 124-26 Kautsky describes an agricultural community in Ralahine, of which, incidentally, Mr. Dioneo also tells the Russian reader in No. 2 of *Russkoye Bogatstvo* of this year.

sides. The Parliamentary Commission on agricultural life in Britain (1897) was told by a small freeholder from Lincoln: "I have brought up a family and nearly worked them to death." Another one said: "We have been working 18 hours a day for several days and average 10 to 12 during the year." A third declared: "We work much harder than labourers, in fact, like slaves." Describing to the Commission the condition of the *bona fide* small farmer in the arable districts, Mr. Read said: "The only way in which he can possibly succeed in this, is doing the work of two agricultural labourers and living at the expense of one." His children "are worse educated and harder worked than the children of the agricultural labourer." (Royal Commission on Agriculture, Final Report, pp. 34 and 357. Quoted by Kautsky, S. 109). Will Mr. Bulgakov undertake to assert that not less frequently a day labourer does the work of two peasants? But what is particularly characteristic is the following fact quoted by Kautsky showing that "the peasant art of starvation (*Hungerkunst*) may lead to the economic superiority of small production": a comparison of the profitableness of two peasant farms in Baden shows a deficit of 933 marks in one, *a big one*, and a surplus of 191 marks in the other, which was *half the size of the first*. But the first farm, which was run exclusively by the employment of wage labourers, had to feed them properly, and on this spent about a mark (nearly 45 kopeks) per day per person; whereas the work on the smaller farm was done exclusively by the members of the family (the wife and six grown-up children), whose keep cost *half that miserable amount*: 48 pfennigs per day per person. If the family of the small peasant had fed as well as the labourers employed by the big farmer, the small farmer would have suffered a deficit of 1,250 marks! "His surplus came, not from his full corn bins, but from his empty stomach." What a mass of similar examples would be discovered if the comparison of the "profitableness" of large and small farms were accompanied by a calculation of the consumption and work of peas-

ants and of wage workers.* Here is another calculation of the higher profit of a small farm (4.6 hectares) compared with a big farm (26.5 hectares) made in a specialized magazine. But how is this higher profit obtained?—asks Kautsky. It turns out that the small farmer is assisted by his children, assisted from the time they just begin to walk; the big farmer, however, has to spend money on his children (school, college). In the small farm even the old people, over 70 years of age, "take the place of full workers." "An ordinary day labourer, particularly on a big farm, goes about his work and thinks: 'I wish it was knocking-off time.' The small peasant, however, at all events in all the busy seasons, thinks to himself: 'Oh, if only the day were an hour or two longer.'" The small producers—the author of the article in the agricultural magazine instructs us—make better use of their time in the busy seasons: "They get up earlier, go to bed later and work more quickly, whereas the labourers employed by the big farmer refuse to get up earlier, go to bed later or work harder than at other times." The peasant is able to obtain a clear income thanks to the "simple" life he leads: he lives in a clay hut built mainly by the labour of his family; his wife has been married for 17 years and has worn out only one pair of boots; more often than not she walks barefooted, or in clogs; and she makes all the clothes for her family. Their food consists of potatoes, milk, and an occasional herring. Only on Sundays does the husband smoke a pipe of tobacco. "These people did not realize that they were living a particularly simple life, and did not express dissatisfaction with their position... Living in this simple manner, they obtained a small surplus out of their farm nearly every year."

Written in April-May 1899

Vol. 4, pp. 104-06 and 113-15

Published in January-February

1900 in *Zhizn*

* Cf. V. Ilyin, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, pp. 112, 175, 201.¹³

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

(Excerpts)

Let us quote what Engels said in 1874 concerning the significance of theory in the Social-Democratic movement. Engels recognizes *not two* forms of the great struggle of Social-Democracy (the political and the economic), as we are accustomed to do, but three, placing *the theoretical struggle on a par with them*. His recommendations to the German working-class movement, which had become strong practically and politically, are so instructive from the standpoint of present-day problems and controversies, that we hope the reader will not complain of our quoting a long passage from his preface to *Der deutsche Bauernkrieg*,* which has long become an extreme bibliographical rarity.

“The German workers have two important advantages over those of the rest of Europe. First, they belong to the most theoretical people of Europe; and they have retained that sense of theory which the so-called ‘educated’ classes of Germany have almost completely lost. Without German philosophy, which preceded it, particularly that of Hegel, German scientific socialism—the only scientific socialism that has ever existed—would never have come into being. Without a sense of theory among the workers, this scien-

* Dritter Abdruck. Leipzig. 1875. Verlag der Genossenschaftsbuchdruckerei.

tific socialism would never have entered their flesh and blood as much as is the case. What an immeasurable advantage this is may be seen, on the one hand, from the indifference towards all theory which is one of the main reasons why the English working-class movement crawls along so slowly in spite of the splendid organization of the individual unions; on the other hand, from the mischief and confusion wrought by Proudhonism,¹⁴ in its original form, among the French and Belgians, and, in the form further caricatured by Bakunin, among the Spaniards and Italians.

“The second advantage is that, chronologically speaking, the Germans were about the last to come into the workers’ movement. Just as German theoretical socialism will never forget that it rests on the shoulders of Saint-Simon, Fourier and Owen—three men who, in spite of all their fantastic notions and all their utopianism, have their place among the most eminent thinkers of all times, and whose genius anticipated innumerable things the correctness of which is now being scientifically proved by us—so the practical workers’ movement in Germany ought never to forget that it has developed on the shoulders of the English and French movements, that it was able simply to utilize their dearly bought experience, and could now avoid their mistakes, which in their time were mostly unavoidable. Without the precedent of the English trade unions and French workers’ political struggles, without the gigantic impulse given especially by the Paris Commune, where would we be now?

“It must be said to the credit of the German workers that they have exploited the advantages of their situation with rare understanding. For the first time since a workers’ movement has existed, the struggle is being conducted pursuant to its three sides—the theoretical, the political and the practical-economic (resistance to the capitalist)—in harmony and in its interconnections, and in a system-

atic way. It is precisely in this, as it were, concentric attack that the strength and invincibility of the German movement lies.

“Due to this advantageous situation, on the one hand, and to the insular peculiarities of the English and the forcible suppression of the French movement, on the other, the German workers have for the moment been placed in the vanguard of the proletarian struggle. How long events will allow them to occupy this post of honour cannot be foretold. But let us hope that as long as they occupy it they will fill it fittingly. This demands redoubled efforts in every field of struggle and agitation. In particular, it will be the duty of the leaders to gain an ever clearer insight into all theoretical questions, to free themselves more and more from the influence of traditional phrases inherited from the old world outlook, and constantly to keep in mind that socialism, since it has become a science, demands that it be pursued as a science, that is, that it be studied. The task will be to spread with increased zeal among the masses of the workers the ever more clarified understanding thus acquired, to knit together ever more firmly the organization both of the party and of the trade unions....

“... If the German workers progress in this way, they will not be marching exactly at the head of the movement—it is not at all in the interest of this movement that the workers of any particular country should march at its head—but they will occupy an honourable place in the battle line; and they will stand armed for battle when either unexpectedly grave trials or momentous events demand of them increased courage, increased determination and energy.”¹⁵

Engels's words proved prophetic. Within a few years the German workers were subjected to unexpectedly severe trials in the shape of the Anti-Socialist Law.¹⁶ And the

German workers really met them well-armed and succeeded in emerging from them victoriously.

The Russian proletariat will have to undergo trials immeasurably more grave; it will have to fight a monster compared with which the Anti-Socialist Law in a constitutional country seems but a pigmy. History has now confronted us with an immediate task which is the *most revolutionary* of all the *immediate* tasks facing the proletariat of any other country. The fulfilment of this task, the destruction of the most powerful bulwark, not only of European, but also (it may now be said) of Asiatic reaction, would make the Russian proletariat the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat. And we have the right to count upon acquiring this honourable title already earned by our predecessors, the revolutionaries of the seventies, if we succeed in inspiring our movement—which is a thousand times broader and deeper—with the same devoted determination and vigour.

What real, concrete meaning is there in it when Martynov¹⁷ sets Social-Democracy the task of “lending the economic struggle itself a political character?” The economic struggle is the collective struggle of the workers against the employers for advantageous terms of *selling their labour power*, for better conditions of labour and of life. This struggle is necessarily a struggle of trades, because working conditions differ very much in the different trades, and, consequently, the fight to *improve* these conditions can only be conducted by trades (trade unions in the Western countries, temporary trade associations and leaflets in Russia, etc.). “Lending the economic struggle itself a political character” means, therefore, striving to secure satisfaction of these trade demands, the improvement of working conditions in the given trade by means of “legislative and administrative measures” (as Martynov expresses it on the next page, 43, of his article). This is

exactly what all workers' trade unions do and always have done. Take a look at the work of the thoroughly scientific (and "thoroughly" opportunist) Mr. and Mrs. Webb and you will see that the British trade unions long ago recognized, and are carrying out, the task of "lending the economic struggle itself a political character"; they have long been fighting for the right to strike, for the removal of all legal hindrances to the co-operative and trade-union movements, for laws protecting women and children, for the improvement of working conditions by means of health and factory legislation, etc.

Thus, the pompous phrase about "lending the economic struggle *itself* a political character," which sounds "awfully" profound and revolutionary, serves at bottom as a screen to conceal the traditional striving to *reduce* Social-Democratic politics to narrow British trade-union politics! On the pretext of rectifying the one-sidedness of the *Iskra*,¹⁸ which, you see, places "the revolutionizing of dogma higher than the revolutionizing of life,"* we are presented with the *struggle for economic reforms* as if it were something new. Actually, the phrase "lending the economic struggle itself a political character" means absolutely nothing more than the struggle for economic reforms. And Martynov himself might have come to this simple conclusion had he pondered well over the significance of his own words. "Our Party," he says, training his heaviest guns on the *Iskra*, "could and should have presented concrete demands to the government for legislative and administrative measures against economic exploitation, unemployment, famine, etc." (*Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, pp. 42-43.)

* *Rabocheye Dyelo*, No. 10, p. 60. This is Martynov's version of the application to the modern, chaotic condition of our movement, of the thesis: "Every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programmes," which we have already characterized above.¹⁹ Essentially this is merely a translation into Russian of the notorious Bernsteinian phrase: "The movement is everything, the final aim is nothing."

Concrete demands for measures—does not this mean demands for social reforms? And again we ask the impartial reader, do we slander the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists (may I be forgiven for this clumsy expression!) by calling them concealed Bernsteinians, when they advance as their point of *disagreement* with the *Iskra* their thesis about the need to fight for economic reforms?

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

Take the type of Social-Democratic circle that has become most widespread in recent years, and examine its work. It has "contacts with the workers" and contents itself with this, issuing leaflets, in which abuses in the factories, the government's partiality towards the capitalists and the brutality of the police are strongly condemned. At meetings with workers the talks usually, or practically, do not go beyond the limits of these subjects. Lectures and discussions on the history of the revolutionary movement,

on problems of the home and foreign policy of our government, on problems of the economic evolution of Russia and of Europe, and of the position of the various classes in present-day society, etc., are extremely rare. No one gives a thought to systematically acquiring and extending contact with other classes of society. In fact the ideal leader, as the majority of the members of such circles picture him, is somebody far more like a trade-union secretary than a Socialist, a political leader. For the secretary of any, say British, trade union always helps the workers to conduct the economic struggle, arranges the exposure of factory abuses, explains the injustice of the laws and measures which hamper the freedom to strike and the freedom to picket (to warn all and sundry that there is a strike at the factory), explains the partiality of arbitration court judges, who belong to the bourgeois classes, etc., etc. In a word, every trade-union secretary conducts and helps to conduct "the economic struggle against the employers and the government." It cannot be too strongly emphasized that *this is not yet* Social-Democracy. The ideal Social-Democrat should be not a trade-union secretary, but *a tribune of the people*, able to react to all manifestations whatsoever of despotism and oppression, no matter where they take place, no matter what stratum or class they affect; able to generalize all these manifestations to produce a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; able to take advantage of every trifling event in order to expound his socialist convictions and his democratic demands *to all*, in order to explain to each and everyone the world-historic significance of the proletariat's struggle for emancipation. Compare, for example, such leaders as Robert Knight (the well-known secretary and leader of the Boiler-Makers' Society, one of the most powerful trade unions in Britain) and Wilhelm Liebknecht, and try to apply to them the contrasts that Martynov draws in his controversy with the *Iskra*. You will see—I am running

through Martynov's article—that Robert Knight to a far greater extent "called on the masses to undertake certain concrete actions" (p. 39), while Wilhelm Liebknecht engaged more in "the revolutionary elucidation of the whole of the present system or partial manifestations of it" (pp. 38-39); that Robert Knight "formulated the immediate demands of the proletariat and indicated the means for realizing them" (p. 41), whereas Wilhelm Liebknecht, while doing this too, was not averse "to simultaneously guiding the activities of various opposition strata," "to dictating a positive programme of action for them"* (p. 41); that what Robert Knight strove to do was "as far as possible to lend the economic struggle itself a political character" (p. 42) and was excellently able "to submit to the government concrete demands promising certain palpable results" (p. 43), while Liebknecht engaged to a much greater degree in "one-sided" "exposures" (p. 40); that Robert Knight attached more importance to the "onward march of the drab everyday struggle" (p. 61), while Liebknecht did to the "propaganda of brilliant and finished ideas" (p. 61); that Liebknecht converted the paper he was directing into "an organ of revolutionary opposition that exposes the system, mainly the political system in our country, in so far as it conflicts with the interests of the most varied strata of the population" (p. 63), whereas Robert Knight "worked for the cause of the working class in close, organic contact with the proletarian struggle" (p. 63)—if by "close and organic contact" is meant the worship of spontaneity which we examined above, using Krichevsky and Martynov as examples—and "restricted the sphere of his influence," convinced, of course, as Martynov is, that "he was thereby deepening that influence" (p. 63). In a word, you will see that *de facto* Martynov re-

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

duces Social-Democracy to narrow trade-unionism, though he does so, of course, not because he does not desire the good of Social-Democracy, but simply because he has been a little too hasty in rendering Plekhanov more profound, instead of taking the trouble to understand him.

Written between the autumn
of 1901 and February 1902
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book in March 1902

Vol. 5, pp. 342-45, 374-76, and
392-94

**LETTER TO THE SECRETARY,
LABOUR REPRESENTATION COMMITTEE, ENGLAND²⁰**

23.III.05

Dear Sir,

Thank You very much for Your donation. I have received a cheque for 80£ (francs 2008) and directed 60£ (frs 1506) according to Your prescriptions in St.-Petersburg to Our St.-Petersburg Committee of the Russian Socialdemocratic Labour Party. I have received also the second cheque for £90 (the sum not yet received here in francs). £50 will be also sent to aid the widows and orphans of the St.-Petersburg (labourers) working men, killed on 9(22) January.

With kind regards
Yours very sincerely,
VI. Oulianoff
(Editor of the "Vperiod")

VI. Oulianoff, Editor of the "Vperiod,"
3. Rue de la Colline. 3. Genève.
Switzerland.

First published on August 18,
1946 in *British Ally*, No. 33

Russian translation in Vol. 36,
p. 111

LETTER TO THE SECRETARY,
LABOUR REPRESENTATION COMMITTEE,
ENGLAND

20.5.05

Dear Sir,

I acknowledge with thanks the receipt of £25, of which £5 will be subscribed, according Your condition, for relief work. Your subscriptions are all mentioned in our paper Vperiod (Forward), which we send to You. Now I send You again the issues of this paper, where the subscriptions are mentioned and I notice these mentions with blue pencil.

We have written already to St.-Petersburg Committee of the Russian Socialdemocratic Labour Party that it is necessary to make a report before some working men meetings about the subscriptions from the L.R.C. All communications with the organisations of our party being secret it must take some time before an answer can be received. This week some Russian comrades go to St.-Petersburg and I repeated to them my request. They promised to me to take all measures to accelerate this report in St.-Petersburg and to send a notice to You. Your letter from 22.4.05 will also be sent to the St.-Petersburg Committee.

I hope, dear Sir, that You will soon receive a letter from

our Petersburg comrades stating the report before working men meeting in the Russian capital.

I beg to apologize for my bad English.

With kindest thanks
Yours very sincerely,
VI. Oulianoff
(Editor of "Vperiod")

VI. Oulianoff,
3. Rue de la Colline. 3.
Genève. Switzerland

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1946 in *British Ally*, No. 33

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NOTES TO
"THE BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT AND THE TRADES
UNION CONGRESS"²¹

1

The matter was as follows: the Taff-Vale Railway sued the railway workers' union for losses caused by the strike. The bourgeois judges, despite the bitter resistance of the workers, awarded damages to the capitalists! To order trade unions to compensate the capitalist gentry for losses caused by a strike means in fact to kill the right to strike. Judges who cringe to the bourgeoisie know how to nullify liberties even guaranteed by the Constitution, when it is a matter of the struggle between labour and capital.

2

The British working-class movement unfortunately promises to serve quite long yet as a sad example of how the divorcement from socialism of the labour movement necessarily leads to its becoming petty and affected by the outlook of the bourgeoisie.

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PREFACE TO THE RUSSIAN TRANSLATION
OF "LETTERS BY J. PH. BECKER, J. DIETZGEN,
F. ENGELS, K. MARX AND OTHERS
TO F. A. SORGE AND OTHERS"

The collection of letters by Marx, Engels, Dietzgen, Becker and other leaders of the past-century international labour movement presented to the Russian public is a necessary addition to our advanced Marxist literature.

We shall not dwell in detail here on the importance of these letters for the history of socialism and for a comprehensive treatment of the activities of Marx and Engels. This aspect of the matter requires no explanation. Let us only note that an understanding of the published letters necessitates an acquaintance with the principal works on the history of the International (see Jaekch, *The International*, Russian translation in the Znaniye edition), on the history of the German and American labour movements (see Fr. Mehring, *History of German Social-Democracy*, and Morris Hillquit, *History of Socialism in America*), etc.

Neither do we intend here to attempt a general outline of the contents of this correspondence or an appreciation of the various historical periods to which it relates. Mehring has done this extremely well in his article, "Der Sorge-sche Briefwechsel" (*Neue Zeit*, 25. Jahrg., Nr. 1 und 2), which will probably be appended by the publisher to the

present translation or will be issued as a separate Russian publication.

Of particular interest to Russian Socialists in the present revolutionary period are the lessons which the militant proletariat must draw from an acquaintance with the intimate sides of the activities of Marx and Engels over the course of nearly thirty years (1867-95). It is, therefore, not surprising that the first attempts made in our Social-Democratic literature to acquaint the readers with the letters of Marx and Engels to Sorge were also linked up with the "burning" issues of Social-Democratic tactics in the Russian revolution (Plekhanov's *Sovremennaya Zhizn* and the Menshevik *Otkliki*). And it is to an appreciation of those passages in the published correspondence which are specially important from the viewpoint of the present tasks of the workers' party in Russia that we intend to draw the attention of our readers.

Marx and Engels dealt most frequently in their letters with the pressing problems of the British, American and German labour movements. This is natural, because they were Germans who at that time lived in England and corresponded with their American comrade. On the French labour movement, and particularly the Paris Commune, Marx expressed himself much more frequently and in much greater detail in the letters he wrote to the German Social-Democrat, Kugelman.*

It is highly instructive to compare what Marx and Engels said of the British, American and German labour movements. The comparison acquires all the greater importance if we bear in mind that Germany on the one hand, and Britain and America on the other, represent different stages of capitalist development and different forms of

* See «Письма К. Маркса к д-ру Кугельману» [*Letters of K. Marx to Dr. Kugelman*], translation edited by N. Lenin, with a foreword by the editor, St. Petersburg, 1907.

domination of the bourgeoisie as a class over the entire political life of these countries. From the scientific standpoint, what we observe here is a sample of materialist dialectics, the ability to bring to the forefront and stress the various points, the various sides of the problem in application to the specific features of different political and economic conditions. From the standpoint of the practical policy and tactics of the workers' party, what we see here is a sample of the way in which the creators of the *Communist Manifesto* set the tasks of the fighting proletariat in accordance with the different stages of the national labour movements in the different countries.

What Marx and Engels criticize most sharply in British and American socialism is its isolation from the labour movement. The burden of all their numerous comments on the Social-Democratic Federation²² in Britain and on the American Socialists is the accusation that they have reduced Marxism to a dogma, to a "rigid (*starre*) orthodoxy," that they consider it "a credo and not a *guide to action*,"²³ that they are incapable of adapting themselves to the theoretically helpless but living and powerful mass labour movement that is marching alongside them. "Had we from 1864 to 1873 insisted on working together only with those who openly adopted our platform," Engels exclaims in his letter of January 27, 1887, "where should we be today?" And in an earlier letter (December 28, 1886), in reference to the influence of the ideas of Henry George on the American working class, he writes:

"A million or two of working men's votes next November for a bona fide working men's party is worth infinitely more at present than a hundred thousand votes for a doctrinally perfect platform."

These are very interesting passages. There are Social-Democrats in our country who hastened to utilize them in defence of the idea of a "labour congress" or something in the nature of Larin's "broad labour party."²⁴ Why not in defence of a "Left bloc?" we would ask these precipitate

“utilizers” of Engels. The letters from which the quotations are taken relate to a time when the American workers voted at the elections for Henry George. Mrs. Wischnetzky—an American woman who married a Russian and who translated Engels’s works—asked him, as may be seen from Engels’s reply, to make a thorough criticism of Henry George. Engels writes (December 28, 1886) that *the time has not yet arrived* for that, the main thing being that the workers’ party should begin to organize itself, even if on a not entirely pure programme. Later on the workers would themselves come to understand what is amiss, “would learn from their own mistakes,” but “anything that might delay or prevent that national consolidation of the working men’s party—on no matter what platform—I should consider a great mistake. . . .”

Engels, of course, perfectly understood and repeatedly pointed out the utter absurdity and *reactionary character* of Henry George’s ideas from the *socialist* standpoint. In the Sorge correspondence there is a most interesting letter from Karl Marx dated June 20, 1881, in which he characterizes Henry George as an ideologist of the *radical bourgeoisie*. “Theoretically the man is utterly backward” (*total arrièrè*), wrote Marx. Yet Engels was not afraid to join with this real *socialist reactionary* in the elections, so long as there were people who could warn the masses of “the consequences of their own mistakes” (Engels, in the letter dated November 29, 1886).

Regarding the Knights of Labor,²⁵ an organization of American workers existing at that time, Engels wrote in the same letter: “The weakest” (literally: rottenest, *faulste*) “side of the Knights of Labor was their *political neutrality*. . . . The first great step, of importance for every country newly entering into the movement, is always the constitution of the workers as an independent political party, no matter how, so long as it is a distinct workers’ party.”

It is obvious that absolutely nothing in defence of a leap *from* Social-Democracy to a non-party labour congress, etc., can be deduced from this. But whoever wants to escape Engels’s accusation of reducing Marxism to a “dogma,” “orthodoxy,” “sectarianism,” etc., must conclude from this that a joint election campaign with radical “social-reactionaries” is sometimes permissible.

But what is more interesting, of course, is to dwell not so much on these American-Russian parallels (we had to refer to them so as to answer our opponents), as on the *fundamental* features of the British and American labour movements. These features are: the absence of any at all big, nation-wide *democratic* tasks facing the proletariat; the complete subjection of the proletariat to bourgeois politics; the sectarian isolation of the groups, the mere handfuls of Socialists from the proletariat; not the slightest success of the Socialists among the working masses in the elections, etc. Whoever forgets these fundamental conditions and sets out to draw broad conclusions from “American-Russian parallels,” displays extreme superficiality.

Engels lays so much stress on the economic organizations of the workers in such conditions because he is dealing with the most firmly established democratic systems, which confront the proletariat with purely socialist tasks.

Engels stresses the importance of an independent workers’ party, even though with a bad programme, because he is dealing with countries where hitherto there has not been even a hint of the workers’ political independence, where, in politics, the workers most of all dragged, and still drag, after the bourgeoisie.

To attempt to apply conclusions drawn from such arguments to countries or historical situations where the proletariat has formed its party before the liberal bourgeois have formed theirs, where the tradition of voting for bourgeois politicians is absolutely unknown to the proletariat,

and where the next immediate tasks are not socialist but bourgeois-democratic, would be making a mockery of Marx's historical method.

Our idea will become even clearer to the reader if we compare the opinions of Engels on the British and American movements with his opinions on the German movement.

Such opinions, and extremely interesting ones at that, also abound in the published correspondence. And what runs like a red thread through all these opinions is something quite different, namely, a warning against the "Right wing" of the workers' party, a merciless (sometimes—as with Marx in 1877-79—a *ferocious*) war upon *opportunism* in Social-Democracy.

Let us first corroborate this by quotations from the letters, and then proceed to an appraisal of this fact.

First of all, we must here note the opinions expressed by Marx in Höchberg and Co. Fr. Mehring, in his article "Der Sorgesche Briefwechsel," attempts to tone down Marx's attacks, as well as Engels's later attacks on the opportunists—and, in our opinion, rather overdoes it. As regards Höchberg and Co. in particular, Mehring insists on his view that Marx's judgement of Lassalle and the Lassalleans²⁶ was incorrect. But, we repeat, what interests us here is not a historical judgement of whether Marx's attacks on particular Socialists were correct or exaggerated, but Marx's judgement *in principle* on definite trends in socialism in general.

While complaining about the compromises of the German Social-Democrats with the Lassalleans and with Dühring (letter of October 19, 1877), Marx also condemns the compromise "with a whole gang of half-mature students and super-wise diplomaed doctors" ("doctor" in German is a scientific degree corresponding to our "candidate" or "university graduate, class 1"), "who want to give socialism a 'higher, idealistic' orientation, that is to say, to replace its materialistic basis (which demands se-

rious objective study from anyone who tries to use it) by modern mythology with its goddesses of Justice, Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity. Dr. Höchberg, who publishes the *Zukunft*, is a representative of this tendency and has 'bought his way' into the Party—with the 'noblest' intentions, I assume, but I do not give a damn for 'intentions.' Anything more miserable than his programme of the *Zukunft* has seldom seen the light of day with more 'modest presumption.'" (Letter No. 70).

In another letter, written almost two years later (September 19, 1879), Marx rebuts the gossip that Engels and he were behind *J. Most*, and gives Sorge a detailed account of his attitude towards the opportunists in the German Social-Democratic Party. The *Zukunft* was run by Höchberg, Schramm and Ed. Bernstein. Marx and Engels *refused* to have anything to do with such a publication, and when the question was raised of establishing a new Party organ with the participation of this same Höchberg and with his financial assistance, Marx and Engels first demanded the acceptance of their nominee, Hirsch, as responsible editor to exercise control over this "mixture of doctors, students and professorial socialists" and then directly addressed a circular letter to Bebel, Liebknecht and other leaders of the Social-Democratic Party, warning them that they would openly combat "such a vulgarization (*Verluderung*—an *even stronger* word in German) of theory and Party," if the Höchberg, Schramm and Bernstein trend did not change.

This was the period in the German Social-Democratic Party which Mehring described in his *History*²⁷ as "A Year of Confusion" ("Ein Jahr der Verwirrung"). After the Anti-Socialist Law, the Party did not at once find the right path, first swinging over to the anarchism of Most and the opportunism of Höchberg and Co. "These people," Marx writes of the latter, "nonentities in theory and useless in practice, want to draw the teeth of socialism (which they have fixed up in accordance with the university rec-

ipes) and particularly of the Social-Democratic Party, to enlighten the workers or, as they put it, to imbue them with 'elements of education' from their confused half-knowledge, and above all to make the Party respectable in the eyes of the petty bourgeoisie. They are just wretched counter-revolutionary windbags."²⁸

The result of Marx's "furious" attack was that the opportunists retreated and—made themselves scarce. In a letter of November 19, 1879, Marx announces that Höchberg has been removed from the editorial committee and that all the influential leaders of the Party—Bebel, Liebknecht, Bracke, etc.—have *repudiated* his ideas. The Social-Democratic Party organ, the *Sozialdemokrat*, began to appear under the editorship of Vollmar, who at that time belonged to the revolutionary wing of the Party. A year later (November 5, 1880), Marx relates that he and Engels constantly fought the "miserable" way in which the *Sozialdemokrat* was conducted and often expressed their opinion *sharply* ("wobei's oft scharf hergeht"). Liebknecht visited Marx in 1880 and promised that there would be an "improvement" *in all respects*.

Peace was restored, and the war never came out into the open. Höchberg withdrew, and Bernstein became a revolutionary Social-Democrat—at least until the death of Engels in 1895.

On June 20, 1882, Engels writes to Sorge and speaks of this struggle as already a thing of the past: "In general things in Germany are going splendidly. It is true that the literary gentlemen in the Party tried to cause a reactionary swing, but they failed ignominiously. The abuse to which the Social-Democratic workers are being everywhere subjected has made them still more revolutionary than they were three years ago. . . . These gentlemen" (the Party literary people) "wanted at all costs to beg and secure the repeal of the Anti-Socialist Law by mildness and meekness, fawning and humility, because it had made short shrift of their literary earnings. As

soon as the law is repealed the split will apparently become an open one, and the Vierecks and Höchbergs will form a separate Right wing, where they can be treated with from time to time until they definitely come a cropper. We announced this immediately after the adoption of the Anti-Socialist Law, when Höchberg and Schramm published in the *Jahrbuch* what was under the circumstances a most infamous judgement of the work of the Party and demanded more cultivated" ("gebildetes" instead of "gebildetes." Engels is alluding to the Berlin accent of German literary people), "refined and elegant behaviour of the Party."

This forecast of a Bernsteinian²⁹ made in 1882 was strikingly confirmed in 1898 and subsequent years.

And since then, and particularly after Marx's death, Engels, it may be said without exaggeration, was untiring in his efforts to straighten out what was distorted by the German opportunists.

The end of 1884. The "petty-bourgeois prejudices" of the German Social-Democratic Reichstag deputies, who voted for the steamship subsidy ("Dampfersubvention," see Mehring's *History*), are condemned. Engels informs Sorge that he has to correspond a great deal on this subject (letter of December 31, 1884).³⁰

1885. Giving his opinion of the whole business of the "Dampfersubvention," Engels writes (June 3) that "it almost came to a split." The "philistinism" of the Social-Democratic deputies was "*colossal*." "A petty-bourgeois Socialist parliamentary group is inevitable in a country like Germany," Engels says.

1887. Engels replies to Sorge who has written that the Party is disgracing itself by electing such deputies as Viereck (a Social-Democrat of the Höchberg type). Nothing can be done—Engels excuses himself—the workers' party cannot find good deputies for the Reichstag. "The gentlemen of the Right wing know that they are being tolerated only because of the Anti-Socialist Law, and that

they will be thrown out of the Party the very day the Party secures freedom of action again." And, in general, it is preferable that "the Party be better than its parliamentary heroes, than the other way round" (March 3, 1887). Liebknecht is a conciliator—Engels complains—he always glosses over differences by phrases. But when it comes to a split, he will be with us at the decisive moment.

1889. Two International Social-Democratic Congresses in Paris. The opportunists (headed by the French Possibilists³¹) split away from the revolutionary Social-Democrats. Engels (he was then sixty-eight years old) flings himself into the fight like a young man. A number of letters (from January 12 to July 20, 1889) are devoted to the fight against the opportunists. Not only they, but also the Germans—Liebknecht, Bebel and others—get a drubbing for their conciliatory attitude.

The Possibilists have sold themselves to the government, writes Engels on January 12, 1889. And he accuses the members of the British Social-Democratic Federation of having allied themselves with the Possibilists. "The writing and running about in connection with this damned congress leave me no time for anything else" (May 11, 1889). The Possibilists are busy, but our people are asleep, Engels writes angrily. Now even Auer and Schipfel are demanding that we attend the Possibilist congress. But this "at last" opened Liebknecht's eyes. Engels, together with Bernstein, writes pamphlets (signed by Bernstein—Engels calls them "our pamphlets") against the opportunists.

"With the exception of the S.D.F., the Possibilists have not a single socialist organization on their side in the whole of Europe." (June 8, 1889.) "They are consequently falling back on the non-socialist trade unions" (let the advocates of a broad labour party, of a labour congress, etc., in our country take note!). "From America they will get one *Knight of Labor*." The adversary is the same as

in the fight against the Bakuninists³²: "only with this difference that the banner of the anarchists has been replaced by the banner of the Possibilists—the selling of principles to the bourgeoisie for small-scale concessions, especially in return for well-paid jobs for the leaders (on the city councils, labour exchanges, etc.)." Brousse (the leader of the Possibilists) and Hyndman (the leader of the S.D.F. which had joined with the Possibilists) attack "authoritarian Marxism" and want to form the "nucleus of a new International."

"You can have no idea of the naïveté of the Germans. It has cost me tremendous effort to explain even to Bebel what it all really meant" (June 8, 1889). And when the two congresses met, when the revolutionary Social-Democrats outnumbered the Possibilists (*who had united with the trade-unionists*, the S.D.F., a section of the Austrians, etc.), Engels was jubilant (July 17, 1889). He was glad that the conciliatory plans and proposals of Liebknecht and others had failed (July 20, 1889). "It serves our sentimental conciliatory brethren right, that for all their amicableness, they received a good kick in their tenderest spot." "This will cure them for some time."

... Mehring was right when he said ("Der Sorgesche Briefwechsel") that Marx and Engels had not much of an idea of "good manners": "If they did not think long over every blow they dealt, neither did they whimper over every blow they received." "If you think that your pin-pricks can pierce my old, well-tanned and thick hide, you are mistaken," Engels once wrote. And the imperviousness they had themselves acquired they presumed in others as well, says Mehring of Marx and Engels.

1893. The chastisement of the "Fabians," which suggests itself ... when passing judgement on the Bernsteinists (for was it not with the "Fabians" in Britain that Bernstein "reared" his opportunism?). "The Fabians here in London are a band of careerists who have understand-

ing enough to realize the inevitability of the social revolution, but who could not possibly entrust this gigantic task to the raw proletariat alone and are therefore kind enough to set themselves at the head. Fear of the revolution is their fundamental principle. They are the 'edicated' *par excellence*. Their socialism is municipal socialism; not the nation but the community is to become the owner of the means of production, at any rate for the time being. This socialism of theirs is then represented as an extreme but inevitable consequence of bourgeois liberalism; hence their tactics of not decisively opposing the Liberals as adversaries but of pushing them on towards socialist conclusions and therefore of intriguing with them, of permeating liberalism with socialism—of not putting up Socialist candidates against the Liberals but of fastening them on to the Liberals, forcing them upon the Liberals, or cajoling them into taking them. That in doing this they are either lied to and deceived themselves or else are lying about socialism, they do not of course realize.

"With great industry they have produced amid all sorts of rubbish some good propagandist writing as well, in fact the best of the kind which the English have produced. But as soon as they get on to their specific tactics of hushing up the class struggle, it all turns putrid. Hence, their fanatical hatred of Marx and all of us—because of the class struggle.

"These people have of course many bourgeois followers and therefore money...."

HOW THE CLASSICS ESTIMATED INTELLECTUALIST OPPORTUNISM IN SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY

1894. The Peasant Question. "On the Continent," Engels writes on November 10, 1894, "success is developing the appetite for more success, and catching the peasant, in the literal sense of the word, is becoming the

fashion. First the French, in Nantes, declare through Lafargue not only... that it is not our business to hasten... the ruin of the small peasants, which capitalism is seeing to for us, but they add that we must directly protect the small peasant against taxation, usury, and landlords. But we cannot co-operate in this, first because it is stupid and second because it is impossible. Next however Vollmar comes along in Frankfort and wants to bribe the *peasantry altogether*, though the peasant he has to deal with in Upper Bavaria is not the debt-ridden small peasant of the Rhineland, but the middle and even the big peasant, who exploits male and female farm hands and sells cattle and grain in quantity. And that cannot be done without giving up the whole principle."

1894, December 4. "...The Bavarians, who have become very, very opportunistic and have almost turned into an ordinary people's party (that is to say, the majority of leaders and many of those who have recently joined the Party), voted in the Bavarian Diet for the budget as a whole; and Vollmar in particular has started an agitation among the peasants with the object of winning the Upper Bavarian big peasants—people who own 25 to 80 acres of land (10 to 30 hectares) and who therefore cannot manage without wage-labourers—instead of winning their farm hands."

We thus see that for more than ten years Marx and Engels systematically and unswervingly fought opportunism in the German Social-Democratic Party and attacked intellectualist philistinism and the petty-bourgeois outlook in socialism. This is an extremely important fact. The general public knows that German Social-Democracy is regarded as a model of Marxist proletarian policy and tactics, but it does not know what a constant war the founders of Marxism had to wage against the "Right wing" (Engels's expression) of that Party. And it is no accident that soon after Engels's death this war turned

from a concealed into an open one. This was an inevitable result of the decades of historical development of German Social-Democracy.

And now we very clearly perceive the two lines of Engels's (and Marx's) recommendations, directions, corrections, threats and exhortations. They most insistently called upon the British and American Socialists to merge with the labour movement and to eradicate the narrow and hidebound sectarian spirit from their organizations. They most insistently taught the German Social-Democrats to beware of succumbing to philistinism, to "parliamentary idiocy" (Marx's expression in the letter of September 19, 1879), to petty-bourgeois intellectualist opportunism.

Is it not characteristic that our Social-Democratic gossips have started chattering about the recommendations of the first kind and shut their mouths, keeping silent over the recommendations of the second kind? Is not *such* one-sidedness in appraising the letters of Marx and Engels the best indication at this end of a certain Russian, Social-Democratic ... "one-sidedness"?

At the present moment, when the international labour movement is displaying symptoms of profound ferment and vacillation, when the extremes of opportunism, "parliamentary idiocy" and philistine reformism have evoked the opposite extremes of revolutionary syndicalism,³³ the general line of Marx's and Engels's "corrections" to British and American socialism and German socialism acquires exceptional importance.

In countries where there are *no* Social-Democratic workers' parties, *no* Social-Democratic members of parliament, *no* systematic and consistent Social-Democratic policy either at elections or in the press, etc.—in such countries, Marx and Engels taught the Socialists *at all costs* to rid themselves of narrow sectarianism and *join* with the labour movement so as to *shake up* the proletar-

iat *politically*. For in the last third of the nineteenth century the proletariat displayed *almost* no political independence either in Britain or America. In these countries—where bourgeois-democratic historical tasks were almost entirely non-existent—the political arena was *wholly* filled by a triumphant and self-satisfied bourgeoisie, unequalled anywhere in the world in the art of deceiving, corrupting and bribing the workers.

To think that these recommendations of Marx and Engels to the British and American labour movements can be simply and directly applied to Russian conditions is to use Marxism not in order to achieve clarity on its *method*, not in order to *study* the concrete historical peculiarities of the labour movement in definite countries, but in order to pay off petty factional, intellectualist scores.

On the other hand, in a country where the bourgeois-democratic revolution was still incomplete, where "military despotism, embellished with parliamentary forms" (Marx's expression in his *Critique of the Gotha Programme*)³⁴ prevailed, and still prevails, where the proletariat had long ago been drawn into politics and was pursuing a Social-Democratic policy, what Marx and Engels feared most of all in such a country was parliamentary vulgarization and philistine belittlement of the tasks and scope of the labour movement.

It is all the more our duty to emphasize and give prominence to *this* side of Marxism in the period of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia, because in our country a vast, "brilliant" and rich liberal-bourgeois press is vociferously trumpeting to the proletariat the "exemplary" loyalty, the parliamentary legality, the modesty and moderation of the neighbouring German labour movement.

This mercenary lie of the bourgeois betrayers of the Russian revolution is not due to accident or to the per-

sonal depravity of certain past or future ministers in the Cadet³⁵ camp. It is due to the profound economic interests of the Russian liberal landlords and liberal bourgeois. And in combating this lie, this "stupefying of the masses" ("Massenverdummung"—Engels's expression in his letter of November 29, 1886), the letters of Marx and Engels should serve as an indispensable weapon for all Russian Socialists.

The mercenary lie of the liberal bourgeois holds up to the people the exemplary "modesty" of the German Social-Democrats. The leaders of these Social-Democrats, the founders of the theory of Marxism, tell us:

"The revolutionary language and action of the French has made the hypocrisy of Viereck and Co." (the opportunist Social-Democrats in the German Reichstag Social-Democratic group) "sound quite feeble" (the reference is to the formation of a Labour group in the French Chamber and to the Decazeville strike, which split the French Radicals from the French proletariat³⁶), "and only Liebknecht and Bebel spoke in the last Socialist debate... and both of them spoke well. We can with this debate once more show ourselves in decent society, which was by no means the case with all of them. In general it is a good thing that the Germans' leadership of the international socialist movement, particularly after they sent so many philistines to the Reichstag (which, it is true, was unavoidable), is being challenged. *In Germany everything becomes philistine in peaceful times*; and therefore the sting of French competition is *absolutely necessary*..." (Letter of April 29, 1886).

Such are the lessons which must be most firmly assimilated by the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, which is predominantly under the ideological influence of German Social-Democracy.

These lessons are taught us not by any particular passage in the correspondence of the greatest men of the nineteenth century, but by the whole spirit and substance

of their comradely and frank criticism of the international experience of the proletariat, a criticism which shunned diplomacy and petty considerations.

How far all the letters of Marx and Engels were indeed imbued with this spirit may also be seen from the following relatively specific but extremely characteristic passages.

In 1889 a young, fresh movement of untrained and unskilled labourers (gas-workers, dockers, etc.) began in Britain, a movement marked by a new and revolutionary spirit. Engels was delighted with it. He refers exultingly to the part played by Tussy, Marx's daughter, who agitated among these workers. "The most repulsive thing here," he says, writing from London on December 7, 1889, "is the bourgeois 'respectability,' which has grown deep into the bones of the workers. The division of society into innumerable strata, each recognized without question, each with its own pride but also its inborn respect for its 'betters' and 'superiors,' is so old and firmly established that the bourgeois still find it fairly easy to get their bait accepted. I am not at all sure, for instance, that John Burns is not secretly prouder of his popularity with Cardinal Manning, the Lord Mayor, and the bourgeoisie in general than of his popularity with his own class. And Champion—an ex-lieutenant—intrigued years ago with bourgeois and especially with conservative elements, preached socialism at the parsons' Church Congress, etc. And even Tom Mann, whom I regard as the best of the lot, is fond of mentioning that he will be lunching with the Lord Mayor. If one compares this with the French, one realizes what a revolution is good for after all."

Comment is superfluous.

Another example. In 1891 there was danger of a European war. Engels corresponded on the subject with Bebel, and they agreed that in the event of Russia attacking Germany, the German Socialists must desperately

fight the Russians and any allies of the Russians. "If Germany is crushed, then we shall be too, while in the most favourable case the struggle will be such a violent one that Germany will only be able to maintain herself by revolutionary means, so that very possibly we shall be forced to come into power and perform a 1793." (Letter of October 24, 1891).

Let this be noted by those opportunists who cried from the house-tops that "Jacobin" prospects for the Russian workers' party in 1905 were un-Social-Democratic! Engels squarely suggests to Bebel the possibility of the Social-Democrats having to participate in a provisional government.

Holding such views on the tasks of Social-Democratic workers' parties it is quite natural that Marx and Engels possessed the most fervent faith in a Russian revolution and its great world significance. We see this ardent expectation of a revolution in Russia in this correspondence over a period of nearly twenty years.

Here is Marx's letter of September 27, 1877. He is quite enthusiastic about the Eastern crisis: "Russia has long been standing on the threshold of an upheaval; all the elements of it are prepared. The gallant Turks have hastened the explosion by years with the thrashing they have inflicted. . . . The upheaval will begin *secundum artem*" (according to the rules of the art), "with some *playing at constitutionalism*, et puis il y aura un beau *tape*" (and then there will be a fine row). "If Mother Nature is not particularly unfavourable towards us, we shall yet live to see the fun!" (Marx was then fifty-nine years old.)

Mother Nature did not—and could not very well—permit Marx to live "to see the fun." But he *foretold* the "playing at constitutionalism," and it is as though his words were written yesterday in relation to the First and Second Russian Dumas.³⁷ And we know that the warning to the people against "playing at constitutionalism" was

the "living soul" of the boycott tactics so detested by the Liberals and opportunists. . . .

Here is Marx's letter of November 5, 1880. He is delighted with the success of *Capital* in Russia, and takes the part of the members of the People's Will organization against the newly-arisen group of Black Redistribution. Marx correctly perceives the anarchistic elements in the latter's views. Not knowing and having then no opportunity of knowing the future evolution of the Black-Redistribution Narodniks into Social-Democrats, Marx attacks the Black-Redistributioners with all his trenchant sarcasm:

"These gentlemen are against all political-revolutionary action. Russia is to make a somersault into the anarchist-communist-atheist millenium! Meanwhile, they are preparing for this leap with the most tedious doctrinairism, whose so-called principles are being hawked about the street ever since the late Bakunin."

We can gather from this how Marx would have appreciated the significance for Russia of 1905 and the succeeding years of the "political-revolutionary action" of *Social-Democracy*.*

Here is a letter by Engels dated April 6, 1887: "On the other hand, it seems as if a crisis is impending in Russia. The recent attentates rather upset the apple-cart. . . ." A letter of April 9, 1887, says the same thing. . . . "The army is full of discontented, conspiring officers." (Engels at that time was impressed by the revolutionary struggle of the People's Will organization; he set his hopes on the officers, and did not yet see the revolutionary spirit of the Russian soldiers and sailors, which was manifested so magnificently eighteen years later. . . .) "I do not think

* By the way, if my memory does not deceive me, Plekhanov or V. I. Zasulich told me in 1900-03 about the existence of a letter of Engels to Plekhanov on *Our Differences* and on the character of the impending revolution in Russia. It would be interesting to know exactly whether there was such a letter, whether it still exists, and whether it is not time to publish it.

things will last another year; and once it [the revolution] breaks out ("losgeht") in Russia, then hurrah!"

A letter of April 23, 1887: "In Germany there is persecution after persecution" (of Socialists). "It looks as if Bismarck wants to have everything ready, so that the moment the revolution breaks out ("losgeschlagen werden") in Russia, which is now only a question of months, Germany could immediately follow her example."

The months proved to be very, very long ones. Doubtless, philistines will be found who, knitting their brows and wrinkling their foreheads, will sternly condemn Engels's "revolutionism," or will indulgently laugh at the old utopias of the old revolutionary exile.

Yes, Marx and Engels made many and frequent mistakes in determining the proximity of revolution, in their hopes in the victory of revolution (e.g., in 1848 in Germany), in their faith in the imminence of a German "republic" ("to die for the republic," wrote Engels of that period, recalling his sentiments as a participant in the military campaign for a Reich constitution in 1848-49). They were mistaken in 1871 when they were engaged in "raising revolt in Southern France, for which" they (Becker writes "we," referring to himself and his nearest friends: letter No. 14 of July 21, 1871) "sacrificed and risked all that was humanly possible. . . ." The same letter says: "If we had had more means in March and April we would have roused the whole of Southern France and would have saved the Commune in Paris" (p. 29). But *such* errors—the errors of the giants of revolutionary thought who sought to raise and did raise the proletariat of the whole world above the level of petty, commonplace and trifling tasks—are a thousand times more noble and magnificent and *historically more valuable and true* than the trite wisdom of official liberalism, which sings, shouts, appeals and exhorts about the vanity of revolutionary vanities, the futility of the revolutionary struggle, and the charms of counter-revolutionary "constitutional" fantasies. . . .

The Russian working class will win their freedom and give a fillip to Europe by their revolutionary action, full though it be of errors—and let the philistines pride themselves on the infallibility of their revolutionary inaction.

April 6, 1907

Published in 1907 in the book
Letters by J. Ph. Becker, J. Dietzen, F. Engels, K. Marx and Others to F. A. Sorge and Others

Vol. 12, pp. 319-38

THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST CONGRESS IN STUTT GART

What distinguished the International Socialist Congress held this August in Stuttgart was the exceptionally large number of delegates present and countries represented. Delegates, 886 in all, attended from all corners of the globe. Apart, however, from being a tremendous demonstration of the unity of the proletarian struggle internationally, the Congress played an outstanding part in determining the tactics of the Socialist parties. General resolutions were adopted by the Congress on a whole number of problems that till now have been settled exclusively within the separate Socialist parties. That socialism has become integrated into a single international force is expressed particularly vividly in the increased number of problems requiring an identical solution in principle in different countries.

We publish the full text of the Stuttgart resolutions below.³⁸ At the moment, however, let us deal briefly with each of them, so as to indicate the main points in dispute and the character of the debates at the Congress.

This is not the first time the colonial question has figured at international congresses. Hitherto their decisions have always unreservedly condemned bourgeois colonial policy as a policy of plunder and brute force. This time the Congress commission was so composed that the opportunist elements, headed by Van Kol of Holland, gained the upper hand. A phrase was inserted in the draft res-

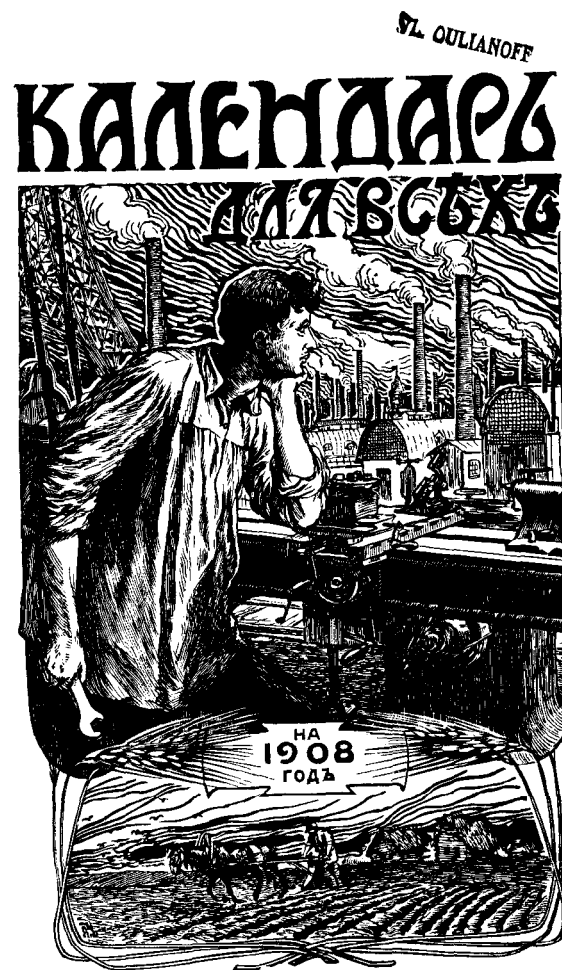
olution to the effect that the Congress did not in principle condemn all colonial policy which under socialism could play a civilizing role. The commission minority (Ledebour of Germany, the Polish and Russian Social-Democrats and many others) vigorously protested against the inclusion of any such idea. The matter was referred to Congress, and the forces on both sides were so nearly equal that the struggle flared up with unparalleled passion.

The opportunists backed Van Kol. Speaking for the majority of the German delegation, Bernstein and David urged acceptance of a "socialist colonial policy" and attacked the Left wing, charging them with taking a futile negative stand, failing to appreciate the importance of reforms, lacking a practical colonial programme, etc. Among those who opposed them was Kautsky, who had no alternative but to ask Congress to declare its *opposition* to the majority of the German delegation. He rightly pointed out that there was no talk of abandoning the struggle for reforms: that was quite explicitly stated in the other sections of the resolution, which had evoked no dispute. The point at issue was whether we should make concessions to the contemporary regime of bourgeois plunder and brute force. It was the present colonial policy that should be discussed by Congress, and this policy was based on the outright enslavement of savages. The bourgeoisie was, in effect, introducing slavery in the colonies, and subjecting the natives to unprecedented humiliation and violence, "civilizing" them by the spread of liquor and syphilis. And in that situation, Socialists were expected to utter evasive phrases about the possibility of accepting colonial policy in principle! That would be outright acceptance of the bourgeois point of view. It would represent a decisive step towards subordinating the proletariat to bourgeois ideology, to bourgeois imperialism, which is now so arrogantly raising its head.

The Congress rejected the commission's proposal by 128 votes to 108, with ten abstentions (Switzerland). It should be noted that at the Stuttgart Congress, the countries represented were for the first time allotted different number of votes—ranging from twenty (for the big nations, Russia included) to two (Luxemburg). The combined vote of the small nations, which do not pursue a colonial policy or which suffer from it, outweighed the vote of those countries where even the proletariat has been somewhat infected by the passion for conquest.

The vote on the colonial question is of very great importance. First, it was a striking exposure of socialist opportunism, which yields to bourgeois blandishments. Secondly, it reflected the influence of a negative feature of the European labour movement, one which can do no small damage to the proletarian cause, and therefore merits serious attention. Marx made repeated reference to a very weighty maxim of Sismondi's. The proletarians of the ancient world, it runs, lived at the expense of society; modern society lives at the expense of the proletarians.

A propertyless but non-labouring class is incapable of overthrowing the exploiters. Only the proletarian class, which maintains the whole of society, can effect a social revolution. Well then, the extensive pursuit of colonial policy has resulted in the European proletarian's position becoming *in part* such that it is *not* his labour, but that of the practically enslaved natives in the colonies, which maintains the whole of society. The British bourgeoisie, for example, derives more profit from the tens and hundreds of millions of inhabitants of India and her other colonies than from the British workers. That being so, a material and economic basis is created in certain countries for infecting the proletariat with colonial chauvinism. This, of course, may be merely a passing phenomenon, nonetheless the evil must be clearly realized, and its causes understood, in order to be able to unite the proletariat of all lands for the fight against such opportunism. And



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this fight will inevitably lead to victory, for the "privileged" nations represent a diminishing minority of the capitalist nations.

There was almost no discussion about women's suffrage at the Congress. There was only the case of an Englishwoman from the extremely opportunist British Fabian Society, who argued that it was permissible for Socialists to advocate a restricted franchise for women, i.e., not universal, but qualified franchise. The Fabian lady was absolutely alone in her views, the underlying idea of which was simply this: British bourgeois ladies hope to secure the suffrage for themselves, without extending it to the female proletariat.

Concurrently with the International Socialist Congress, and in the same building in Stuttgart there took place the First International Socialist Women's Conference. Interesting arguments took place at this Conference and in the Congress commission when the resolution was discussed, between the German and the Austrian Social-Democrats. The latter, during their fight for universal suffrage, had pushed the demand for female equality with men somewhat into the background: out of practical considerations they had emphasized their demand for male, and not universal, suffrage. In their speeches, Zetkin and other German Social-Democrats quite rightly told the Austrians that they had behaved wrongly, that they had reduced the strength of the mass movement by failing to advance with every energy the demand for electoral rights not only for men, but also for women. The last words of the Stuttgart resolution ("the demand for universal suffrage must be advanced *simultaneously* for both men and women") undoubtedly relate to this episode of excessive "practicalness" in the history of the Austrian working-class movement.

The resolution concerning the relation between the Socialist parties and the trade unions is of especially great importance to us Russians. The Stockholm Congress of

the R.S.D.L.P.³⁹ declared in favour of *non-Party* unions, thus adopting the viewpoint of neutrality. That same viewpoint has always been upheld by our non-Party democrats, Bernsteinites and Socialist-Revolutionaries.⁴⁰ The London Congress,⁴¹ on the contrary, put forward a different principle, namely, close relations between the unions and the Party, to the point of unions being recognized (under certain conditions) as Party unions. At Stuttgart, the S.-D. subsection of the Russian section (the Socialists of each country form independent sections at international congresses) split when the question was discussed (there was no split on the other issues). Specifically, Plekhanov upheld neutrality in principle. The Bolshevik Voinov upheld the anti-neutral viewpoint of the London Congress and of the Belgian resolution (published together with de Brouckère's report in the Congress materials; this report will appear shortly in Russian). Clara Zetkin rightly remarked in her paper, *Die Gleichheit*, that Plekhanov's arguments in support of neutrality were just as unsatisfactory as those of the French. And the Stuttgart Congress resolution, as Kautsky justly noted, and as anybody will be convinced who makes a careful study of it, puts an end to the recognition of "neutrality" in principle. The resolution does not say a word about trade unions being neutral or non-Party. On the contrary, the need for close ties between the unions and the Socialist parties and for strengthening these ties is quite definitely recognized.

The R.S.D.L.P. London resolution on trade unions now has a solid basis of principle in the shape of the Stuttgart resolution, which proclaims in general and for all countries the need for lasting and close ties between the unions and the Socialist party; the London resolution points out that for Russia, given favourable conditions, the ties should take the form of the unions' allegiance to the Party, and that Party members' activities should be directed to that end.

Let us note that the harmful aspects of the principle of neutrality were manifested at Stuttgart in the fact that half the German delegation, trade-union representatives, were the most determined supporters of the opportunist viewpoint. That was why in Essen, for example, the Germans opposed Van Kol (what took place in Essen was a congress of only the Party, and not of the trade unions), whereas in Stuttgart they supported him. The propagation of neutrality has *in fact* yielded harmful fruits in Germany by playing into the hands of the opportunists in the Social-Democratic movement. From now on we cannot but reckon with that fact; particularly must we do so in Russia, where the proletariat has so many bourgeois-democratic advisers recommending "neutrality" for the trade-union movement.

About the resolution on emigration and immigration we shall say only a few words. In this regard, too, an attempt was made in the commission to support narrow craft views, to secure the adoption of the idea that the immigration of workers from backward countries (coolies from China, etc.) be banned. Again the aristocratic spirit to be found among the proletarians of some "civilized" countries who derive certain advantages from their privileged position and are therefore inclined to forget the demands of international class solidarity. At the Congress itself nobody supported this craft and philistine narrow-mindedness. The resolution fully meets the demands of revolutionary Social-Democracy.

We come to the last and perhaps the most important resolution of the Congress, namely, that on anti-militarism. The notorious Hervé, who has made much noise in France and in Europe generally, upheld a semi-anarchist viewpoint on this subject, naïvely proposing that every war be "answered" by a strike or an uprising. He did not see, on the one hand, that war is a necessary product of capitalism, and that the proletariat cannot renounce participation in a revolutionary war, since such wars are

possible and have taken place in capitalist societies. He did not see, on the other hand, that the possibility of "answering" a war depends on the character of the crisis that the war gives rise to. The choice of the means of struggle depends on these conditions, and the struggle must consist (this is the third point of Hervéism's misunderstandings or thoughtlessness) not in merely replacing war by peace, but in replacing capitalism by socialism. The essential thing is not just to prevent war breaking out, but to use the crisis evoked by a war to hasten the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. But underlying all the semi-anarchist absurdities of Hervéism was the correct practical notion of giving an impulse to socialism in the sense of not being confined to merely parliamentary means of struggle, of developing among the masses the consciousness of the need to adopt revolutionary methods in connection with the crises that war inevitably brings in its train—in the sense, finally, of spreading among the masses a keener consciousness of international working-class solidarity and of the falsity of bourgeois patriotism.

Bebel's resolution, which the Germans proposed and which coincided on all essential points with Guesde's resolution, suffered from the defect of making no reference to the practical tasks of the proletariat. This rendered it possible to read Bebel's orthodox propositions through opportunist spectacles. Vollmar immediately turned this possibility into a reality.

That was why Rosa Luxemburg and the Russian S.-D. delegates proposed amendments to Bebel's resolution. These amendments 1) stated that militarism is the chief instrument of class oppression; 2) pointed to the need for propaganda among the youth; 3) emphasized the need for Social-Democracy not only to fight against wars breaking out or for the speediest termination of wars that have already broken out, but also to utilize the crisis

created by a war to hasten the downfall of the bourgeoisie.

The sub-committee (selected by the commission on anti-militarism) accepted all these amendments to Bebel's resolution. In addition Jaurès made a happy suggestion: instead of indicating the means of struggle (strike, uprising), they should give historical examples of the proletariat's fight against war, ranging from demonstrations in Europe to the revolution in Russia. The result of all these alterations was a resolution which, though overlong, is really rich in ideas and exactly indicates the tasks of the proletariat. This resolution combined the strictness of orthodox, i.e., the only scientific, Marxist analysis with the recommendation to the workers' parties of the most resolute and revolutionary methods of struggle. It cannot be read in Vollmar fashion, just as it cannot be confined within the narrow bounds of naïve Hervéism.

All in all, the Stuttgart Congress clearly brought the opportunist and the revolutionary wings of international Social-Democracy face to face on a whole number of highly important issues, which it settled in the spirit of revolutionary Marxism. The resolutions of the Congress, elucidated in the Congress debates, must be regularly consulted by every propagandist and agitator. Unity in tactics and unity in revolutionary struggle by the proletarians of all countries will considerably further the work done at Stuttgart.

Written between the end of August and the beginning of September 1907

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MUNICIPALIZATION OF THE LAND AND MUNICIPAL SOCIALISM*

These two terms were approximated by the Mensheviks themselves, whose agrarian programme was adopted at Stockholm.⁴² Suffice it to mention the names of two prominent Mensheviks, Kostrov and Larin. "Some comrades," said Kostrov at Stockholm, "seem to be hearing about municipal ownership for the first time. Let me remind them that in Western Europe there is a whole trend" (precisely!) "called 'municipal socialism' (Britain), which advocates the extension of ownership by urban and rural municipalities, and which is also supported by our comrades. Many municipalities own real estate, and that does not contradict our programme. We now have the opportunity to acquire (!) real-estate wealth gratis (!!)" for the municipalities, and we ought to take advantage of it. Of course, the confiscated land should be municipalized" (p. 88).

The naïve opinion about "the opportunity to acquire wealth gratis" is magnificently expressed here. But the speaker did not stop to think why this "trend" of municipal socialism, precisely as a specific one and chiefly in Britain, which he cited as an example, is a trend of *extreme opportunism*. Why did Engels, in his letters to Sorge, when characterizing the extreme intellectualist oppor-

* This item is § 7 of Chapter IV of V. I. Lenin's *The Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, 1905-1907*.—Ed.

tunism of the British Fabians, emphasize the petty-bourgeois significance of their "municipalization" schemes?⁴³

Larin, in unison with Kostrov, says in his comments on the Menshevik programme: "Perhaps in some localities the people's local government bodies will be able to manage these huge estates themselves, as, for instance, the horse tramways or slaughter-houses are managed by municipal councils, and then the whole (!) of the profit obtained from them will be placed at the disposal of the whole (!) population"*—and not of the local bourgeoisie, my dear Larin?

The philistine illusions of the philistine heroes of West-European municipal socialism are already making themselves felt. That the bourgeoisie are in power is forgotten; so also is the fact that only in towns with a high percentage of *proletarian* population is it possible to obtain for the working people some crumbs of benefit from municipal government! But this is by the way. The principal fallacy in the "municipal socialist" idea of municipalizing the land lies in the following.

The bourgeois intelligentsia of the West, like the British Fabians, elevate municipal socialism to a separate "trend" precisely because they dream of social peace, of class conciliation, and wish to deflect the attention of the public from the fundamental problems of the economic system as a whole, and of the state *structure* as a whole, to minor problems of local *administration*. In the sphere of problems of the first category, class contradictions stand out most sharply; that is the sphere which, as we have shown, affects the very foundations of the rule of the bourgeoisie as a class. It is here, therefore, that the philistine, reactionary utopia of bringing about socialism in part is especially hopeless. Attention is directed to the sphere of minor local problems, not of the problem of the

* «Крестьянский вопрос и социал-демократия», стр. 66 [*The Peasant Question and Social-Democracy*, p. 66].

rule of the bourgeoisie as a class, not of that of the chief instruments of that rule, but of that of distributing the *crumbs* dropped by the rich bourgeoisie for the "*needs of the population*." Naturally, since attention is focused on such problems as the spending of paltry sums (paltry in comparison with the total surplus value and the total state expenditure of the bourgeoisie), which the *bourgeoisie themselves are willing* to set aside for public health (Engels pointed out in *The Housing Question*⁴⁴ that the bourgeoisie themselves are afraid of contagious diseases in the towns), or for public education (since the bourgeoisie must have educated workers who can adapt themselves to a high technical level!), and so on, it is possible, in the sphere of *such minor* problems to indulge in grandiloquent talk about "social peace," about the harmfulness of the class struggle, and so forth. Where is the class struggle if the bourgeoisie themselves are spending money on the "needs of the population," on public health, on education? Why do we need a social revolution if it is possible through the local government bodies, gradually, step by step, to extend "collective ownership," to "socialize" production: the horse tramways, the slaughter-houses referred to so relevantly by the estimable Y. Larin?

The philistine opportunism of that "trend" lies in that it forgets the *narrow limits* of so-called "municipal socialism" (in reality, municipal capitalism, as the British Social-Democrats properly argue against the Fabians). It forgets that so long as the bourgeoisie rule as a class they cannot allow any encroachment, even from the "municipal" point of view, upon the real *foundations* of their rule; that if the bourgeoisie do allow, tolerate "municipal socialism," it is precisely because the latter does not touch the *foundations* of their rule, does not affect the *important* sources of their wealth, but extends only to the local, narrow sphere of expenditure that the bourgeoisie themselves *allow* the "population" to manage. The very slightest knowledge of Western "municipal socialism" is

sufficient to show that any attempt by *socialist* municipalities to go even slightly beyond the boundaries of their normal, i.e., minor, petty activities, which give no *substantial* relief to the workers, any attempt to touch *capital* even slightly, is invariably and absolutely vetoed in the most categorical fashion by the central authorities of the bourgeois state.

Now it is this fundamental mistake, this philistine opportunism of the West-European Fabians, Possibilists and Bernsteinites, that is taken over by our advocates of municipalization.

“Municipal socialism” means socialism in matters of *local administration*. That which goes beyond the limits of *local* interests, beyond the limits of state *administration*, i.e., all that affects the main sources of revenue of the ruling classes and the principal means of securing their rule, all that affects not the administration of the state, but the *structure* of the state, *thereby* transcends the domain of “municipal socialism.” But our wiseacres evade this acute national issue, this problem of the land, which most directly affects the vital interests of the ruling classes, by *ranging* it among “problems of local administration.” In the West they municipalize horse tramways and slaughterhouses; why should we not municipalize one half of the best land?—argues the puny Russian intellectual. That would be suitable both in case of restoration, and in case of the incomplete democratization of the central government!

Thus we get agrarian socialism in a bourgeois revolution, a socialism of the most philistine sort, calculated to *blunt* the class struggle on *vital* issues by *relegating* the latter to the category of petty problems affecting only local administration. As a matter of fact, the problem of exploiting half of the best land is neither a local one nor one of administration. It is a problem that affects the whole state, a problem of the structure not only of the landlord, but also of the bourgeois, state. And to try to tempt the people

with the idea that it is possible to develop “municipal socialism” in agriculture before accomplishing the socialist revolution is to indulge in the most inadmissible kind of demagoguery. Marxism permits the introduction of nationalization in the programme of the bourgeois revolution because nationalization is a bourgeois measure, because absolute rent hinders the development of capitalism, because the private ownership of land is a hindrance to capitalism. But to include the municipalization of the big estates in the programme of the bourgeois revolution, requires the remodelling of Marxism into Fabian intellectualist opportunism.

It is here that we see the difference between petty-bourgeois and proletarian methods in the bourgeois revolution. The petty bourgeoisie, even the most radical—our Socialist-Revolutionary Party included—anticipates not class struggle *after* the bourgeois revolution, but universal prosperity and appeasement. In advance, therefore, it “builds its nest,” introduces plans for petty-bourgeois reforms into the bourgeois revolution, talks about various “norms,” about “regulating” landownership, about strengthening the labour principle and small farming, etc. The petty-bourgeois method is that of creating relationships of the utmost possible social peace. The proletarian method is *exclusively* that of clearing the path of everything that is mediaeval, of clearing the path for the *class struggle*. Therefore, the proletarian can leave it to the small farmers to discuss “norms” of landownership; the proletarian is interested only in abolishing the landlord latifundia, only in abolishing the private ownership of land, as the *last* barrier to the class struggle in agriculture. In the bourgeois revolution we are interested not in petty-bourgeois reforms, not in a future “nest” of appeased small farmers, but in conditions for the proletarian struggle against all philistine appeasement on a bourgeois basis.

It is this anti-proletarian spirit that municipalization introduces into the programme of the *bourgeois* agrarian

revolution, for, despite the profoundly false view of the Mensheviks, municipalization does not widen the scope of and sharpen the class struggle, but, on the contrary, *blunts* it. It blunts it by assuming that local democracy is possible without the complete democratization of the centre. It also blunts it by the idea of "municipal socialism," because the latter is *conceivable* in bourgeois society only *off* the high road of the struggle, only in minor, local, unimportant issues on which *even* the bourgeoisie may yield, may let themselves be reconciled without losing the possibility of preserving their rule as a class.

The working class must provide bourgeois society with the purest, most consistent and most thoroughgoing programme of bourgeois revolution, including the bourgeois nationalization of the land. The proletariat scornfully rejects petty-bourgeois reformism in the bourgeois revolution; we are interested in freedom for the struggle, not in freedom for philistine bliss.

The opportunism of the intelligentsia in the workers' party naturally pursues a different line. Instead of a broad revolutionary programme in the bourgeois revolution, attention is focused on a petty-bourgeois utopia: to uphold local democracy while there is no democracy at the centre; to secure for petty reformism a little corner of municipal activity away from the great "tussles," and to evade the extraordinarily acute conflict over the land by following the recipe of the anti-Semites, i.e., by transferring an important national problem to the domain of petty, local ones.

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1907

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TRADE-UNION NEUTRALITY

In the previous issue of the *Proletary* we published the resolution of our Party C.C. on trade unions.⁴⁵ *Nash Vek* tells its readers about the resolution, and adds that it was adopted unanimously in the C.C., since the Mensheviks voted for it in view of the concessions it contains as compared with the original Bolshevik draft. If the report is true (the defunct *Nash Vek* was distinguished for usually being exceptionally well informed about everything relating to Menshevism), then all we can do is to wholeheartedly welcome the big step towards united Social-Democratic activity in such an important field as the trade unions. The concessions referred to by *Nash Vek* are quite insignificant ones, and do not in the least alter the basic principles of the Bolshevik draft (which, incidentally, was published in No. 17 of the *Proletary*, dated October 20, 1907, along with a lengthy article in support of it, entitled "The Trade Unions and the Social-Democratic Party").

The whole of our Party, consequently, now recognizes that work in the trade unions must be conducted not in the spirit of trade-union neutrality but in that of the closest possible relations between them and the Social-Democratic Party. It is also recognized that allegiance to the Party by the trade unions must be achieved exclusively by S.-D. activity within them, that the S.-D.s must form solid nuclei in the unions, and that illegal unions should be formed where legal ones are impossible.

There can be no doubt that Stuttgart⁴⁶ has exerted very strong influence in bringing the two factions of our Party closer together on the issue of the character of our work in the trade unions. The Stuttgart Congress resolution, as Kautsky pointed out in a speech to the Leipzig workers, puts an end to the recognition of neutrality in principle. The high level reached in the development of class contradictions, their aggravation latterly in all countries, the long experience of Germany (where the neutrality policy strengthened opportunism in the trade unions while not in the least preventing the appearance of special Christian and Liberal unions), and the extension of that particular sphere of proletarian struggle which requires joint and unanimous action by both the unions and the political party (the mass strike and the armed uprising in the Russian revolution, as the prototype of likely forms of the proletarian revolution in the West)—all these things have destroyed the basis of the neutrality theory once and for all.

Among the proletarian parties there is no likelihood of the question of neutrality evoking a particularly big controversy now. It is a different matter with the non-proletarian quasi-Socialist parties like that of our Socialist-Revolutionaries, who actually are the extreme Left wing of the revolutionary bourgeois party of intellectuals and progressive peasants.

It is supremely characteristic that the only ones here to uphold the *idea* of neutrality after Stuttgart have been the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Plekhanov. And they have done so very unsuccessfully.

In the last issue of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party organ, *Znamya Truda* (No. 8, December 1907), we find two articles devoted to the trade-union movement. The S.-R.s most of all try in those articles to ridicule the statement made in the S.-D. paper, *Vperyod*, that the Stuttgart resolution settled the question of the Party's attitude to the trade unions along the same lines as the London resolu-

tion, namely, in the Bolshevik spirit. Our answer is that in the very same issue of *Znamya Truda* the S.-R.s themselves cited *facts* which prove such an assessment to be absolutely correct.

"That was the time," writes *Znamya Truda* about the autumn of 1905, "and it is a characteristic fact—when the three Russian socialist factions: the Menshevik Social-Democrats, the Bolshevik Social-Democrats, and the S.-R.s, first met face to face to state their views on the trade-union movement. The Moscow Bureau, which was commissioned to select from its midst a central bureau that would convene a congress (of trade unions), organized a big meeting of worker trade-unionists at the Olympic Theatre.* The Mensheviks drew a classically Marxist, strictly orthodox line of demarcation between the aims of the Party and of the trade union. 'The task of the S.-D. Party is to establish the socialist system and abolish capitalist relations; the task of the trade unions is to improve working conditions within the bounds of the capitalist system, so as to secure conditions for the sale of manpower that are of advantage to the interests of labour'; the conclusion drawn was that the trade unions are non-Party, and that they embrace 'all workers of the given profession.'**

"The Bolsheviks sought to prove that at the present time there can be no strict separation of politics from profession, and hence drew the conclusion that 'there must be close unity between the Social-Democratic Party and the trade unions, which it must lead.' Finally, the S.-R.s demanded that the unions be strictly non-Party, in order

* The meeting was attended by about fifteen hundred people. See report in *Byulleten Muzeya Sodeistviya Trudu*, No. 2, November 26, 1905 (quoted by *Znamya Truda*).

** It should be said, however, that Messrs. the Mensheviks understood this "non-Party" character in quite an original way: thus, their speaker illustrated his points as follows: "A proper solution of the attitude to the Party has been found in the Moscow Typographical Union, which suggests to comrades that they join the ranks of the S.-D. Party as individuals" (note by *Znamya Truda*).

to avoid a split in the ranks of the proletariat, but rejected any limitation of the tasks and activities of the trade unions to some narrow sphere, and formulated this task as the struggle against capital all along the line, consequently, as both an economic and a political struggle."

That is how *Znamya Truda* itself describes the facts! And only a person who is blind or totally incapable of thinking can deny that of these three viewpoints the one that speaks of close unity between the Social-Democratic Party and the unions "is confirmed by the Stuttgart resolution, which recommends close ties between the Party and the trade unions."*

In order to confuse this absolutely clear issue, the S.-R.s did a most amusing thing; they mixed up the question of the independence of the trade unions in the economic struggle with that of their being non-Party. "The Stuttgart Congress," they write, "definitely stood for the independence (the non-Party character) of the unions, i.e., rejected the viewpoint of both the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks." This conclusion is drawn from the following words in the Stuttgart resolution: "Each of the two organizations (the Party and the trade union) has a sphere corresponding to its nature, a sphere in which it must act quite independently. In addition, however, there is an ever expanding sphere," etc., as quoted above. And wags appeared who *mixed up* this demand for the "independence" of the trade unions in the "sphere corresponding to their nature" with the question of the unions being non-Party or of their having close ties with the Party in the political sphere and in dealing with the tasks of the socialist revolution!

That was how our S.-R.s completely hushed up the basic question of principle, namely, that of the assessment to be given to the "neutrality" theory, which in fact serves to strengthen the influence of the bourgeoisie over the prole-

* What the Mensheviks put forward in November 1905 was not orthodox but *vulgar* views on neutrality. Let the S.-R. gentlemen remember that!

ariat. Instead of dealing with this question of principle, they preferred to speak of just the specifically Russian situation where there are several Socialist parties, and did so in such a way as to throw a *false* light on what happened at Stuttgart. "One cannot argue that the Stuttgart resolution is hazy," writes *Znamya Truda*, "for Mr. Plekhanov dispersed all haziness and every doubt when he spoke at the International Congress as the Party's official representative; so far, however, we have no appropriate statement by the Central S.-D. Committee that 'such a statement by Comrade Plekhanov disorganizes the ranks of the united party. . . .'"

Gentlemen of the S.-R. Party! You are entitled, of course, to wax ironical about our C.C. having called Plekhanov to order. You are entitled to think that one can respect a party that, for example, does *not* officially condemn Mr. Gershuni's pro-Cadet conduct. But why utter a downright untruth? Plekhanov *was not* the S.-D. Party's representative at the Stuttgart Congress, but merely one of its 33 delegates. And what he represented was the views not of the S.-D. Party but of the present Menshevik opposition to that Party, to its London decisions. The S.-R.s cannot but be aware of this, which means they are telling a *deliberate* untruth.

"... In the commission that examined the question of the relations between the trade unions and the political party, he (Plekhanov) literally said the following: 'In Russia there are 11 revolutionary organizations; with which of these must the trade unions enter into contact?... The introduction of political differences into the trade unions in Russia would be harmful.' In answer to this *all* the members of the commission were *unanimous* in declaring that the Congress resolution must not be understood in that way, that they 'do not at all impose on the trade unions and their members the duty of being members of the S.-D. Party,' that they, as stated in the resolution, demand their 'complete independence'" (*Znamya Truda's* italics).

You are mixing things up, gentlemen of *Znamya Truda*! In the commission a *Belgian* comrade asked whether

it could be made a duty of trade-union members to join the Social-Democratic Party, and *everybody* answered that it could not. Plekhanov, on the other hand, proposed the following amendment to the resolution: "Unity, however, in the trade-union organization should not be lost sight of." This amendment was adopted, but not unanimously (Comrade Voinov, who represented the views of the R.S.D.L.P., voted for the amendment, and in our opinion was right in doing so). That was how matters stood.

Social-Democrats must never lose sight of unity in the trade-union organization. That is absolutely right. But it refers to the S.-R.s, too, and we invite them to ponder over this "unity of the trade-union organization" when the latter announces its close ties with Social-Democracy! Nobody ever dreamt of "imposing the duty" on trade-union members of joining the S.-D. Party. Fear has put that idea into the heads of the S.-R.s. And to suggest that the Stuttgart Congress forbade trade unions to announce their close ties with the Social-Democratic Party or to establish *such* ties in reality, in actual life, is a fairy tale.

"The Russian S.-D.s," writes *Znamya Truda*, "are conducting a most unflinching and energetic campaign to win the trade unions and subordinate them to their Party leadership. The Bolsheviks are doing so directly and openly ... the Mensheviks have chosen a more roundabout way..." Correct, gentlemen of the S.-R. Party! For the sake of the prestige of the workers' International you are entitled to demand of us that we conduct this campaign in a tactful and restrained way, while "not losing sight of the unity of the trade-union organization." We very readily recognize this, and demand that you recognize the same thing, but we shall not give up our campaign!

But then Plekhanov said that it was harmful to introduce political differences into the unions. ... Yes, Plekhanov said that stupid thing, and the S.-R. gentlemen naturally had to seize on it, as they always do seize on everything that is least worthy of being imitated. It is not Plekha-

nov's words, however, that must serve as the guiding line, but the Congress resolution, which *cannot* be implemented without "introducing political differences." Here is a little example. The Congress resolution says that the trade unions must not be guided by "the theory of a harmony of interests between labour and capital." We Social-Democrats assert that the agrarian programme which in bourgeois society demands equal distribution of the land is based on the theory of a harmony of interests between labour and capital.* We shall always declare ourselves against making such a difference (or even a difference with monarchist-minded workers) the grounds for splitting the ranks during a strike, etc., but we shall always "introduce this difference" into the workers' midst in general, and into *all* worker's unions in particular.

Plekhanov's reference to 11 parties is just as foolish. Firstly, Russia is not alone in having different Socialist parties. Secondly, Russia has only two rival Socialist parties of any consequence, the S.-D. and the S.-R. parties, for it is quite ridiculous to lump national parties together. Thirdly, the question of uniting the really Socialist parties is quite a special one; by introducing it Plekhanov confuses the issue. We must always and everywhere stand for the closest relations between the unions and the Socialist party of the working class, but the question of which party in a particular country, in a particular nationality is really socialist and really the party of the working class, is a special one, and is settled not by resolutions of international congresses, but by the progress of the struggle between the national parties.

How far Comrade Plekhanov's arguments on this subject are wrong is shown particularly vividly by his article in No. 12 of *Sovremenny Mir*, 1907. On page 55 Plekhanov

* Even some S.-R.s realize this now, and have thus taken a definite step towards Marxism. See the very interesting new book by Messrs. Firsov and Jacoby, which we shall soon discuss in detail with readers of the *Proletary*.

quotes a statement by Lunacharsky that trade-union neutrality is supported by the German revisionists. Plekhanov answers this statement as follows: "The revisionists say that the unions must be neutral, but understand this as meaning that the unions must be used to fight orthodox Marxism." And Plekhanov concludes: "The elimination of trade-union neutrality will not help matters at all. Even if we make the unions closely and formally dependent on the Party, and revisionist 'ideology' triumphs in the Party, the elimination of trade-union neutrality will merely be a fresh victory for 'the critics of Marx.'"

This argument is a typical specimen of Plekhanov's way of shirking the issue and hushing up the essence of the dispute. If revisionist ideology really does triumph in the Party, then it will not be the Socialist party of the working class. The issue is not how the Party takes shape, and what struggle and what splits occur in the process. The issue is that a Socialist party and trade unions exist in every capitalist country, and it is our job to define the basic relations between them. The class interests of the bourgeoisie inevitably engender the endeavour to confine the unions to petty and narrow activity based on the existing system, to prevent them having any ties with socialism, and the neutrality theory is the ideological covering for these endeavours of the bourgeoisie. One way or another the revisionists in the S.-D. parties always clear a way for themselves in capitalist society.

Of course, at the outset of the workers' political and trade-union movements in Europe it was possible to uphold trade-union neutrality as a means of extending the original field of proletarian struggle at a time when it was comparatively undeveloped and when the bourgeoisie exerted no systematic influence on the unions. At the present time it is quite out of place from the viewpoint of international Social-Democracy to uphold trade-union neutrality. One can only smile when reading Plekhanov's assurances that "now, too, Marx would stand for trade-union

neutrality in Germany," especially when that sort of argument is based on a one-sided interpretation of a single "quotation" from Marx, while the aggregate of Marx's statements and the whole spirit of his teachings are ignored.

"I stand for neutrality, understood in the Bebelian, and not the revisionist sense," writes Plekhanov. To talk that way means to swear by Bebel and still to get into a mess. There is no gainsaying that Bebel is such a great authority in the international proletarian movement, such an experienced practical leader, a Socialist with such a keen sense of the requirements of the revolutionary struggle, that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred he himself got out of the mess when he happened to slip into one, and dragged back those who wanted to follow his lead. Bebel was wrong when he and Vollmar defended the revisionist agrarian programme in Breslau (in 1895), when he insisted (in Essen) on making a distinction in principle between defensive and offensive wars, and when he was ready to elevate trade-union "neutrality" to the level of a principle. We readily believe that if Plekhanov gets himself into a mess only in Bebel's company, he will not do so often or for long. But we still think Bebel should not be imitated when Bebel is wrong.

It is said—and Plekhanov makes a special point of it—that neutrality is necessary in order to unite all the workers who are coming to see the need for improving their material conditions. But those who say this forget that the present stage of development of class contradictions inevitably and unavoidably introduces "political differences" even into the question of how this improvement is to be secured within the bounds of contemporary society. The theory of trade-union neutrality, unlike the theory that there must be close ties between the unions and revolutionary Social-Democracy, inevitably leads to preference for such methods of securing this improvement as imply a blunting of the proletarian class struggle. A striking ex-

ample of this (which incidentally is connected with the appraisal of one of the most interesting episodes in the modern labour movement) is provided by *the very* issue of the *Sovremenny Mir* in which Plekhanov advocates neutrality. Side by side with Plekhanov, we see here Mr. E. P. praising the well-known British railwaymen's leader Richard Bell, who ended a dispute between the workers and the railway directors by a compromise. Bell is described as the "soul of the whole railwaymen's movement." "There is not the slightest doubt," E. P. writes, "that thanks to his calm, thoughtful and consistent tactics, Bell has won the absolute confidence of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, the members of which are ready to follow him anywhere without hesitation" (*Sovremenny Mir*, No. 12, page 75). This point of view is not accidental, but is connected at bottom with the neutrality theory, which puts in the forefront the organizing of the workers for the improvement of their conditions, and not for a struggle that can benefit the cause of proletarian emancipation.

But this point of view does not at all correspond to the views of the British Socialists, who would probably be very much surprised to learn that no objection is raised to glorifiers of Bell writing in the same journal as do prominent Mensheviks like Plekhanov, Iordansky and Co.

Justice,⁴⁷ the British Social-Democratic newspaper, in a leading article on November 16, commented as follows on the agreement arrived at between Bell and the railway companies: "We cannot but agree with the almost universal trade-union condemnation which has been pronounced upon this so-called treaty of peace" ... "it absolutely destroys the very reason of existence of the union" ... "this preposterous agreement ... cannot be binding on the men, and the latter will do well to at once repudiate it." And in its next issue, that of November 23, Burnett wrote the following about this agreement in an article entitled "Sold Again!": "There weeks ago the A.S.R.S. was one of the

most powerful trade unions in the country; today it is reduced to the level of a mere benefit society..." "All these changes have taken place not because the railwaymen have fought and lost, but because their leaders have deliberately or stupidly sold them to the railway bosses ere the fight began." And the editor added that a similar letter had been received from "A Midland Railway Company's Wage-Slave."

But perhaps this is an "infatuation" of the "too revolutionary" Social-Democrats? No. *The Labour Leader*,⁴⁸ organ of the moderate Independent Labour Party,⁴⁹ which does not even want to call itself socialist, in its issue of November 15 published a letter from a railway trade-unionist in which, replying to the praise lavished on Bell by the entire capitalist press (from the radical *Reynolds' Newspaper* to the Conservative *Times*), he stated that the agreement concluded by Bell was the "most contemptible one that has ever occurred in the history of Trade Unionism," and described Richard Bell as the "Marshal Bazaine of the Trade-Union movement." In the same issue another railwayman demands that "Mr. Bell ... should be called upon to explain" the nefarious settlement by which "the railwaymen ... are condemned to seven years' penal servitude..." And the editor of this moderate organ, in the leading article of the same issue, describes the agreement as "the Sedan of the British Trade-Union movement." "Never has such an opportunity presented itself for a national manifestation of the power of organized labour." Among the workers there prevailed "unprecedented enthusiasm" and a desire to fight. And the article concludes with a scathing comparison between the dire needs of the workers and the triumph of "Mr. Lloyd George" (the Cabinet Minister who played the role of lackey to the capitalists) "and Mr. Bell hastening to prepare banquets."

Only the extreme opportunists, the members of the purely intellectual Fabian organization, *approved* of the settlement; so that even *The New Age*, which sympathizes with

the Fabians, blushed for shame and was obliged to admit that while the Conservative bourgeois *Times* had published the Manifesto of the Fabian Society Executive Committee in full, apart from these gentlemen "no socialist organization, no trade union, and no prominent labour leader" (December 7th issue, p. 101) had declared in favour of the settlement.

Here you have a specimen of how the neutrality theory is applied by Plekhanov's colleague, Mr. E. P. The problem was one not of "political differences" but of improving the workers' conditions in existing society. The entire British bourgeoisie, the Fabians and Mr. E. P. declared for "improvement" at the price of abstaining from struggle and of submitting to the tender mercies of capital; all the Socialists and trade-unionists were for a collective struggle by the workers. Will Plekhanov, then, continue now to advocate "neutrality," and not close ties between the trade unions and the Socialist party?

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THE AGRARIAN QUESTION IN RUSSIA TOWARDS THE CLOSE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

(Excerpt)

It is often thought in Russia that nationalization of the land means removing the land from the sphere of commerce. This, undoubtedly, is the viewpoint of the majority of the progressive peasants and of the ideologists of the peasantry. But this view is a radically wrong one. The very opposite is the case. Private property in land is an obstacle to the free investment of capital in land. Therefore, where the free renting of land from the state exists (and this is the essence of nationalization in bourgeois society) the land is drawn *more intensely* into the sphere of commerce than is the case where private property in land prevails. There is much more freedom of capital investment in land, much more freedom of competition in agriculture, where land is freely rented than where land is private property. Nationalization of the land is, as it were, landlordism without the landlord. And what landlordism in the capitalist development of agriculture means is explained in the wonderfully profound arguments of Marx in his *Theories of Surplus Value*. I have quoted these arguments in my work on the agrarian programme mentioned above,⁵⁰ but in view of the importance of the question, I take the liberty of repeating them here.

In the paragraph on the historical conditions of Ricardo's theory of rent (*Theorien über den Mehrwert*, II. Band, 2. Teil, Stuttgart, 1905, S. 5-7), Marx says that

Ricardo and Anderson "start out from the viewpoint regarded as very strange on the Continent," viz., they presume that no "landed property exists as an obstacle to any investment of capital in land." At first sight, this would seem to be contradictory, because it is just in Britain that feudal landed property is considered to have been completely preserved. But Marx explains that precisely in Britain capital "dealt ruthlessly with the traditional relations of agriculture as nowhere else in the world." Britain is in this respect "the most revolutionary country in the world." "All historically inherited relations—not only the position of the villages but the very villagers themselves, not only the habitations of the agricultural population, but this population itself, not only the ancient economic centres but the very economy itself—have been ruthlessly swept away where they were in contradiction to the conditions of capitalist production in agriculture or did not correspond to those conditions. The German," continues Marx, "finds economic relations determined by the traditional common-land (*Feldmarken*) relations, the position of economic centres and particular conglomerations of the population. The Briton finds that the historical conditions of agriculture have been progressively created by capital since the fifteenth century. The expression customary in the United Kingdom, the 'clearing of estates,' does not occur in any Continental country. But what does this 'clearing of estates' mean? It means that, without regard for the local population—which is driven away, for existing villages—which are levelled to the ground, for farm buildings—which are torn down, for the kind of agriculture—which is transformed at a stroke, being converted for example from tillage to pasture; in a word, all conditions of production, instead of being accepted as they are handed down by tradition, are historically *fashioned* in the form necessary under the circumstances for the most profitable investment of capital. To that extent, therefore, *no landed property exists*; it allows

capital—the farmer—to manage freely, since it is only concerned about the money income. A Pomeranian landowner" (Marx refers to Rodbertus, whose theory of rent he refutes brilliantly and in detail in this work), "his mind full of his ancestral common lands, economic centres and the agricultural collegium, etc., is quite likely, therefore, to hold up his hands in horror at Ricardo's 'unhistorical' views on the development of agricultural relations." As a matter of fact, "British conditions are the only ones in which modern landed property, i.e., landed property *modified* by capitalist production, has developed adequately" (with ideal perfection). "Here the English theory" (i.e., Ricardo's theory of rent) "is the classical one for the modern, i.e., capitalist mode of production."

In Britain, the clearing of the estates proceeded in revolutionary forms, accompanied by the violent break-up of peasant landownership.

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INFLAMMABLE MATERIAL IN WORLD POLITICS

The revolutionary movement in various European and Asian countries has latterly made itself felt so impressively that we see before us the fairly clear outlines of a new and incomparably higher stage in the international proletarian struggle.

There has been a counter-revolution in Persia⁵¹—a curious combination of the dissolution of Russia's First Duma, and of the Russian uprising at the close of 1905. Shamefully defeated by the Japanese, the armies of the Russian Tsar are taking revenge by zealously serving the counter-revolution. The exploits of the Cossacks in mass shootings, punitive expeditions, manhandling and pillage in Russia are followed by their exploits in suppressing the revolution in Persia. That Nicholas Romanov, head of the Black-Hundred⁵² landlords and of the capitalists scared by strikes and civil war, should be venting his fury on the Persian revolutionaries, is understandable. It is not the first time that Russia's Christian soldiery is cast in the role of international hangman. That Britain is pharisaically washing her hands of the affair and maintaining a demonstratively friendly neutrality towards the Persian reactionaries and supporters of absolutism, is a somewhat different matter. The Liberal British bourgeoisie, irritated by the growth of the labour movement at home and frightened by the rise of the revolutionary struggle in India, is more and more frequently, more and more frankly and saliently, demonstrating how *savage* become the most "civilized" European "politicians," men

who have passed through the highest school of constitutionalism, when the mass struggle flares up against capital and the capitalist colonial system, a system of slavery, plunder and violence. The position of the Persian revolutionaries is a difficult one; theirs is a country which the masters of India on the one hand, and the counter-revolutionary Russian Government on the other, were on the point of dividing up between themselves. But the dogged struggle in Tabriz and the repeated swing of the fortunes of war to the revolutionaries who, it seemed, had been utterly defeated, are evidence that the Shah's bashibazouks, even with the aid of Russian Lyakhovs and British diplomats, are encountering the most vigorous resistance from the people. A revolutionary movement that can offer armed resistance to attempts at restoration, that forces the authors of such attempts to call in foreign aid—such a movement cannot be destroyed. In these circumstances, even the fullest triumph of Persian reaction would merely be the prelude to fresh popular unrest.

In Turkey, the revolutionary movement in the army, led by the Young Turks,⁵³ has achieved victory. True, it is only half a victory, or even less, since Turkey's Nicholas II has so far managed to get away with a promise to restore the celebrated Turkish constitution.⁵⁴ But in a revolution, such half victories, such forced and hasty concessions by the old regime, are the surest guarantee of new and much more decisive, more acute fluctuations of the civil war, involving broader masses of the people. And the school of civil war is never lost upon nations. It is a hard school, and its full course *inevitably* includes victories for the counter-revolution, the wild fury of the enraged reactionaries, atrocities by the old government against the rebels, etc. But only inveterate pedants and doting mummies can moan over the fact that the nations have entered this very painful school. For it is one that teaches the oppressed classes how to wage civil war and how to carry the revolution to victory. It concentrates in the masses of con-

temporary slaves the hatred which the downtrodden, benighted and ignorant slaves have always carried within them and which leads to their performing supreme history-making feats when they come to realize the shame of their slavery.

In India, the native slaves of the "civilized" British capitalists have in precisely this recent period been causing much unpleasant concern to their "masters." There is no end to the violence and plunder which goes under the name of the British system of government in India. Nowhere in the world—with the exception, of course, of Russia—will you find such abject mass poverty, and such chronic starvation. The most Liberal and radical personalities of free Britain, men like John Morley—that authority for Russian and non-Russian Cadets, that luminary of "progressive" (actually capital-serving) political writing—become regular Genghis Khans when appointed to govern India, and are capable of sanctioning every means of "pacifying" the population in their charge, down to the *flogging* of political protestors! The little British Social-Democratic weekly *Justice* has been *banned* in India by Liberal and "radical" scoundrels like Morley. And when Keir Hardie, a British M. P. and leader of the Independent Labour Party, had the temerity to visit India and speak to the Indians about the most elementary democratic demands, the whole British bourgeois press raised a howl against this "rebel." And now the most influential British newspapers are in a fury about "agitators" who disturb the tranquillity of India, and are welcoming the purely Russian, *à la* Plehve, court sentences and summary punishment of democratic Indian publicists. But popular India is beginning to stand up in defence of *her* writers and political leaders. The infamous sentence pronounced by the British jackals on the Indian democrat Tilak—he was sentenced to a long term of exile; a question in the British House of Commons the other day revealed that the Indian jurors had declared for acquittal

and that the verdict had been passed *by the vote of the British jurors!*—this reprisal against a democrat by the lackeys of the money-bags evoked street demonstrations and a strike in Bombay. In India, too, the proletariat has already developed to conscious political mass struggle and, that being the case, the Russian-style British regime in India is doomed! By their colonial plunder of Asian countries, the Europeans have succeeded in so steeling one of them, Japan, that she has won great military victories which have ensured her independent national development. There can be no doubt that the age-old plunder of India by the British, and the contemporary struggle of all these "progressive" Europeans against Persian and Indian democracy, will *steel* millions, tens of millions of proletarians in Asia, to wage a struggle against their oppressors which will be just as victorious as that of the Japanese. The class-conscious European worker already has comrades in Asia, and their number will grow by leaps and bounds.

In China, too, the revolutionary movement against the mediaeval order has made itself felt with particular force in recent months. True, nothing definite can yet be said about the present movement—there is so little information about it and such a crop of reports about revolts in various parts of the country—but no doubt can exist about the vigorous growth of the "new spirit" and "European trends" in China, especially since the Russo-Japanese war, and consequently, the old Chinese revolts will inevitably develop into a conscious democratic movement. That this time some of those who participate in plundering the colonies are much concerned is evident from the behaviour of the French in Indo-China: they have *helped* the "historical regime" in China to put down the revolutionaries! They have equally feared for the safety of "their own" Asian possessions bordering on China.

The French bourgeoisie, however, are concerned not only over their Asian possessions. The barricades in Ville-neuve-Saint-Georges, near Paris, the shooting down of

the strikers who built these barricades (on Thursday, July 30 [17])—these events are renewed evidence of the sharpening of the class struggle in Europe. Clemenceau, the Radical who governs France on behalf of the capitalists, is working with uncommon zeal to demolish the last remnants of republican-bourgeois illusions among the proletariat. The shooting down of the workers by troops acting on the orders of a “radical” government has, under Clemenceau, become almost more frequent than before. The French Socialists have already dubbed Clemenceau “The Red” for this, and now, when his agents, the gendarmes and generals, have again shed the blood of the workers, the Socialists recall the catch-phrase once uttered by this ultra-progressive bourgeois republican to a workers’ delegation: “You and I are on different sides of the barricades.” Yes, the French proletariat and the most extreme bourgeois republicans have finally taken their place on opposite sides of the barricades. The French working class shed much blood to win and defend the republic, and now, on the basis of the fully established republican order, the decisive struggle between the propertied class and the working people is rapidly coming to a head. “It was not simply brutality,” *L’Humanité*⁵⁵ wrote of the July 30 events, “it was part of a battle.” The generals and the police were bent on provoking the workers and turning a peaceful unarmed demonstration into a massacre. But the troops that surrounded and attacked the unarmed strikers and demonstrators met with resistance, their action leading to the immediate erection of barricades, and to events which are agitating the whole of France. These barricades, *L’Humanité* says, were built of boards and were ludicrously ineffectual. But that is not important. What is important is that the Third Republic had eliminated the old habit of barricades, whereas now Clemenceau “is reviving that habit”—and he is just as candid about the matter as were “the butchers of June 1848, and Galliffet in 1871”⁵⁶ on the subject of civil war.

And the socialist press is not alone in recalling these great historic dates in connection with the events of July 30. The bourgeois press is furiously attacking the workers, accusing them of behaving as if they intended to start a socialist revolution. One paper cites a minor but characteristic incident indicative of the mood of both sides at the scene of action. When the workers were carrying a wounded comrade past General Virvère, who directed the operations against the strikers, there were shouts from the demonstrators: “*Saluez!*” And the general of the bourgeois republic saluted his wounded enemy.

The sharpening of the struggle between the proletariat and bourgeoisie is to be observed in all the leading capitalist countries. The tendency is the same everywhere, though it manifests itself differently in accordance with the difference in historical conditions, political systems and forms of the labour movement. In America and Britain, where complete political freedom exists and where the proletariat have no revolutionary and socialist traditions—or at least, any that are at all living—this sharpening of the struggle is expressed in the mounting movement against the trusts, in the extraordinary growth of socialism and the increasing attention it is getting from the propertied classes, and in the transition of workers’ organizations, in some cases purely economic, to systematic and independent proletarian political struggle. In Austria and Germany, and partly also in the Scandinavian countries, this sharpening of the class struggle affects election campaigns, party relationships, helps to bring together the bourgeoisie of all sorts and shades against their common enemy, the proletariat, and is accompanied by harsher judicial and police persecution. Slowly but surely, the two opposing camps are building up their strength, consolidating their organizations, separating with increasing sharpness in every sphere of public life, as if preparing, tacitly but intently, for the impending revolutionary battles. In the Latin countries, Italy and

particularly France, the sharpening of the class struggle is expressed in especially stormy, violent, and occasionally outright revolutionary upheavals, when the pent-up hatred of the proletariat for its oppressors bursts out with unexpected force, and the "peaceful" atmosphere of parliamentary struggle gives way to episodes of real civil war.

The international revolutionary movement of the proletariat does not and cannot develop evenly and in identical forms in different countries. The full and all-round utilization of every opportunity in every field of activity comes only as the result of the class struggle of the workers in the various countries. Every country makes its valuable contribution, introduces its specific features to the common stream, but in every single country the movement suffers from a particular one-sidedness, from the particular theoretical and practical shortcomings of the individual socialist parties. On the whole we can clearly see that international socialism has made tremendous progress, that in a number of specific clashes with the enemy the proletariat have rallied million-strong armies, and that the decisive struggle with the bourgeoisie is nearing—a struggle for which the working class is much better *prepared* than at the time of the Commune, that last great proletarian insurrection.

And this progress of the whole of international socialism, along with the sharpening of the revolutionary-democratic struggle in Asia, places the Russian revolution in a peculiar and particularly difficult position. The Russian revolution has a great international ally both in Europe and Asia, but, at the same time, and *precisely because of this*, it has not only a national, not only a Russian, but also an *international* enemy. Reaction against the mounting proletarian struggle is inevitable in every capitalist country, and it unites the bourgeois governments of the world against every popular movement, against every revolution, both in Asia and particularly in Europe. The opportunists in our Party, like the majority of the Russian

liberal intelligentsia, are still dreaming of a bourgeois revolution in Russia that will "not alienate" or scare away the bourgeoisie, that will not engender "excessive" reaction, or lead to the seizure of power by the revolutionary classes. Vain hopes! A philistine utopia! The amount of inflammable material in all the leading countries of the world is increasing so speedily, and the conflagration is so clearly spreading to most Asian countries, which only yesterday were in a state of deep slumber, that the intensification of international bourgeois reaction and the aggravation of every single national revolution are absolutely inevitable.

The historical tasks of our revolution are not being and cannot be performed by the forces of counter-revolution. The Russian bourgeoisie are gravitating more and more towards the international anti-proletarian and anti-democratic trend. That is inevitable. The Russian proletariat should not seek allies among the Liberals. It must follow its own independent path to the complete victory of the revolution, basing itself on the need for a forcible solution of the agrarian problem in Russia by the peasant masses themselves, helping them to overthrow the rule of the Black-Hundred landlords and the Black-Hundred autocracy, setting itself the task of establishing a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry in Russia, and remembering that its struggle and its victory are inseparable from the international revolutionary movement. Less illusions about the liberalism of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie (counter-revolutionary both in Russia and the world over). More attention to the growth of the international revolutionary proletariat!

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A PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION OF BRITISH AND GERMAN WORKERS

As is well known, in Britain and Germany a chauvinist campaign has long been conducted in the bourgeois press, especially the gutter press, in which the countries are incited against one another. Competition in the world market between British and German capitalists is becoming increasingly fierce. Britain's former supremacy and undivided rule over the world market have become things of the past. Germany is one of the capitalist countries that are developing particularly rapidly, and her industrial products are seeking markets abroad on an ever growing scale. The struggle for colonies and the conflict of commercial interests have in capitalist society become major causes of war. It is therefore not surprising that the capitalists of both countries consider war between Britain and Germany inevitable, and their military men deem it quite desirable. The British jingoes want to undermine the strength of a dangerous rival by smashing Germany's sea-power while it is still immeasurably weaker than Britain's. The German Junkers and generals, headed by that Bourbon, Wilhelm II, are spoiling for a fight with Britain, hoping to be able to use their numerical superiority in land forces and expecting the clamour of military victory to stifle the ever growing discontent of the working masses and prevent the aggravation of the class struggle in Germany.

The British and German workers resolved to come out publicly against the growing war danger. For a long time the working-class press in both countries had been waging a steadfast struggle against chauvinism and militarism. But what was required was a somewhat more imposing expression of the will of the working class than through the organs of the press. The British workers decided to send a delegation to Berlin to attend a grand demonstration that would declare the joint determination of the proletariat of both countries to wage war on war.

The demonstration took place in Berlin on Sunday, September 20 (7).^{*} For once the British workers' representatives were able to address the city's proletariat without let or hindrance. When, two years before, J. Jaurès had wanted to speak to the German workers on behalf of the French working class at a Social-Democratic mass meeting in Berlin to protest against the bourgeois jingoes, the German Government banned him. This time it did not dare to eject the delegates of the British proletariat.

A huge rally of working men was held in one of Berlin's biggest halls. About 5,000 people packed the place and the overflow of many thousands of others occupied the surrounding grounds and the street. Stewards wearing red armbands kept order. Comrade Legien, the well-known leader of the German (so called "free," i.e., actually Social-Democratic) trade unions, greeted the British delegation on behalf of the entire politically and industrially organized working class of Germany. He said that fifty years ago French and British workers had demonstrated on behalf of peace. At that time those pioneer Socialists had no following of organized masses. Today Britain and Germany had together an army of $4\frac{1}{3}$ million organized workers. It was on behalf of this army that the British delegates and the Berlin rally now spoke, declaring that

^{*} September 7, old style.—Ed.

the decision of war or peace lay in the hands of the working class.

In his speech in reply the British workers' delegate, Maddison condemned the jingo slander campaign conducted by the bourgeoisie and submitted an address from the workers of Britain to the workers of Germany, signed by 3,000 people. Among the signatories, he said, were representatives of both trends in the British labour movement (i.e., Social-Democrats, and adherents of the Independent Labour Party, who do not yet hold any consistent socialist point of view). The address pointed out that wars serve the interests of the possessing classes; that the masses of the workers bear the whole burden of war, while the possessing classes derive benefit from national calamities. Let the workers unite to fight the militarists, to ensure peace!

After other British delegates and a representative of the German Social-Democratic Party, Richard Fischer, had spoken, the meeting closed with the unanimous adoption of a resolution branding the "selfish and short-sighted" policy of the "ruling and exploiting classes" and expressing readiness to act in accordance with the resolution of the International Congress at Stuttgart, i.e., to fight war by all ways and means. The meeting dispersed in an orderly manner amidst the singing of the workers' Marseillaise. There were no street demonstrations. The Berlin police and local military authorities were disappointed. It is characteristic of the system in Germany that the most peaceful demonstration of the workers could not get along without a police and military demonstration. The Berlin garrison was mobilized. Detachments of troops were stationed in accordance with a strict plan at different parts of the city, mostly in such a way that their hiding-places and numbers could not be easily ascertained. Police patrols covered the streets and squares in the vicinity of the meeting hall, particularly the way from there to the royal castle, around

which police in civilian clothes and troops concealed in house yards drew an iron ring. A complicated system of police pickets was organized; groups of policemen loitered at street corners; police officers were detailed to all "important" spots; police cyclists acted as scouts and kept the military authorities informed on every step the "enemy" made; bridges and canal crossings were put under triple guard. "They stood watch over the jeopardized monarchy," sarcastically wrote the *Vorwärts* regarding all these measures taken by the government of Wilhelm II.

"They held a rehearsal," we add on our part. Wilhelm II and the German bourgeoisie were rehearsing military combat against an insurgent proletariat. Such rehearsals are undoubtedly or at any rate useful to both the masses of workers and to the soldiers. *Ça ira* (it will be a success!), as the French workers' song says. Repeated rehearsals are leading maybe very slowly yet, but very surely, to a great historical climax.

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MEETING
OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST BUREAU⁵⁷

(Excerpt)

The whole of the next day was taken up with the meeting of the International Socialist Bureau. The first item on the agenda, namely, the affiliation of the British Labour Party, occupied the whole of the morning session. According to the Rules of the International, organizations eligible for membership are, first, Socialist parties which recognize the class struggle, and second, working-class organizations whose standpoint is that of the class struggle (i.e., trade unions). The Labour Party recently formed in the British House of Commons does not openly call itself socialist, and does not expressly and definitely recognize the principle of the class struggle (which, be it said in parenthesis, the British Social-Democrats call upon it to do). But it goes without saying that the Labour Party was admitted to the International in general, and the Stuttgart Socialist Congress in particular, because, as a matter of fact, this Party is an organization of a mixed type, standing between the two types defined in points 1 and 2 of the Rules of the International, and being the political representative of the British trade unions. Nevertheless, the question of the affiliation of this Party was raised, and raised by itself in the shape of the so-called Independent Labour Party (the I.L.P., as the Britons call it), which is one of the two sub-sections of the British Section of the

International. The other sub-section is the Social-Democratic Federation.

The Independent Labour Party demanded the *direct* recognition of the Labour Party as an affiliated organization of the International. Its delegate Bruce Glasier urged the enormous significance of this representation in Parliament of hundreds of thousands of organized workers who are more and more definitely moving towards socialism. He expressed himself very contemptuously about principles, formulas and catechisms. Kautsky in reply to him dissociated himself from this attitude of contempt towards the principles and ultimate aims of socialism, but wholly supported the affiliation of the Labour Party as a party actually waging the class struggle. Kautsky moved the following resolution:

“Whereas by previous resolutions of the International Congresses, all organizations adopting the standpoint of the proletarian class struggle and recognizing the necessity for political action, have been accepted for membership, the International Bureau declares that the British Labour Party is admitted to International Socialist Congresses, because, while not expressly (*ausdrücklich*) accepting the proletarian class struggle, in practice the Labour Party conducts this struggle, and adopts its standpoint, inasmuch as the Party is organized independently of the bourgeois parties.” Kautsky was supported by the Austrians, by Vaillant of the French group, and, as the voting showed, by the majority of the small nations. The opposition came first of all from Hyndman, the representative of the British Social-Democratic Federation, who demanded that the *status quo* be maintained until the Labour Party expressly recognizes the principle of the class struggle and of socialism; then from Roussel (the second French delegate, and a follower of Guesde), Rubanovich of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, and Avramov, the delegate of the revolutionary wing of the Bulgarian Socialists.

I took the floor in order to associate myself with the first part of Kautsky's resolution. It was impossible, I argued, to refuse to admit the Labour Party, i.e., the parliamentary representative of the trade unions, since Congresses had previously admitted all trade unions whatever, even such as had allowed themselves to be represented by bourgeois parliamentarians. But, I said, the second part of Kautsky's resolution is wrong, because *in fact* the Labour Party is not a party really independent of the Liberals, and does not pursue a fully independent class policy. I therefore proposed an amendment that the end of the resolution, beginning with the word "because," should read as follows:

"because it" (the Labour Party) "represents the first step on the part of the really proletarian organizations of Britain towards a conscious class policy and towards a *socialist* workers' party." I submitted this amendment to the Bureau, but Kautsky would not accept it, stating in his next speech that the International Bureau could not adopt decisions based on "expectations." But the main struggle raged between the supporters and the opponents of Kautsky's resolution as a whole. When it was about to be voted on, Adler proposed that it be divided into two parts. This was done, and both parts were carried by the International Bureau: the first with three against and one abstention, and the second with four against and one abstention. Thus, Kautsky's resolution became the decision of the Bureau. The one who abstained on both votes was Rubanovich. Let me add that Victor Adler, who spoke after me and before Kautsky's second speech, replied to me in the following manner—I am quoting from the Belgian Socialist organ *Le Peuple*, which gave the most detailed and exact reports of the sessions: "Lenin's proposal is tempting (*séduisante*, Adler said: *verlockend*, enticing), but it cannot make us forget that the Labour Party is now outside the bourgeois parties. It is not our business to judge how it did this. We recognize the fact of progress."

Such was the nature of the debate at the International Bureau on the question under discussion. I shall now take the liberty to deal in greater detail with this debate in order to explain to the readers of *Proletary* the position that I took up. The arguments advanced by V. Adler and K. Kautsky failed to convince me, and I still think they are wrong. By stating in his resolution that the Labour Party "does not expressly accept the proletarian class struggle," Kautsky undoubtedly voiced a certain "expectation," a certain "judgement" as to what the policy of the Labour Party is now and what that policy should be. But Kautsky expressed this *indirectly*, and did so in such a way that it amounted to an assertion which, first, is incorrect fundamentally, and secondly, provides a basis for misrepresenting his *idea*. That by separating in *Parliament* (not during the elections! not in its whole policy! not in its propaganda and agitation!) from the bourgeois parties, the Labour Party in Britain is taking the first step towards socialism and towards a class policy of the proletarian mass organizations is indisputable. This is not an "expectation" but a fact, the very fact which compels us to admit the Labour Party into the International, since we have already accepted the trade unions. Finally, it is precisely such a formulation that would make hundreds of thousands of British workers, who undoubtedly respect the decisions of the International but have not yet become full Socialists, ponder once again over the question of why they are regarded as having taken only the *first* step, and of what should be the *next* steps along this road. My formulation does not contain the shadow of the claim that the International should undertake to solve the concrete and detailed problems of a national labour movement, should undertake to determine when the next steps should be taken, and what they should be. That in general further steps are necessary must be admitted regarding a party which does not expressly and clearly accept the principle of the class struggle. This is what Kautsky in his resolu-

tion acknowledged indirectly, instead of doing so directly. It looked as if the International certifies that the Labour Party is *actually* waging a consistent class struggle, as if it is sufficient for a workers' organization to form a separate labour group in Parliament in order *in its entire conduct* to become independent of the bourgeoisie.

On this question Hyndman, Roussel, Rubanovich and Avramov undoubtedly occupied a still more incorrect position (which Rubanovich did not rectify but confused by abstaining from voting on both parts of the resolution). When Avramov declared that to accept the Labour Party would be to encourage opportunism, he expressed a glaringly wrong view. One need only recall Engels's letters to Sorge. For a number of years Engels strongly insisted that the British Social-Democrats, led by Hyndman, were committing an error by acting like sectarians, failing to link themselves with the unconscious but powerful class instinct of the trade unions, and by turning Marxism into a "dogma," whereas it should be a "guide to action." When there exist objective conditions which retard the growth of the political consciousness and class independence of the proletarian masses, one must be able patiently and steadfastly to work hand in hand with them, making no concessions in principles, but not refraining from activity *right in the midst* of the proletarian masses. These lessons of Engels's have been corroborated by the subsequent development of events, when the British trade unions, insular, aristocratic, philistinely selfish, and hostile to socialism, which have produced a number of outright traitors to the working class who have sold themselves to the bourgeoisie for ministerial posts (like the scoundrel John Burns), have nevertheless begun to *move towards* socialism, awkwardly, inconsistently, in zig-zag fashion, but are still moving towards socialism. Only the blind can fail to see that socialism is now growing apace among the working class in Britain, that socialism is *once again* becoming a

mass movement in that country, that the social revolution is approaching in Great Britain.

The International would undoubtedly have acted wrongly had it not directly and resolutely expressed its complete sympathy with this enormous progress of the mass labour movement in Britain, and voiced its encouragement of the great turn that had begun in the cradle of capitalism. But it does not in the least follow from this that the Labour Party can now be regarded as a party actually independent of the bourgeoisie, as a party waging the class struggle, as a socialist party, etc. It was necessary to rectify the undoubted error committed by the British Social-Democratic Federation, but there was no need to give even a shadow of encouragement to *other, undoubted and not less important* errors of the British opportunists who lead the so-called Independent Labour Party. That these leaders are opportunists is indisputable. Ramsay MacDonald, the leader of the I.L.P., even proposed at Stuttgart that point 2 of the Rules of the International be so amended as to require, in place of the recognition of the class struggle, only the *bona fides* of labour associations, for affiliation to the International. Kautsky himself immediately detected the opportunist note in the words of Bruce Glasier and dissociated himself from them—in his speech at the Bureau, but unfortunately not in his resolution. The speech at the Bureau was delivered before a dozen persons, but the resolution was written for millions.

I have before me the newspapers published by both trends of British socialism containing comments on the meeting of the International Bureau. The organ of the Independent (hm! hm!) Labour Party, *The Labour Leader*, rejoices, and *openly declares* to tens of thousands of British workers that the International Socialist Bureau not only recognized the Labour Party (that is true, and had to be done) but also "*vindicated the policy of the I.L.P.*" (*The Labour Leader*, Oct. 16, 1908, p. 665). This

is not true. The Bureau did *not* vindicate it. This is an illegitimate, opportunist interpretation of a slight awkwardness in Kautsky's resolution. This slight awkwardness is beginning to produce fairly abundant fruits, and it is supplemented by bad translation: it is not for nothing that the Italians say that translators are traducers (*traduttori*—*tradittori*). The official translations of the Bureau resolutions into the three official languages have not been published yet, and it is not known when they will appear. Kautsky's resolution states that the Labour Party "adopts the standpoint of the class struggle" (end of the resolution; in the original: *sich . . . auf seinen, d.h. des Klassenkampfes, Boden stellt*), and the translation of the British Social-Democrats reads: "places itself on the ground of international socialism." In the translation of the British opportunists (I.L.P.) it reads: "*adopts the position of international socialism.*" (*Ibid.*) Now try and rectify such mistakes when you carry on agitation among the British workers!

I have not the least intention of accusing Bruce Glasier of distorting the resolution. I am sure he could not have had that in view. And this is not so important. What is important is that the *spirit* of precisely the *second* part of Kautsky's resolution be applied in practical mass work. On the same page of *The Labour Leader*, another member of the I.L.P., in describing his impressions of the Bureau meeting and of the mass meeting in Brussels, complains that at the meeting "the emphasis on the ideal and ethical aspect of socialism was almost entirely absent," an aspect which, he averred, was always emphasized at I.L.P. meetings. "*In its stead we had . . . the barren and uninspiring dogma of the class war.*"

When Kautsky wrote his resolution about the Englishmen, he had in mind, not a British "Independent," but a German Social-Democrat. . . .

Justice, the organ of the British Social-Democrats, publishes Hyndman's bitter words against the majority of the

Bureau as "whittlers-away of principle to suit the convenience of trimmers." "I have not the slightest doubt," writes Hyndman, "that if the British Labour Party had been told plainly that they either had to accept socialist principles . . . or keep away altogether, they would very quickly have decided to bring themselves into line with the International Socialist Party." And in another article in the same issue, *facts* are quoted to prove that *actually* the Independent Labour Party got some of its members elected under the *jumbled* flag of Liberalism and the Independent Labour Party (Liberal-Labour Alliance), and that some of the "Independents" had the backing of the Liberal Minister, John Burns (*Justice*, October 17, 1908, pp. 4 and 7).

If Hyndman carries out the plan he speaks of, namely, that of raising this question again at the International Socialist Congress at Copenhagen (1910), then the R.S.D.L.P. must try to get Kautsky's resolution amended.

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(29), 1908

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CONFERENCE OF THE BRITISH SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Many European Socialist parties have taken advantage of the Easter holidays (April 16, new style) to hold their conferences: the French, Belgian, Dutch (the opportunist section), the British Social-Democratic Party and the British Independent Labour Party. We propose to call the attention of our readers to some items discussed at the conferences of the two last-mentioned parties.

The 31st Annual Conference of the British Social-Democratic Party (S.D.P.) was held in Coventry. The most interesting item discussed was that of "armaments and foreign policy." It is well known that Britain and Germany have been arming very intensely during the past few years. Competition between these countries in the world market is becoming increasingly acute. A military conflict is approaching more and more menacingly. The bourgeois jingo press in both countries is supplying the masses with millions upon millions of inflammatory articles full of incitement against the "enemy," of howls about the inevitable danger of a "German invasion" or a "British attack," and of shouts about the need for increased armaments. The Socialists of Britain and Germany, and also of France (whom Britain would be particularly glad to drag into war in order to have a continental and land army against Germany) are devoting much attention to the threatening war, fighting with might and main against bourgeois chauvinism and armaments, and doing all

they can to explain to the most backward sections of the proletariat and of the petty-bourgeoisie what misfortune war brings in its train, war which exclusively serves the interests of the bourgeoisie.

A sad exception to this among the Socialists have been certain prominent leaders of the British S.D.P., and among them Hyndman. The latter has let himself be scared by the howls of the British bourgeois press about a "German menace," and has gone so far as to assert that Britain is compelled to arm for defence, that Britain must have a powerful navy, that Wilhelm is the aggressive party

True, Hyndman has encountered opposition, in fact very strong opposition within the S.D.P. itself. A number of resolutions from the branches were emphatically against him.

The Coventry Congress, or Conference—to use the English term, which does not correspond in meaning to the Russian "konferentsia"—had to settle the issue. A resolution emphatically opposing any kind of jingo viewpoint was proposed by the Central Hackney branch (Hackney, a district in Northeast London). In its report on the Conference, *Justice*, the central organ of the S.D.P., quotes only the end of this, what it terms "lengthy," resolution, which calls for the utmost energy in combating the demands for additional armaments, and opposing all colonial and financial aggression. Zelda Kahan emphasized, in supporting the resolution, that it was Britain which during the last forty years had been the aggressor, that Germany would not gain by making Britain a German province; and that there was no danger of that. "The British Navy is kept to maintain the Empire. Never has the S.D.P. made a bigger and more terrible mistake than in identifying the Party with the jingo warmongers"; as a consequence of this mistake, said Kahan, "we, the S.D.P., have placed ourselves outside the international movement."

The entire Party Executive Committee, including H. Quelch—we have to confess with shame—supported Hyndman. The "amendment" they moved declared no

more nor less than the following: "This Conference holds that the maintenance of an adequate Navy for national defence" is an "immediate object"!... Then, of course, it goes on to repeat all the "good old words"—about combating imperialist policy, about war against capitalism, etc. But, of course, there is *a fly in the ointment* in all this, namely, the bourgeois-evasive and at the same time purely bourgeois-chauvinist phrase recognizing the necessity for an "adequate" navy. And this in 1911, when the British naval budget most clearly reveals a tendency toward boundless growth—and this in a country whose navy "defends and protects" the "Empire," i.e., including India, where a population of nearly 300 millions is being plundered and outraged by the British bureaucracy, where "enlightened" British statesmen like the Liberal and "radical" Morley, *banish* or inflict *corporal punishment* upon natives for political offences!

What miserable sophistry Quelch had to resort to can be seen from the following passage in his speech (as reported in *Justice*, which defends Hyndman)!... "If we believe in national autonomy, we must have national defence and that defence must be adequate, or it is useless. We are opposed to imperialism, whether British or German; the small nationalities under Prussian rule hate her despotism, and the small nations threatened by her regard the British Navy and the German Social-Democracy as their only hope..."

You see how quickly those who step on the slippery slope of opportunism go to the bottom! The British Navy, which helps to enslave India (not a very "small" nation), is placed *on a par* with German Social-Democracy as a champion of national liberty... Zelda Kahan was right when she said that never yet had British Social-Democracy so disgraced itself. Never had it so clearly revealed its sectarian character, noted and condemned long ago by Engels,⁵⁸ as by the *ease* with which even men like Quelch *go over* to the chauvinists.

The voting on the resolution resulted in a tie: 28 for the Executive Committee and 28 against. In order to win a victory—a deplorable one—Hyndman and Quelch had to demand a branch vote, which secured them 47 votes against 33.

In the Social-Democratic Party there were those who raised a most determined voice of protest against chauvinism in their ranks; there was a very strong minority ready to wage a serious struggle. The situation in the Independent Labour Party is worse: there opportunism is no rarity. There the question of whether Socialists and the workers should support armaments is debated quite calmly in "discussion" articles in the official organ of the Party, *The Labour Leader* (No. 16, April 21, 1911).

The London correspondent of the *Vorwärts* justly remarked that the best criticism of the position of the S.D.P. was an article in the *ultra-chauvinist* newspaper the *Daily Mail*, which *praised* the wisdom of the Social-Democratic leaders. He quotes the beginning of the article in that British jingo newspaper as saying: "It is encouraging to learn that, however extravagant some of the fallacies and impossible some of the ideals of the Social-Democratic Party in this country, there is at least one supremely important question on which that Party is guided by reason and common sense."

The really encouraging feature of the Birmingham Conference of the I.L.P. was that firm and determined voices were heard from its ranks protesting against the opportunist policy, the policy of dependence upon the Liberals being pursued by this Party in general, and by the Party leader, Ramsay MacDonald, in particular. In reply to the reproach that the Labour members do not raise socialism in the House of Commons, MacDonald said with virginal opportunist innocence that "propaganda speeches" were hardly in place in Parliament. "The great function of the House of Commons," he said, "is to translate into legislation the socialism that is preached in the country." The

speaker forgot all about the difference between bourgeois social reform and socialism! He was prepared to expect socialism from a bourgeois Parliament. . . .

Leonard Hall stated in his speech that in 1892 the I.L.P. was formed for the purpose of killing the Labour Electoral Association as being merely a wing of Liberalism. They had buried the corpse (after killing the Association), but it now seemed to have revived in the Labour Party. The leader of the Party, he said, pursued this policy in his speeches, letters and books.

Another I.L.P. member, George Lansbury, M.P., sharply criticized the policy of the Parliamentary Labour Party for its dependence upon the Liberals and its fear of "endangering" the Liberal government. "More than once I have been so ashamed of the conduct of the Labour members that I have nearly resigned." He went on to say that all the time the Liberals tried to engage the House with minor questions and the Labour members were not able to win independence for themselves. "I have never known a time," said Lansbury, "when both Liberals and Tories had not put forward some 'great' question to hide the poverty question. I am in the House of Commons with the picture before me of those men and women, who night after night toiled in the slums of Bow and Bromley" (poor district in the East End of London) "to send me there. They worked for me because they thought I was different from the Liberals and Tories. . . . They sent me to face the question of poverty, poverty, poverty. . . . I appeal to you," he said, addressing the Conference, "to keep a solid party in the House of Commons absolutely distinct from the convenience of Liberals and Tories. We must show no more mercy to the Liberals when they do wrong than to the Tories. . . . The men and women who toil and suffer have nothing to hope for from either Liberals or Tories; their only hope lies in, and salvation can come from, their organized effort. . . . Let us make it clear to the men and women of the slums that even in Parliament we are true

to what we say outside, namely, that Liberals and Tories are the enemies of the people and socialism their only hope."

Lansbury's speech was interrupted by thunders of applause, and when he finished he received a perfect ovation. In Germany such speeches are an everyday occurrence. In Britain they are a novelty. And when such speeches are beginning to be delivered, when worker-delegates at the Conference of the Independent Labour Party (unfortunately, very frequently independent of socialism, but dependent upon the Liberals) applaud such speeches, then we have the right to conclude that in Britain, too, the spirit of proletarian struggle is gaining the upper hand over the diplomacy of opportunist parliamentarians like MacDonald (let us add in parenthesis that this MacDonald recently expressed his complete sympathy with the Italian reformists on their readiness to join a bourgeois Cabinet, and his dislike for "dry theory").

The speeches of Hall, Lansbury and others have not changed the policy of the I.L.P. MacDonald remains at the head of the Party, and its policy will continue to be opportunist. The bourgeois influence upon the proletariat is strong—especially in democratic countries. But these speeches do not pass without leaving a trace, they undermine the influence of the bourgeoisie and of the opportunists. When the British people get a daily newspaper going (and *both* parties are seriously thinking about this) such and only such speeches will find access to the minds and hearts of the working class. The Liberals of all countries, Russia included, are rejoicing and laughing now at the sight of the predominance of opportunism in the British labour movement. But "he laughs best who laughs last."

Zvezda, No. 18, April 16 (29),
1911

Vol. 17, pp. 145-50

OLD BUT EVER NEW TRUTHS

Readers are aware from the press of the events that led to the workers' delegates being absent from the Second Congress of Factory Doctors held in Moscow.⁵⁹ We cannot stop here to give a detailed account of these events and to deal with their significance. Let us merely note the instructive arguments of *Rech* of April 14, i.e., the day when the congress opened, in a leading article written on the eve of these events.

"Unfortunately," wrote the Cadet paper, "external obstacles are being raised to such participation (the participation of workers' representatives). Everybody knows what fate befalls certain over-fiercy speakers. As a result, the workers' representatives want to speak of the difficulty they have in concentrating on special problems, of the impossibility of arranging proper representation at the congress, of the obstacles put in their organizations' path, and of much that again is far removed from the congress agenda and the discussion of which distracts attention from the questions to be dealt with, and occasionally leads to undesirable consequences. The thickening of the atmosphere also explains the intolerance displayed by the workers' representatives to 'bourgeois' speakers, to all the government's measures and to the possibility of collaboration with representatives of other social groups."

The whole of this tirade is a typical example of impotent yearnings, whose impotence is to be explained not by the accidental composition or any peculiarities of the

given Liberal party, the given question, etc., but by far deeper causes, namely, by the objective conditions surrounding the Liberal bourgeoisie in general in twentieth-century Russia. The Liberal bourgeoisie yearn for a "system" under which they are faced by workers who have no inclination "to make over-fiercy speeches," and are sufficiently "tolerant" of the bourgeoisie, and of the idea of *collaboration with the bourgeoisie*, and "all the government's measures." They yearn for a system under which these humble workers who "collaborate" with them can "concentrate on special problems" of social policy, humbly agreeing to patch up the tattered garment of bourgeois concern for their "younger brother."⁶⁰ In a word, the Russian Liberals yearn for approximately the kind of system that we see today in Britain or France, *as distinct* from Prussia. In Britain and France the bourgeoisie hold full sway and (with few exceptions) rule almost directly, whereas in Prussia the feudal lords, the Junkers, monarchist militarism are in the lead. In Britain and France the bourgeoisie quite frequently, freely and extensively use the method of winning over people of proletarian stock or traitors to the workers' cause (John Burns, Briand) as "collaborators" who calmly "concentrate on special problems" and teach the workers "tolerance" of the rule of capital.

It is beyond all doubt that the British and French system is much more democratic than the Prussian, much more favourable for the struggle of the working class, and is on a much higher plane as regards the dying away of the mediaeval institutions which prevent that class from seeing its chief and real adversary. It is therefore beyond all doubt that it is in the Russian workers' interest to support all aspirations towards remodelling our country along British or French, rather than Prussian, lines. But one must not confine oneself to this indisputable conclusion, as is done only too often. The question or questions in dispute (with democrats of different hues) just begin here.

Aspirations should be supported, but support of the weak and vacillating requires that they be given something firmer to lean on, that illusions be dispelled which prevent the weakness being seen, which prevent the causes of the weakness being understood. Anyone who strengthens such illusions, who associates himself with the impotent yearnings of the impotent, inconsistent, wavering advocates of democracy, far from supporting aspirations towards bourgeois democracy, enfeebles them. Time was, in the middle of the seventeenth century or at the end of the eighteenth, when the British and the French bourgeoisie did not lament their younger brother's "intolerance," made no sour faces about "over-fieri speakers" in that younger brother's ranks, but themselves supplied speakers (and not only speakers) of the *most* fiery brand, who roused contempt for the preaching of "tolerance," for impotent *yearnings*, vacillations, and irresolution. And among these fiery orators were people who for ages have remained beacons and teachers, despite all the historical narrowness, often naïveté, of the notions they had then about the ways and means of abolishing misfortunes of every kind.

The German bourgeoisie, like the Russian, also lamented its "younger brother's" "over-fieri" speakers, its conduct standing out in human history as a model of meanness, baseness, and servility, that was rewarded with the kicks of "Junker" jack boots. The difference between the former and the latter sort of bourgeoisie lies, of course, not in the "qualities" of the different "races," but in the level of economic and political development, which compelled the bourgeoisie to fear its "younger brother," to waver impotently between condemning the violence of feudalism and condemning the "intolerance" of the workers.

These are all old truths. But they are eternally new and remain new when in a publication of people desirous of being Marxists we come across lines like the following:

"What caused the failure of the movement of 1905-06 was not the 'excesses' of the Lefts, because these 'excesses'

themselves were in their turn caused by the aggregate of a whole number of causes, and not the 'treachery' of the bourgeoisie, who all over the West committed 'treachery' at the appropriate moment, but the absence of an established bourgeois party capable of replacing the obsolete bureaucratic authority at the helm of state, and economically strong and sufficiently democratic to have the support of the people." And several lines later . . . "the weakness of urban bourgeois democracy, that should have become the political centre of attraction for the democratic peasantry. . . ." (*Nasha Zarya*, No. 3, page 62, Mr. V. Levitsky's article.)

Mr. Levitsky has thought out his rejection of the idea of "hegemony" more thoroughly ("urban bourgeois democracy," and nobody else, "*should have become* the centre of attraction"!) or proclaims it more boldly and definitely than Mr. Potresov did, when he cleaned up his article in *The Social Movement* under the influence of Plekhanov's ultimatums.

Mr. V. Levitsky reasons quite like a Liberal. He is an inconsistent one, however many Marxist words he uses. He has no notion whatever that quite another social category than urban bourgeois democracy *should have become* "the centre of attraction for the democratic peasantry." He forgets that this "should have become" *was* a reality during big historical periods in Britain, France, and Russia alike, —these periods in the latter country having been big in significance, but small in time, while in the first two countries it was mostly the democratic, ultra-democratic "over-fieri" plebs who united the heterogeneous elements of the "mob."

Mr. Levitsky forgets that even in the short periods in history when the "mob" happened to play the role of "centre of attraction for the democratic peasantry," when they succeeded in *wresting* this role from the liberal bourgeoisie, they exerted decisive influence on the *degree to which* the country in question secured democracy in the subse-

quent decades of so-called peaceful development. In the brief periods of *their* hegemony, the "mob" educated their bourgeoisie, and refashioned them in such a way that the latter subsequently tried to retreat, but in this retreat *could not* go further back than, say, a Second Chamber in France or departures from democracy in elections, etc., etc.

Now this idea is foreign to Mr. Levitsky. It is the idea, confirmed by the historical experience of *all* European countries, that during a period of bourgeois transformations (or rather, bourgeois revolutions) bourgeois democracy in each country takes shape one way or another, assumes a particular form, is reared in a particular tradition, recognizes some definite minimum of democracy, depending on how far the *hegemony* passes at decisive moments of the national history into the hands *not* of the bourgeoisie *but* of the "mob," the "plebs" of the eighteenth century, and the proletariat of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is this idea of hegemony that constitutes one of the fundamental principles of Marxism, and the Liquidators' break with them (or even indifference to them) is the deep source of a whole number of irreconcilable differences in principle with the opponents of Liquidationism.

Each capitalist country passes through a period of bourgeois revolutions when there is established a definite degree of democracy, a definite type of constitutionalism or parliamentarism, a definite degree of autonomy, independence, love of freedom and initiative on the part of the "mob" in general, and the proletariat in particular, a definite tradition in all political and social life. What the degree of democracy will be, and what the tradition, depends precisely on whether at the *decisive* moments the hegemony belongs to the bourgeoisie or their antipode, whether the former or the latter (again at these decisive moments) are "the centre of attraction for the democratic peasantry" and for all democratic intermediate groups and strata whatsoever.

Mr. Levitsky is a past master at uttering brilliant formulas which immediately disclose, in a sharp and clear manner, the ideas underlying Liquidationism. Such is his famous formula: "*not* hegemony, *but* a class party," which, in plain language means: not Marxism, but Brentano-ism⁶¹ (social-liberalism). Just as likely to become famous are the two formulas mentioned here, namely: "urban bourgeois democracy *should have become* the centre of attraction for the democratic peasantry," and "the failure was caused by the absence of an established bourgeois party."

Zvezda, No. 25,
June 11, 1911

Vol. 17, pp. 181-85

HYNDMAN ON MARX

Recently there were published the voluminous memoirs of one of the founders and leaders of the British Social-Democratic Party, Henry Mayers Hyndman. The book, of nearly five hundred pages, is entitled *The Record of an Adventurous Life** and represents the reminiscences, written in lively fashion, of the author's political activity and of the "celebrities" he knew. Hyndman's book provides much interesting material for characterizing British socialism and for appraising certain important problems affecting the entire international labour movement.

We therefore think it timely to devote several articles to Hyndman's book, particularly in view of the fact that the Right-wing Cadet *Russskiye Vedomosti* published (on October 14) an article by the Liberal Dioneo, which provides an admirable example of how the Liberals throw light, or rather darkness, on these problems.

Let us start with Hyndman's reminiscences of Marx. Hyndman made his acquaintance only in 1880, when he was apparently very little informed about Marx's teachings and about socialism in general. It is characteristic of British relationships that, born in 1842, Hyndman, until the moment we are speaking of, was a "democrat" of an indefinite colour who had contacts and sympathies with the Conservative Party (Tories). Hyndman turned to socialism after reading *Capital* (in the French translation) dur-

* *The Record of an Adventurous Life*, by Henry Mayers Hyndman, London (Macmillan & Co.), 1911.

ing one of his numerous voyages to America between 1874 and 1880.

Accompanied by Karl Hirsch, Hyndman, on his way to visit Marx, mentally compared him to—Mazzini!

The plane on which Hyndman makes this comparison can be judged from the fact that he describes Mazzini's influence on those around him as "personal and individually ethical," and deemed the influence of Marx to be "almost wholly intellectual and scientific." Hyndman went to Marx as to a "supreme analytic genius" and was eager to learn as a student; what attracted him in Mazzini was his character and his "elevation of thought and conduct." But that Marx "was far the more powerful mind cannot be disputed." Nor can it be disputed that Hyndman very poorly understood in 1880 (and does not quite understand even now—but of that later) the difference between a bourgeois democrat and a Socialist.

"The first impression of Marx," writes Hyndman, "as I saw him was that of a powerful, shaggy, untamed old man, ready, not to say eager, to enter into conflict, and rather suspicious himself of immediate attack. Yet his greeting to us was cordial and his first remarks to me, after I had told him what a great pleasure and honour I felt it to be to shake hands with the author of *Capital*, were agreeable enough; for he told me that he had read my articles on India* with pleasure and had commented on them favourably in his newspaper correspondence.

"When speaking with fierce indignation of the policy of the Liberal Party, especially in regard to Ireland, the old warrior's small deep-sunk eyes lighted up, his heavy brows wrinkled, the broad, strong nose and face were obviously moved by passion, and he poured out a stream of vigorous denunciation, which displayed alike the heat of his temperament and the marvellous command he possessed over our language. The contrast between his manner and utterance when

* Until he recently turned to jingoism, Hyndman was a determined enemy of British imperialism, and from 1878 carried on a noble campaign of exposure against the shameful acts of violence, outrage, plunder and indignity (including the flogging of political "criminals") for which Britishers of all parties in India, including the "educated" and "radical" author, John Morley, have long made themselves famous in India.

thus deeply stirred by anger and his attitude when giving his views on the economic events of the period was very marked. He turned from the role of prophet and vehement denunciator to that of the calm philosopher without any apparent effort, and I felt from the first that on this latter ground many a long year might pass before I ceased to be a student in the presence of a master.

"I had been surprised in reading *Capital*, and still more when perusing his smaller works, such as his pronouncement on the Commune of Paris, and his *Eighteenth Brumaire*, how he combined the ablest and coolest examination of economic causes and social effects with the most bitter hatred of classes and even of individual men such as Napoleon III or M. Thiers, who, according to his own theories, were little more than flies upon the wheels of the great Juggernaut car of capitalist development. Marx, of course, was a Jew, and to me it seemed that he combined in his own person and nature, with his commanding forehead and great overhanging brow, his fierce glittering eyes, broad sensitive nose and mobile mouth, all surrounded by a setting of untrimmed hair and beard, the righteous fury of the great seers of his race, with the cold analytical powers of Spinoza and the Jewish doctors. It was an extraordinary combination of qualities, the like of which I have known in no other man.

"As I went out with Hirsch, deeply impressed by the great personality we had left, Hirsch asked me what I thought of Marx. 'Well,' I replied, 'I think he is the Aristotle of the nineteenth century.' And yet as I said it, I knew that this did not cover the ground. For one thing it was quite impossible to think of Marx as acting the courtier to Alexander [of Macedon] while carrying on the profound studies which have so deeply influenced later generations, and besides he never so wholly segregated himself from immediate human interests—notwithstanding much that has been said to the contrary—as to be able to consider facts and their surroundings in the cold hard light of the greatest philosopher of antiquity. There can be no doubt whatever that his hatred of the system of exploitation and wage slavery by which he was surrounded was not only intellectual and philosophic but bitterly personal.

"I remember saying to him once that as I grew older, I thought I became more tolerant. 'Do you,' he said, 'do you?' It was quite certain he didn't. It has been, I think, Marx's deep animosity to the existing order of things and his scathing criticism of his opponents which has prevented many of the educated well-to-do class from appreciating his masterly life-work at its full value and has rendered third-rate sciolists and logomachers like Böhm-Bawerk, such heroes in their eyes, merely because they have misrepresented and attempted to 'refute' him. Accustomed as we are nowadays, especially in England, to fence always with big soft buttons on the point of our rapiers, Marx's

terrible onslaughts with naked steel upon his adversaries appeared so improper that it was impossible for our gentlemanly sham fighters and mental gymnasium men to believe that this unsparing controversialist and furious assailant of capital and capitalists was really the deepest thinker of modern times."

In 1880 Marx was practically unknown to the British public. His health was then failing. His strenuous exertions (sixteen hours a day and more of mental labour!) had sapped his constitution. He was now forbidden by his doctors to do any work in the evenings and, Hyndman relates, "at the close of 1880 and the beginning of 1881, I had the advantage of very frequent conversations with him."

"Our method of talking was peculiar. Marx had a habit when at all interested in the discussion of walking actively up and down the room, as if he were pacing the deck of a schooner for exercise. I had acquired on my long voyages (to America, Australia, etc.) the same tendency of pacing to and fro when my mind was much occupied. Consequently, master and student could have been seen walking up and down on opposite sides of the table for two or three hours in succession, engaged in discussing the affairs of the past and the present."

Hyndman does not give anything like a detailed account of the position Marx took *on even a single one* of the questions he discussed with him. From what is quoted above it can be seen that Hyndman concentrated most of all, and almost exclusively, on the *anecdotal* side; this is in line with the rest of his book. Hyndman's autobiography is the biography of a British bourgeois philistine who, being the pick of his class, finally makes his way to socialism, but never completely throws off bourgeois traditions, bourgeois views and prejudices.

While repeating the philistine reproaches against Marx and Engels that they were "autocrats" in "what was supposed to be a democratic" International, that they did not understand practical affairs, did not know people, etc., Hyndman never makes an attempt to test a single one of

these reproaches on the basis of an exact, concrete indication of the circumstances at the periods concerned.

What we get is an anecdote and not a Marxist historical analysis. Marx and Engels fought against the unity of German Social-Democracy (with the Lassalleans), whereas this unity was necessary! That is all that Hyndman says. He does not say a word about Marx and Engels having been a thousand times right in principle in their opposition to Lassalle and the Lassalleans. He does not even raise the question. He does not even ask himself whether "democracy" (organizational) in the period of the International was not a screen for bourgeois sects engaged in disrupting the work of building up proletarian Social-Democracy.

As a result, the story of Hyndman's rupture with Marx is told in such a way that we get absolutely nothing but gossip (in the spirit of Messrs. the Dioneos). Engels, you see, was "exacting, suspicious, jealous"; Marx's wife is alleged to have told Hyndman's wife that Engels was Marx's "evil genius" (!!); Engels, whom Hyndman never even met (despite what Mr. Dioneo has written in *Ruskiye Vedomosti*), was "not disinclined to give full weight to the exchange value of his ready cash in his relations with those whom he helped" (with money; Engels was very rich, Marx very poor). Engels is said to have caused a quarrel between Marx and Hyndman, out of fear that Hyndman, a wealthy man at that time, would take Engels's place as Marx's rich friend!!

Of course, Messrs. the Liberals derive pleasure from rehashing such inexpressible banalities. And of course to acquaint themselves at least with the letters (of Marx and Engels) to Sorge referred to by Hyndman himself, and *to try and understand* the point at issue, is not at all in the interests of the Liberal hacks! They do not take the trouble to do that! And yet a reference to these letters and a comparison between them and Hyndman's "memoirs" would immediately settle the matter.

In 1881 Hyndman published a pamphlet entitled *England for All* in which he adopts socialism but remains a very, very confused bourgeois democrat. The pamphlet was written for the "Democratic Federation" (not Socialist) which was then formed and to which a large number of anti-socialist elements belonged. In two chapters of this pamphlet Hyndman paraphrases and copies from *Capital*, but *does not mention Marx*; however, in the preface he vaguely speaks of a certain "great thinker" and "original writer" to whom he is indebted, etc. Hyndman tells us that it was over this that Engels caused a "breach" between him and Marx, and at the same time quotes a letter Marx had written to him (dated December 8, 1880), in which Marx says that, according to Hyndman, he, Hyndman, "does not share the view of my" (Marx's) "party for England."

It is clear what the difference was about—a difference not understood, noticed or appreciated by Hyndman. It was that Hyndman at that time (as Marx plainly wrote to Sorge on December 15, 1881) was a "well-meaning, petty-bourgeois writer," "half bourgeois, half proletarian." It is clear that if a man who becomes acquainted with Marx, becomes intimate with him, calls himself a student of his, later forms a "democratic" federation and writes a pamphlet for it in which he misrepresents Marxism and does not mention Marx, then Marx could not let this go without "furious" protest. Evidently the protest was made, for Marx in the same letter to Sorge quotes extracts from letters of apology by Hyndman in which the latter excuses himself on the ground that "the English don't like to be taught by foreigners" and that "my" (Marx's) "name was so much detested" (!!), etc. (Hyndman himself states that he destroyed nearly all of Marx's letters to him, so that the discovery of the truth from this side is not to be expected.)

Fine apologies, are they not! Well, at a time when the question of the then existing differences between Hynd-

man and Marx has been cleared up quite definitely, and when all, even Hyndman's present book, shows that there is much of the philistine and bourgeois in his views (for example, the arguments with which Hyndman defends capital punishment for criminals!), what is offered as the explanation of his rupture with Marx is the "intrigues" of Engels, who for forty years, along with Marx, followed a common line of principle. Why, even if all the rest of Hyndman's book were a barrel full of honey, this one spoonful of tar would be enough to spoil it.

The differences between Marx and Hyndman at that time are most characteristically revealed by what Hyndman tells us about Marx's opinion of Henry George. The estimation of Henry George given by Marx is known from his letter to Sorge dated June 20, 1881. Hyndman defended Henry George to Marx with the following argument: "George will teach more by inculcating error than other men can impart by complete exposition of the truth."

"Marx," writes Hyndman, "would not hear of this as a sound contention. The promulgation of error could never be of any good to the people, that was his view. 'To leave an error unrefuted is to encourage intellectual immorality. For ten who go farther, a hundred may very easily stop with George and the danger of this is too great to run!'" That was what Marx said!!

Yet Hyndman tells us that, on the one hand, he still holds to his previous opinion of Henry George, and that, on the other hand, George was a boy with a bright farthing dip fooling around within the radius of a man using an electric searchlight.

An excellent comparison, only... only it was risky for Hyndman to make this excellent comparison side by side with his miserable gossip about Engels.

Zvezda, No. 31, November 26, 1911

Vol. 17, pp. 271-77

A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE AGRARIAN PROGRAMMES OF STOLYPIN AND THE NARODNIKS

(Excerpt)

The renting of land is even more *convenient* for pure capitalism, for the fullest, freest, most "ideal" adaptation to the market, than is ownership of land. Why? Because private ownership of land *hinders* the passing of the land from hand to hand, *impedes* the adaptation of land usage to the conditions of the market, *retains* the land in the possession of the particular family or person and his heirs, even if they are bad farmers. The renting of land is a more flexible form; under it the adaptation of land usage to the market proceeds most simply, most easily and most rapidly.

That, incidentally, is why Britain is not an exception among the capitalist countries, but is the country that, from the viewpoint of capitalism, has the most perfect agrarian system, as Marx pointed out in his criticism of Rodbertus. And what is Britain's agrarian system? It is the old system of landownership, landlordism, with the new, free, purely capitalist renting of land.

And what if this landlordism existed without landlords, i.e., if the land belonged not to landlords but to the state? That, from the viewpoint of capitalism, would be a *still more* perfect agrarian system, with still greater freedom of adaptation of land usage to the market, with still greater

ease in the mobilization of the land as an object of economy, with still greater freedom, breadth, clarity and definiteness in the class struggle characteristic of every form of capitalist landownership.

Neuskaya Zvezda, No. 15,
July 1, 1912

Vol. 18, pp. 128-29

IN BRITAIN

The British Liberals have been in power for six and a half years. The labour movement in Britain is becoming stronger and stronger. Strikes are assuming a mass character; moreover, they are ceasing to be purely economic and are turning into political strikes.

Robert Smillie, the leader of the Scottish miners who recently displayed such strength in mass struggle, declares that in their next big fight the miners will demand the transfer of the mines to the state. And this next big fight is inexorably approaching, because all the miners of Britain perfectly well realize the impotence of the notorious Minimum Wage Act to bring about any real improvement in their conditions.

Well then, realizing that the ground is slipping from under their feet, the British Liberals have invented a new battle-cry in order once again to rouse among the electorate confidence in the Liberals for a time. You can't sell without cheating—is capitalism's commercial slogan. You can't get seats in Parliament without cheating—is the slogan of capitalist politics in free countries.

The "fashionable" slogan invented by the Liberals for this purpose is the demand for "land reform." What the Liberals and their expert in humbugging the masses, Lloyd George, mean by that, is not clear. Apparently, they aim at increasing the land tax, and no more. But the real thing

concealed behind the high-sounding promises of "the land for the people," etc., is the collecting of fresh millions for military gambles, for the navy.

In Britain, agriculture is conducted on thoroughly capitalist lines. The capitalist farmers rent moderately-sized plots of land from the landlords and cultivate them with the aid of wage workers.

Under these circumstances no "land reform" can effect any change in the conditions of the rural labourers. In Britain, the buying-out of the landlords' estates might even turn into a new method of fleecing the proletariat, because the landlords and the capitalists, possessing state power, would sell their land at exorbitant prices. And the price would have to be paid by the taxpayers, i.e., the workers again.

The noise raised by the Liberals over the land problem has done good in one respect: it has roused interest in the organizing of the agricultural labourers.

Now, when the agricultural labourers of Britain wake up and organize in unions, the Liberals will not be able to get away with charlatan "promises of reform" or of allotments for regular and day labourers.

Recently a representative of a British labour newspaper visited Joseph Arch, the old agricultural workers' leader who has spent much time and energy trying to rouse the labourers to conscious life. This could not be done at one stroke, and Arch's slogan—"three acres and a cow" (an acre is a little more than $\frac{1}{3}$ of a dessiatin) for every agricultural worker—was a very naïve one, while the union he founded fell to pieces. But the cause he fought for has not died. The organization of the agricultural labourers in Britain is once again becoming an issue.

Arch is now eighty-three years old. He lives in the same village and in the same house in which he was born. In conversation with his interviewer he stated that the agricultural labourers' union had managed to raise wages to

15, 16 and 17 shillings a week (a shilling is nearly 48 kopeks). And now the wages of agricultural labourers in England have again dropped—in Norfolk, where Arch lives, to 12 or 13 shillings a week.

Pravda, No. 89, August 12, 1912

Vol. 18, pp. 246-47

DEBATES IN BRITAIN ON LIBERAL LABOUR POLICY

It is well known that in Britain there are two workers' parties: the British Socialist Party,⁶² as the Social-Democrats now call themselves, and the so-called Independent Labour Party.

This split in the British workers' socialist movement is no accident. It originated long ago. It arose out of the specific features of British history. Capitalism developed in Britain before it did in any other country, and for a long time Britain was the "workshop" of the world. This exceptional, monopolist position created in Britain relatively tolerable conditions of life for the *aristocracy of labour*, i.e., for the minority of skilled, well-paid workers.

Hence the petty-bourgeois, craft spirit in the ranks of this labour aristocracy which has been divorcing itself from its class, trailing behind the Liberals, and been contemptuous of socialism as a "utopia." The Independent Labour Party is precisely a party of Liberal Labour policy. It is justly said that this Party is "independent" only of socialism, but very dependent upon Liberalism.

In recent times Britain's monopoly has been thoroughly undermined. The previous relatively tolerable conditions of life have given way to extreme want as a consequence of the high cost of living. The class struggle is becoming tremendously intensified, and along with this the foundation of opportunism is being undermined, the former basis for the spread among the working class of the ideas of Liberal Labour policy is being undermined.

So long as considerable numbers of British workers have held these ideas, the elimination of this split among the workers has been out of the question. Unity cannot be *created* by means of phrases and desires, so long as Social-Democracy still has to wage a struggle against Liberal Labour policy. *At the present time*, however, this unity is really becoming possible, because the *protest* against Liberal Labour policy is *growing* in the Independent Labour Party *itself*.

Before us lies the official report of the recent, 20th, Annual Conference of this Party, which took place at Merthyr on May 27 and 28, 1912. The debate on parliamentary policy given in the report is very interesting; actually it was a debate on a deeper issue, that of Social-Democratic and Liberal Labour policies, although the speakers did not use these terms.

The debate was opened at the Conference by Jowett, M.P. He moved a resolution against supporting the Liberals, about which we shall speak in greater detail below, and the seconder of the resolution, Conway, openly said: "The average worker is asking the question whether the Labour Party in Parliament has a view of its own." Suspicion is growing in the country that the Labour Party is "tied" to the Liberals. "A feeling is growing in the country that the Labour Party is simply a wing of the Liberal Party." It should be observed that the Parliamentary Labour Party consists *not only* of I.L.P. M.P.s, but also of M.P.s representing trade unions. The latter call themselves Labour M.P.s and Labour Party members, and *do not belong* to the I.L.P. The British opportunists have succeeded in doing what the opportunists in other countries are frequently inclined to do, namely, in combining opportunist "socialist" M.P.s with the M.P.s representing allegedly non-party trade unions. The notorious "broad labour party," of which certain Mensheviks spoke in Russia in 1906-07, has materialized in Britain, and only in Britain.

In order to give practical expression to his views, Jowett moved a resolution, drawn up in the pure "British" manner: without any general principles (the British pride themselves on their "practicality" and their dislike for general principles; this is an expression of the same craft spirit in the labour movement). The resolution requested the Labour group in the House of Commons *to ignore all threats* that the Liberal government might find itself in a minority and hence might be compelled to resign, and *to vote steadfastly on the merits of the questions brought before them.*

In his resolution Jowett "took the bull by the horns." The Liberal government in Britain, like the entire Liberal Party, is doing its utmost to persuade the workers that all forces must unite against reaction (i.e., against the Conservative Party), that the Liberal majority must be retained, and that it may melt away if the workers do not vote with the Liberals, that the workers must not isolate themselves, but must support the Liberals. And so Jowett puts the question clearly: vote "steadfastly," ignore the threat that the Liberal government may fall, vote not as dictated by the interests of the Liberal Party, but on the merits of each question, i.e., in Marxist language—pursue an independent proletarian class policy and not a Liberal Labour policy.

(In the ranks of the Independent Labour Party, Marxism is rejected *on principle*, and that is why Marxist language is not used at all.)

The opportunists, who predominate in the Party immediately fell upon Jowett. And characteristically enough, they attacked him just as opportunists do, in a roundabout way, by evasion. They did not want to say *openly* that they are *in favour* of supporting the Liberals. They expressed their thoughts in *general phrases*, and, of course, did not fail to mention the "independence" of the working class. Well, exactly like our Liquidators,⁶³ who always shout very loudly about the "independence" of the working

class at the very moment when they are *in fact* preparing to replace this independence by a Liberal Labour policy.

Murray, the representative of the opportunist majority, moved an amendment, i.e., counter-resolution, as follows:

"That this Conference recognizes that the Labour Party, in order to effectually carry out its object, must continue to regard all the possible consequences and effects, immediate and otherwise, of any line of action before adopting it, bearing in mind that its decisions must be guided solely by consideration for its own interest as a party, and by desire to increase its opportunities for attaining its ends."

Compare the resolution with the amendment. Jowett's resolution clearly demanded a break with the policy of supporting the Liberals. Murray's amendment consisted of meaningless commonplaces, quite plausible and at first sight indisputable, but which, *in fact*, served to screen *nothing but* the policy of supporting the Liberals. Had Murray been acquainted with Marx, and had he been speaking to people who respected Marxism, he would have thought nothing of sugar-coating his opportunism with Marxist turns of speech and of saying that Marxism demands that all the concrete circumstances of each particular case should be taken into consideration, that we must not tie our hands, that while preserving our independence we "shall take advantage of conflicts," "seize at the Achilles' heel of the contradictions" in the present regime, etc., etc.

Opportunism can be expressed in terms of *any* doctrine *you like, including that of Marxism*. The peculiarity of the "destiny of Marxism" in Russia consists precisely in the fact that not only opportunism in the workers' party but also opportunism in the Liberal party (Izgoyev and Co.) likes to dress up in Marxist "terminology"! But that is by the way. Let us return to Merthyr.

Jowett was supported by McLachlan.

"What are the interests of a political party?" he asked. "Are the interests of the party merely to be served by retaining men in the House of Commons? If the interests of the Party are to be considered, then the men and women who are outside Parliament have

as much right to be considered as the men in Parliament. As a socialist organization we should try to give effect to our principles in our political activities."

And McLachlan referred to the vote on the Heswell Reformatory case. A boy inmate of this reformatory had been done to death. Questions are raised in Parliament. The Liberal Cabinet is threatened with defeat. Britain is not Prussia, and a Cabinet that is in the minority must resign. And so, in order to save the Cabinet, the Labour members vote in favour of whitewashing the torturer.

The Labour Party, said McLachlan, took into account the consequences that their action might have upon the government. He was not afraid, he said, of a succession of general elections if the policy of voting on merits was adopted. The fall of the government and new elections would result in a *combination of the two bourgeois parties* (McLachlan simply said: the "other two parties," without the word "bourgeois." Britons don't like Marxist terms!) *and the sooner that happened the better for our movement*. He wanted to see the work of our propagandists carried into effect by the work of our men in the House. Unless that was done the Tory (i.e., Conservative) workman *would never believe there was any difference between Liberal and Labour*. Even if we lost every seat in the House of Commons through standing up for our principles it would do more good than any amount of attempts to wheedle concessions out of the government!

Keir Hardie, M.P., the Party leader, squirms and wriggles. . . .

"It is not true to say that the Labour Party holds the balance of power. The Liberals and Irishmen in the House can outvote the Tory and Labour members. . . . In the case of the Heswell Reformatory I voted for the government purely on the merits of the case, and not in support of the government. The superintendent had been guilty of harshness and cruelty, and every Labour member went to the House determined to vote against the government. But during the debate the other side was put, and it showed that although the superintendent had been guilty of cruel treatment, the record of the School was

the best in the Kingdom. Under those circumstances it would have been wrong to vote against the government. . . ." (Such is the pass to which the British opportunists have brought the Labour Party: the leader was not howled down for that sort of speech, but was listened to calmly!)

"The real trouble is not with the I.L.P. members, but that when the Labour Party took over the Miners' Federation, and the miners' members joined the Labour group, *they were Liberals*, and they have not changed their opinions, since they gave a *purely nominal* adherence to the Party. . . .

"Jowett's resolution reduces Parliamentary government to absurdity. The consequences of any vote must be considered.

"... I would advise the previous question as regards both the resolution and the amendment" (!!!).

Lansbury, supporting Jowett's resolution, said:

"It is not so foolish as Keir Hardie would have us suppose. It does not mean that in voting upon a question every consideration should be ignored but *only* the consideration as to what effect it would have on the government. I got into the socialist movement through sheer disgust with political caucuses and bosses, and the control of the House of Commons by such people. My experience has been that every question that comes up for discussion has to be discussed in regard to its probable effect on the fortunes of the government of the day.

"It makes it almost impossible for the Labour Party to differentiate itself from the Liberal Party. I do not know of any particular piece of legislation in connection with which the Labour Party has in any kind of way differentiated itself from the Liberals. We as a party were part and parcel of the government in regard to the Insurance Act. . . . The Labour Party voted steadily for the Bill, and stood by the government all the way through.

"I was ashamed of the vote over the Heswell Reformatory. When a man poured boiling water over a boy until he died I felt ashamed of . . . voting for the whitewashing of that man. On that occasion the Labour Party whips ran about the House bringing up their men to prevent the government being defeated. . . . To accustom men . . . to voting against their consciences is deadly for the future of democracy in this country. . . ."

Philip Snowden, M.P., one of the most rabid opportunists, wriggled like an eel. He said:

"My fighting instinct inclines me to support the resolution, but my common sense, judgement, and experience induce me to vote for the

amendment. I agree that the present Parliamentary system has a demoralizing effect upon those who went to the House moved by idealism and political enthusiasm. But I do not believe the adoption of Jowett's resolution will make much difference. The merits of a question are not confined to the particular question itself. There are certain issues which the Labour Party considers of greater importance than any possible consequences of voting for the government—Women's Suffrage is one—but are we to disregard consequences on every paltry issue? This policy would necessitate repeated General Elections and nothing is more irritating to the public than such contests. . . . Politics means compromise.”

On a vote being taken 73 were for the resolution and 195 *against*.

The opportunists were victorious. That is not surprising in an opportunist party like the British I.L.P. But it is now a finally established fact that opportunism is giving rise to an opposition in the ranks of this very Party.

The opponents of opportunism acted much more correctly than their like-minded colleagues in Germany frequently do when they defend rotten compromises with the opportunists. The fact that they came out openly with their resolution gave rise to an extremely important debate on principles, and this debate will have a very deep effect on the British working class. Liberal Labour policy is maintained by tradition, routine and the agility of the opportunist leaders. But its bankruptcy among the masses of the proletariat is inevitable.

Written in October 1912

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No. 4

Vol. 18, pp. 331-37

IN AMERICA

In the city of Rochester the 32nd Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labour, as the association of trade unions is called, has come to a close. Alongside the swiftly growing Socialist Party this association is a live chunk of the past: of the old craft-union, liberal-bourgeois traditions that hang full-weight over America's working-class *aristocracy*.

The Federation numbered 1,841,268 members on August 31, 1911. Samuel Gompers, a determined opponent of socialism, was re-elected President. But Max Hayes, the socialist workers' candidate, received 5,074 votes against Gompers's 11,974, whereas formerly Gompers used to be elected unanimously. The struggle of the Socialists against the "professionals" in the American trade-union movement is slowly but surely leading to the victory of the former over the latter.

Gompers not only believes wholly in the bourgeois fairy tale of the "harmony between labour and capital," but directly introduces bourgeois policy into the Federation as against socialist policy, although he professes complete political "neutrality" of the trade unions! During the recent presidential elections in the United States, Gompers reproduced in the Federation's official publication the programmes and platforms of all three bourgeois parties (Democratic, Republican and Progressive) but did *not* reproduce the programme of the *Socialist* Party!!

Voices in protest against such manner of action were heard at the Rochester Convention even among Gompers's own following.

The state of affairs in the American working-class movement, as in the British movement, shows us the remarkably sharp split between purely trade-unionist and socialist strivings, a split between *bourgeois labour policy* and *socialist labour policy*. For strange as it may sound, in capitalist society bourgeois policy may be carried on by the working class, too, if the latter forgets about its emancipatory aims, becomes reconciled with wage slavery and confines itself to seeking alliances now with this, now with that bourgeois party, so as to obtain fictitious "improvements" in its slavish conditions.

The principal historical cause responsible for the particular prominence and (temporary) strength of bourgeois labour policy in Britain and America is the long-standing political liberty and the exceptionally advantageous conditions, as compared with other countries, for the deep-going and widespread development of capitalism. By virtue of these conditions there has emerged in the working class an aristocracy that has trailed after the bourgeoisie and *betrayed* its own class.

In the twentieth century this specific feature of the position of Britain and the United States is rapidly vanishing. Other countries are catching up with Anglo-Saxon capitalism, and the *mass* of the workers are learning socialism from their life's experience. The faster the growth of world capitalism, the sooner will the victory of socialism ensue in the United States and Britain.

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1912

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Vol. 36, pp. 178-79

THE BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT IN 1912

The most outstanding event in the past year has been the miners' strike. If the railway strike in 1911 displayed the "new spirit" of the British workers, the miners' strike certainly marks a new epoch.

In spite of all the preparations of the ruling classes for "war," in spite of the strenuous efforts of the bourgeoisie to crush the resistance of the disobedient slaves of capital, the strike was a success. The state of organization of the miners was exemplary. There was not a trace of blacklegging. Coal-mining by soldiers or inexperienced labourers was out of the question. And after a six weeks' struggle the bourgeois government of Britain realized that the country's entire industrial life was coming to a standstill and that the words of the workers' song, "All wheels cease to whirl then thy hand wills it,"⁶⁴ were coming true.

The government yielded.

"The Prime Minister of the most powerful empire the world has ever seen attended a delegate meeting of the mine-owners' striking slaves and pleaded with them to agree to a compromise." That is how a well-informed Marxist summed up the struggle.

The British Government, which usually feeds its workers with promises of reform "some day," now worked at top speed. *In five days* a new law was rushed through Parliament, introducing a *minimum wage*, i.e., regulations establishing rates of pay *below* which wages cannot be reduced.

It is true that this law, like all bourgeois reforms, is a miserable half measure and in part merely a deception of the workers, because though fixing the lowest rate of pay, the employers grind their wage slaves down all the same. Those who know the British labour movement, however, assert that since the coal strike the British proletariat is *no longer the same*. The workers have learned to fight. They have discovered the *path* that will lead them to victory. They have become aware of their power. They have ceased to be the meek lambs they so long seemed to be to the satisfaction of all the champions and extollers of wage slavery.

In Britain a change has taken place in the relation of social forces, a change which cannot be expressed in figures, but which everyone feels.

Unfortunately, not much progress is being made in Party affairs in Britain. The split between the British Socialist Party (formerly the S.-D. Federation), and the Independent (of socialism) Labour Party continues. The opportunist conduct of the M.P.s belonging to the latter party is giving rise, as is always the case, to *syndicalist* tendencies among the workers. Happily these are not strong.

The British trade unions are slowly but surely turning towards socialism, in spite of many Labour members of Parliament who stubbornly champion the old line of Liberal Labour policy. But it is beyond the power of these last of the Mohicans to retain the old line!

Pravda, No. 1, January 1, 1913

Vol. 18, pp. 437-38

CONFERENCE OF THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY

The 13th Conference of the British Labour Party was held in London from January 29 to 31, new style. Five hundred delegates were present.

The Conference passed a resolution against war, and by a considerable majority passed another resolution calling upon the Party's representatives in Parliament to vote against any electoral reform bill that does not extend the franchise to women.

The British Labour Party, which exists *side by side* with the opportunist Independent Labour Party and the Social-Democratic British Socialist Party, is something in the nature of a *broad labour party*. It is a compromise between a socialist party and non-socialist trade unions.

This compromise arose out of the specific features of British history and the fact of the *aristocracy* of the working class being segregated into non-socialist, Liberal trade unions. These unions have begun to turn towards socialism, and this is giving rise to a host of intermediate, confused situations.

For example, on Party discipline a resolution was passed threatening expulsion from the Party for violation of the decisions of the Party or of the *Parliamentary group*.

Disputes arose which are utterly impossible in any other country, such as: against whom is this resolution directed, against the Liberals or against the Socialists?

The fact of the matter is that out of the forty Labour M.P.s, 27 are *non-Socialists*! In opposing the resolution, the Socialist Will Thorne said they want to tie the hands

of the thirteen Socialists by subordinating them to the *non-Socialists*. Even the I.L.P. member, Bruce Glasier, while supporting the resolution, admitted that there are some *half a dozen* Labour M.P.s whose place is among the Conservatives.

The resolution was adopted.

A resolution that not only the posters of the opportunist *Daily Herald* be hung up in the Conference hall was defeated by 643,000 votes against 398,000.* The voting here is calculated according to the number of members each delegation represents.

The non-Socialists and extremely bad Socialists were in the majority at the Conference. But definite voices were heard indicating that the mass of the workers are dissatisfied with such a party, and that they demand of their M.P.s that they do less playing at legislation and more socialist propaganda.

Pravda, No. 30,
February 6, 1913

Vol. 18, pp. 512-13

* A line is apparently missing in the Russian text. The sentence should read as follows: "A resolution that not only the posters of the opportunist *Daily Citizen* but also those of the *Daily Herald*⁶⁵ be hung up in the Conference hall was defeated by 643,000 votes against 398,000."—*Ed.*

"WHO STANDS TO GAIN?"

There is a Latin saying: "Cui prodest?"—"Who stands to gain?" When it is not immediately apparent which political or social groups, forces or leading figures advocate certain proposals, measures, etc., one should always ask: "Who stands to gain?"

It is not important *who* directly advocates a particular policy, since under the present noble system of capitalism any money-bags can always "hire," buy or enlist any number of lawyers, writers and even M.P.s, professors, parsons and the like to defend any views. We live in an age of trade when the bourgeoisie have no scruples about trading their honour or conscience. And then there are simpletons who out of stupidity or by sheer habit defend views prevalent in certain bourgeois circles.

Yes, indeed! In politics it is not so important *who* directly advocates particular views. What is important is *who stands to gain* from these views, proposals, measures.

For instance, "Europe," the states that call themselves "civilized," is now engaged in a mad hurdle-race for armaments. In thousands of tunes, in thousands of newspapers, from thousands of pulpits, they shout and howl about patriotism, culture, native land, peace, and progress—and all that in order to justify new expenditures of tens and hundreds of millions of rubles for all manner of weapons of destruction—for guns, dreadnoughts, etc.

Ladies and gentlemen—one feels like saying about all these phrases of the “patriots,” so-called. Put no faith in phrase-mongering. Better see *who stands to gain!*

A short while ago the renowned British firm Armstrong, Whitworth & Co. published its annual accounts. The firm is engaged mainly in the manufacture of all kinds of armaments. A balance was shown of £877,000, *about 8 million rubles*, and a dividend was declared of *12.5 per cent!!* About 900,000 rubles were set aside as reserve capital, and so on and so forth.

That's where the millions and milliards squeezed out of the workers and peasants for armaments go. Dividends of 12.5 per cent mean *doubling* one's capital every 8 years. And this does not include all kinds of fees to directors, etc. Armstrong in Britain, Krupp in Germany, Creusot in France, Cockerill in Belgium and how many more of them are there in all “civilized” countries? And then the countless host of contractors.

These are the ones *who stand to gain* from the whipping up of jingoism, from the chatter about “patriotism” (gun patriotism), about the defence of culture (with weapons destructive of culture) and so forth!

Pravda, No. 84, April 11, 1913

Vol. 19, pp. 33-34

IN BRITAIN

(The Pitiful Results of Opportunism)

The British Labour Party, which must be distinguished from the *two* Socialist parties in Britain, the British Socialist Party and the Independent Labour Party, is the workers' organization that is most opportunist and soaked in the spirit of Liberal Labour policy.

In Britain there is complete political liberty and the Socialist parties exist quite openly. But the Labour Party is the parliamentary representative of the workers' organizations, of which some are non-political, and others Liberal, a regular mixture of the kind wanted by our Liquidators, who hurl so much abuse at the “underground.”

The opportunism of the British Labour Party is to be explained by the specific historical conditions of the latter half of the nineteenth century in Britain, when the “aristocracy of labour” shared to some extent in the particularly high profits of British capital. Now these conditions are becoming a thing of the past. Even the Independent Labour Party, i.e., the *socialist* opportunists in Britain, realizes that the Labour Party has landed in a morass.

In the last issue of *The Labour Leader*, the organ of the Independent Labour Party, we find the following edifying communication. The Naval Estimates are being discussed in the British Parliament. The Socialists introduce a motion to *reduce* the Estimates. The bourgeoisie, of course, quash it by voting *for* the government.

And the Labour M.P.s?

Fifteen vote for the reduction, i.e., *against* the government; 21 *are absent*; 4 vote *for the government*, i.e., against the reduction!!

Two of the four try to justify their action on the grounds that the workers in their constituencies get their living in the armament industries.

There you have a striking example of the *betrayal* of socialism, of the *betrayal* of the workers' cause to which opportunism leads. As we have already indicated, condemnation of this treachery is spreading ever wider among British Socialists. The Russian workers should learn from other people's mistakes to understand how fatal are opportunism and Liberal Labour policy.

Pravda, No. 85, April 12, 1913

Vol. 19, pp. 35-36

CULTURED EUROPEANS AND SAVAGE ASIANS

The well-known English Social-Democrat, Rothstein, relates in the German labour press an instructive and typical incident that occurred in British India. This incident reveals better than all arguments why the revolution is growing apace in that country with over 300 million inhabitants.

The British journalist Arnold, who issues a newspaper in Rangoon, a large town (with over 200,000 inhabitants) in one of the Indian provinces, published an article entitled: "A Mockery of British Justice." It exposed a local British judge named Andrew. For publishing this article Arnold was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment, but he appealed, and having connections in London was able to get the case before the highest court in Britain. The Indian government itself hastily "reduced" the sentence to four months and Arnold was released.

What was all the fuss about?

A British colonel named McCormick had a mistress whose servant was a little 11-year-old Indian girl, named Aina. This gallant representative of a cultured nation enticed Aina to his room, violated her and locked her up in his house.

It so happened that Aina's father was dying and he sent for his daughter. It was then that the village where he lived learned the whole story. The population seethed with indignation. The police were compelled to order McCormick's arrest.

But Judge Andrew released him on bail, and after a disgraceful travesty of justice acquitted him! The gallant colonel declared, as gentlemen of noble extraction usually do under such circumstances, that Aina was a prostitute, in proof of which he brought five witnesses. Eight witnesses, however, brought by Aina's mother were not even examined by Judge Andrew.

When the journalist Arnold was tried for libel, the President of the Court, Sir ("His Worship") Charles Fox, refused to allow him to call witnesses in his defence.

It must be clear to everyone that thousands and millions of such cases occur in India. Only absolutely exceptional circumstances enabled the "libeller" Arnold (the son of an influential London journalist) to extricate himself from prison and secure publicity for the case.

Do not forget that the British Liberals put their "best" people at the head of the Indian administration. Recently the Viceroy of India, the chief of the McCormicks, Andrews and Foxes, was John Morley, the well-known radical author, a "luminary of European learning," a "most honourable man" in the eyes of all European and Russian Liberals.

The "European" spirit has already awakened in Asia: the peoples of Asia have become democratic-minded.

Pravda, No. 87, April 14, 1913

Vol. 19, pp. 37-38

A GREAT TECHNICAL VICTORY

The world-famous British chemist, William Ramsay, has discovered a method of obtaining gas right at the coal face. Ramsay is already negotiating with a colliery owner concerning the practical application of this method.

A great modern technical problem is thus approaching solution. The revolution that will be effected by this solution will be a tremendous one.

At the present time, to utilize the energy contained in coal the latter has to be transported all over the country and burned in a host of separate enterprises and homes.

Ramsay's discovery means a gigantic technical revolution in this, perhaps the most important, branch of production in capitalist countries.

Ramsay has discovered a method of transforming coal into gas right where the coal lies, without hauling it to the top. A similar but much simpler method is sometimes used in the mining of salt: it is not brought to the surface directly, but is dissolved in water, the solution being pumped to the top.

In Ramsay's method, the coal mines are transformed, as it were, into enormous distilling apparatuses for the manufacture of gas. Gas is used to drive gas engines which can extract *twice as much* energy from coal as steam engines can. Gas engines, in their turn, transform the energy into electricity, which existing technical facilities are already able to transmit over enormous distances.

When this technical revolution takes place the cost of electricity would be reduced to *one-fifth* or even *one-tenth*

of its present cost. An enormous amount of human labour now spent in extracting and distributing coal would be saved. It would be possible to use even the poorest seams, now not worked. The cost of lighting and heating houses would come down tremendously.

The revolution in industry brought about by this discovery will be enormous.

But the consequences of this revolution for the whole of social life under the present capitalist system will be quite different from those that this discovery would yield under socialism.

Under capitalism the "release" of the labour of millions of miners engaged in extracting coal will inevitably cause mass unemployment, an enormous increase in poverty, and a worsening of the workers' conditions. And the profits of this great invention will be pocketed by the Morgans, Rockefellers, Ryabushinskys, Morozovs, and their suites of lawyers, directors, professors and other flunkeys of capital.

Under socialism the application of Ramsay's method, which will "release" the labour of millions of miners, etc., will make it possible immediately to shorten the working day *for all* from 8 hours to, say, 7 hours and even less. The "electrification" of all factories and railways will make working conditions more hygienic, will rid millions of workers of smoke, dust and dirt, and accelerate the transformation of dirty, repulsive workshops into clean, bright laboratories worthy of human beings. The electric lighting and heating of every home will relieve millions of "domestic slaves" of the need to spend three-fourths of their lives in smelly kitchens.

The technical facilities of capitalism are increasingly, day after day, *out-growing* the social conditions which condemn the working people to wage slavery.

Pravda, No. 91, April 21, 1913

Vcl. 19, pp. 41-42

CONFERENCE OF THE BRITISH SOCIALIST PARTY

The British Socialist Party was formed in Manchester in 1911. Its constituent bodies were the former Socialist Party, previously known as the Social-Democratic Federation, and several scattered groups and individuals, including Victor Grayson, a fiery Socialist, little governed by principles and given to phrase-mongering.

The Second Conference of the British Socialist Party took place at the seaside town of Blackpool on May 10 to 12 (new style). In all, 100 delegates attended, less than one-third of the total number, and this circumstance, in view of the fierce struggle of the majority of the delegates against the old Executive of the Party, made a bad impression on observers. The bourgeois press in Britain (exactly like the bourgeois press in Russia) is trying to seize upon, colour and make a noise about episodes of particularly acute struggle between the Party and its Executive.

The bourgeois press is not concerned with the *ideological* content of the struggle within the socialist movement. All it looks for is sensation, and the more spicy scandals. . . .

And yet the ideological content of the struggle within the B.S.P. has been of a very serious character. At the head of the old Executive was one of the founders of the Party, Hyndman. For several years he has been taking a stand, on the very important question of armaments and war, which ignored, and even opposed, the position taken by the Party. Hyndman has taken it into his head that Britain is

threatened with defeat and enslavement by Germany and that for this reason Socialists should support the demand for an "appropriate" (i.e., strong) navy for the defence of Britain!

Socialists in the role of advocates of a "strong" navy, and that in a country whose navy helps in the most shameless and feudal fashion to enslave and plunder the *three hundred million* of the population of India, and tens of millions in Egypt and in other colonies.

It is natural that the British bourgeoisie (the Conservatives and Liberals) are pleased with Hyndman's fancy idea. It is also natural that the British Social-Democrats, to their honour be it said, have not taken this shameful and disgraceful thing lying down but have bitterly opposed it.

The fight has been a long and stubborn one; attempts at a compromise were made, but Hyndman was incorrigible. And it must be said to the credit of British socialism that at the Conference Hyndman was deprived of his seat on the Executive; three-fourths of the newly elected Executive are new men (of the eight members, only two, Quelch and Irving, have been re-elected).

The Conference passed a resolution against the old Executive, reading as follows:

"This Conference congratulates our French and German comrades on their vigorous opposition to the increase of armaments in their respective countries, and pledges the British Socialist Party, as an integral part of the International Socialist Party, bound by the resolutions on war passed at Stuttgart and Basle, 1912, to pursue the same policy in Great Britain, with the object of checking the growth of all forms of militarism and of reducing the existing abominably high expenditure on armaments."

The resolution is sharp. But one must be able to speak the truth, even though it be sharp. The British Social-Democrats would have lost the right to fight against the opportunists of the so-called Independent (of socialism, but dependent on the Liberals) Labour Party, had they not sharply opposed the nationalist sins of their Executive.

Let the bourgeois press gloat and cut capers over the internal struggle among the Social-Democrats. Social-Democrats do not regard themselves as saints; they know that not infrequently the proletariat is infected with some filthy disease by the bourgeoisie who surround it; that is inevitable in this filthy and disgusting capitalist society. But Social-Democrats know how to heal their party by frank and fearless criticism. And they will certainly do so in Britain, too.

Pravda, No. 109,
May 14, 1913

Vol. 19, pp. 73-74

ARMAMENTS AND CAPITALISM

Britain is one of the richest, freest and most advanced countries in the world. The armaments fever has long afflicted British "society" and the British Government, in exactly the same way as it has the French, German, and other governments.

Well, the British press, particularly the labour press, is publishing very interesting data, which reveal the cunning capitalist armaments "mechanism." Britain's naval armaments are particularly great. Britain's shipbuilding yards (Vickers, Armstrong, Brown and others) are world-famous. Hundreds and thousands of millions of rubles are being spent by Britain and other countries on war preparations, and of course all this is done exclusively in the interests of peace, in the interests of preserving culture, in the interests of the country, civilization, etc.

And as shareholders and directors of shipyards, and of gunpowder, dynamite, ordnance and other factories, we find admirals and prominent statesmen of both parties, Conservative and Liberal. A rain of gold is positively pouring into the pockets of bourgeois politicians, who constitute an exclusive international gang engaged in instigating an armaments race among the peoples and *fleeing* these trustful, stupid, dull and submissive peoples like sheep.

Armaments are considered a national affair, a patriotic affair; it is presumed that everyone strictly keeps things secret. But the shipbuilding yards, the ordnance, dynamite

and small-arms factories are *international enterprises*, in which the capitalists of the various countries work together in duping and fleecing "the public" of the various countries, and making ships and guns alike for Britain against Italy, or for Italy against Britain.

A cunning capitalist mechanism! Civilization, order, culture, peace—and the plunder of hundreds of millions of rubles by capitalist businessmen and swindlers in shipbuilding, dynamite manufacturing, etc.!

Britain is a member of the Triple Entente, which is hostile to the Triple Alliance. Italy is a member of the Triple Alliance. The well-known firm of Vickers (Britain) has *branches* in Italy. The shareholders and directors of this firm (through the venal press and through venal M.P.s, Conservative and Liberal alike) incite Britain against Italy, and vice versa. And profit is drawn from the workers both of Britain and of Italy; the people are fleeced in both the one country and the other.

Conservative and Liberal Cabinet Ministers and Members of Parliament are almost all shareholders in these firms. They work hand in glove. The son of the "great" Liberal minister, Gladstone, is a director of the Armstrong concern. Rear-Admiral Bacon, the celebrated naval specialist and a high official at the Admiralty, takes a post at the Coventry Ordnance Works at a salary of £7,000 (over 60,000 rubles), whereas the British Prime Minister's salary is £5,000 (about 45,000 rubles).

The same thing, of course, takes place in all capitalist countries. The governments manage the affairs of the capitalist class, and managers are well paid. They are shareholders themselves. And they shear the sheep together, amid a babel of speeches about "patriotism."...

Pravda, No. 115,
May 21, 1913

Vol. 19, pp. 83-84

IN AUSTRALIA

A general election recently took place in Australia. The Labour Party, which had a majority in the Lower House—44 seats out of 75—was defeated. Now it only has 36 seats out of 75. The majority has passed to the Liberals, but this majority is a very unstable one, because 30 of the 36 seats in the Upper House are held by Labour.

What sort of peculiar capitalist country is this, in which the workers' representatives predominate in the *Upper* House and recently did so in the Lower House, and yet the capitalist system is in no danger?

An English correspondent of the German Labour press recently explained this circumstance, which is very often misrepresented by bourgeois writers.

The Australian Labour Party is not even a socialist party in name. In deeds it is a liberal-bourgeois party, while the so-called Liberals in Australia are really Conservatives.

This strange and incorrect use of terms in naming parties is not unique. In America, for example, the slave-owners of yesterday are called Democrats, and in France enemies of socialism, petty bourgeois, are called Radical-Socialists! In order to understand the real significance of parties, one must examine not their signboards but their class character and the historical conditions of each individual country.

Australia is a young British colony.

Capitalism in Australia is still quite young. The country is only just taking shape as an independent state. The workers are for the most part emigrants from Britain. They left the country at the time when Liberal Labour policy held almost undivided sway there, when the masses of the British workers were *Liberals*. Even now the majority of the skilled factory workers in Britain are Liberals or semi-Liberals. This is the result of the exceptionally favourable, monopolist position enjoyed by Britain in the second half of the last century. Only now are the masses of the workers in Britain turning (but turning slowly) towards socialism.

And while in Britain the so-called Labour Party is an *alliance* between the non-socialist trade unions and the extremely opportunist Independent Labour Party, in Australia the Labour Party is the *unalloyed* representative of the *non-socialist* workers' trade unions.

The leaders of the Australian Labour Party are trade-union officials, the most moderate and "capital-serving" element everywhere, and in Australia altogether peaceable, purely Liberal.

The ties binding the separate states into a united Australia are still very weak. The Labour Party has had to concern itself with developing and strengthening such an Australia, and with establishing central government.

In Australia the Labour Party has done what in other countries was done by the Liberals, namely, introduced a uniform tariff for the whole country, a uniform educational law, a uniform land tax and uniform factory legislation.

Naturally, when Australia is finally developed and consolidated as an independent capitalist state, the condition of the workers will change, as also will the *Liberal* Labour Party, which will make way for a *Socialist* workers' party. Australia is an illustration of the conditions under which *exceptions* to the rule are possible. The rule is: a Socialist workers' party in a capitalist country. The exception is: a Liberal Labour Party which arises only for a short time

by virtue of specific conditions that are abnormal for capitalism in general.

Those Liberals in Europe and in Russia who try to "teach" the people that class war is unnecessary by citing the example of Australia, only deceive themselves and others. It is ridiculous to think of applying Australian conditions (an undeveloped, young colony, populated by Liberal British workers) to countries where the state is long established and capitalism well developed.

Pravda, No. 134,
June 13, 1913

Vol. 19, pp. 188-90

BOURGEOIS FINANCIAL MAGNATES AND POLITICIANS

The British Labour press is continuing its exposure of the connection between financial "operations" and high politics. These revelations deserve the attention of the workers of all countries because they expose the very basis of state administration in capitalist society. The words of Karl Marx that the government is a committee for managing the affairs of the capitalist class⁶⁶ are confirmed to the full.

The Labour Leader, No. 24 (June 12, new style), devotes a whole page to listing the names of British Ministers (7 names), ex-Ministers (3 names), Bishops and Archdeacons (12 names), Peers (47 names), Members of Parliament (18 names), big newspaper owners, financiers and bankers, who are shareholders or directors in joint-stock companies which trade mainly in war supplies.

The author of the article, Walton Newbold, collected all this information from official banking, commercial and industrial, financial and other sources, from the reports of patriotic organizations (like the Navy League), etc.

We get a picture quite similar to that once drawn from Russian data by Rubakin, who showed how many big landlords in Russia were State Councillors,⁶⁷ high dignitaries, —now we may add: members of the State Duma, shareholders or directors of joint-stock companies, etc. It would be quite opportune to bring Rubakin's facts up to date by using the latest reference books, particularly as to partici-

pation in financial, commercial and industrial undertakings.

Our Liberals (especially the Cadets) have a strong aversion for the "theory" of the class struggle, and particularly insist on their view that the governments of modern states *can stand outside of classes or above classes*. But what can you do, gentlemen, if the "theory" which is so unpleasant to you exactly corresponds to reality? If all the *fundamentals* of contemporary legislation and contemporary politics clearly show us the class character of the structure and administration of all contemporary states? If even information about the personalities of prominent politicians, Members of Parliament, high officials, etc., reveals the inseparable connection existing between economic rule and political rule?

The denial or concealment of the class struggle is the worst form of hypocrisy in politics, is banking on the ignorance and prejudices of the least developed strata of the people, the small proprietors (peasants, handicraftsmen, etc.), who are furthest removed from the most acute and direct struggle of classes, and cling as before, as of old, to their patriarchal views. But what is ignorance and backwardness in the peasant is a subtle method of corrupting the people and keeping them in slavery—on the part of the liberal intellectuals.

Pravda, No. 142,
June 23, 1913

Vol. 19, pp. 211-12

EXPOSURE OF THE BRITISH OPPORTUNISTS

A Parliamentary by-election recently took place in Leicester, England.

This election is of enormous importance in principle, and every Socialist interested in the very important question of the attitude of the proletariat towards the Liberal bourgeoisie in general, and of the British socialist movement in particular, should ponder deeply over the Leicester election.

Leicester is a *two-member* constituency and each elector has *two* votes. There are only a few such constituencies in Britain, but they particularly favour a tacit *bloc* (alliance) between the Socialists and the Liberals, as is emphasized by the correspondent in Britain of the Leipzig *People's Paper*. It was precisely in such constituencies that the most prominent of the leaders of the so-called Independent (independent of socialism, but dependent on Liberalism) Labour Party were elected to Parliament. The I.L.P. leaders, Keir Hardie, Philip Snowden and Ramsay Mac-Donald, were returned by such constituencies.

And in these constituencies the Liberals, who have the biggest vote, call on their supporters to cast one vote for the Socialist and one for the Liberal, provided, of course, that the Socialist is a "reasonable," moderate, "independent" one and not an irreconcilable Social-Democrat whom the British Liberals and Liquidators no less than the Russian ones know how to dub anarcho-syndicalist, etc.!

What actually takes place, therefore, is the formation

of a bloc between the Liberals and the moderate, opportunist Socialists. Actually, the British "Independents" (for whom our Liquidators have such tender feelings) *depend* on the Liberals. The conduct of the "Independents" in the British Parliament constantly confirms this dependence.

Well then, the I.L.P. member for Leicester, none other than the party leader, MacDonald, resigned for personal reasons.

What was to be done?

The Liberals, of course, put forward their candidate.

Leicester is a factory town with a predominantly proletarian population.

The local I.L.P. organization called a conference which by 67 votes against 8 decided *to put forward a candidate*. No sooner said than done. Banton, a Town Councillor and prominent member of the I.L.P., was nominated.

Then the Executive Committee of this Party, which provides the money for running the election (and elections in Britain are very costly!), *refused* to endorse Banton's candidature!!

The Executive Committee of the opportunists opposed the local workers.

The Leicester branch of the other British socialist party, which is not opportunist and is *really* independent of the Liberals, sends its representative to the Leicester I.L.P.ers and invites them to support *its* candidate, Hartley, a member of the British Socialist Party, a very popular figure in the labour movement, an ex-member of the Independent Labour Party who left it because of its opportunism.

The members of the Leicester branch of the I.L.P. were in an awkward position: they were heart and soul in favour of Hartley, but... but what of the discipline of their Party, the decision of their Executive Committee? The Leicesterites found a way out: they closed the meeting, and as *private individuals all* declared for Hartley. Next day a huge meeting of workers endorsed Hartley's

candidature. Banton himself sent a telegram stating that he would vote for Hartley. The Leicester trade unions declared for Hartley.

The I.L.P. Parliamentary group intervened and published a *protest* in the *Liberal* press (just like our *Rech* and *Sovremenka*,⁶⁸ which help the opportunists) against Hartley's candidature, against "undermining" MacDonald!!

The election, of course, resulted in a victory for the Liberals. They obtained 10,863 votes, the Conservatives 9,279, and Hartley 2,580.

Class-conscious workers in various countries quite often adopt a "tolerant" attitude toward the British I.L.P.ers. This is a great mistake. The *betrayal* of the workers' cause in Leicester by the I.L.P. is no accident, but the result of the *entire* opportunist policy of the Independent Labour Party. The sympathies of all *real* Social-Democrats should be with those British Social-Democrats who are determinedly combating the Liberal corruption of the workers by the "Independent" Labour Party in Britain.

Rabochaya Pravda, No. 3,
July 16, 1913

Vol. 19, pp. 242-44

CLASS WAR IN DUBLIN

In Dublin, the capital of Ireland—a city of not a highly industrial type, with a population of half a million—the class struggle, which permeates the whole life of capitalist society everywhere, has become accentuated to the point of class war. The police have positively gone wild; drunken policemen assault peaceful workers, break into houses, torment the aged, women and children. Hundreds of workers (over 400) have been injured and *two killed*—such are the casualties of this war. All prominent leaders of the workers have been arrested. People are thrown into prison for making the most peaceful speeches. The city is like an armed camp.

What is the matter? How could such a war flare up in a peaceable, cultured, civilized free state?

Ireland is something of a British Poland, only rather more of the Galician type than of the Warsaw-Lodz-Dombrowski variety.* National oppression and Catholic reaction have turned the proletarians of this unhappy country into paupers, the peasants into toilworn, ignorant and dull slaves of the priesthood, and the bourgeoisie into a phalanx, masked by nationalist phrases, of capitalists, of despots over the workers; finally, they have turned the authorities into a gang accustomed to every kind of violence.

At the present moment the Irish nationalists (i.e., the Irish bourgeoisie) are the victors. They are buying up the land from the British landlords; they are getting national *Home Rule* (the famous Home Rule for which such a long

* That is, rather more clerical-agrarian than industrial.—Ed.

and stubborn struggle between Ireland and Britain has gone on); they will freely govern “their” land in conjunction with “their” Irish priests.

Well, this Irish nationalist bourgeoisie is celebrating its “national” victory, its maturity in “affairs of state” by declaring a war to the death against the Irish labour movement.

In Dublin lives the British Lord-Lieutenant. But in actual fact his power yields to that of the Dublin capitalist leader, a certain Murphy, publisher of the *Independent* (seriously—“Independent!”), the principal shareholder and director of the Dublin tramways, and a shareholder in a whole number of capitalist establishments in Dublin. Murphy has declared, on behalf of all the Irish capitalists, of course, that he is ready to spend three-quarters of a million pounds (nearly 7 million rubles) to destroy the Irish trade unions.

And these unions have begun to develop splendidly. On the heels of the Irish bourgeois scoundrels engaged in celebrating their “national” victory followed the Irish proletariat, awakening to class consciousness. It has found a talented leader in the person of Comrade *Larkin*, secretary of the Irish Transport Workers’ Union. Possessing remarkable oratorical talent, a man of seething Irish energy, Larkin has performed miracles among the unskilled workers—that mass of the British proletariat which in Britain is so often cut off from the advanced workers by that cursed petty-bourgeois, Liberal, aristocratic spirit of the British skilled worker.

A new spirit has been aroused in the Irish workers’ unions. The unskilled workers have introduced unparalleled animation into the trade unions. Even the women have begun to organize—a thing hitherto unknown in Catholic Ireland. Dublin showed promise of becoming one of the foremost towns in the whole of Great Britain so far as organization of the workers is concerned. The country that used to be typified by the fat, well-fed Catholic priest

and the poor, starving, ragged worker, in tatters even on Sunday because he is without the wherewithal to purchase Sunday clothes—this country, bearing a double and triple, national, yoke, was beginning to turn into a land with an organized army of the proletariat.

Murphy proclaimed a crusade of the bourgeoisie against Larkin and "Larkinism." To begin with, 200 tramwaymen were dismissed in order to provoke a strike during the exhibition and to *embitter* the whole struggle. The Transport Workers' Union went on strike and demanded the re-instatement of the discharged men. Murphy engineered lock-outs. The workers retaliated by downing tools. War raged all along the line. Passions flared up.

Larkin—incidentally, he is a grandson of the famous Larkin executed in 1867 for participating in the Irish liberation movement—delivered fiery speeches at meetings. In these speeches he pointed out that the party of the British bourgeois enemies of Irish Home Rule is openly calling for resistance to the government, is threatening revolution, is organizing armed resistance to Home Rule and with absolute impunity is flooding the country with revolutionary appeals.

But what the reactionaries, the *British* jingoes Carson, Londonderry and Bonar Law may do (the British Purishkeviches, the nationalists who are in full cry against Ireland), the proletarian Socialist may not. Larkin was arrested. A meeting called by the workers was banned.

Ireland, however, is not Russia. The attempt to suppress the right of assembly evoked a storm of indignation. Larkin *had to be* tried. At the trial Larkin became the accuser and actually put Murphy in the dock. By cross-questioning witnesses Larkin proved that Murphy had had long conversations with the Lord-Lieutenant on the eve of his, Larkin's, arrest. Larkin declared the police to be in Murphy's pay, and no one dared gainsay him.

Larkin was released on bail (political liberty cannot be abolished at one stroke). Larkin declared that he would be

at the meeting no matter what happened. And indeed, he came to the meeting disguised, and began to speak to the crowd. The police recognized him, seized him and beat him. For two days the dictatorship of the police truncheon raged, crowds were clubbed, women and children tormented. The police broke into workers' homes. A worker named *Nolan*, a member of the Transport Worker's Union, was beaten to death. Another died from injuries.

On Thursday, September 4 (August 22, old style), Nolan's funeral took place. The proletariat of Dublin followed in a procession 50,000 strong behind the body of their comrade. The police brutes lay low, not daring to irritate the crowd, and exemplary order prevailed. "This is a more magnificent demonstration than when they buried Parnell" (the celebrated Irish nationalist leader), said an old Irishman to a German correspondent.

The Dublin events mark a turning point in the history of the labour movement and of socialism in Ireland. Murphy threatened to destroy the Irish trade unions. He only succeeded in destroying the last remnants of the influence of the nationalist Irish bourgeoisie over the proletariat in Ireland. He has helped to steel the working-class movement in Ireland, to make it independent, free of nationalist prejudices, and revolutionary.

This was seen immediately at the Trades Union Congress which opened on September 1 (August 19, old style), in Manchester. The Dublin events inflamed the delegates—despite the resistance of the opportunist trade-union leaders with their petty-bourgeois spirit and their admiration for the bosses. A Dublin workers' delegation was given an ovation. Delegate Partridge, chairman of the Dublin branch of the Engineers' Union, spoke about the abominable outrages committed by the police in Dublin. A young working girl had just gone to bed when the police raided her house. The girl hid in the closet, but was dragged out by the hair. The police were drunk. These "men" (if one

may call them such) beat up ten-year-old lads and five-year-old children!

Partridge was twice arrested for making speeches which the judge himself admitted were peaceful. I am sure, said Partridge, that I will now be arrested if I publicly recite the Lord's Prayer.

The Manchester Congress sent a delegation to Dublin. The bourgeoisie there again took up the weapon of nationalism (just like the bourgeois nationalists in Poland, or in the Ukraine, or among the Jews!) declaring that "Englishmen have no business on Irish soil!" But *fortunately*, the Nationalists have already lost their influence over their workers.*

At the Manchester Congress speeches were delivered of a kind that had not been heard for a long time. A resolution was moved to transfer the whole Congress to Dublin, and to organize a general strike throughout Britain. Smillie, the Chairman of the Miners' Union, stated that the Dublin methods would compel all British workers to resort to revolution and that they would be able to learn the use of arms.

The masses of the British workers are slowly but surely taking a new path—they are abandoning the defence of the petty privileges of the labour aristocracy for their own great heroic struggle for a new system of society. And along this path the British proletariat, bearing in mind their energy and organization, will bring socialism about more quickly and securely than anywhere else.

Severnaya Pravda, No. 23, August 29 (September 11), 1913;
Nash Put, No. 5, August 30 (September 12), 1913

Vol. 19, pp. 297-301

* The Irish Nationalists are already expressing the fear that Larkin will organize an independent Irish workers' party, which will have to be reckoned with in the first Irish National Parliament.

A WEEK AFTER THE DUBLIN ATROCITIES

On Sunday, September 7 (August 25, old style), exactly a week after the police atrocities, the Dublin workers organized a huge meeting to protest against the conduct of the Irish capitalists and the Irish police.

The meeting took place in the same street (O'Connell Street) and at the same spot where the meeting banned by the police was to have taken place the previous Sunday. It is a historic spot, where it is most convenient to organize meetings and where they are most frequently held in Dublin.

The police kept out of sight. The streets were filled with workers. There were crowds of people, but complete order prevailed. "Last Sunday," exclaimed an Irish speaker, "the police truncheon reigned here without reason; today reason reigns without the police truncheon."

Britain *has* a constitution—and for the second time the authorities did not dare to bring their drunken police soldiers into action. Three platforms were put up and six speakers, including representatives of the British proletariat, condemned the crime perpetrated against the people, called upon the workers to display international solidarity, to wage a common struggle.

A resolution was unanimously adopted demanding the right of assembly and the right to organize, and calling for an immediate investigation—under the direction of independent persons and with a guarantee of publicity for

all the proceedings—of the conduct of the police the previous Sunday.

In London a magnificent meeting was held in Trafalgar Square. Groups of Socialists and other workers came with their banners. There were many posters with cartoons and slogans on topical events. The crowd particularly applauded a poster depicting a policeman waving a red flag with the inscription, "Silence!"

The outstanding speeches were made by Ben Tillett, who showed that the "Liberal" government of Britain is no better than a reactionary one, and Partridge, Dublin Secretary of the Engineers' Union, who described in detail the shameless acts of police violence in Dublin.

It is instructive to note that the principal slogan at the London and Dublin meetings was the demand for the right to organize. This is quite understandable. Britain *has* the foundations of political liberty, *has* a constitutional regime, generally speaking. The right to organize demanded by the workers is one of the reforms absolutely necessary and quite achievable under the present constitutional regime (just as achievable as, say, the partial reform of workers' insurance in Russia).

The right to organize is equally indispensable to the workers of Britain and of Russia. And the British workers quite rightly advance this slogan of a political reform essential to them, perfectly well aware of the path to be followed for its achievement and of its complete feasibility under the British Constitution (just as the Russian workers would be right in advancing the partial demand for amendments to the Insurance Act).

In Russia, however, precisely those general foundations of political liberty are absent *without which* the demand for the right to organize is simply ridiculous and is merely a current liberal phrase designed to deceive the people by suggesting that the path of reform is possible in our country. In Russia the fight for the right to organize—a right most urgently needed by both the workers and the entire

people—cannot be conducted *without* contrasting the impotent and false reformism of the Liberals to the consistent democracy of the workers, who are innocent of reformist illusions.

Severnaya Pravda, No. 27, September 3 (16), 1913; *Nash Put*, No. 8, September 3 (16), 1913

Vol. 19, pp. 312-13

HARRY QUELCH

On Wednesday, September 17 (September 4, old style), Comrade Harry Quelch, the leader of the British Social-Democrats, died in London. The British Social-Democratic organization was formed in 1884 and was called the Social-Democratic Federation. In 1909 the Party changed its name to Social-Democratic Party, and in 1911, after it was joined by a number of independently existing socialist groups, assumed the name of British Socialist Party.

Harry Quelch was one of the most energetic and devoted workers in the British Social-Democratic movement. He was active not only as a Social-Democratic Party worker, but also as a trade-unionist. The London Society of Compositors repeatedly elected him its chairman, and he had also been chairman of the London Trades Council.

Quelch was the editor of *Justice*, the weekly organ of the British Social-Democrats, as well as editor of the Party monthly journal, the *Social-Democrat*.

He took a very active part in all the work of the British Social-Democratic movement and regularly spoke at Party and public meetings. On many occasions he represented British Social-Democracy at International Congresses and on the International Socialist Bureau. Incidentally, when he attended the Stuttgart International Socialist Congress he was persecuted by the Wurtemberg Government, which expelled him from Stuttgart (without trial, by police order, as an alien) for referring to the Hague Conference⁶⁹ as a "thieves' supper." When, the day following Quelch's ex-

pulsion, the Congress resumed its session, the British delegates left empty the chair on which Quelch had sat, and hung a notice on it bearing the inscription: "Here sat Harry Quelch, now expelled by the Wurtemberg Government."

The South Germans often boast of their hatred for the Prussians because of their red tape, bureaucracy and police rule, but they themselves behave like the worst Prussians where a proletarian Socialist is concerned.

The historical conditions for the activities of the British Social-Democrats, whose leader Quelch was, are very peculiar. In the most advanced land of capitalism and political liberty, the British bourgeoisie (who as far back as the seventeenth century settled accounts with absolute monarchy in a pretty democratic way) managed in the nineteenth century to *split* the British working-class movement. In the middle of the nineteenth century Britain enjoyed almost a complete monopoly in the world market. Thanks to this monopoly the profits got by British capital were extraordinarily high, so that it was possible for some crumbs of these profits to be thrown to the aristocracy of labour, the skilled factory workers.

This aristocracy of labour, which at that time earned tolerably good wages, boxed itself up in narrow, self-interested craft unions, and isolated itself from the mass of the proletariat, while in politics it supported the Liberal bourgeoisie. And to this very day perhaps nowhere in the world are there so many Liberals among the advanced workers as in Britain.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, however, things began to change. Britain's monopoly was broken by America, Germany, etc. The economic basis of the narrow, petty-bourgeois, trade-unionism and Liberalism among the British workers was destroyed. Socialism is again raising its head in Britain, penetrating among the masses and growing irresistibly *despite* the rank opportunism of the British near-socialist intelligentsia.

Quelch was in the front ranks of those who fought steadfastly and with conviction against opportunism and Liberal Labour policy in the British working-class movement. True, isolation from the masses sometimes infected the British Social-Democrats with a certain sectarianism. Hyndman, the leader and founder of Social-Democracy in Britain, has even slipped into jingoism. But the British Socialist Party has fought him on this, and over the whole of Britain the Social-Democrats, and they *alone*, have for decades been carrying on systematic propaganda and agitation in the Marxist spirit. This is the great historical service rendered by Quelch and his comrades. The fruits of the activities of the Marxist Quelch will be reaped in full measure by the British working-class movement in the next few years.

In conclusion we cannot refrain from mentioning Quelch's sympathy for the Russian Social-Democrats and the assistance he rendered them. Eleven years ago the Russian Social-Democratic newspaper had to be printed in London. The British Social-Democrats, headed by Quelch, readily made their printing plant available. As a consequence, Quelch himself had to "squeeze up": a corner had been boarded off at the print-shop by a thin partition to serve him as editorial room. This corner contained quite a small writing-table, a bookshelf above it, and a chair. When the present writer visited Quelch in this "editorial office" there was no room for another chair...*

Pravda Truda, No. 1, September 11 (24), 1913; *Nash Put*, No. 16, September 12 (25), 1913

Vol. 19, pp. 331-33

* This room, in which Lenin edited *Iskra* while he was in London in 1902, is now part of "Marx House," Clerkenwell Green.—Ed.

CIVILIZED BARBARISM

Britain and France are the most civilized countries in the world. London and Paris are the world's capitals, with populations of 6 and 3 millions, respectively. The distance between them is an 8 to 9 hours' journey.

One can imagine how great is the commercial intercourse between these two capitals, what masses of goods and of people constantly pass from the one to the other.

And yet the richest, the most civilized and the freest countries in the world are now discussing, in fear and trepidation, by no means for the first time! the "difficult" question of whether a tunnel can be built under the English Channel (which separates Britain from the European Continent).

Engineers have long been of the opinion that it can. The capitalists of Britain and France have mountains of money. Profit from capital invested in such an enterprise would be absolutely certain.

What, then, is holding the matter up?

Britain is afraid of—invasion! A tunnel, you see, would, "if anything should happen," facilitate the invasion of Britain by enemy troops. That is why the British military authorities have, not for the first time, wrecked the plan to build the tunnel.

When you read about this, you cannot but be astonished at the madness and blindness of the civilized nations. Needless to say, to bring traffic in the tunnel to a halt, and completely to wreck the tunnel would require a few seconds, with modern technical devices.

But the civilized nations have driven themselves into the position of barbarians. Capitalism has brought about a situation where the bourgeoisie, in order to hoodwink the workers, is *compelled* to frighten the British people with idiotic tales about "invasion." Capitalism has brought about a situation where a number of capitalists who stand to lose "good business" by the digging of the tunnel are leaving no stone unturned to wreck this plan and hold up technical progress.

The Britishers' fear of the tunnel is fear of themselves. Capitalist barbarism is stronger than civilization.

Wherever you look you come at every step across problems which humanity is quite capable of solving *immediately*. Capitalism prevents this. It has amassed enormous wealth—and has made men the *slaves* of this wealth. It has solved the most complicated technical problems—and has prevented the application of technical improvements because of the poverty and ignorance of millions of the population, because of the stupid niggardliness of a handful of millionaires.

Under capitalism civilization, freedom and wealth call to mind the rich glutton who is rotting alive through over-eating but will not let what is young live on.

But the young is growing and will emerge supreme in spite of all.

Pravda Truda, No. 6, September 17, 1913

Vol. 19, pp. 348-49

THE LIBERALS AND THE LAND PROBLEM IN BRITAIN

On Saturday, October 11 (September 28, old style), the British Liberal Minister, Lloyd George, opened his "Land Campaign" in two "brilliant" speeches delivered in the town of Bedford. Just as our Kit Kitych Guchkov⁷⁰ promised "to settle accounts" with the Russian privileged and all-powerful landlords, so the British Liberal Minister promised to start a campaign on the land problem, to expose the landlords and appeal to the people on the issue of a "radical" (Lloyd George is extremely radical!) land reform.

The Liberal press in Britain tried to give their leader's campaign as impressive an appearance as possible. Publicity, publicity at all costs! If the speech is too long, let us publish a brief "summary" of it, let us call it a land "Charter," let us embellish it in such a way as to conceal the diplomatic subterfuges of the parliamentary huckster behind a long list of reforms—a minimum wage, 100,000 cottages for the workers, and the "compulsory alienation of the land at its *net* (!) value to the landlords."

In order to show the reader *how* the Minister of the Liberal British bourgeoisie carries on agitation among the people, we shall quote several passages from Lloyd George's Bedford speeches.

"There is not a question more vital, more fundamental than the question of the land!" exclaimed the speaker. "The food the people eat, the water they drink, the houses they

dwell in, the industries which give them their livelihood, all depend upon the land." And to whom does the land belong in Britain? To a handful of rich people! One-third of all the land belongs to members of the House of Lords. "Landlordism is the greatest of all monopolies in this land." The power of the landlords is boundless. They may evict their tenants, and devastate the land worse than an enemy would. "Now, I am not attacking the landlords either as individuals or as a class," the Minister took pain to declare, "but can such a state of affairs be allowed to continue?"

During the last few decades the agricultural population has declined from over two millions to one and a half millions, while the number of gamekeepers has increased from 9,000 to 23,000. There is no other country in the world where there is so much uncultivated land and where the farmers suffer so much from game bred by the rich for their entertainment.

The wealth of Britain is increasing at an astonishing rate. But what about the agricultural labourers? Nine-tenths of them earn less than 20½ shillings (about 10 rubles) per week, a sum which in workhouses is considered to be barely sufficient to prevent an inmate from starving. Sixty per cent of the agricultural labourers earn less than eighteen shillings (about 9 rubles) per week.

The Conservatives propose that the land be purchased in small holdings. "But him who talks about purchase," thundered the British Rodichev,⁷¹ "I shall ask: *at what price?*" (*Laughter.*)

Will not the high price crush the small buyer? Will he not be crushed by high rates? There is a Small Holdings Act which is supposed to provide land for workers. Here is an example. The total rates and taxes on a plot of land were assessed at £30 (nearly 270 rubles). This land is bought and resold to poor people in small holdings. The payments turn out to be £60!

"The depopulation of rural England threatens to make our country defenceless—without a strong peasantry there can be no strong army." Now, can either a Russian or a British Liberal get along without playing on crude nationalist and jingo sentiments?

"The landlords did not create the land," exclaimed Lloyd George, "the country must choose between the power of the landlords and the welfare of the workers. We must act firmly and determinedly against monopoly—and property in land is the greatest monopoly. The tenant farmer must obtain guarantees that he will not be evicted, or deprived of the fruits of his energy and skill" (a voice: "What is the remedy?"). "We must act, enough of timid attempts at half-measures. We must deal with it thoroughly, we must do as business men do. It is no use tinkering and mending, we must put the land monopoly under better control.

"We must secure a minimum wage for the labourer, shorten the working day, give him a decent, comfortable cottage and plot of land so that he can grow a certain amount of produce for his family. We must secure for him a *ladder of progress* in order that the 'enterprising' labourer may rise from the small allotment, the kitchen garden, to the small independent farm. And the more enterprising should go further, and become substantial farmers in our country. You are tempted with the charms of emigration to America and Australia. But we want the British worker to find sustenance for himself, a free life and comfort for himself and for his children right here, in England, in our own country."

Thunderous applause... And one can almost hear the isolated voices of those in the audience who were not bulldozed (like the one who shouted: "What is the remedy?") saying: "He sings well; but will he do anything?"

This British Liberal Minister, this favourite of the petty-bourgeois crowd, sings well, he is a past master in the art of breaking strikes by bulldozing the workers, the best

servant of British capital, which enslaves both the British workers and the 300 million population of India. What power, however, induced this hardened politician, this lackey of the money-bags, to make such "radical" speeches?

The power of the labour movement.

In Britain there is no standing army. The people cannot be restrained by violence—they can only be restrained by deception. The labour movement is growing irresistibly. The people's attention must be diverted, the masses must be "engaged" with high-sounding schemes for reform, a pretence must be made of waging war on the Conservatives, sops must be promised so as to prevent the masses from losing faith in the Liberals, to ensure that, like sheep following shepherds, they follow the industrial and financial capitalists.

And the promises of reform . . . does not the English proverb say that promises are like pie-crusts, made to be broken? Lloyd George makes promises, and the Liberal Cabinet as a whole will cut them fivefold before setting about their realization. The Conservatives, in their turn, will make a *further* cut, the result being a tenfold one.

The reformism of the British bourgeoisie is the clearest indication of the growth of a deep-going revolutionary movement among the British working class. No eloquent orator, no Liberal charlatan can stop this movement.

Za Pravdu, No. 8,
October 12 (25), 1913

Vol. 19, pp. 396-99

THE BRITISH LIBERALS AND IRELAND

What is now taking place in the British Parliament in connection with the Bill on Irish Home Rule (self-government, or, more exactly, autonomy for Ireland) is a matter of outstanding interest from the standpoint of both class relationships and the elucidation of the national and agrarian problems.

For centuries Britain has enslaved Ireland, doomed the Irish peasants to unparalleled suffering and gradual extinction from starvation, driven them from the land and compelled them to leave their native country in hundreds of thousands and millions and emigrate to America. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Ireland had a population of 5½ millions; now the population is only 4⅓ millions. Ireland has become depopulated. During the nineteenth century, more than 5 million Irish settled in America, and there are now more Irishmen in the United States than in Ireland!

The unparalleled destitution and suffering of the Irish peasantry are an instructive example of the lengths to which the landlords and the Liberal bourgeoisie of a "dominant" nation will go. Britain largely based her "brilliant" economic development, the "prosperity" of her industry and commerce on such exploits among the Irish peasantry as recall those of the Russian feudal landlady, Saltychikha.

While Britain "flourished," Ireland moved towards extinction and remained an undeveloped, half-wild, purely

agrarian country, a land of poverty-stricken tenant farmers. But however much the "enlightened and Liberal" bourgeoisie of Britain desired to perpetuate the enslavement of Ireland and her poverty, reform inevitably approached, the more so that the revolutionary outbursts of the Irish people in their struggle for liberty and land became more and more ominous. In 1861 there was formed the Irish revolutionary organization of *Fenians*. The Irish who settled in America rendered it every assistance.

The year 1868, with the formation of the government of Gladstone, hero of the Liberal bourgeoisie and the dull philistines, ushered in the *era of reform* in Ireland, an era which has dragged on very nicely to the present day, i.e. little short of half a century. Oh, the wise statesmen of the Liberal bourgeoisie are very well able to "hasten slowly" in the matter of reform!

Karl Marx, who then had already lived in London for more than fifteen years, watched the struggle of the Irish with great interest and sympathy. On November 2, 1867, he wrote to Frederick Engels: "I have done my best to bring about this demonstration of the English workers in favour of Fenianism. . . . I used to think the separation of Ireland from England impossible. I now think it inevitable, although after the separation there may come *federation*. . . ." In a letter dated November 30th of the same year, Marx, reverting to the same subject, wrote: "The question now is, what shall we advise the English workers? In my opinion they must make the repeal of the Union" (the abolition of the union with Ireland) "(in short, the affair of 1783, only democratized and adapted to the conditions of the time) an article of their *pronunziamento*. This is the only legal and therefore only possible form of Irish emancipation which can be admitted in the programme of an *English* [workers'] party." And Marx went on to show that the Irish stood in need of Home Rule and independence from Britain, of an agrarian revolution and of tariffs against Britain.

Such was the programme that Marx suggested to the British workers in the interests of Irish freedom, of accelerating social development and the freedom of the British workers; because the British workers could not become free so long as they helped (or even allowed) the keeping of another nation in slavery.

But alas! The British workers, owing to a number of special historical causes, proved in the last third of the nineteenth century to be dependent upon the Liberals, to be imbued with the spirit of Liberal Labour policy. They proved to be not at the head of nations and classes fighting for liberty, but at the tail of the contemptible lackeys of the money-bags, Messrs. the British Liberals.

And the Liberals have dragged out for *half a century* the liberation of Ireland, which is not complete even to this day! It is only in the twentieth century that the Irish peasant has begun to turn from a tenant farmer into a free owner of land, but Messrs. the Liberals have saddled him with the system of *buying out the land at a "fair" price!* He has paid, and will continue to pay for many years, millions upon millions to the British landlords as a reward for having plundered him for centuries and reduced him to permanent starvation. [The British Liberal bourgeoisie have compelled the Irish peasants to thank the landlords for this in hard cash. . . .⁷²

Now a Home Rule Bill for Ireland is under consideration in Parliament. But in the North of Ireland there is a province called Ulster (sometimes wrongly spelt in Russian) which is inhabited partly by people of English stock, Protestants, as distinct from the Catholic Irishmen. Well then, the British Conservatives, led by that Black-Hundred landlord, Purishkevich—that is to say, Carson, have raised a frightful howl against Irish autonomy. That means, they say, subjecting Ulsterites to alien people of alien faith! Lord Carson has threatened rebellion, and has organized armed Black-Hundred gangs for this purpose.

This is an empty threat, of course. There can be no question of a rebellion by a handful of hooligans. Nor could there be any question of an Irish Parliament (whose power is determined by *British* law) "oppressing" the Protestants.

The point is simply that the Black-Hundred landlords are trying to *frighten* the Liberals.

And the Liberals are quaking, bowing to the Black Hundreds, making concessions to them, offering to *take a referendum* in Ulster and to postpone the application of the reform to Ulster for *six* years!

The haggling between the Liberals and the Black Hundreds continues. The reform can wait: the Irish have waited half a century; they can wait a little longer; after all, one mustn't "offend" the landlords!

Of course, if the Liberals appealed to the people of Britain, to the proletariat, Carson's Black-Hundred gangs would melt away immediately and disappear. The peaceful and full achievement of freedom by Ireland would be guaranteed.

But is it conceivable that the Liberal bourgeoisie will turn to the proletariat for aid against the landlords? Why, the Liberals in Britain are also lackeys of the money-bags, capable only of cringing to the Carsons.

Put Pravdy, No. 34,
March 12, 1914

Vol. 20, pp. 130-33

CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS IN BRITAIN

In No. 34 of *Put Pravdy*, when describing the interesting events in Ireland, we referred to the policy of the British Liberals, who allowed themselves to be scared by the Conservatives.⁷³

Since those lines were written new events have occurred, which have transformed that particular conflict (between the Liberals and Conservatives) over the question of Home Rule for Ireland into a general constitutional crisis in Britain.

As the Conservatives threatened a Protestant "rebellion" in Ulster against Home Rule (autonomy, self-government) for Ireland, the Liberal government set part of its troops into motion in order to compel respect for the will of Parliament.

And what happened?

Generals and the other British Army officers mutinied! They declared that they would not fight against Protestant Ulster, that that would run counter to their "patriotism," and that they would resign.

The Liberal government was absolutely stunned by this revolt of the landlords, who are at the head of the army. The Liberals are accustomed to console themselves with constitutional illusions and phrases about the rule of law, and close their eyes to the real relation of forces, to the class struggle. And this real relation of forces has been and remains such that, owing to the cowardice of the bourgeoisie, a number of *pre-bourgeois*, mediaeval institu-

tions and privileges of Messrs. the landlords have been preserved.

To suppress the revolt of the aristocratic officers, the Liberal government should have appealed to the people, to the masses, to the proletariat, but this is exactly what the "enlightened" Liberal bourgeois gentlemen feared more than anything else. And the government *actually made concessions* to the mutinous officers, persuaded them to withdraw their resignations, and gave them *written assurances* that troops would not be used against Ulster.

Efforts were made to conceal from the people the disgraceful fact that such written assurances had been given (March 21, new style), and the Liberal leaders, Asquith, Morley and others, lied in the most incredible and shameless manner in their official statements. However, the truth came out. The fact that written promises were given to the officers has not been refuted. Apparently, "pressure" was brought to bear by the King. The resignation of War Minister Seely, the assumption of his portfolio by Asquith "himself," the re-election of Asquith, the circular to the troops about respect for the law—all this was nothing but sheer official hypocrisy. The fact remains that the Liberals yielded to the landlords, who had torn up the Constitution.

Tempestuous scenes ensued in the British Parliament. The Conservatives heaped well-deserved ridicule and scorn upon the Liberal government, while the Labour M. P., Ramsay MacDonald, one of the most moderate of the Liberal Labour politicians, protested in the strongest terms against the conduct of the reactionaries. He said that these people were always ready to howl against strikers; but when it was a matter of Ulster, they refused to fulfil their duty because the Irish Home Rule Bill affected their class prejudices and interests. (The landlords in Ireland are British, and Home Rule for Ireland, which would mean Home Rule for the Irish bourgeoisie and peasants, threatens to curtail somewhat the voracious appetites of

the noble lords.) Ramsay MacDonald continued that these people thought only of fighting the workers, but when it was a matter of compelling the rich and the property owners to respect the law, they refused to do their duty.

The significance of this landlords' revolt against the British Parliament, the "all-powerful" Parliament (as the Liberal blockheads, especially the Liberal pundits, have thought and said millions of times), is extraordinarily great. March 21 (March 8, old style), 1914, will be an epoch-making turning point, the day when the noble landlords of Britain smashed the British Constitution and British law to bits and gave an excellent lesson in class struggle.

This lesson was a result of the impossibility of blunting the acuteness of the antagonisms between the British proletariat and bourgeoisie by means of the half-hearted, hypocritical, sham-reformist policy of the Liberals. This lesson will not be lost upon the British labour movement; the working class will now quickly proceed to shake off its philistine faith in the scrap of paper, called the British law and Constitution, which the British aristocrats have torn up before the eyes of the whole people.

These aristocrats behaved like revolutionaries *of the Right* and thereby shattered all conventionalities, all veneers that prevented the people from seeing the unpleasant but undoubtedly real class struggle. Everybody saw what was hypocritically concealed by the bourgeoisie and the Liberals (they are hypocritical everywhere, but it is doubtful whether their hypocrisy assumes such proportions anywhere as in Britain). Everybody saw that the conspiracy to break the will of Parliament had been prepared long ago. Real class rule lay and still lies *outside* of Parliament. The above-mentioned mediaeval institutions, which for long had been inactive (or rather seemed to be inactive), quickly came into action and proved to be *stronger* than Parliament. And Britain's petty-bourgeois Liberals, with their speeches about reforms and the might of

Parliament that lull the workers, proved in fact to be frauds, straw men put up to bamboozle the people. They were quickly "shut up" by the aristocracy, who held power.

How many books have been written, especially by German and Russian Liberals, in praise of law and social peace in Britain! Everybody knows that the historical mission of the German and Russian Liberals is to cringe like lackeys to what the class struggle has yielded in Britain and in France, and to proclaim the results of that struggle as the "truths of science," a science "above classes." In reality, however, "law and social peace" in Britain were merely the brief result of the slumber of the British proletariat approximately between the 1850's and 1900's.

An end has come to the British monopoly. World competition has intensified. The cost of living has gone up. Associations of big capitalists have crushed the small and middle business men and hurled their full weight against the workers. The British proletariat, who fell into slumber after the period of the end of the eighteenth century, after the Chartist movement of the 1830's and 1840's, have awakened once again.

The Constitutional crisis of 1914 will be an important stage in the history of this awakening.

Put Pravdy, No. 57,
April 10 (23), 1914

Vol. 20, pp. 205-08

THE UTOPIAN KARL MARX AND THE PRACTICAL ROSA LUXEMBURG*

While declaring the independence of Poland to be a "utopia" and repeating it ad nauseam, Rosa Luxemburg exclaims ironically: why not raise the demand for the independence of Ireland?

Evidently, the "practical" Rosa Luxemburg is unaware of Karl Marx's attitude to the question of Ireland's independence. It is worth while dwelling upon this, in order to show how a *concrete* demand for national independence is analysed from a really Marxist and not an opportunist standpoint.

It was Marx's custom to "probe the teeth," as he expressed it, of his socialist acquaintances, testing their intelligence and the strength of their convictions. Having made the acquaintance of Lopatin, Marx wrote to Engels on July 5, 1870, expressing a highly flattering opinion of the young Russian Socialist, but adding at the same time:

"...*Poland* is his weak point. On this point he speaks quite like an Englishman—say, an English Chartist of the old school—about Ireland."

Marx questions a Socialist belonging to an oppressing nation about his attitude to an oppressed nation and at once reveals a defect *common* to the Socialists of the dominant nations (British and Russian): failure to understand their socialist duties towards the downtrodden nations,

* This is § 8 of V. I. Lenin's *The Right of Nations to Self-Determination*.—Ed.

their echoing of the prejudices acquired from the "dominant-nation" bourgeoisie.

Before passing on to Marx's positive declarations on Ireland, we must make the reservation that to the national problem in general the attitude of Marx and Engels was a strictly critical one; they recognized its historically relative importance. Thus, Engels wrote to Marx on May 23, 1851, that the study of history was leading him to pessimistic conclusions concerning Poland, that the importance of Poland was temporary—only until the agrarian revolution took place in Russia. The role of the Poles in history was one of "brave stupidity." "And one cannot point to a single instance in which Poland represented progress successfully, even if only in relation to Russia, or did anything at all of historic importance." Russia has more elements of civilization, education, industry and of the bourgeoisie than the "Poles, whose whole nature is that of the idle cavalier." "What are Warsaw and Cracow compared to Petersburg, Moscow, Odessa!" Engels had no faith in the success of an insurrection of the Polish nobility.

But all these thoughts, so full of genius and penetration, by no means prevented Engels and Marx twelve years later, when Russia was still dormant and Poland was seething, from treating the Polish movement with the most profound and ardent sympathy.

When drafting the Address of the International in 1864, Marx wrote to Engels (on November 4, 1864) that he had to combat Mazzini's nationalism, and went on to say: "Inasmuch as international politics occurred in the Address, I spoke of countries, not of nationalities, and denounced Russia, not the *minores gentium*."* Marx had no doubt about the subordinate significance of the national problem as compared with the "labour problem." But his theory is as far from ignoring national movements as heaven from earth.

1866 arrives. Marx writes to Engels about the "Proud-

* The lesser nations.—Ed.

honist clique" in Paris which "declares nationalities to be an absurdity, attacks Bismarck and Garibaldi, etc. As polemics against chauvinism their doings are useful and explicable. But as believers in Proudhon (Lafargue and Longuet, two very good friends of mine here, also belong to them), who think all Europe must and will sit quietly on their hindquarters until the gentlemen in France abolish 'poverty and ignorance'... they are grotesque" (letter of June 7, 1866).

"Yesterday," Marx writes on June 20, 1866, "there was a discussion in the International Council on the present war. . . . The discussion wound up, as was to be foreseen, with 'the question of nationality' in general and the attitude we take towards it The (*non-worker*) representatives of 'Young France' came out with the announcement that all nationalities and even nations were 'antiquated prejudices.' Proudhonized Stirnerism. . . . The whole world waits until the French are ripe for a social revolution. . . . The English laughed very much when I began my speech by saying that our friend Lafargue and others, who had done away with nationalities, had spoken 'French' to us, i.e., a language which nine-tenths of the audience did not understand. I also suggested that by the negation of nationalities he appeared, quite unconsciously, to understand their absorption by the model French nation."

The conclusion that follows from all these critical words of Marx is clear: the working class should be the last to make a fetish of the national problem, since the development of capitalism does not necessarily awaken *all* nations to independent life. But to brush aside mass national movements once they have started, and to refuse to support what is progressive in them means, in effect, pandering to *nationalistic* prejudices, viz., recognizing "one's own" as the "model nation" (or, let us add, as the nation possessing the exclusive privilege of forming a state).*

* Cf. also Marx's letter to Engels of June 3, 1867: ". . . I have learned with real pleasure from the report of the *Times* Paris

But let us return to the problem of Ireland.

Marx's position on this problem is most clearly expressed in the following extracts from his letters:

"I have done my best to bring about this demonstration of the British workers in favour of Fenianism. . . . I used to think the separation of Ireland from England impossible, I now think it inevitable, although after the separation there may come federation." This is what Marx wrote to Engels on November 2, 1867.

In his letter of November 30 of the same year he added:

"... What shall we advise the *English* workers? In my opinion they must make the repeal of the Union" (of Ireland with Britain, i.e., the separation of Ireland from Britain) "(in short, the affair of 1783, only democratized and adapted to the conditions of the time) an article of their *pronunziamento*. This is the only legal and therefore only possible form of Irish emancipation which can be admitted in the programme of an *English* party. Experience must show later whether a mere personal union can continue to subsist between the two countries. . . .

"...What the Irish need is:

"1) Self-government and independence from England.

"2) An agrarian revolution. . . ."

Marx attached tremendous importance to the question of Ireland and delivered lectures of one and a half hours' duration at the German Workers' Union on this subject (letter of December 17, 1867).

Engels notes in a letter of November 20, 1868, "the hatred for the Irish among the English workers," and almost a year later (October 24, 1869), returning to this subject, he writes:

"Il n'y a qu'un pas" (it is only one step) "from Ireland to Russia. . . . Irish history shows one what a misfortune it is for a nation to have subjugated another nation. All

correspondent about the pro-Polish exclamations of the Parisians against Russia. . . . M. Proudhon and his little doctrinaire clique are not the French people."

the abominations of the English have their origin in the Irish Pale. I have still to plough my way through the Cromwellian period, but this much seems certain to me, that things would have taken another turn in England, too, but for the necessity of military rule in Ireland and the creation of a new aristocracy there."

Let us note, in passing, Marx's letter to Engels of August 18, 1869:

"In Posnan the Polish workers have brought a strike to a victorious end by the help of their colleagues in Berlin. This struggle against Monsieur le Capital—even in the subordinate form of the strike—is a more serious way of getting rid of national prejudices than that of the bourgeois gentlemen with their peace declamations."

The policy on the Irish question pursued by Marx in the International may be seen from the following:

On November 18, 1869, Marx writes to Engels that he spoke for an hour and a quarter in the Council of the International about the attitude of the British Ministry to the Irish amnesty and proposed the following resolution:

"Resolved,

"that in his reply to the Irish demands for the release of the imprisoned Irish patriots . . . Mr. Gladstone deliberately insults the Irish nation;

"that he clogs political amnesty with conditions alike degrading to the victims of misgovernment and the people they belong to;

"that having, in the teeth of his responsible position, publicly and enthusiastically cheered on the American slave-holders' rebellion, he now steps in to preach to the Irish people the doctrine of passive obedience;

"that his whole proceedings with reference to the Irish amnesty question are the true and genuine offspring of that '*policy of conquest*' by the fiery denunciation of which Mr. Gladstone ousted his Tory rivals from office;

"that the General Council of the International Working Men's Association express their admiration of the spirited,

firm and high-souled manner in which the Irish people carry on their amnesty movement;

“that these resolutions be communicated to all branches of, and working men’s bodies connected with, the International Working Men’s Association in Europe and America.”

On December 10, 1869, Marx writes that his paper on the Irish question to be read at the Council of the International will be framed on the following lines:

“... Quite apart from all phrases about ‘international’ and ‘humane’ *justice for Ireland*—which are taken for granted in the *International Council*—it is in the direct and absolute interest of the English working class to get rid of their present connection with Ireland. And this is my fullest conviction, and for reasons which in part I can not tell the English workers themselves. For a long time I believed that it would be possible to overthrow the Irish regime by English working-class ascendancy. I always expressed this point of view in the *New York Tribune*” (an American paper to which Marx contributed for a long time). “Deeper study has now convinced me of the opposite. The English working class will *never accomplish anything* until it has got rid of Ireland... English reaction in England had its roots... in the subjugation of Ireland” (Marx’s italics).

Marx’s policy on the Irish question should now be quite clear to readers.

The “utopian” Marx was so “impractical” that he stood for the separation of Ireland, which has not been realized even half a century later.

What gave rise to Marx’s policy, and was it not a mistake?

At first Marx thought that Ireland would be liberated not by the national movement of the oppressed nation, but by the working-class movement of the oppressing nation. Marx did not make an absolute point of the national movement, knowing, as he did, that only the victory of the work-

ing class can bring about the complete liberation of all nationalities. It is impossible to estimate in advance all the possible correlations between the bourgeois liberation movements of the oppressed nations and the proletarian emancipation movement of the oppressing nation (the very problem which today makes the national question in Russia so difficult).

However, it turned out that the British working class fell under the influence of the Liberals for quite a long time, became an appendage of theirs and by adopting a Liberal Labour policy rendered itself impotent. The bourgeois liberation movement in Ireland grew stronger and assumed revolutionary forms. Marx reconsidered his view and corrected it. “How disastrous it is for a nation when it has subjugated another nation.” The British working class will never be free until Ireland is freed from the British yoke. Reaction in Britain is strengthened and fostered by the enslavement of Ireland (just as reaction in Russia is fostered by her enslavement of a number of nations!).

And Marx, in proposing in the International a resolution of sympathy with the “Irish nation,” the “Irish people” (the clever L. VI. would probably have berated poor Marx for forgetting about the class struggle!), advocates the *secession* of Ireland from England, “although after the separation there may come federation.”

What were the theoretical grounds for this conclusion of Marx’s? In Britain the bourgeois revolution had been consummated long ago. But it had not yet been so in Ireland; it is being consummated only now, after the lapse of half a century, by the reforms of the British Liberals. If capitalism had been overthrown in Britain as quickly as Marx at first expected, there would have been no room for a bourgeois-democratic and general national movement in Ireland. But since it had arisen, Marx advised the British workers to support it, to give it a revolutionary impetus and lead it to completion in the interests of *their own* liberty.

The economic ties between Ireland and Britain in the 1860's were, of course, even closer than Russia's ties with Poland, the Ukraine, etc. The "impracticability" and "impossibility" of the secession of Ireland (if only owing to geographical conditions and Britain's immense colonial power) were quite obvious. While in principle an enemy of federalism, Marx in this instance admits also of federation,* *so long as* the emancipation of Ireland is achieved in a revolutionary and not in a reformist way, through the movement of the masses of the Irish people supported by the British working class. There can be no doubt that only such a solution of the historical problem would most benefit the interests of the proletariat and rapid social development.

Things turned out differently. Both the Irish people and the British proletariat proved to be weak. Only now, through the miserable deals between the British Liberals and the Irish bourgeoisie, is the Irish problem *being solved* (the example of Ulster shows with what difficulty) through the land reform (with compensation) and autonomy (not introduced so far). Well then? Does it follow that Marx and Engels were "utopians," that they advanced "impossible" national demands, that they allowed themselves to be influenced by the Irish petty-bourgeois nationalists (there is no doubt about the petty-bourgeois nature of the Fenian movement), etc.?

* By the way, it is not difficult to see why, from a Social-Democratic point of view, the right of nations to "self-determination" must not be understood as *either* federation *or* autonomy (although, speaking in the abstract, both come under the category of "self-determination"). The right to federation is, in general, an absurdity, since federation is a bilateral contract. It goes without saying that Marxists cannot place the defence of federalism in general in their programme. As to autonomy, Marxists defend not "the right to" autonomy but autonomy *itself*, as a general, universal principle of a democratic state with a heterogeneous national composition, with sharp differences in geographical and other conditions. Consequently, the recognition of the "right of nations to autonomy" is as absurd as the "right of nations to federation."

No. In the Irish question, too, Marx and Engels pursued a consistently proletarian policy, which really educated the masses in the spirit of democracy and socialism. Only such a policy could have saved both Ireland and Britain from half a century of delay in the introduction of the necessary reforms, and could have prevented these reforms from being mutilated by the Liberals to please the reactionaries.

The policy of Marx and Engels in the Irish question serves as a splendid example, which is of immense *practical* importance to this day, of the attitude the proletariat of the oppressing nations should adopt towards national movements. It serves as a warning against that "servile haste" with which the philistines of all countries, colours and languages hurry to declare as "utopian" the idea of changing the frontiers of states that have been established by the violence and privileges of the landlords and bourgeoisie of one nation.

Should the Irish and British proletariat not accept Marx's policy and make the secession of Ireland their slogan, that would be the worst sort of opportunism, neglect of their duties as democrats and Socialists, and yielding to *British* reaction and the *British* bourgeoisie.

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UNDER A FALSE FLAG

(Excerpt)

The second epoch, or the “forty-five-year stretch” (1870-1914), as A. Potresov calls it, is characterized by him very incompletely. The characterization of this epoch given in Trotsky’s German work is just as incomplete, though he does not agree with A. Potresov about the practical conclusions to be drawn (something that should be considered as the former’s superiority over the latter)—and both the writers mentioned are practically in the dark as to why they approximate somewhat to one another.

A. Potresov writes the following about what we have called the second, or yesterday’s epoch:

“Detailed narrowness of work and struggle and all-penetrating gradualness, these signs of the epoch which some have elevated to a principle, have become for others an ordinary fact of their lives, and as such have become an element of their psychology, a shade of their ideology” (71). “Its (the epoch’s) talent for systematic, consistent and careful progress had a reverse side, firstly, in a clearly expressed inadaptability to circumstances in which the gradualness was disturbed and to all sorts of catastrophic phenomena, and, secondly, in the fact of being exceptionally confined to national action, the national environment” (72) ... “Neither revolution nor wars” (70) ... “Democracy was the more successfully nationalized the longer its period of ‘positional struggle’ dragged on, the longer that stretch of European history failed to leave the scene which ... was immune from international conflicts in the heart of Europe, and consequently without experience

of the disorders that transcended the bounds of national territories, the stretch that had no acute sense of interests existing on a European or world scale” (75-76).

The main defect of this characterization, as of the corresponding one by Trotsky about the same epoch, is the refusal to see or to recognize the deep-going inner contradictions in contemporary democracy, which has developed on the basis described. It appears as if contemporary democracy in this epoch remained a single whole which, generally speaking, was penetrated by gradualness, was nationalized, became unaccustomed to disturbances of gradualness and catastrophes, degenerated, and turned mouldy.

Actually that could not be the case, because alongside the tendencies indicated, other ones, of an opposite kind, undoubtedly operated, the “lives” of the working masses became internationalized—the gravitation towards the towns and the levelling (evening out) of living conditions in the big cities throughout the world, the internationalization of capital, the intermingling in the big factories of the urban and the rural population, the native and the foreign population, etc.—class contradictions grew acute, employers’ associations exerted greater pressure on the workers’ unions, sharper and severer forms of struggle were employed in the shape, for example, of mass strikes, the cost of living rose, oppression by finance capital became unbearable, and so on and so forth.

Actually that *was not* the case—we knew that for certain. Not one, not a single one of the big capitalist countries in Europe throughout that epoch was spared the struggle between the two opposite trends within contemporary democracy. In each of the big countries that struggle at some time assumed the most turbulent forms, including splits, and that despite the generally “peaceful,” “stagnant,” drowsy character of the epoch. These contradictory trends affected all the diverse spheres of life and problems of contemporary democracy without exception, namely, the attitude to the bourgeoisie, alliances with the Liberals, the

voting for credits, the attitude to colonial policy, to reforms, to the character of the economic struggle, to trade-union neutrality, etc.

“All-penetrating gradualness” was by no means an attitude that held undivided sway throughout contemporary democracy, as would appear from what both Potresov and Trotsky say. No, that gradualness crystallized into a definite trend, which in Europe of that period quite often gave rise to separate factions, and occasionally even to separate parties of contemporary democracy. That trend had its leaders, its press organs, its policy, its particular—and particularly organized—influence over the masses of the people. More. That trend increasingly based itself—and, finally, if one may put it that way, became based altogether on the interests of a certain social stratum *within* contemporary democracy.

“All-penetrating gradualness” naturally attracted quite a number of petty-bourgeois fellow-travellers into the ranks of contemporary democracy; then, a certain stratum of parliamentarians, journalists, and trade-union officials acquired a petty-bourgeois manner of life—and consequently of political “orientation” (inclination, aspiration); a sort of working-class bureaucracy and aristocracy, more or less sharply and clearly defined, came on the scene.

Take, for instance, the possession of colonies, the expansion of colonial possessions. This undoubtedly was one of the distinguishing features of the period described and of the majority of big states. And what did this mean economically? The sum total of certain super-profits and special privileges for the bourgeoisie, and then undoubtedly the opportunity for a small minority of petty bourgeois to get crumbs from these “slices of the pie.” Then come the best-placed office employees, labour movement officials, etc. That an insignificant minority of the working class—in Britain, for instance—did “enjoy” crumbs of the advantages derived from colonies, from privileges, is an indisputable fact recognized and indicated in their day by Marx and Engels.

But what were once exclusively British phenomena became common to all big capitalist countries in Europe in proportion as these countries came to own colonies of large dimensions, and in general as the imperialist period of capitalism grew and developed.

In a word, the “all-penetrating gradualness” of the second (or yesterday’s) epoch created not only a certain “inadaptability to disturbances of gradualness,” as A. Potresov thinks, not only certain “possibilist” propensities, as Trotsky imagines. It created a whole opportunist *trend*, based on a definite social stratum within contemporary democracy that is bound to the bourgeoisie of its national “colour” by numerous ties of common economic, social, and political interests—a trend that is bluntly, openly, quite consciously and systematically hostile to any idea of “disturbances of gradualness.”

The root of a number of Trotsky’s (not to mention A. Potresov’s) tactical and organizational mistakes lies in his fear, or his unwillingness, or his inability to admit this fact of the complete “maturity” of the opportunist trend, and also of its very close, indissoluble connection with the national-liberals (or social-nationalism) of our days. In practice, the denial of “maturity” and of this indissoluble connection leads at least to utter confusion and helplessness in relation to the prevalent evil of social-nationalism (or national-liberalism).

The connection between opportunism and social-nationalism is denied, generally speaking, by A. Potresov, Martov, Axelrod, Vl. Kosovsky (who has gone to the length of defending the German democrats’ vote, cast in the national-liberal spirit, for war credits), and Trotsky.

Their main “argument” is that yesterday’s division of democracy “according to opportunism” does not completely coincide with today’s division of it “according to social-nationalism.” This argument is firstly wrong in fact, as we shall show in a moment, and secondly, it is altogether one-sided, incomplete, and unsound from the angle of Marxist principles. Individuals and groups can cross from one side

to another—that is not only possible, but even inevitable when any big social “shake-up” takes place; the character of the *trend* does not change at all as a result of this; nor does the ideological connection between the specific trends, their *class* significance, change. One would have thought that all these considerations are so well known and undoubted that it is even somewhat awkward to emphasize them so. Yet it is just these considerations that have been forgotten by the writers mentioned. The basic class significance—or if you wish, the social-economic content—of opportunism is that certain elements of contemporary democracy have crossed over (in fact, i.e., even if they do not recognize it) to the bourgeoisie on a whole number of specific issues. Opportunism is Liberal Labour policy. Our advice to anybody who fears that these expressions appear “factional” is to take the trouble to study the views of Marx, Engels, and Kautsky (a particularly suitable “authority” for opponents of “factionalism,” is he not?) about, say, British opportunism. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the results of such a study will be the admission that opportunism and Liberal Labour policy radically and fundamentally coincide. The basic class significance of the social-nationalism of our days is exactly the same. The basic *idea* of opportunism is alliance or closer relations (occasionally agreement, bloc, etc.) between the bourgeoisie and its antipode. The basic idea of social-nationalism is exactly the same. There can be no doubt about the ideological-political affinity, connection, even identity, between opportunism and social-nationalism. And, of course, we must make our basis not individuals, not groups, but an analysis of the *class* content of social *trends* and an ideological-political investigation of their main, fundamental principles.

Approaching the same subject from a somewhat different angle we shall pose the question: *where* did social-nationalism come from? How did it grow and mature? *What* gave it significance and strength? Whoever has failed to

find an answer to these questions has absolutely failed to understand social-nationalism, and of course is absolutely incapable of “breaking ideologically” with it, however much he calls heaven to witness his readiness to do so.

And the answer to this question can only be one: social-nationalism grew out of opportunism, and it is this latter that gave it strength. How did social-nationalism come to be born “suddenly”? Exactly as a child is born “suddenly” if nine months have passed since conception. Each of the numerous manifestations of opportunism throughout the second (or yesterday’s) epoch in all European countries was a streamlet and all together they have now “suddenly” merged into the big, though very shallow (and let us add in parenthesis: muddy and dirty) social-nationalist river. Nine months after conception the offspring has to separate from the mother; many decades after opportunism was conceived its mature offspring, social-nationalism, will have—in a period that is more of less brief (by comparison with decades), to separate from contemporary democracy. However much various kind people shout, fret, and fume about thoughts and speeches on this subject, it is inevitable, for it arises out of the entire social development of contemporary democracy and out of the objective situation of the third epoch.

But if division “according to opportunism” and division “according to social-nationalism” do not completely conform, does this not prove that no substantial connection exists between these phenomena? Firstly, it does not prove that, just as the fact that at the end of the eighteenth century individual members of the bourgeoisie crossed now to the feudal lords and then to the people does not prove that there was “no connection” between the growth of the bourgeoisie and the great 1789 revolution in France. Secondly, on the whole—and we are dealing with the matter on the whole—they *do* coincide. Let us take not one country, but a number of them, e.g., ten European countries: Germany, Britain, France, Belgium, Russia, Italy, Sweden, Switzer-

land, Holland, and Bulgaria. Only the countries which are italicized will seem somewhat exceptional; in the rest it is the *trends* which are hostile to social-nationalism that gave rise to the *trends* of resolute opponents of opportunism. Contrast the well-known *Monthly*⁷⁴ and its opponents in Germany, *Nashe Dyelo*⁷⁵ and its opponents in Russia, the Bissolati party and its opponents in Italy; the supporters of Greulich and Grimm in Switzerland, Branting and Höglund in Sweden, Troelstra, and Pannekoek and Gorter in Holland; finally, the "Obshchedyeloists" and "Tesnyaki"⁷⁶ in Bulgaria. That there is a general conformity between the old division and the new one is a fact; complete conformity does not exist even in the simplest natural phenomena, just as no complete conformity exists between the Volga after the Kama flows into it, and the Volga before it does so, or just as the child does not completely resemble its parents. Britain seems to be an exception; actually there were two main trends in it before the war, trends gathered round two *daily* papers—the surest objective indication of the mass character of the trend—namely, the *Daily Citizen* of the opportunists, and the *Daily Herald* of the opponents of opportunism. Both newspapers have been overwhelmed by the wave of nationalism; but opposition has been displayed by less than one-tenth of the supporters of the first, and by about three-sevenths of the supporters of the second.⁷⁷ The usual method of comparison, when the B.S.P. is contrasted to the I.L.P. alone, is a wrong one, because the bloc that exists *in fact* between the latter, and the Fabians and the Labour Party, is forgotten. So then, only two countries out of the ten constitute exceptions; but in these cases, too, we do not have complete exceptions, for it is not that the trends have changed places, but that (for reasons which are so understandable that it is not worth stopping to deal with them) the wave has overwhelmed practically all the opponents of opportunism. This shows how strong the wave is, without doubt; but it does

not in the least refute the fact that on a European scale the old division and the new one coincide.

We are told that the division "according to opportunism" is out of date; that only the division into supporters of internationalism and supporters of national insularity has any meaning. That is a radically wrong view. The concept "supporter of internationalism" is robbed of all substance and of all meaning if you do not develop it *concretely*, and every step of such concrete development will be an enumeration of symptoms of hostility to opportunism. In practice it will be still more the case. The supporter of internationalism who is not the most consistent and resolute opponent of opportunism is a myth, nothing more. Maybe isolated individuals of this type sincerely consider themselves "internationalists"; people, however, are judged not by what they think of themselves, but by their political conduct. The political conduct of such "internationalists" as are not consistent and resolute opponents of opportunism will always be of assistance or support to the nationalist trend. On the other hand, the nationalists also call themselves "internationalists" (Kautsky, Lensch, Haenisch, Vandervelde, Hyndman, etc.), and not only do they call themselves such, but fully recognize international rapprochement, agreement, the closest unity among people, and identification of their manner of thinking. The opportunists are *not against* "internationalism"; they are only for international approval of, and international agreement among, the opportunists.

Written not earlier than February 1915

Vol. 21, pp. 129-36

REGARDING THE LONDON CONFERENCE⁷⁸

The declaration that we publish made by Comrade Maximovich,⁷⁹ the representative of the R.S.D.L.P. Central Committee, fully expresses the Party's views on this Conference. The French bourgeois press splendidly revealed the significance of the Conference as an instrument or a manoeuvre of the British and French bourgeoisie. The parts were distributed as follows: *Le Temps* and *L'Écho de Paris* attacked the French Socialists for supposedly making too great concessions to internationalism. These attacks were a mere manoeuvre the purpose of which was to pave the way for Premier Viviani's well-known speech in Parliament delivered in a patriotic and aggressive strain. The *Journal des Débats*, on the other hand, bluntly gave the game away when it said that the whole point was to get the British Socialists, headed by Keir Hardie, who till then had opposed the war and recruiting, to cast their votes for war until victory over Germany. That was achieved. That is important. That is the political result of drawing both the British and the French Socialists over to the British and French bourgeoisie. As to the phrases about internationalism, socialism, referendum, and so forth—they are all *nothing but* phrases, empty words, of no significance whatsoever!

Undoubtedly, the clever French bourgeois reactionaries blurted out the absolute truth. It is for the purpose of ravaging and plundering Germany, Austria, and Turkey that war is being waged by the Anglo-French, plus Russian, bourgeoisie. They need recruiting agents, they need

the agreement of the Socialists to fight until victory is won over Germany; all the rest is empty and unworthy phrase-mongering, prostitution of the great words: socialism, internationalism, and so forth. In deeds—to follow the bourgeoisie and to help them plunder foreign countries, and in words—to offer the masses the hypocritical recognition of “socialism and the International.” It is that which constitutes the basic sin of opportunism, the basic cause of the collapse of the Second International.

That is why the task of the opponents of the social-chauvinists at the London Conference was clear. It was to leave the Conference in the name of clear anti-chauvinist principles, *without falling* into pro-Germanism. Since it is precisely *for chauvinistic*, and for no other, motives that the pro-Germans are determined enemies of the London Conference!! Comrade Maximovich fulfilled that task when he spoke definitely about the *treachery* of the German Socialists.

The Bundists and the supporters of the Organization Committee⁸⁰ cannot understand this clear and simple thing at all. The first mentioned are pro-Germans like Kosovsky, who *directly justifies* the German Social-Democrats in voting for war credits (see the Bund's *Informatsionny Listok*, No. 7, January 1915, p. 7, beginning of § V). The editors of that sheet did not utter a single word to dissociate themselves from Kosovsky (though they specially dissociated themselves from Borisov, that champion of Russian patriotism). There is not one word in the manifesto of the Bund C.C. (*ibid.*, p. 3) that is clearly directed against social-chauvinism.

The supporters of the O.C. stand for reconciling pro-German with pro-French chauvinism, as can be seen from Axelrod's statements (Nos. 86 and 87 of *Golos*, and from No. 1 of *Izvestia*, issued by the foreign secretariat of the O.C., dated February 22, 1915). When the editors of *Nashe Slovo*⁸¹ proposed that we take joint action against “official social-chauvinism,” we told them *outright* in our

reply, in which we enclosed our draft declaration and referred to the decisive opinion of Comrade Maximovich, that the O.C. and the Bund are themselves on the side of official social-patriotism.

Why does *Nashe Slovo* deceive itself and others by *keeping silent* about this in the leading article of issue No. 32? Why does it keep silent about the fact that our draft declaration also contained words about the *treachery* of the German Social-Democrats? *Nashe Slovo's* declaration *omitted* this most important "fundamental" point; neither we, nor Comrade Maximovich accepted or could accept that declaration. That was why united action between us and the O.C. did *not* result. Why, then, does *Nashe Slovo* deceive itself and others by asserting that a basis exists for united action??

"Official social-patriotism" is the supreme evil of contemporary socialism. All forces must be made ready and rallied to fight this evil (and not to effect a reconciliation with it, or to declare a mutual international "amnesty" on this point). Kautsky and others have supplied quite a definite programme of an "amnesty" and peace with social-chauvinism. We have tried to supply a definite programme of struggle against it—see, particularly, issue No. 33 of *Sotsial-Demokrat* and the resolutions published. It remains for us to express the wish that *Nashe Slovo* will pass from vacillating between "platonic sympathy for internationalism" and peace with social-chauvinism, to something more definite.

Sotsial-Demokrat, No. 40,
March 29, 1915

Vol. 21, pp. 155-57

'AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE SLOGAN OF CIVIL WAR

A report from Berlin dated January 8, new style, sent to Swiss newspapers reads: "Recently the press has repeatedly contained news of peaceful attempts to establish friendly relations between men in German and French trenches. According to *Tägliche Rundschau* an army order dated December 29 forbids fraternization and all relations whatsoever with the enemy in the trenches; violation of this order will be punishable as high treason."

So then, fraternization and attempts to establish friendly relations are a fact. Germany's military leaders are concerned about it; which means they attach considerable importance to it. The British *Labour Leader* of January 7, 1915, contains a *whole number* of extracts from the British bourgeois press which show that there were cases of fraternization between British and German soldiers, who arranged a "48 hours' armistice" (for Christmas), met together amicably half-way between the trenches, etc. The British military authorities issued a *special order forbidding* fraternization. Yet the socialist opportunists and their defenders (or lackeys?) assured the workers in the press (as Kautsky did), with an exceptionally complacent air and calm consciousness that the military censorship would save them from repudiations, assured the workers that agreements between the Socialists of the belligerent countries to take action against the war were *impossible* (the actual expression used by Kautsky in *Neue Zeit*)!!

Just imagine that if Hyndman, Guesde, Vandervelde, Plekhanov, Kautsky, etc., instead of abetting the bourgeoisie as they are now doing, were to establish an international committee to agitate for "fraternization and attempts to establish friendly relations" between the Socialists of the belligerent countries, both "in the trenches" and among the troops in general. What would be the results in a few months' time, if now, six months after the outbreak of war, *contrary to* all the leaders, chiefs and stars of the first magnitude who have betrayed socialism, opposition is growing everywhere against those who voted for war credits and against those who entered governments, while the military authorities threaten death for "fraternization"!

"There is one practical issue: the victory or defeat of one's own country," wrote the lackey of the opportunists, Kautsky, in unison with Guesde, Plekhanov and Co. Yes, if we forget about socialism and the class struggle, that will be true. But if we do not forget about socialism, it will not be true: there is another *practical* issue. Either to perish in the war between the slave-holders, and remain blind and helpless slaves, or to perish for making "attempts at fraternization" between the slaves aimed at overthrowing slavery.

That *actually* is the "practical" issue.

Sotsial-Demokrat, No. 40,
March 29, 1915

Vol. 21, pp. 158-59

BOURGEOIS PHILANTHROPISTS AND REVOLUTIONARY SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY

The Economist, a journal of the British millionaires, pursues a very instructive line in relation to the war. The representatives of the advanced capital of the oldest and richest capitalist country shed tears over the war and are incessantly expressing a desire for peace. Those Social-Democrats who, following the opportunists and Kautsky, think that the socialist programme consists in the propagation of peace, may fully convince themselves of their error by reading the British *Economist*. Their programme is not socialist but bourgeois-pacifist. Dreams of peace without the propagation of revolutionary action only express the horror of war and have nothing to do with socialism.

Moreover, the British *Economist* is for peace precisely because it is afraid of revolution. In the issue of February 13, 1915, for instance, we read:

"Philanthropists profess to hope that the peace settlement will bring with it a great international reduction of armies and armaments. . . . But those who know the forces which really control the diplomacy of Europe see no utopias. The outlook is for bloody revolutions and fierce wars between labour and capital, or between the masses and the governing classes of Continental Europe."

In the issue of March 27, 1915, we again find the desire expressed for a peace that would guarantee the freedom of nations, etc., promised by Edward Grey. Should this

hope fail, the 'war ... will end in revolutionary chaos, beginning no one can say where, and ending in no one can say what.'

The British pacifist millionaires understand contemporary politics much better than do the opportunists, the followers of Kautsky and similar socialist yearners for peace. The bourgeois gentry know, first, that phrases about a democratic peace are an idle, foolish utopia so long as the old "forces really control diplomacy," i.e., so long as the capitalist class has not been expropriated. Second, the bourgeois gentry appraise the outlook soberly: foreseeing "bloody revolutions," "revolutionary chaos." A socialist revolution always appears to the bourgeoisie as "revolutionary chaos."

We see in the practical politics of the capitalist countries three kinds of sympathy for peace:

1) The enlightened millionaires want to hasten peace because they are afraid of revolution. A "democratic" peace (without annexations, with reduction of armaments, etc.) they soberly and correctly describe as a utopia under capitalism.

This philistine utopia is preached by the opportunists, the followers of Kautsky, etc.

2) The unenlightened masses of the people (the petty bourgeoisie, semi-proletarians, part of the workers, etc.) by voicing their desire for peace express in a very indefinite way a growing protest against the war, a growing, hazy revolutionary mood.

3) The enlightened vanguard elements of the proletariat, the revolutionary Social-Democrats, attentively watch the sentiments of the masses, use their growing urge for peace not to support vulgar utopias of a "democratic" peace under capitalism, not to encourage hopes being placed in the philanthropists, the authorities, the bourgeoisie, but in order to make the hazy revolutionary sentiments clear. They do so—basing themselves on the experience of the masses and on their sentiments, enlighten-

ing them by thousands of the facts of pre-war politics—in order systematically, steadfastly, unswervingly—

—to show the need for mass revolutionary action against the bourgeoisie and the governments of their respective countries as the *only* road towards democracy and socialism.

Sotsial-Demokrat, No. 41,
May 1, 1915

Vol. 21, pp. 169-70

THE COLLAPSE OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

(Excerpts)

Only yesterday, one may say, when he turned before the war to the defence of imperialism, Hyndman was regarded by all "respectable" Socialists as an unbalanced crank, and nobody spoke of him in any other tone but that of disdain. Now the most prominent Social-Democratic leaders of all countries have completely sunk to Hyndman's position, differing from each other only in shade and temperament. And we are quite unable to use language at all parliamentary in estimating or characterizing the civic courage of people who, like the writers in *Nashe Slovo*, speak about "Mister" Hyndman in terms of contempt, while they speak—or remain silent—about "Comrade" Kautsky with deference (or obsequiousness?). Can such an attitude be reconciled with respect for socialism and for one's convictions in general? If you are convinced that Hyndman's jingoism is false and fatal, should you not direct your criticism and attacks against the *more influential* and more dangerous protagonist of such views, Kautsky?

IV

The most subtle theory of social-chauvinism, most skillfully made up to appear scientific and international, is the theory of "ultra-imperialism" advanced by Kautsky. Here is the clearest, most precise and most recent exposition of this theory by the author himself:

"The abatement of the Protectionist movement in Britain; the lowering of tariffs in America; the striving for disarmament; the rapid decline in the export of capital from France and Germany in the years immediately preceding the war; finally, the growing international interlocking of the various cliques of finance capital—all this has caused me to consider whether the present imperialist policy cannot be superseded by a new, ultra-imperialist policy, which will introduce the joint exploitation of the world by internationally united finance capital in place of the mutual rivalries of national finance capitals. Such a new phase of capitalism is at any rate conceivable. Is it achievable? Sufficient premises are still lacking to enable us to answer this question." (*Neue Zeit*, No. 5, April 30, 1915, p. 144.)

"... The course and the outcome of the present war may prove decisive in this respect. It may entirely crush the weak rudiments of ultra-imperialism by fanning national hatred to the highest degree among the finance capitalists as well, by intensifying the armaments race, by making a new world war inevitable. Under such conditions, the thing I foresaw and formulated in my pamphlet, *The Path to Power*, would come true in horrifying dimensions; class contradictions would become sharper and sharper and with it would come the moral decay (literally: "going out of business, Abwirtschftung," bankruptcy) of capitalism..." (It must be noted that by this pretentious word Kautsky simply means the "hatred" which the "intermediary strata between the proletariat and finance capital," namely, "the intelligentsia, the petty bourgeois, even small capitalists," entertain towards capitalism)... "But the war may end otherwise. It may lead to the strengthening of the weak rudiments of ultra-imperialism... Its lessons" (note this!) "may hasten developments for which we would have to wait long in peacetime. If it does lead to this, to an agreement between nations, disarmament and a lasting peace, then the worst of the causes that led before the war to the growing moral decay of capitalism may disappear." The new phase will, of course, bring "new misfortunes" for the proletariat, "maybe even worse," but "for a time," "ultra-imperialism" "could create an era of new hopes and expectations within the framework of capitalism" (p. 145).

In what way is the justification of social-chauvinism deduced from this "theory"?

In a rather strange way—for a "theoretician"—namely, the following:

The Left-wing Social-Democrats in Germany say that imperialism and the wars it gives rise to are not an accident, but a necessary product of capitalism, which has led

to the domination of finance capital. It is necessary, therefore, to pass to the revolutionary mass struggle, for the epoch of comparatively peaceful development has passed away. The "Right-wing" Social-Democrats crudely declare: Since imperialism is "necessary," we too must be imperialists. Kautsky, in the role of the "centre," tries to reconcile these two views.

"The extreme Lefts," he writes in his pamphlet *The National State, the Imperialist State and the League of States* (Nuremberg, 1915), wish to "oppose" socialism to inevitable imperialism, i.e., "not only the propaganda for it that we have been carrying on in opposition to all forms of capitalist domination for half a century, but the immediate achievement of socialism. This seems very radical, but it can only serve to *drive everyone who does not believe* in the immediate practical achievement of socialism into the camp of imperialism" (p. 17, our italics).

When speaking of the immediate achievement of socialism, Kautsky "achieves" a sleight-of-hand, taking advantage of the fact that in Germany, particularly under the military censorship, it is forbidden to talk about revolutionary action. Kautsky knows very well that what the Lefts are demanding of the Party is the *immediate* propagation and preparation of revolutionary action, and not the "immediate practical achievement of socialism."

From the fact that imperialism is necessary the Lefts draw the conclusion that revolutionary action is necessary. The "theory of ultra-imperialism" serves Kautsky as *a means of justifying the opportunists*, of making it appear that they have not gone over to the bourgeoisie at all but simply "do not believe" in immediate socialism and expect that a new "era" of disarmament and lasting peace "may be" ushered in. The "theory" boils down to, and *only* to, the point that Kautsky uses the *hope* for a *new* peaceful era of capitalism to justify the opportunists and the official Social-Democratic parties in joining the bourgeoisie and in rejecting revolutionary (i.e., proletarian) tactics during the *present turbulent era*, notwithstanding the solemn declarations of the Basle resolution.

Note that in doing so Kautsky not only fails to say that this new phase follows, and necessarily does so, from such and such circumstances and conditions, but, on the contrary, says frankly: I cannot even decide as yet whether this new phase is "*achievable*" or not. Indeed, look at the "tendencies" towards the new era which Kautsky points to. The astonishing thing is that among the economic facts the author includes the "striving for disarmament"! This means hiding in the shadow of innocent philistine talk and dreams away from indubitable facts that cannot possibly be reconciled with the theory of the blunting of contradictions. Kautsky's "ultra-imperialism"—this word, by the way, does not at all express what the author wants to say—implies a tremendous *blunting* of the contradictions of capitalism. We are told of "the abatement of Protection in Britain and America." Where is the slightest tendency here towards a new era? Carried to extremes, Protection in America has abated, but Protection remains, just as the privileges, the preferential tariffs of the British colonies in favour of Britain remain. Let us recall what is the basis of the change from the former, "peaceful," epoch of capitalism to the present, imperialist epoch: the fact that free competition has given way to monopolist associations of capitalists, and that the whole world is divided up. Obviously both these facts (and factors) are really of world-wide significance: Free Trade and peaceful competition were possible and necessary so long as capital was able without hindrance to enlarge its colonies and to seize unoccupied land in Africa, etc., while the concentration of capital was still slight and there were as yet no monopolist undertakings, i.e., undertakings of such magnitude as to dominate a *whole* branch of industry. The appearance and growth of such monopolist undertakings (this process has very likely not stopped either in Britain or in America, has it? Not even Kautsky will dare deny that the war has accelerated and intensified it) makes the free competition of former times *impossible*,

cuts the ground from under it, while the division of the globe *compels* the transition from peaceful expansion to armed struggle for the *redivision* of colonies and spheres of influence. It is ridiculous to think that the *abatement* of Protection in two countries can change anything in this respect.

Further, the decline in capital exports from *two* countries in the course of a few years. According to Harms's statistics in 1912, for example, the capital invested abroad by the two countries, France and Germany, amounted to approximately 35,000 million marks (about 17,000 million rubles) each, while Britain alone had invested twice that amount.* The increase in capital exports never has proceeded, nor could proceed, evenly under capitalism. Kautsky cannot even dare to suggest that the accumulation of capital has declined or that the capacity of the home market has undergone any important change through a big improvement, say, in the conditions of the masses. Under these circumstances, the decline in capital exports from two countries in the course of a few years cannot at all warrant the conclusion that a new era has set in.

"The growing international interlocking of the cliques of finance capital." This is the only really general and undoubted tendency, not during the last few years, and not in two countries, but in the whole world, in the whole of capitalism. But why must this tendency lead to a striving for disarmament, and not for armaments, as hitherto? Take any one of the world-famous "gun" (and general armament) firms, Armstrong, for instance. Recently the British *Economist* (May 1, 1915) announced that the *profits* of that firm had risen from £606,000 (about 6 million rubles) in

1905/6 to £856,000 in 1913 and to £940,000 (9 million rubles) in 1914. The interlocking of finance capital is here very pronounced and continues to increase; German capitalists "have holdings" in the business of the British firm; British firms build submarines for Austria, etc. Internationally interlocked capital is doing splendid business in armaments and wars. To deduce an economic tendency towards disarmament from the combining and interlocking of various national capitals into one international whole means substituting the pious philistine wish that class contradictions be blunted for the actual sharpening of these contradictions.

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* See Bernhard Harms, *Probleme der Weltwirtschaft*, Jena, 1912; George Paish, *Great Britain's Capital Investments in Colonies, etc.* in the *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, Vol. LXXIV, 1910/11, p. 167. Lloyd George, in a speech early in 1915, estimated British capital invested abroad at £4,000 millions, i.e., about 80,000 million marks.

BRITISH PACIFISM AND BRITISH DISLIKE OF THEORY

Political liberty has hitherto been incomparably greater in Britain than in the other countries of Europe. Here more than anywhere else is the bourgeoisie accustomed to govern and knows how to govern. The relations between the classes are more developed and in many respects clearer than in other countries. The absence of conscription makes the people freer in their attitude towards the war *in the sense* that everybody is free to refuse to join the army, and that is why the government (which in Britain is a committee for managing the affairs of the bourgeoisie in its purest form) is compelled to strain every nerve to rouse "popular" enthusiasm for the war. It would be absolutely impossible to attain this goal without radically breaking the law, were not the proletarian mass entirely disorganized and demoralized by the desertion of a minority of the best placed, skilled and organized workers to Liberal, i.e., bourgeois policy. The British trade unions comprise about one-fifth of the wage workers. The leaders of those trade unions are mostly Liberals, and Marx long ago called them agents of the bourgeoisie.

All these peculiarities of Britain help us, on the one hand, better to understand the essence of present-day social-chauvinism, for this essence is *identical* in autocratic and democratic countries, in militarist and non-conscription countries; on the other hand, they help us to appreciate, on the basis of facts, the significance of that compromise with social-chauvinism which is expressed,

for instance, in the extolling of the slogan of peace, etc.

The most consummate expression of opportunism and of Liberal Labour policy is undoubtedly the Fabian Society. Let the reader peruse the correspondence of Marx and Engels with Sorge (two Russian translations have appeared). The reader will find there an excellent characterization of that society by Engels, who treats Messrs. Sidney Webb & Co. as a gang of bourgeois scoundrels who aim to demoralize the workers, to influence them in a counter-revolutionary direction. One may vouch for it that not a single Second International leader of any responsibility and influence has ever attempted to refute this estimation of Engels's, or even to doubt its correctness.

Let us now compare the *facts*, leaving *theory* aside for a moment. You will see that the *conduct* during the war of the Fabians (see, for instance, their weekly paper, the *New Statesman*) and of the German Social-Democratic Party, including Kautsky, is *exactly the same*. The same direct and indirect defence of social-chauvinism; the same combination of such defence with a readiness to utter all sorts of kindly, humane and near-Left phrases about peace, disarmament, etc., etc.

The fact exists, and the conclusion to be drawn, however unpleasant it may be to various persons, is inevitably and undoubtedly the following: in practice the leaders of the contemporary German Social-Democratic Party, including Kautsky, are exactly the same sort of agents of the bourgeoisie as Engels called the Fabians long ago. The non-recognition of Marxism by the Fabians and its "recognition" by Kautsky & Co. makes no difference whatever in essentials, in practical politics; it only proves that some writers, politicians, etc., have turned Marxism into Struve-ism.⁸² Their hypocrisy is *not* their personal vice; they may in individual cases be the most virtuous heads of families; their hypocrisy is the result of the objective falsity of their social position: they are supposed to repre-

sent the revolutionary proletariat, whereas actually they are agents for transmitting bourgeois, jingo ideas to the proletariat.

The Fabians are more sincere and honest than Kautsky & Co., because they have not promised to stand for revolution; politically, however, they are of the *same* kidney.

The "age-old" character of political liberty in Britain, and the developed condition of its political life in general, and of its bourgeoisie in particular, resulted in various *shades* of bourgeois opinion quickly, easily and freely finding new expression in new political organizations in that country. One such organization is the Union of Democratic Control. Its secretary and treasurer is E. D. Morel, now a regular contributor to the central organ of the Independent Labour Party, *The Labour Leader*. This individual was for several years the Liberal Party candidate in the Birkenhead constituency. When, shortly after the outbreak of the war, Morel came out *against* it, the committee of the Birkenhead Liberal Association notified him, in a letter dated October 2, 1914, that his candidature was no longer acceptable, i.e., he was simply expelled from the Party. Morel replied, on October 14, in a letter which he subsequently published as a pamphlet entitled *The Outbreak of the War*. In this pamphlet, as in a number of other articles, Morel exposes *his* government, proving the falseness of asserting that the cause of the war was the violation of Belgium's neutrality, or that the aim of the war is the destruction of *Prussian* imperialism, etc., etc. Morel defends the programme of the Union of Democratic Control, which is peace, disarmament, the right of self-determination for all territories on the basis of a plebiscite, and the democratic control of foreign policy.

All this shows that Morel, as an individual, undoubtedly deserves credit for his sincere sympathy with democracy, for turning from the jingo bourgeoisie to the pacifist bourgeoisie. When Morel adduces facts to prove that *his* government duped the people in that it denied the ex-

istence of secret treaties although such treaties actually existed; that the British bourgeoisie as early as 1887 quite clearly recognized the inevitability of Belgium's neutrality being violated in the event of a Franco-German war, and emphatically rejected the idea of interfering (at that time Germany was not yet a dangerous competitor!); that French militarists like Colonel Boucher, in a number of books published before the war, quite openly confessed the existence of plans for an *aggressive* war by France and Russia against Germany; that the well-known British military authority, Colonel Repington, admitted *in 1911* in the press that the growth of Russian armaments after 1905 had been a threat to Germany—when Morel shows all this, we cannot but admit that we are dealing with an exceptionally honest and courageous bourgeois, who is not afraid to break with his own party.

Nevertheless, everybody will immediately concede that after all Morel is a bourgeois, whose talk about peace and disarmament is empty phrase-mongering, since without revolutionary action by the proletariat there can be no question either of a democratic peace or of disarmament. And Morel, who has now broken with the Liberals on the question of the present war, remains a Liberal on all other economic and political issues. Why, then, when Kautsky in Germany gives a Marxist cloak to the *same bourgeois phrases* about peace and disarmament is this considered not as hypocrisy on his part but as his merit? Only the undeveloped character of political relations and the absence of political liberty in Germany prevent the formation there, as quickly and easily as in Britain, of a bourgeois league for peace and disarmament with Kautsky's programme.

Let us, then, admit the truth that Kautsky's position is that of a pacifist bourgeois and not of a revolutionary Social-Democrat.

We are living amidst sufficiently great events to have

the courage to admit the truth "regardless of personalities."

Possessed of an aversion for abstract theory and proud of their practicality, the British often raise political issues *more directly*, thus, helping the Socialists of other countries to find the real content *beneath* the husk of terminology of every kind (including "Marxist"). The pamphlet *Socialism and War** published before the war by the jingo paper, *Clarion*, is instructive in this respect. The pamphlet contains the anti-war "manifesto" of the American Socialist, Upton Sinclair, and a reply to it by the jingo, Robert Blatchford, who has long adopted Hyndman's imperialist viewpoint.

Sinclair is a sentimental Socialist without theoretical training. He puts the question "simply," being incensed by the approach of war and seeking salvation from it in socialism.

We are told, writes Sinclair, that the socialist movement is still too weak, that we must wait for evolution. But evolution proceeds in the hearts of men; we are the instruments of evolution, and if we do not fight, then there will be no evolution. We are told that our movement (against war) will be suppressed; but I [Sinclair] declare, and I am profoundly convinced of it, that the suppression of any indignation which has as its aim, on the ground of the highest humanity, the prevention of war, would be the greatest victory that socialism has ever gained, as this would rouse the conscience of civilization and stir up the workers of the whole world as never before in all history. Let us, says Sinclair, not be too anxious regarding our movement; let us not attach too much importance to numbers and the appearance of outward strength. A thousand men aglow with faith and determination are stronger than a million grown cautious and respectable. And there is no greater danger for the social-

* *Socialism and War*. The Clarion Press, 44 Worship Street, London, E.C.

ist movement, he says, than the danger of becoming an established institution.

This, as can be seen, is a naïve, theoretically unsound, but profoundly correct warning against the vulgarizing of socialism and a call to revolutionary struggle.

What does Blatchford say in reply to Sinclair?

That war is caused by capitalist and militarist interests is true, he says. He is no less in favour of peace and of socialism superseding capitalism than any other Socialist. But Sinclair will not convince him by "rhetorical and fine phrases," will not eliminate the facts. Facts, friend Sinclair, are stubborn things, and the German menace is a fact. Neither the British nor the German Socialists are strong enough to prevent war, and Sinclair exaggerates the British Socialist forces tremendously; they are not united and have neither money, nor arms, "nor discipline." What remains for them is *to help* the British Government to increase its navy, for there is not, nor can there be, any other guarantee of peace.

In Continental Europe the chauvinists have never been so frank either before or after the outbreak of the war. In Germany not frankness prevails, but Kautsky's hypocrisy and play at sophisms. The same is true of Plekhanov. That is why it is instructive to cast a glance at the situation in a more advanced country. There nobody will be deceived by sophisms or a travesty of Marxism. There issues are placed more straightforwardly and truly. Let us learn from the "advanced" British.

Sinclair is naïve in his appeal, although at bottom it is a profoundly true one; he is naïve because he ignores the half-century-old development of mass socialism and the struggle of trends within it; ignores the conditions for the growth of revolutionary action when an objectively revolutionary situation as well as a revolutionary organization exist. "Sentiment" cannot make up for that. The grim and merciless struggle between powerful trends in socialism,

between the opportunist and revolutionary trends, cannot be evaded by rhetoric.

Blatchford speaks bluntly and betrays the deeply hidden arguments of the Kautskyites & Co., who are afraid to tell the truth. We are still weak, that is all, says Blatchford, but by this directness he at once exposes and lays bare his opportunism, his jingoism. It is immediately obvious that he serves the bourgeoisie and the opportunists. Declaring socialism to be "*weak*" he *himself weakens* it by preaching an anti-socialist, bourgeois, policy.

Like Sinclair, but reversely, like a coward and not like a fighter, like a traitor and not like the "madly brave," he, too, ignores the conditions for creating a revolutionary situation.

However, as far as concerns his practical conclusions, his policy (rejection of revolutionary action, of propaganda for and preparation of such action), Blatchford, the vulgar jingo, is in *complete* accord with Plekhanov and Kautsky.

Marxist words have in our days become a cover for the total renunciation of Marxism; to be a Marxist one must expose the "Marxist hypocrisy" of the leaders of the Second International, one must fearlessly recognize the struggle of two trends in socialism, one must get to the bottom of the problems relating to this struggle. That is the conclusion to be drawn from British relationships, which show us the *Marxist* essence of the matter *without* Marxist words.

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Vol. 21, pp. 233-38

SOCIALISM AND WAR

(Excerpt)

THE STATE OF AFFAIRS AMONG THE OPPOSITION

There can be no doubt whatever that what most interests all internationalists is the state of affairs in the German Social-Democratic opposition. Official German Social-Democracy, which was the strongest and leading party in the Second International, struck the heaviest blow at the international workers' organization. At the same time, however, it was German Social-Democracy that proved to have the strongest opposition. Of all the big European parties, it was the first in which a loud voice of protest was raised by comrades who remained loyal to the banner of socialism. It was with joy that we read the magazines *Lichtstrahlen* and *Die Internationale*.⁸³ With still greater joy did we learn of the distribution in Germany of secretly-printed revolutionary manifestoes, as, for example, the one headed: "The Chief Enemy Is at Home." This showed that the spirit of socialism is alive among the German workers, that there still are people in Germany capable of upholding revolutionary Marxism.

The split in the contemporary socialist movement has been most strikingly revealed within German Social-Democracy. Here we very distinctly see three trends: the opportunist-chauvinists, who have nowhere sunk so low, to such a degree of renegacy as they have in Germany; the Kautskyite "Centre," who have here shown themselves

totally incapable of playing any role other than that of henchmen of the opportunists; and the Left, who are the only Social-Democrats in Germany.

Naturally, what interests us most of all is the state of affairs among the German Left. In it we see our comrades, the hope of all the internationalist elements.

What is that state of affairs?

The magazine *Die Internationale* was quite right when it said that the German Left is still in a state of ferment, that considerable regroupings in it still lie ahead, that it contains more resolute and less resolute elements.

We Russian internationalists do not in the least, of course, claim the right to interfere in the internal affairs of our comrades, the German Lefts. We are aware that they alone are fully competent to determine their methods of fighting the opportunists in accordance with the conditions of time and place. We merely deem it our right and duty to express our opinion frankly on the state of affairs.

We are convinced that the author of the leading article in the magazine *Die Internationale* was profoundly right when he asserted that the Kautskyite "Centre" is doing more harm to Marxism than avowed social-chauvinism is. Whoever now obscures disagreements, whoever now, under the guise of Marxism, preaches to the workers what Kautskyism is preaching, is lulling the workers, is more harmful than the Südekums and Heines, who put the question bluntly and compel the workers to examine the issues.

The Fronde against "the officialdom" which Kautsky and Haase are latterly venturing to talk of, should mislead nobody. The disagreements between them and the Scheidemanns are not on fundamentals. The former believe that Hindenburg and Mackensen have *already* won and that they can already permit themselves the luxury of protesting against annexations. The latter believe that Hindenburg and Mackensen have not *yet* won and that, therefore, it is necessary "to hold out to the end."

Kautskyism is only conducting a sham fight against "the officialdom," and is doing so in order to be able, after the war, to conceal from the workers the principles in dispute and to gloss the matter over with the 1,001st puffy resolution draft in a vaguely-"Leftist" spirit, in introducing which the diplomats of the Second International are such masters.

It is quite understandable that in their arduous struggle against "the officialdom" the German opposition should also make use of this unprincipled Fronde of Kautskyism. But what must remain the touchstone for every internationalist is rejection of neo-Kautskyism. Only he is a genuine internationalist who fights Kautskyism, who understands that the "Centre," *even after* the sham turn taken by its leaders, remains *an ally of the chauvinists and opportunists* as far as principles are concerned.

Of enormous importance is our attitude to the wavering elements in the International in general. These elements—mainly Socialists of the *pacifist* complexion—are to be found in both the neutral countries and some of the belligerent countries (in Britain, for example, the Independent Labour Party). These elements can be our fellow-travellers. Closer relations with them against the social-chauvinists are necessary. It should be remembered, however, that they are *only* fellow-travellers, that on the main and fundamental issue, in restoring the International, these elements will go not with us, but against us; they will go with Kautsky, Scheidemann, Vandervelde and Sembat. At international conferences we must not limit our programme to what is acceptable to these elements. Otherwise we ourselves will become captive to the wavering pacifists. That is what happened, for example, at the International Women's Conference in Berne.⁸⁴ The German delegation, which supported Comrade Clara Zetkin's point of view, in fact played the part of "Centre" at this Conference. The Women's Conference only said what was acceptable to the delegates from the opportunist Dutch party

of Troelstra and to the delegates of the I.L.P., which party—let us not forget—at the London conference of “Entente” chauvinists⁸⁵ voted for Vandervelde’s resolution. We express our supreme respect to the I.L.P. for its courageous struggle against the British Government during the war. But we know that that Party has never been based on Marxism. We, however, consider that the chief task of the Social-Democratic opposition at the present moment is to raise the banner of revolutionary Marxism, to tell the workers firmly and definitely about our attitude to imperialist wars, to advance the watchword of mass revolutionary action, i.e., of transforming the epoch of imperialist wars into the beginning of the epoch of civil wars.

There are revolutionary Social-Democratic elements, in spite of all, in many countries. They are to be found in Germany, Russia, Scandinavia (the influential trend represented by Comrade Höglund), the Balkans (the Bulgarian “Tesnyaki” party), Italy, Britain (part of the B.S.P.), France (Vaillant himself has admitted in *L’Humanité* that he has received letters of protest from internationalists, but he has not published a single one of them in full), Holland (the *Tribunists*⁸⁶), etc. To weld these Marxist elements together—however few they may be at the outset—to recall in their name the now forgotten words of genuine socialism, to call upon the workers of all lands to break with the chauvinists and take their stand under the old banner of Marxism—such is the task of the day.

Conferences with so-called programmes of “action” have hitherto merely consisted in the more or less detailed proclamation at them of a programme of plain pacifism. Marxism is not pacifism. To fight for the speediest termination of the war is a necessary thing. But only if there is a call for *revolutionary* struggle does the demand for “peace” acquire proletarian meaning. Without a series of revolutions a so-called democratic peace is a philistine utopia. A real programme of action would only be provided by a *Marxist* programme, one that gives the masses a com-

plete and clear interpretation of what has occurred, explains what imperialism is and how to fight it, openly states that opportunism brought about the collapse of the Second International, and openly calls for the building of a Marxist International without and *against* the opportunists. Only such a programme as would show that we believe in ourselves, believe in Marxism, that we proclaim a life-and-death struggle against opportunism would sooner or later ensure us the sympathy of the genuine proletarian masses.

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THE REVOLUTIONARY PROLETARIAT AND THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-DETERMINATION

The Zimmerwald Manifesto,⁸⁷ like the majority of the programmes or the tactical resolutions of the Social-Democratic parties, proclaims the "right of nations to self-determination." Parabellum, in Nos. 252 and 253 of the *Berner Tagwacht*, declares the "struggle for the non-existent right to self-determination" to be "illusory"; he counters to it the "revolutionary mass struggle of the proletariat against capitalism," while at the same time *assuring* us that "we are against annexations" (this assurance is repeated *five* times in Parabellum's article), and against all violence to nations.

The arguments advanced by Parabellum in support of his position boil down to the assertion that now all national problems, like those of Alsace-Lorraine, Armenia, etc., are problems of imperialism; that capital has outgrown the framework of national states—that it is impossible "to turn back the wheel of history" to the obsolete ideal of national states, etc.

Let us see whether Parabellum's arguments are correct.

First of all, it is Parabellum who is looking backward and not forward when, entering into battle against working class acceptance "of the ideal of the national state," he directs his glance towards Britain, France, Italy, Germany, i.e., towards countries where the national move-

ment for liberation is a thing of the past, and not towards the East, towards Asia, Africa, the colonies, where this movement is a thing of the present and the future. Suffice it to mention India, China, Persia, Egypt.

Further: imperialism means that capital has outgrown the framework of national states, it means that national oppression has been extended and accentuated on a new historical basis. Hence, what follows is that, Parabellum notwithstanding, we must *connect* the revolutionary struggle for socialism with a revolutionary programme on the national question.

From what Parabellum says it appears that *in the name* of the socialist revolution he scornfully rejects a consistently revolutionary programme in the sphere of democracy. That is wrong. The proletariat cannot be victorious except through democracy, i.e., by giving full effect to democracy and by combining every step of its struggle with democratic demands formulated in most resolute terms. It is absurd *to counter* the socialist revolution and the revolutionary struggle against capitalism to *one* of the questions of democracy, in this case, the national question. We must *combine* the revolutionary struggle against capitalism with a revolutionary programme and tactics as regards *all* democratic demands: a republic, a militia, popular election of officials, equal rights for women, self-determination of nations, etc. While capitalism exists, these demands, all of them, can only be achieved as an exception, and even then in an incomplete, distorted form. Basing ourselves on the democracy already achieved, exposing its incompleteness under capitalism, we demand the overthrow of capitalism, the expropriation of the bourgeoisie, as a necessary basis both for the abolition of the poverty of the masses and for the *complete* and *all-round* introduction of *all* democratic reforms. Some of these reforms will be started before the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, others *in the course* of this overthrow, and still others after it. The social revolution is not a single battle,

but an epoch covering a whole number of battles over all sorts of problems of economic and democratic reform, which are consummated only by the expropriation of the bourgeoisie. It is for the sake of this final aim that we must formulate *every one* of our democratic demands in a consistently revolutionary way. It is quite conceivable that the workers of some particular country will overthrow the bourgeoisie *before* even a single fundamental democratic reform has been fully achieved. It is quite inconceivable, however, that the proletariat, as a historical class, will be able to defeat the bourgeoisie if it is not made ready for this by being educated in the spirit of the most consistent and resolutely revolutionary democracy.

Imperialism is the progressively growing oppression of the nations of the world by a handful of Great Powers; it is the epoch of wars among the latter to extend and consolidate the oppression of nations; it is the epoch in which the masses of the people are deceived by hypocritical social-patriots, i.e., individuals who *under the pretext* of "freedom of nations," "right of nations to self-determination," and "defence of the fatherland," justify and defend the oppression of the majority of the world's nations by the Great Powers.

That is why the central point of the Social-Democratic programme must be precisely that division of nations into oppressing and oppressed which is the *essence* of imperialism, and which is *falsely* evaded by the social-chauvinists and Kautsky. This division is not important from the viewpoint of bourgeois pacifism or of the philistine utopia of peaceful competition among independent nations under capitalism, but it is most important from the viewpoint of the revolutionary struggle against imperialism. And from this division must follow *our* definition of the "right of nations to self-determination," a definition that is consistently democratic, revolutionary, and *in accord* with the general task of the immediate struggle for socialism. It is on behalf of this right, and fighting for its sincere recogni-

tion, that the Social-Democrats of the oppressing nations must demand the freedom of the oppressed nations to secede, for otherwise recognition of equal rights for nations and of international working-class solidarity would in fact be mere empty phrase-mongering, mere hypocrisy. The Social-Democrats of the oppressed nations, on the other hand, must place in the forefront the unity and the merging of the workers of the oppressed nations with those of the oppressing nations, for otherwise these Social-Democrats will involuntarily become the allies of this or that national *bourgeoisie*, who *always* betray the interests of the people and of democracy, and are *always* ready in their turn to annex territory and to oppress other nations.

The manner in which the national question was presented at the end of the sixties of the past century may serve as an instructive example. The petty-bourgeois democrats, to whom all thought of the class struggle and of the socialist revolution was totally alien, pictured to themselves a utopia of peaceful competition among free and equal nations under capitalism. The Proudhonists utterly "denied" the national question and the right of nations to self-determination, from the viewpoint of the immediate tasks of the social revolution. Marx ridiculed French Proudhonism and showed its affinity to French chauvinism ("... all Europe must and will sit quietly on their hindquarters until the gentlemen in France abolish 'poverty. . .'"* "By the negation of nationalities they appeared, quite unconsciously, to understand their absorption into the model French nation."). Marx demanded *the separation of Ireland* from Britain "although after the separation there may come federation,"** and he demanded it not from the standpoint of the petty-bourgeois utopia of a peaceful capitalism, not from considerations

* See p. 203 of this volume.—Ed.

** See p. 194 of this volume.—Ed.

of "justice for Ireland," but from the standpoint of the interests of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat of the *oppressing, i.e., British nation* against capitalism. The freedom of *that* nation was cramped and mutilated by the fact that it oppressed another nation. The internationalism of the *British* proletariat would remain a hypocritical phrase if *they* did not demand the separation of Ireland. Although Marx never favoured small states, splitting up states at all, or the principle of federation, he considered the separation of an oppressed nation to be a step towards federation, and consequently, not towards splitting up, but towards concentration, both political and economic, but concentration on the basis of democracy.⁸⁸ From Parabellum's standpoint, Marx very likely fought an "illusory struggle" when he demanded the separation of Ireland. Actually, however, this demand *alone* represented a consistent revolutionary programme, it alone corresponded to internationalism, it alone advocated concentration along *non-imperialist* lines.

The imperialism of our days has led to a situation where the oppression of nations by the Great Powers has become general. The standpoint that a fight must be conducted against the social-chauvinism of the dominant nations, now waging an imperialist war to increase the oppression of nations, and oppressing the majority of the world's nations and the majority of the earth's population—it is this standpoint that must be decisive, cardinal and basic in the national programme of Social-Democracy.

Take a glance at the present trends of Social-Democratic thought on this subject. The petty-bourgeois utopians who dreamt of equality and peace among nations under capitalism have given way to the social-imperialists. In fighting against the former, Parabellum is tilting at windmills and involuntarily playing into the hands of the latter. What is the programme of the social-chauvinists on the national question?

They either entirely deny the right to self-determination, using arguments like those advanced by Parabellum (Cunow, Parvus, the Russian opportunists Semkovsky, Liebman, and others), or they recognize that right in an obviously hypocritical fashion, namely, without applying it to precisely those nations which are oppressed by their own nation or by the military allies of their own nation (Plekhanov, Hyndman, all the pro-French patriots, then Scheidemann, etc., etc.). The formulation of the social-chauvinist lie that is most plausible and therefore most dangerous to the proletariat is the one given by Kautsky. In words, he is *for* self-determination of nations; in words, he is for the Social-Democratic Party "*die Selbständigkeit der Nationen allseitig (!) und rückhaltlos (??) achtet und fordert.*"* (*Neue Zeit*, No. 33, II, p. 241, May 21, 1915.) In *deeds*, however, he adapts the national programme to the prevailing social-chauvinism, distorts and cuts it down, gives no exact definition of the duties of the Socialists of the oppressing nations, and even plainly falsifies the democratic principle itself when he says that to demand "state independence" ("*staatliche Selbständigkeit*") for every nation would mean demanding "too much" ("*zu viel*," *Neue Zeit*, No. 33, II, p. 77, April 16, 1915). "National autonomy," if you please, is enough! The principal question, the very one that the imperialist bourgeoisie will not permit to be discussed, namely, the question of the *frontiers of a state* based upon the oppression of nations, is avoided by Kautsky, who, to please that bourgeoisie throws the most essential thing out of the programme. The bourgeoisie are ready to promise any "national equality," "national autonomy" you please, so long as the proletariat remains within the framework of legality and "peacefully" submits to them on the question of the state *frontiers*! Kautsky formulates the national programme of

* "all-sidedly (!) and unreservedly (??) respecting and demanding the independence of nations."—Ed.

Social-Democracy in a reformist and not a revolutionary manner.

Parabellum's national programme, or more correctly his *assurances* that "we are against annexations," has the whole-hearted endorsement of the Parteivorstand,* Kautsky, Plekhanov and Co., precisely because that programme does not expose the predominant social-patriots. Bourgeois pacifists would also endorse that programme. Parabellum's splendid *general* programme ("revolutionary mass struggle against capitalism") serves him, as the Proudhonists of the sixties, not to draw up in conformity with it, in its spirit, a programme on the national question that is uncompromising and equally revolutionary, but to clear the field here for the social-patriots. In our imperialist epoch the majority of the Socialists in the world belong to nations that oppress other nations and strive to extend this oppression. That is why our "struggle against annexations" will be meaningless and will not scare the social-patriots in the least, if we do not declare that the Socialist of an oppressing nation who does not conduct propaganda, both in peacetime and wartime, in favour of freedom of secession for the oppressed nations, is no Socialist and no internationalist, but a chauvinist! The Socialist of an oppressing nation who fails to conduct such propaganda in defiance of government prohibition, i.e., in the free, i.e., in the illegal, press is a hypocritical advocate of equal rights for nations!

About Russia, which has not yet completed its bourgeois-democratic revolution, Parabellum writes only *one* sentence:

"Selbst das wirtschaftlich sehr zurückgebliebene Russland hat in der Haltung der Polnischen, Lettischen, Armenischen Bourgeoisie gezeigt, dass nicht nur die militärische Bewachung es ist, die die Völker in diesem 'Zuchthaus der Völker' zusammenhält, sondern Bedürfnisse der

* The leadership of the German Social-Democratic Party.—Ed.

kapitalistischen Expansion, für die das ungeheure Territorium ein glänzender Boden der Entwicklung ist."*

That is not a "Social-Democratic standpoint" but a liberal-bourgeois one, not an internationalist, but a Great-Russian chauvinist standpoint. Parabellum, who fights the German social-patriots so excellently, apparently knows very little about Russian chauvinism. In order to convert Parabellum's sentence into a Social-Democratic postulate and to draw Social-Democratic conclusions from it, it should be changed and supplemented in the following way:

Russia is a prison of peoples not only because of the military-feudal character of tsarism, not only because the Great-Russian bourgeoisie support tsarism, but also because the Polish, etc., bourgeoisie have sacrificed the freedom of nations and democracy in general for the interests of capitalist expansion. The Russian proletariat cannot march at the head of the people towards a victorious democratic revolution (which is its immediate task), or fight alongside its brothers, the proletarians of Europe, for a socialist revolution, without immediately demanding, fully and "rückhaltlos,"** freedom to separate from Russia for all the nations oppressed by tsarism. This we demand, not independently of our revolutionary struggle for socialism, but because this struggle will remain an empty phrase if it is not linked up with a revolutionary approach to all questions of democracy, including the national question. We demand freedom of self-determination, i.e., independence, i.e., freedom of separation for the oppressed nations, not because we have dreamt of splitting up the country economically, or of the ideal of small states, but, on the contrary, because we want large

* "Even economically very backward Russia proved, in the stand taken by the Polish, Lettish and Armenian bourgeoisie, that it is not only the military guard that keeps the peoples in that 'prison of peoples' together, but also the need for capitalist expansion, for which the vast territory is a splendid ground for development."—Ed.

** Unreservedly.—Ed.

states and the closer unity and even fusion of nations, but on a truly democratic, truly internationalist basis, which is *inconceivable* without freedom to separate. Just as Marx in 1869 demanded the separation of Ireland, not in order to split, but to achieve subsequent free alliance between Ireland and Britain, not in order to secure "justice for Ireland," but in the interests of the revolutionary struggle of the British proletariat, so we consider the refusal of Russian Socialists to demand freedom of self-determination for nations, in the sense we have indicated above, to be a direct betrayal of democracy, internationalism and socialism.

Written in German not earlier than October 16 (29), 1915
First published in 1927 in *Lenin Miscellany* VI

Vol. 21, pp. 371-77

LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF THE SOCIALIST PROPAGANDA LEAGUE⁸⁹

Dear comrades!

We are extremely glad to get your leaflet. Your appeal to the members of the Socialist Party to struggle for a new International, for clear-cut revolutionary socialism as taught by Marx and Engels, and against the opportunism, especially against those who are in favor of working class participation in a war of defence, corresponds fully with the position our party (Social-Democratic Labor Party of Russia, *Central Committee*) has taken from the beginning of this war and has always taken during more than ten years.

We send you our sincerest greetings & best wishes of success in our fight for true internationalism.

In our press & in our propaganda we differ from your programme in several points & we think it is quite necessary that we expose you briefly these points in order to make immediate & serious steps for the coordination of the international strife of the uncompromisingly revolutionary Socialists especially Marxists in all countries.

We criticise in the most severe manner the old, Second (1889-1914) International, we declare it dead & not worth to be restored on old basis. But we never say in our press that too great emphasis has been heretofore placed upon so-called "Immediate Demands," and that thereby the socialism can be diluted: we say & we prove that all bourgeois parties, all parties except the working-class revolutionary

party, are liars & hypocrites when they speak about reforms. We try to help the working class to get the smallest possible but real improvement (economic & political) in their situation & we add always that no reform can be durable, sincere, serious if not seconded by revolutionary methods of struggle of the masses. We preach always that a socialist party not uniting this struggle for reforms with the revolutionary methods of working-class movement can become a sect, can be severed from the masses, & that that is the most pernicious menace to the success of the clear-cut revolutionary socialism.

We defend always in our press the democracy in the party. But we never speak against the centralization of the party. We are for the democratic centralism. We say that the centralization of the German Labor movement is not a feeble but a strong and good feature of it. The vice of the present Social-Democratic Party of Germany consists not in the centralization but in the preponderance of the opportunists, which should be excluded from the party especially now after their treacherous conduct in the war. If in any given crisis the small group (for instance our Central Committee is a small group) can act for directing the mighty mass in a revolutionary direction, it would be very good. And in all crises the masses can not act immediately, the masses want to be helped by the small groups of the central institutions of the parties. Our Central Committee quite at the beginning of this war, in September 1914, has directed the masses not to accept the lie about "the war of defence" & to break off with the opportunists & the "would-be-socialists-jingoes" (we call so the "Socialists" who are now in favor of the war of defence). We think that this centralistic measure of our Central Committee was useful & necessary.

We agree with you that we must be against craft Unionism & in favor of industrial Unionism i.e. of big, centralized Trade Unions & in favor of the most active participation of all members of party in all economic

12/ ^{entire} freedom of colonies, ^{that} ~~socialist~~ ~~is~~ ~~our~~ ~~press~~, ~~are~~ ⁱⁿ ~~really~~ ~~a~~ ~~jingoes~~

For conclusion I repeat once more best greetings & wishes for your League. We should be very glad to have a further information from you & to unite our struggle against opportunism & for the true - internationalism.

Yours K. Lenin.

W: There are two Soc. Dem. parties in Russia. Our party (Central Committee) is against opportunism. The other party (Organization Committee) is opportunist. We are against the unity with them.

You can writ to our official address (Publication 218c. For the C. K. of rue King de Suger, 8. Genève. Switzerland). But better write to my personal address: Mr. Williams, Seidenweg 4a. ¹¹ Bern. Switzerland.

struggles & in *all* trade union & cooperative organizations of the working class. But we consider that such people as Mr. Legien in Germany & Mr. Gompers in the U. St. are bourgeois and that their policy is not a socialist but a nationalistic, middle class policy. Mr. Legien, Mr. Gompers & similar persons are not the representatives of working class, they represent the aristocracy & bureaucracy of the working class.

We entirely sympathize with you when in political action you claim the "mass action" of the workers. The German revolutionary & internationalist Socialists claim it also. In our press we try to define with more details what must be understood by political mass action, as f.i. political strikes (very usual in Russia), street demonstrations and civil war prepared by the present imperialist war between nations.

We do not preach unity in the *present* (prevailing in the Second International) socialist parties. On the contrary we preach *secession* with the opportunists. The war is the best object-lesson. In *all* countries the opportunists, their leaders, their most influential dailies & reviews are *for* the war, in other words, they have in reality *united* with "their" national bourgeoisie (middle class, capitalists) against the proletarian masses. You say, that in America there are also Socialists who have expressed themselves in favor of the participation in a war of defence. We are convinced, that unity with such men is an evil. *Such* unity is unity with the national middle class & capitalists, and a *division* with the international revolutionary working class. And we are for secession with nationalistic opportunists and unity with international revolutionary Marxists & working-class parties.

We never object in our press to the unity of S.P. & S.L.P. in America. We always quote letters from Marx & Engels (especially to Sorge, active member of American socialist movement), where both condemn the sectarian character of the S.L.P.⁹⁰

We fully agree with you in your criticism of the old International. We have participated in the conference of Zimmerwald (Switzerland) 5-8. IX. 1915. We have formed there a *left wing*, and have proposed *our resolution* & our draught of a manifesto. We have just published these documents in German & I send them to you (with the German translation of our small book about "Socialism & War"), hoping that in your League there are probably comrades, that know German. If you could help us to publish these things in English (it is possible only in America and later on we should send it to England), we would gladly accept your help.

In our struggle for true internationalism & against "jingo-socialism" we always quote in our press the example of the opportunist leaders of the S.P. in America, who are in favor of restrictions of the immigration of Chinese and Japanese workers (especially after the Congress of Stuttgart, 1907, & *against* the decisions of Stuttgart). We think that one can not be internationalist & be at the same time in favor of such restrictions. And we assert that Socialists in America, especially English Socialists, belonging to the ruling, and *oppressing* nation, who are not against any restrictions of immigration, against the possession of colonies (Hawaii) and for the entire freedom of colonies, that such Socialists are in reality jingoes.

For conclusion I repeat once more best greetings & wishes for Your League. We should be very glad to have a further information from You & to *unite* our struggle against opportunism & for the true internationalism.

Yours *N. Lenin*

N.B. There are *two* Soc.-Dem. parties in Russia. Our party ("*Central Committee*") is against opportunism. The other party ("*Organization Committee*") is opportunist. We are *against* the unity with them.

You can write to our official address (Bibliothèque russe. For the C.K. 7 rue Hugo de Senger. 7. Genève. Switzerland). But better write to my personal address: Wl. Ulianow. Seidenweg 4a, III Berne. Switzerland.

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OPPORTUNISM AND THE COLLAPSE OF THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

(Excerpts)

II

It would be ridiculous to regard the whole question as one of personalities. What has it to do with opportunism if men like *Plekhanov*, and *Guesde*, etc.?—asked *Kautsky* (*Neue Zeit*, May 28, 1915). What has it to do with opportunism if *Kautsky*, etc.?—replied *Axelrod* in the name of the opportunists of the Quadruple Entente⁹¹ (*Die Krise der Sozialdemokratie*, Zurich 1915, p. 21). All this is a farce. *To explain the crisis of the whole movement it is necessary to examine, firstly, the economic significance of the given policy; secondly, the ideas underlying it; and thirdly, its connection with the history of the trends in socialism.*

What is the economic essence of defencism in the war of 1914-15? The bourgeoisie of *all* the big powers are waging the war so as to partition and exploit the world, so as to oppress other nations. Some crumbs of the huge profits of the bourgeoisie may fall to the share of a small circle of the labour bureaucracy, the labour aristocracy, and petty-bourgeois fellow-travellers. The class basis of social-chauvinism and of opportunism is one and the same, namely, the alliance between a thin stratum of privileged workers and “their” national bourgeoisie *against* the masses of the working class; the alliance between the

lackeys of the bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie themselves against the class exploited by the latter.

The political content of opportunism and social-chauvinism is one and the same, namely, class collaboration, rejection of the dictatorship of the proletariat, rejection of revolutionary action, unconditional recognition of bourgeois legality, mistrust in the proletariat, trust in the bourgeoisie. Social-chauvinism is the direct continuation and consummation of British Liberal Labour policy, of Millerandism and Bernsteinism.

The struggle between the two main trends in the working-class movement, between revolutionary and opportunist socialism, fills the entire epoch from 1889 to 1914. At the present time also, there are in every country two main trends on the question of the attitude to the war. Let us not resort to the bourgeois and opportunist method of referring to personalities. Let us take the *trends* in a number of countries. Let us take ten European countries: Germany, Britain, Russia, Italy, Holland, Sweden, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Belgium and France. In the first eight countries the division into an opportunist and a revolutionary trend corresponds to the division into social-chauvinists and internationalists. In Germany the strongholds of social-chauvinism are: the *Sozialistische Monatshefte* and Legien and Co.; in Britain the Fabians and the Labour Party (the I.L.P. has always formed a bloc with them, supported their organ, and in this bloc has always been weaker than the social-chauvinists, whereas in the B.S.P. the internationalists form three-sevenths of the membership); in Russia this trend is represented by *Nasha Zarya* (now *Nashe Dyelo*), by the Organization Committee, and by the Duma group under Chkheidze's leadership;⁹² in Italy by the reformists headed by Bissolati; in Holland by Troelstra's party; in Sweden by the majority of the party led by Branting; in Bulgaria by the party of so-called "broad" Socialists; in Switzerland by Greulich and Co. It is among the revolutionary Social-Democrats in all these

countries that a more or less sharp protest against social-chauvinism has already been heard. Only two countries, France and Belgium, form an exception; there, however, internationalism also exists, but is very weak.

Social-chauvinism is consummated opportunism. It is ripe for an open, often vulgar, alliance with the bourgeoisie and the General Staffs. It is this alliance that gives it great strength and the monopoly of the legal printed word and of deceiving the masses. *It is ridiculous to go on regarding opportunism as an inner-Party phenomenon.* It is ridiculous to think of carrying out the Basle resolution in conjunction with David, Legien, Hyndman, Plekhanov and Webb. Unity with the social-chauvinists means unity with one's "own" national bourgeoisie, which exploits other nations; it means splitting the international proletariat. This does not mean that a rupture with the opportunists is possible everywhere immediately; it only means that historically it has matured, that it is necessary and inevitable for the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, that history, which has led from "peaceful" capitalism to imperialist capitalism, has prepared this rupture. *Volentem ducunt fata, nolentem trahunt.**

III

The shrewd representatives of the bourgeoisie understand this perfectly well. That is why they are so lavish in their praise of the present socialist parties which are headed by "defenders of the fatherland," i.e., defenders of imperialist robbery. That is why the governments reward the social-chauvinist leaders either with ministerial posts (in France and Britain), or with a monopoly of unhindered legal existence (in Germany and Russia). That is why in Germany, where the Social-Democratic Party was strongest and where its transformation into a national-liberal *counter-revolutionary* labour party has been most obvious,

* The fates lead the willing, drag the unwilling.—Ed.

things have got to the stage where the Public Prosecutor regards the struggle between the "minority" and the "majority" as "incitement to class hatred"! That is why the shrewd opportunists are concerned most of all with preserving the former "unity" of the old parties, which rendered such great service to the bourgeoisie in 1914-15. The views of these opportunists of all countries of the world were expounded with a frankness worthy of gratitude by a member of German Social-Democracy in an article signed "Monitor" which appeared in April 1915, in the reactionary magazine *Preussische Jahrbücher*. Monitor thinks that it would be very dangerous for the bourgeoisie if Social-Democracy moved *still further to the right*: "It must preserve its character as a labour party with socialist ideals; for on the day it gives this up a new party will arise, which will adopt the programme that the old, the former party abandoned and give it a still more radical formulation" (*Preussische Jahrbücher*, 1915, No. 4, pp. 50-51).

Monitor hit the nail on the head. This is exactly what the British Liberals and the French Radicals have always wanted: revolutionary-sounding phrases designed to deceive the masses into placing their trust in the Lloyd Georges, Sembats, Renaudels, Legiens, and Kautskys, in men capable of preaching "defence of the fatherland" in a predatory war.

But Monitor represents only one variety of opportunism: the frank, crude, cynical variety. The others act in a stealthy, subtle, "honest" manner. Engels once said that "honest" opportunists are the most dangerous for the working class. . . .⁹⁸ Here is an example:

Kautsky, in the *Neue Zeit* (November 26, 1915), writes: "The opposition to the majority is growing; the masses are in an opposition mood" . . . "After the war" (only *after* the war? *N.L.*) "class contradictions will become so sharp that radicalism will gain the upper hand among the masses." "After the war" (only *after* the war? *N.L.*) "we

shall be menaced by the desertion of the radical elements from the Party and their influx into the party of anti-parliamentary" (?? this should be taken to mean extra-parliamentary) "mass action." "Thus, our Party is splitting up into two extreme camps, having nothing in common with each other." For the sake of saving unity Kautsky tries to persuade the majority in the Reichstag to allow the minority to make a few radical parliamentary speeches. This means that Kautsky wishes, with the aid of a few radical parliamentary speeches, to reconcile the revolutionary masses with the opportunists, who have "nothing in common" with revolution, who have long had the leadership of the trade unions, and now, relying on their close alliance with the bourgeoisie and the government, have also captured the leadership of the Party. What material difference is there between this and Monitor's "programme"? None, except for honeyed phrases which prostitute Marxism.

At a meeting of the Reichstag group held on March 18, 1915, *Wurm*, a Kautskyite, "warned" the group against "pulling the strings too tight; there is growing opposition among the masses of the workers to the majority of the group; it is necessary to keep to the Marxist" (?! probably a misprint; this should read the "Monitor") "Centre." ("Klassenkampf gegen den Krieg! Material zum 'Fall Liebknecht.'" Als Manuskript gedruckt.* P. 67). We see, therefore, that the revolutionary sentiment of the *masses* was admitted as a *fact* on behalf of *all* the Kautskyites (the so-called "Centre") *as early as March, 1915!!* And eight and a half months later, Kautsky again comes forward with the proposal to "reconcile" the masses, who want to fight, with the opportunist, counter-revolutionary party—and he wants to do this with the aid of a few revolutionary-sounding phrases!!

* *The Class Struggle against the War! Materials on the Liebknecht Case*. Printed for private circulation.—Ed.

War often has its uses in that it exposes what is rotten and casts off convention.

Let us compare the British Fabians with the German Kautskyites. Here is what a *real* Marxist, Frederick Engels, wrote about the former on January 18, 1893: "...a band of careerists who have understanding enough to realize the inevitability of the social revolution, but who could not possibly entrust this gigantic task to the raw proletariat alone. . . . Fear of the revolution is their fundamental principle." (*Letters to Sorge*, p. 390.)

And on November 11, 1893, he wrote: "... these overweening bourgeois, who would graciously deign to emancipate the proletariat from above if only it would be sensible enough to realize that such a raw, uneducated mass cannot alone emancipate itself and cannot achieve anything except by the grace of these clever lawyers, writers and sentimental old women." (*Ibid.*, p. 401.)

In theory Kautsky locks down upon the Fabians with the contempt of a pharisee for a poor sinner. Because after all he swears by "Marxism." But what difference is there between them in practice? Both signed the Basle Manifesto,⁹⁴ and both treated it as Wilhelm II treated Belgian neutrality. But Marx all his life castigated those who try to quench the revolutionary spirit of the workers.

In opposition to the revolutionary Marxists, Kautsky has advanced a new theory of "ultra-imperialism." By this he means that the "mutual rivalries of national finance capitals" will be superseded by the "joint exploitation of the world by internationally united finance capital" (*Neue Zeit*, April 30, 1915). But he adds: "We have not yet sufficient premises to decide whether such a new phase of capitalism is achievable." Thus, on the basis of a mere assumption about a "new phase," and not daring to state definitely that it is "feasible," the inventor of this "phase" rejects his own revolutionary statements, rejects the revolutionary tasks and revolutionary tactics of the proletariat *now*, in the "phase" of the crisis *that has already*

begun, that of war, and of an unprecedented accentuation of class contradictions! Is this not the most abominable type of Fabianism?

Axelrod, the leader of the Russian Kautskyites, sees "the centre of gravity of the problem of internationalizing the proletarian movement for emancipation in the internationalization of everyday practice"; for example, "labour protection and insurance legislation must become the object of the workers' international actions and organization." (*Axelrod, The Crisis of Social-Democracy*, Zurich, 1915, pp. 39 and 40.) It is quite clear that not only Legien, David and the Webbs, but even Lloyd George himself, and Nauman, Briand and Milyukov would fully associate themselves with such "internationalism." As in 1912, *Axelrod* is prepared to utter the most revolutionary phrases for the very distant future if the future International "will come out" (against the governments in case of war) "and raise a revolutionary storm." Just look how brave we are! But when it is a question of helping and developing the incipient revolutionary ferment among the masses *now*, *Axelrod* replies that these tactics of revolutionary mass action "would have some justification if we were on the very eve of the social revolution, as was the case in Russia, for example, where the student demonstrations of 1901 heralded the approaching decisive battles against absolutism." At the present moment, however, all this is "utopia," "Bakuninism," etc., quite in the spirit of Kolb, David, Südekum and Legien.

Dear *Axelrod* only forgets that in 1901 nobody in Russia knew, or could know, that the first "decisive battle" would take place four years later—don't forget, *four* years, and would be "indecisive." Nevertheless, we revolutionary Marxists alone were right at that time: we ridiculed the Krichevskys and Martynovs, who called for an immediate assault. We merely advised the workers to kick out the opportunists everywhere and to exert every effort to sustain, sharpen and widen the demonstrations and other mass

revolutionary actions. The present situation in Europe is perfectly analogous. It would be absurd to call for an "immediate" assault. But it would be disgraceful to call oneself a Social-Democrat and yet refrain from advising the workers to break with the opportunists and exert every effort to strengthen, deepen, widen and sharpen the incipient revolutionary movement and demonstrations. Revolution never falls ready-made from the skies, and at the beginning of a revolutionary ferment nobody can tell whether and when it will lead to a "real," "genuine" revolution. Kautsky and Axelrod give the workers old, threadbare, counter-revolutionary advice. Kautsky and Axelrod feed the masses with the hope that the *future* International will certainly be revolutionary, only in order *at present* to protect, camouflage and embellish the domination of the counter-revolutionary elements—the Legiens, Davids, Vanderveldes and Hyndmans. Is it not obvious that "unity" with Legien and Co. is the best means for preparing the "future" revolutionary International?

"To strive to transform the world war into civil war would be folly," declares *David*, the leader of the German opportunists (*Die Sozialdemokratie und der Weltkrieg—Social-Democracy and the World War*, 1915, p. 172), in reply to the manifesto of the Central Committee of our Party dated November 1, 1914. This manifesto says, *inter alia*:

"However difficult such a transformation may appear at any given moment, Socialists will never relinquish systematic, persistent and undeviating preparatory work in this direction now that war has become a fact."

(This passage is also quoted by *David*, p. 171.) A month before *David's* book appeared our Party published resolutions in which "systematic preparation" was defined as follows: 1) refusal to vote for credits; 2) breaking the class truce; 3) formation of underground organizations; 4) support of manifestations of solidarity in the trenches; 5) support of all revolutionary mass actions.

David is almost as brave as *Axelrod*: in 1912 he did not think it "folly" to point to the Paris Commune in the event of war breaking out.

Plekhanov, that typical representative of the Entente social-chauvinists, argues about revolutionary tactics in the same way as *David*. He calls it a "farcical dream." But listen to what *Kolb*, a frank opportunist, has to say. *Kolb* wrote: "The tactics of those who surround *Liebknrecht* would result in the struggle within the German nation reaching boiling point." (*Die Sozialdemokratie am Scheidewege—Social-Democracy at the Crossroads*, p. 50.)

But what is a struggle which has reached boiling point, if not civil war?

If the tactics of our Central Committee, which, in the main, coincide with the tactics of the Zimmerwald Left,⁹⁵ were "folly," "a dream," "an adventure," "Bakunism," as *David*, *Plekhanov*, *Axelrod*, *Kautsky*, and others have asserted, they could never lead to a "struggle within the nation," let alone to the struggle reaching boiling point. Nowhere in the world have anarchist phrases brought about a struggle within a nation. But facts prove that precisely in 1915, as a result of the crisis created by the war, the revolutionary ferment among the masses is increasing; strikes and political demonstrations in Russia, strikes in Italy and Britain, hunger demonstrations and political demonstrations in Germany, are growing. Are these not the beginnings of revolutionary mass struggles?

To support, develop, widen, sharpen mass revolutionary actions; to create underground organizations—without which it is impossible even in "free" countries to tell the masses of the people the truth—this is the whole practical programme of Social-Democracy in this war. Everything else is either lies or phrases, no matter what opportunist or pacifist theories it is embellished with.*

* At the International Women's Conference held in Berne in March 1915, the representatives of the Central Committee of our Party urged the absolute necessity for creating underground organi-

When we are told that these "Russian tactics" (David's expression) are not suitable for Europe, we usually reply by pointing to the facts. On October 30 a delegation of Berlin women comrades appeared before the Presidium of the Party in Berlin, and stated that "now that we have a large organizing apparatus it is much easier to distribute illegal pamphlets and leaflets and to arrange 'prohibited meetings' than it was under the Anti-Socialist Law." "Ways and means are not lacking, evidently the will is lacking." (*Berner Tagwacht*, 1915, No. 271.)

Were these bad comrades diverted from the path of truth by the Russian "sectarians," etc.? Are the real masses represented, not by these comrades, but by Legien and Kautsky? By Legien, who, in a lecture on January 27, 1915, thundered against the "anarchistic" idea of forming underground organizations; and by Kautsky, who has become so counter-revolutionary that on November 26, four days before the demonstration of ten thousand in Berlin, he denounced street demonstrations as "adventurism"!!

Enough of phrases! Enough of prostituted "Marxism" à la Kautsky! After twenty-five years of the Second International, after the Basle Manifesto, the workers will no longer believe in phrases. Opportunism has become over-ripe; it has gone right over to the camp of the bourgeoisie and turned into social-chauvinism: it has broken with Social-Democracy spiritually and politically. It will break with it organizationally, too. The workers are already demanding an "uncensored" press and "prohibited" meetings, i.e., secret organizations to support the revolutionary

zations. That was rejected. The British delegates laughed at the proposal and praised British "liberty." But a few months later British papers, like *The Labour Leader*, reached us with blank spaces, and then news arrived about police raids, confiscation of pamphlets, arrests, and harsh sentences imposed on comrades who spoke in Britain about peace, only about peace!

mass movement. Only such "war against war" is Social-Democratic deeds, and not words. And despite all difficulties, temporary defeats, mistakes, delusions, interruptions, this work will lead mankind to the victorious proletarian revolution.

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IMPERIALISM, THE HIGHEST STAGE OF CAPITALISM

(Excerpts)

IV. THE EXPORT OF CAPITAL

Typical of the old capitalism, when free competition held undivided sway, was the export of *goods*. Typical of the latest stage of capitalism, when monopolies rule, is the export of *capital*.

Capitalism is commodity production at its highest stage of development, when labour power itself becomes a commodity. The growth of internal exchange, and particularly of international exchange, is a characteristic feature of capitalism. The uneven and spasmodic development of the separate enterprises, separate industries, and separate countries, is inevitable under capitalism. Britain became a capitalist country before any other, and by the middle of the nineteenth century, having adopted free trade, claimed to be the "workshop of the world," the supplier of manufactured goods to all countries, which in exchange were to keep her provided with raw materials. But in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, *this* monopoly was already undermined, for other countries, sheltering themselves by "protective" tariffs, developed into independent capitalist states. On the threshold of the twentieth century we see the formation of a new type of monopoly: firstly, monopolist associations of capitalists in all capitalistically developed countries; secondly, the monopolist position of a few very rich countries, in which the accumulation of

capital has reached gigantic proportions. An enormous "surplus of capital" has arisen in the advanced countries.

It goes without saying that if capitalism could develop agriculture, which today frightfully lags behind industry everywhere, if it could raise the standard of living of the masses, who everywhere continue to be half-starved and poverty-stricken, in spite of the amazing technical progress, there could be no talk of a surplus of capital. This "argument" is very often advanced by the petty-bourgeois critics of capitalism. But if capitalism did these things it would not be capitalism, for both uneven development and a semi-starvation level of existence of the masses are fundamental and inevitable conditions and premises of this mode of production. So long as capitalism remains what it is, surplus capital will be utilized not to raise the standard of living of the masses in the given country, for that would mean reducing the profits of the capitalists, but to increase profits by exporting the capital to backward countries. In these backward countries profits are usually high, for capital is scarce, the price of land is relatively small, wages are low, raw materials are cheap. The possibility of exporting capital is created by the fact of a number of backward countries having already been drawn into world capitalist intercourse; main-line railways either have been or have begun to be built there, elementary conditions for industrial development are assured, etc. The necessity for exporting capital is created by the fact of capitalism in a few countries having become "overripe," and (owing to the backward state of agriculture and the poverty of the masses) of capital lacking a field for "profitable" investment.

Here are approximate figures showing the amount of capital invested abroad by three principal countries.*

* Hobson, *Imperialism*, London 1902, p. 58; Riesser, *Die deutschen Grossbanken und ihre Konzentration im Zusammenhange mit der Entwicklung der Gesamtwirtschaft in Deutschland* [The German Big Banks and Their Concentration in Connection with the Development

Capital Invested Abroad (in 1,000 million francs)

Year	Britain	France	Germany
1862	3.6	—	—
1872	15.0	10 (1869)	—
1882	22.0	15 (1880)	?
1893	42.0	20 (1890)	?
1902	62.0	27-37	12.5
1914	75-100.0	60	44.0

This table shows that the export of capital reached enormous dimensions only at the beginning of the twentieth century. Before the war the capital invested abroad by the three principal countries amounted to between 175 and 200 thousand million francs. At the modest rate of 5 per cent, the income from this sum should reach from 8 to 10 thousand million francs a year. A solid basis for the imperialist oppression and exploitation of most of the nations and countries of the world, for the capitalist parasitism of a handful of wealthy states!

How is this capital invested abroad distributed among the various countries? *Where* is it invested? These questions can be given only an approximate answer, one, however, that can throw light on certain general relations and connections of modern imperialism.

of the Economy in Germany), 4 Aufl. 1912, S. 395 und 404; P. Arndt in *Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv* [Archive of World Economy], Bd. 7, 1916, S. 35; Neymarck in *Bulletin*; Hilferding, *Finance Capital*, p. 492; Llyod George, Speech in the House of Commons, May 4, 1915, reported in the *Daily Telegraph*, May 5, 1915; B. Harms, *Probleme der Weltwirtschaft* [Problems of World Economy], Jena 1912, S. 235 et seq.; Dr. Siegmund Schilder, *Entwicklungstendenzen der Weltwirtschaft* [Trends of Development of World Economy], Berlin, 1912, Band 1, S. 150; George Paish, *Great Britain's Capital Investments, etc.*, in *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, Vol. LXXIV, 1910-11, p. 167, etc.; Georges Diouritch, *L'expansion des banques allemandes à l'étranger, ses rapports avec le développement économique de l'Allemagne* [Expansion of German Banks Abroad in Connection with the Economic Development of Germany], Paris, 1909, p. 84.

Distribution (Approximate) of Foreign Capital in Different Parts of the Globe (About 1910)

	Britain	France	Germany	Total
	(In 1,000 million marks)			
Europe	4	23	18	45
America	37	4	10	51
Asia, Africa and Australia	29	8	7	44
<i>Total</i>	70	35	35	140

The principal field of investment of British capital is the colonies, which are very large in America, too (for example, Canada), not to mention Asia, etc. Enormous capital exports are bound up most closely, in this case, with enormous colonies, whose importance for imperialism we shall speak of later. The situation is different in the case of France. French capital abroad is invested mainly in Europe, primarily in Russia (at least 10,000 million francs). This is mainly *loan* capital, government loans, and not capital invested in industrial undertakings. Unlike British, colonial, imperialism, French imperialism may be termed usury imperialism. In the case of Germany, we have a third type; its colonies are inconsiderable, and its capital invested abroad is divided most evenly between Europe and America.

The export of capital influences, greatly accelerates, the development of capitalism in those countries to which this export goes. While, therefore, the export of capital may to a certain extent tend to arrest development in the capital-exporting countries, it can only do so by expanding and deepening the further development of capitalism throughout the world.

The capital-exporting countries are nearly always able to obtain certain "advantages," the character of which throws light on the peculiarity of the epoch of finance capital and monopolies. Here, for instance, is a passage from the Berlin review, *Die Bank*, for October 1913:

"A comedy worthy of the pen of Aristophanes is lately being played in the international capital market. Numerous foreign countries, from Spain to the Balkan states, from Russia to Argentina, Brazil and China, are openly or secretly coming into the big money markets with demands, sometimes very persistent, for loans. The money markets are not very bright at the moment and the political outlook is not promising. Not a single money market, however, dares to refuse a loan for fear that its neighbour may forestall it, consent to grant a loan and so secure some reciprocal service. In these international transactions the creditor nearly always manages to secure some extra benefit: a favourable clause in a commercial treaty, a coaling station, a contract to construct a harbour, a fat concession, or an order for guns."*

Finance capital has created the epoch of monopolies, and monopolies introduce everywhere monopolist principles: the use of "connections" for profitable transactions takes the place of competition on the open market. The most usual thing is to stipulate that part of the loan granted shall be spent on purchases in the creditor country, particularly on orders for war materials, or for ships, etc. During the last two decades (1890-1910) France very often resorted to this method. The export of capital thus becomes a means for encouraging the export of commodities. In this connection, transactions between particularly big firms assume a form which, as Schilder** "mildly" puts it, "borders on bribery." Krupp in Germany, Schneider in France, Armstrong in Britain are instances of firms, closely connected with powerful banks and governments, that cannot easily be "bypassed" when a loan is being arranged.

France, while granting loans to Russia, "squeezed" her in the commercial treaty of September 16, 1905, by stipulating for certain concessions, to run till 1917. She did the

* *Die Bank*, 1913, 2, p. 1024.

** Schilder, *op. cit.*, pp. 346, 350 and 371.

same thing in the commercial treaty with Japan of August 19, 1911. The tariff war between Austria and Serbia, which lasted, with a seven months' interval, from 1906 to 1911, was partly caused by competition between Austria and France for supplying Serbia with war materials. In January 1912, Paul Deschanel stated in the Chamber of Deputies that from 1908 to 1911 French firms had supplied war materials to Serbia to the value of 45 million francs.

A report from the Austro-Hungarian Consul at Sao Paulo (Brazil) states: "The construction of the Brazilian railways is being carried out chiefly by French, Belgian, British and German capital. In the financial operations connected with the construction of these railways the countries involved stipulate for orders for the necessary railway materials."

Thus finance capital, literally, one might say, spreads its net over all countries of the world. An important role in this is played by banks founded in the colonies, and by their branches. German imperialists look with envy at the "old" colonial countries which have been particularly "successful" in providing for themselves in this respect. In 1904, Britain had 50 colonial banks with 2,279 branches (in 1910 there were 72 with 5,449 branches); France had 20 with 136 branches; Holland 16 with 68; and Germany had "only" 13 with 70 branches.* The American capitalists, in their turn, are jealous of the British and German: "In South America," they complained in 1915, "five German banks have forty branches, and five British—seventy branches... Britain and Germany have invested in Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay in the last twenty-five years approximately 4,000 million dollars, and as a result enjoy together 46 per cent of the total trade of these three countries."**

* Riesser, *op. cit.*, 4th ed., p. 375; Diouritch, p. 283.

** *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. LIX, May 1915, p. 301. In the same volume, on p. 331, we read that the well-known statistician Paish, in the last issue of

The capital-exporting countries have divided the world among themselves in the figurative sense of the term. But finance capital has led to the *actual* division of the world.

VI. THE DIVISION OF THE WORLD AMONG THE GREAT POWERS

In his book, on "the territorial development of the European colonies," A. Supan,* the geographer, gives the following brief summary of this development at the end of the nineteenth century:

*Percentage of Territory Belonging to the European Colonial Powers
(Including the United States)*

	1876	1900	Increase or decrease
In Africa	10.8%	90.4%	+79.6%
„ Polynesia	56.8%	98.9%	+42.1%
„ Asia	51.5%	56.6%	+5.1%
„ Australia	100.0%	100.0%	—
„ America	27.5%	27.2%	-0.3%

"The characteristic feature of this period," he concludes, "is, therefore, the division of Africa and Polynesia." As there are no unoccupied territories—that is, territories not belonging to any state—in Asia and America, it is necessary to amplify Supan's conclusion and say that the characteristic feature of the period under review is the final division of the globe—final, not in the sense that no *redivision* is possible; on the contrary, redivisions are possible and inevitable—but in the sense that the colonial policy of the capitalist countries has *completed* the seizure of the unoccupied territories on our planet. For the first

the financial magazine *The Statist*, estimated the amount of capital exported by Britain, Germany, France, Belgium and Holland at 40,000 million dollars, i.e., 200,000 million francs.

* A. Supan, *Die territoriale Entwicklung der europäischen Kolonien* [*The Territorial Development of the European Colonies*], 1906, p. 254.

time the world is completely divided up, so that in the future *only* redivision is possible, i.e., the passage of territory from one "owner" to another, and not from being ownerless to being "owned."

Hence, we are passing through a peculiar epoch of world colonial policy, which is most closely connected with the "latest stage in the development of capitalism," with finance capital. It is therefore necessary first of all to deal in greater detail with the facts, in order to ascertain as exactly as possible what distinguishes this epoch from those preceding it, and what the present situation is. In the first place, two questions of fact arise here: is an intensification of colonial policy, a sharpening of the struggle for colonies, observed in precisely the epoch of finance capital? And how, in this respect, is the world divided at the present time?

The American writer Morris, in his book on the history of colonization,* made an attempt to sum up the data on the colonial possessions of Britain, France and Germany during different periods of the nineteenth century. Here, in brief, are the results he obtained:

Size of Colonial Possessions

Year	Britain		France		Germany	
	Area (mln. sq. m.)	Pop. (mln.)	Area (mln. sq. m.)	Pop. (mln.)	Area (mln. sq. m.)	Pop. (mln.)
1815-30	?	126.4	0.02	0.5	—	—
1860	2.5	145.1	0.2	3.4	—	—
1880	7.7	287.9	0.7	7.5	—	—
1899	9.3	309.0	3.7	56.4	1.0	14.7

For Britain, the expansion of colonial conquests was enormous in the period between 1860 and 1880, and very considerable in the last twenty years of the nineteenth

* Henry C. Morris, *The History of Colonization*, New York 1900. Vol. II, p. 88; Vol. I, p. 419; Vol. II, p. 304.

century. For France and Germany it was so precisely in these twenty years. We saw above that the development of pre-monopoly capitalism, of capitalism in which free competition prevailed, reached its limit in the 1860's and 1870's. We now see that it is *precisely after that period* that the tremendous "boom" in colonial conquests begins, and that the struggle for the territorial division of the world becomes extraordinarily sharp. It is beyond doubt, therefore, that capitalism's transition to the stage of monopoly capitalism, to finance capital, is *connected* with the sharpening of the struggle for the division of the world.

In his work on imperialism, Hobson marks the years 1884-1900 as the period of intensified "expansion" of the chief European states. According to his estimate, Britain during these years acquired 3.7 million sq. miles of territory with a population of 57 mln.; France—3.6 mln. sq. miles with a population of 36.5 mln.; Germany—1.0 mln. sq. miles with 14.7 mln.; Belgium—900,000 sq. miles with 30 mln.; Portugal—800,000 sq. miles with 9 mln. The hunt for colonies by all the capitalist states at the end of the nineteenth century and particularly since the 1880's is a commonly known fact in the history of diplomacy and of foreign policy.

In the most flourishing period of free competition in Britain, i.e., between 1840 and 1860, its leading bourgeois politicians were *opposed* to colonial policy and were of the opinion that the liberation of the colonies, their complete separation from Britain, was inevitable and desirable. M. Beer, in an article, "Modern British Imperialism,"* published in 1898, states that in 1852, Disraeli, a statesman generally inclined towards imperialism, declared: "The colonies are millstones round our necks." But at the end of the nineteenth century the heroes of the hour in Britain were Cecil Rhodes and Joseph Chamberlain, who openly

* *Die Neue Zeit*, XVI, I, 1898, S. 302.

advocated imperialism and applied the imperialist policy in the most cynical manner!

It is not without interest to observe that at that time already these leading British bourgeois politicians saw the connection between what might be called the purely economic and the socio-political roots of modern imperialism. Chamberlain advocated imperialism as a "true, wise and economical policy," and pointed particularly to the German, American and Belgian competition that Britain was encountering in the world market. Salvation lies in monopoly, said the capitalists, as they formed cartels, syndicates and trusts. Salvation lies in monopoly, echoed the political leaders of the bourgeoisie, as they hastened to seize the parts of the world not yet divided up. And Cecil Rhodes, we are informed by his intimate friend, the journalist Stead, said to him about his imperialist views in 1895: "I was in the East End of London" (working-class quarter) "yesterday and attended a meeting of the unemployed. I listened to the wild speeches, which were just a cry for 'bread,' 'bread!' and on my way home I pondered over the scene and I became more than ever convinced of the importance of imperialism. . . . My cherished idea is a solution for the social problem, i.e., in order to save the 40,000,000 inhabitants of the United Kingdom from a bloody civil war, we colonial statesmen must acquire new lands to settle the surplus population, to provide new markets for the goods produced in the factories and mines. The Empire, as I have always said, is a bread-and-butter question. If you want to avoid civil war, you must become imperialists."*

That was said in 1895 by Cecil Rhodes, the millionaire, king of finance, the man mainly responsible for the Anglo-Boer War. True, his defence of imperialism is crude and cynical, but in substance it does not differ from the "theory" of Messrs. Maslov, Südekum, Potresov, David and the founder of Russian Marxism,⁹⁶ and others. Cecil Rhodes was a somewhat more honest social-chauvinist. . . .

* *Ibid.*, p. 304.

To present as precise a picture as possible of the territorial division of the world and of the changes which have occurred during the last decades in this respect, let us utilize the data furnished by Supan in the work mentioned on the colonial possessions of all the powers of the world. Supan takes the years 1876 and 1900; we will take the year 1876—a year very aptly selected, for it is by that time that the pre-monopoly stage of development of West-European capitalism can be said, in the main, to have been completed—and the year 1914, replacing Supan's figures by more recent ones from Hübner's *Geographical and Statistical Tables*. Supan gives figures only for colonies; we think it useful, in order to present a complete picture of the division of the world, to add material in brief on the non-colonial countries, and on the semi-colonies—in which category we place Persia, China and Turkey: the first of these countries is already almost completely a colony, the second and third are becoming such.

We get the following result:

Colonial Possessions of the Great Powers
(Million square kilometres and million inhabitants)

	Colonies				Metropolitan countries		Total	
	1876		1914		1914		1914	
	Area	Pop.	Area	Pop.	Area	Pop.	Area	Pop.
Great Britain . . .	22.5	251.9	33.5	393.5	0.3	46.5	33.8	440.0
Russia	17.0	15.9	17.4	33.2	5.4	136.2	22.8	169.4
France	0.9	6.0	10.6	55.5	0.5	39.6	11.1	95.1
Germany	—	—	2.9	12.3	0.5	64.9	3.4	77.2
U. S. A.	—	—	0.3	9.7	9.4	97.0	9.7	106.7
Japan	—	—	0.3	19.2	0.4	53.0	0.7	72.2
Total for 6 Great Powers	40.4	273.8	65.0	523.4	16.5	437.2	81,5	960.6

Colonies of other powers (Belgium, Holland, etc.)	9.9	45.3
Semi-colonies (Persia, China, Turkey)	14.5	361.2
Other countries	28.0	289.9
Whole world	133.9	1,657.0

We clearly see here how “complete” was the division of the world on the border line between the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. After 1876 colonial possessions grew enormously, by more than fifty per cent, from 40 to 65 mln. sq. km. for the six biggest powers; the increase amounts to 25 mln. sq. km., or 50 per cent more than the area of the metropolitan countries (16.5 mln.). In 1876 three powers had no colonies, and a fourth, France, had scarcely any. By 1914 these four powers had acquired colonies of an area of 14.1 mln. sq. km., i.e., about 50 per cent more than the area of Europe, with a population of nearly 100 million. The unevenness in colonial expansion is very great. If, for instance, we compare France, Germany and Japan, which do not differ very much in area and population, we will see that the first has acquired almost three times as much colonial territory as the other two combined. But as to the size of its finance capital, France, at the beginning of the period under review, was also, perhaps, several times richer than Germany and Japan put together. In addition to, and on the basis of, purely economic conditions, geographical and other conditions also affect the dimensions of colonial possessions. However strong the process of levelling the world, of evening the economic and living conditions in different countries, may have been in the past decades due to the pressure of large-scale industry, exchange and finance capital, considerable differences still remain; and among the six countries mentioned we see, firstly, young capitalist countries, whose progress has been extraordinarily rapid (America, Germany, Japan); secondly, countries with an old capitalist development,

whose progress lately has been much slower than that of those previously mentioned (France and Britain); and thirdly, a country most backward economically (Russia), where modern capitalist imperialism is enmeshed, so to speak, in a particularly close network of pre-capitalist relations.

Alongside the colonial possessions of the Great Powers, we have placed the small colonies of the small states, which are, so to speak, the next objects of a possible and probable "redivision" of colonies. Mostly these small states retain their colonies only because the big powers are torn by conflicting interests, friction, etc., which prevent agreement being reached about the division of the spoils. As to the "semi-colonies," they provide an example of the transitional forms to be met with in all spheres of nature and society. Finance capital is such a great, we may say decisive, force in all economic and in all international relations, that it is capable of subjecting, and actually does subject, to itself even states enjoying the fullest political independence; we shall shortly see examples of this. Of course, finance capital finds most "convenient," and derives the greatest profit from, *such* a subjection as involves the loss of political independence by the subjected countries and peoples. The semi-colonies are typical as a "middle stage" in this regard. It is natural that the struggle for these semi-dependent countries should have become particularly bitter in the epoch of finance capital, when the rest of the world has already been divided up.

Colonial policy and imperialism existed before the latest stage of capitalism, and even before capitalism. Rome, founded on slavery, pursued a colonial policy and practised imperialism. But "general" disquisitions on imperialism, which ignore, or put into the background, the fundamental difference between social-economic formations, inevitably turn into the most vapid banality or bragging, like the comparison: "Greater Rome and Greater

Britain."* Even the capitalist colonial policy of *previous* stages of capitalism is essentially different from the colonial policy of finance capital.

The principal feature of the latest stage of capitalism is the domination of monopolist associations of big employers. These monopolies are most firmly established when *all* the sources of raw materials are captured by one group, and we have seen with what zeal the international capitalist associations exert every effort to deprive their rivals of all opportunity of competing, to buy up, for example, iron-ore fields, oil fields, etc. Colonial possession alone fully guarantees the monopoly against all contingencies in the struggle with competitors, including the one when the adversary would like to be protected by a law establishing a state monopoly. The more capitalism is developed, the more strongly the shortage of raw materials is felt, the more intense the competition and the hunt for sources of raw materials throughout the world, the more desperate is the struggle for the acquisition of colonies.

"It may be asserted," writes Schilder, "although it may sound paradoxical to some, that in the more or less discernible future the growth of the urban and industrial population is more likely to be hindered by a shortage of raw materials for industry than by a shortage of food." For example, there is a growing shortage of timber—the price of which is steadily rising—of leather, and of raw materials for the textile industry. "Associations of manufacturers are trying to create an equilibrium between agriculture and industry in the whole of world economy; as an example of this we might mention the International Federation of Cotton Spinners' Associations in several of the most important industrial countries, founded in 1904, and the Fed-

* C. P. Lucas, *Greater Rome and Greater Britain*, Oxford 1912, or the Earl of Cromer, *Ancient and Modern Imperialism*, London 1910.

eration of European Flax Spinners' Associations, founded on the same model in 1910."*

Of course the bourgeois reformists, including particularly the present-day Kautskyites, try to belittle the importance of facts of this kind by arguing that raw materials "could be" obtained in the open market without a "costly and dangerous" colonial policy; and that the supply of raw materials "could be" increased enormously by "simply" improving conditions in agriculture in general. But such arguments become an apology for imperialism, an embellishment of it, because they ignore the principal feature of the latest stage of capitalism: monopolies. The free market is increasingly becoming a thing of the past, monopolist syndicates and trusts are restricting it with every passing day, while "simply" improving conditions in agriculture means improving the conditions of the masses, raising wages and reducing profits. Where, except in the imagination of sentimental reformists, are there any trusts capable of concerning themselves about the condition of the masses instead of the conquest of colonies?

Finance capital is interested not only in the already discovered sources of raw materials but also in potential sources, because present-day technical development is extremely rapid, and land which is useless today may be made fertile tomorrow if new methods are discovered (to this end a big bank can equip a special expedition of engineers, agricultural experts, etc., and if large capital expenditures are undertaken. This also applies to prospecting for minerals, to new methods of processing and utilizing raw materials, etc., etc. Hence, the inevitable striving of finance capital to enlarge its economic territory and even its territory in general. Just as the trusts capitalize their property at two or three times its value, taking into account its "potential" (and not present) profits, and the further results of monopoly, so finance capital in general

* Schilder, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-42.

strives to seize as much land as possible, wherever possible, however possible, taking into account potential sources of raw materials and fearing to be left behind in the fierce struggle for the last slices of undivided territory, or for the redivision of those that have been already divided.

The British capitalists are exerting every effort to develop cotton growing in *their* colony, Egypt (in 1904, out of 2.3 million hectares of land under cultivation, 600,000, or more than one-fourth, were under cotton); the Russians are doing the same in *their* colony, Turkestan, because in this way they will be better able to defeat their foreign competitors, to monopolize the sources of raw materials and form a more economical and profitable textile trust, in whose hands *all* the phases of cotton production and processing will be "combined" and concentrated.

The interests pursued in the export of capital likewise give an impetus to the conquest of colonies, for in the colonial market it is easier (and sometimes alone possible) by employing monopolist methods to eliminate competition, to ensure supplies, to secure the necessary "connections," etc.

The politics and the ideology of finance capital, the extra-economic superstructure which grows up on its basis, stimulate the striving for colonial conquest. "Finance capital does not want liberty, it wants domination" as Hilferding very truly says. And a French bourgeois writer, developing and supplementing, as it were, the ideas of Cecil Rhodes quoted above,* writes that social causes should be added to the economic causes of modern colonial policy: "owing to the growing complexities of life and the difficulties which weigh not only on the masses of the workers, but also on the middle classes, 'in all the countries of the old civilization there are accumulating impatience, irritation and hatred which are becoming a menace to public

* See pp. 278-79 of this volume.—Ed.

order; the energy driven out of a definite class channel must be given employment abroad in order to avert an explosion at home.”*

Since we are speaking of colonial policy in the epoch of capitalist imperialism, it must be observed that finance capital and its attendant foreign politics, which boil down to the struggle of the Great Powers for the economic and political division of the world, give rise to a number of *transitional* forms of state dependence. Typical of this epoch is not only the two main groups of countries: the colony owners and colonies, but also the diverse forms of dependent countries which, politically, are formally independent, but are actually enmeshed in a network of financial and diplomatic dependence. We have already referred to one form of dependence—the semi-colony. An example of another is provided by Argentina.

“South America, and especially Argentina,” writes Schulze-Gaevernitz in his work on British imperialism, “is so dependent financially on London that it ought to be described as almost a British commercial colony.”** Basing himself on the reports of the Austro-Hungarian consul at Buenos Aires for 1909, Schilder estimated the amount of British capital invested in Argentina at 8,750 million francs. It is not difficult to imagine what strong connections British finance capital (and its faithful “friend,” diplomacy) thereby acquires with the Argentine bourgeoisie, with the circles that control all that country’s economic and political life.

* Wahl, *La France aux colonies* [*France in the Colonies*], quoted by Henri Russier, *Le Partage de l’Océanie* [*The Partition of Oceania*], Paris 1905, p. 165.

** Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Britischer Imperialismus und englischer Freihandel zu Beginn des 20-ten Jahrhunderts* [*British Imperialism and English Free Trade at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century*], Leipzig 1906, p. 318. Sartorius v. Waltershausen says the same in *Das volkswirtschaftliche System der Kapitalanlage im Auslande* [*The National Economic System of Capital Investments Abroad*], Berlin 1907, p. 46.

A somewhat different form of financial and diplomatic dependence, while the country is politically independent, is presented by Portugal. Portugal is an independent, sovereign state, but actually, for more than two hundred years, since the war of the Spanish Succession (1701-14), it has been a British protectorate. Britain has protected Portugal and its colonies in order to fortify her own positions in the fight against her rivals, Spain and France. In return Britain has received commercial privileges, preferential conditions for importing goods and especially capital into Portugal and its colonies, the right to use the ports and islands of Portugal, its telegraph cables, etc., etc.* Relations of this kind have always existed between big and small states, but in the epoch of capitalist imperialism they become a general system, they form part of the sum total of the “division of the world” relations, become links in the chain of operations of world finance capital.

In order to finish with the problem of the division of the world, we must make the following additional observation. This problem was raised quite openly and definitely not only in American literature after the Spanish-American War, and in English literature after the Anglo-Boer War, at the very end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth; not only has German literature, which has “most jealously” watched “British imperialism,” systematically given its appraisal of this fact. The problem has also been raised in French bourgeois literature as definitely and broadly as is thinkable from the bourgeois point of view. Let us quote Driault, the historian, who, in his book, *Political and Social Problems at the End of the Nineteenth Century*, in the chapter “The Great Powers and the Division of the World,” wrote the following: “During the past few years, all the free territory of the globe, with the exception of China, has been occupied by the powers of Europe and North America. Several conflicts

* Schilder, *op. cit.*, Vol I, pp. 160-61.

and shiftings of influence have already occurred over this matter, which foreshadow more terrible upheavals in the near future. For it is necessary to make haste. The nations which have not provided for themselves run the risk of never receiving their share and participating in the tremendous exploitation of the earth which will be one of the most essential features of the next century" (i.e., the twentieth). "That is why all Europe and America have lately been afflicted with the fever of colonial expansion, of 'imperialism,' that most noteworthy feature of the end of the nineteenth century." And the author added: "In this division of the world, in this furious hunt for the treasures and the big markets of the globe, the relative strength of the empires founded in this nineteenth century is totally out of proportion to the place occupied in Europe by the nations which founded them. The dominant powers in Europe, the arbiters of its destiny, are *not* equally dominant throughout the world. And, since colonial might, the hope of possessing as yet unassessed wealth, will evidently react upon the relative strength of the European powers, the colonial problem—'imperialism,' if you will—which has already modified the political conditions of Europe itself, will modify them more and more."*

VIII. THE PARASITISM AND DECAY OF CAPITALISM

We now have to examine yet another very important aspect of imperialism to which, usually, insufficient importance is attached in most judgements on this subject. One of the shortcomings of the Marxist Hilferding is that on this point he has taken a step backward compared with the non-Marxist Hobson. We refer to the parasitism characteristic of imperialism.

As we have seen, the most profound economic basis of imperialism is monopoly. This is capitalist monopoly, i.e.,

* J.-E. Driault, *Problèmes politiques et sociaux*, Paris 1907, p. 299.

monopoly which has grown out of capitalism and exists in the general environment of capitalism, commodity production and competition, in permanent and insoluble contradiction to this general environment. Nevertheless, like all monopoly, it inevitably engenders a tendency to stagnation and decay. Since monopoly prices are established, even temporarily, the motive cause of technical and, consequently, of all other progress, disappears to a certain extent and, further, the *economic* possibility arises of artificially retarding technical progress. For instance, in America, a certain Owens invented a machine which revolutionized bottle-making. The German bottle-manufacturing cartel purchased Owens's patent, but pigeonholed it, holding up its employment. Certainly, monopoly under capitalism can never completely, and for very long, eliminate competition from the world market (and this, by the by, is one of the reasons why the theory of ultra-imperialism is so absurd). Certainly, the possibility of reducing production costs and increasing profits by introducing technical improvements operates in the direction of change. But the *tendency* to stagnation and decay, which is characteristic of monopoly, continues to operate, and in some industries, in some countries, for certain periods of time, it gains the upper hand.

The monopoly ownership of very extensive, rich or well-situated colonies operates in the same direction.

Further, imperialism is an immense accumulation in a few countries of money capital amounting, as we have seen, to 100,000-150,000 million francs in securities. Hence the extraordinary growth of a class, or rather, of a stratum of rentiers, i.e., people who live by "clipping coupons," who take no part in any enterprise whatever, whose profession is idleness. The export of capital, one of the most fundamental economic bases of imperialism, still further intensifies this extreme isolation of the rentiers from production and sets the seal of parasitism on the

whole country that lives by exploiting the labour of several overseas countries and colonies.

"In 1893," writes Hobson, "the British capital invested abroad represented about 15 per cent of the total wealth of the United Kingdom."* Let us remind the reader that by 1915 this capital had increased about two and a half times. "Aggressive imperialism," says Hobson further on, "which costs the taxpayers so dear, which is of so little value to the manufacturer and trader . . . is a source of great gain to the investor" (the rentier). . . . "The annual income Great Britain derives from commissions in her whole foreign and colonial trade, import and export, is estimated by Sir R. Giffen at £18,000,000" (nearly 170 million rubles) "for 1899, taken at 2.5 per cent, upon a turnover of £800,000,000." Great as this sum is, it cannot explain the aggressive imperialism of Great Britain. It is explained by the income of 90 to 100 million pounds sterling from "invested" capital, the income of the rentiers.

The income of the rentiers is *five times* the income from the foreign trade of the biggest "trading" country in the world! That is the essence of imperialism and imperialist parasitism.

For that reason the term, "rentier state" (Rentnerstaat) or usurer state, is coming into common use in the economic literature dealing with imperialism. The world has become divided into a handful of usurer states and a vast majority of debtor states. "At the top of the list of foreign investments," says Schulze-Gaevernitz, "are those placed in politically dependent or allied countries: Britain grants loans to Egypt, Japan, China and South America. Her navy plays the part of bailiff in case of necessity. Britain's political power protects her from the indignation of her debtors."** Sartorius von Waltershausen in his book, *The National Economic System of Capital Investments Abroad*, cites Holland as the model "rentier state," and points

* Hobson, *Imperialism*, pp. 59, 60.

** Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Britischer Imperialismus*, p. 320, et. seq.

out that Britain and France are now becoming such.* Schilder is of the opinion that five industrial states have become "definitely pronounced creditor countries": Britain, France, Germany, Belgium and Switzerland. He does not include Holland in this list simply because she is "industrially little developed."** The United States is a creditor only of the American countries.

"Britain," says Schulze-Gaevernitz, "is gradually becoming transformed from an industrial into a creditor state. Notwithstanding the absolute increase in industrial output and the export of manufactured goods, the relative importance of income from interest and dividends, issues of securities, commissions and speculation is on the increase in the whole of the national economy. In my opinion it is precisely this that forms the economic basis of imperialist ascendancy. The creditor is more firmly attached to the debtor than the seller is to the buyer."*** In regard to Germany, A. Lansburgh, the publisher of the Berlin *Die Bank*, in 1911, in an article entitled "Germany—a Rentier State," wrote the following: "People in Germany are ready to sneer at the yearning to become rentiers that is observed among the people in France. But they forget that as far as the bourgeoisie is concerned the situation in Germany is becoming more and more like that in France."****

The rentier state is a state of parasitic, decaying capitalism, and this circumstance cannot fail to influence all the social-political conditions of the countries concerned, in general, and the two basic trends in the working-class movement, in particular. To show this as clearly as possible, let us quote Hobson, who is the most "reliable" witness, since he cannot be suspected of partiality for "Marxist orthodoxy"; on the other hand, he is an Englishman

* Sartorius von Waltershausen, *Das volkswirtschaftliche System*, etc., Berlin 1907, Buch IV.

** Schilder, *op. cit.*, p. 393.

*** Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Britischer Imperialismus*, p. 122.

**** *Die Bank*, 1911, 1, pp. 10-11.

who is very well acquainted with the situation in the country which is richest in colonies, finance capital, and imperialist experience.

With the Anglo-Boer War fresh in his mind, Hobson describes the connection between imperialism and the interests of the "financiers," their growing profits from contracts, supplies, etc., and writes: "While the directors of this definitely parasitic policy are capitalists, the same motives appeal to special classes of the workers. In many towns most important trades are dependent upon government employment or contracts; the imperialism of the metal and shipbuilding centres is attributable in no small degree to this fact." Two sets of circumstances, in that writer's opinion, have weakened the power of the old empires: 1) "economic parasitism," and 2) the formation of their armies from subject peoples. "There is first the habit of economic parasitism, by which the ruling state has used its provinces, colonies, and dependencies in order to enrich its ruling class and to bribe its lower classes into acquiescence." And we would add that the economic possibility of such bribery, whatever its form may be, requires the high profits of monopoly.

Concerning the second circumstance, Hobson writes: "One of the strangest symptoms of the blindness of imperialism is the reckless indifference with which Great Britain, France and other imperial nations are embarking on this perilous dependence. Great Britain has gone farthest. Most of the fighting by which we have won our Indian Empire has been done by natives; in India, as more recently in Egypt, great standing armies are placed under British commanders; almost all the fighting associated with our African dominions, except in the southern part, has been done for us by natives."

The prospect of the partition of China drew from Hobson the following economic appraisal: "The greater part of Western Europe might then assume the appearance and character already exhibited by tracts of country in the

South of England, in the Riviera, and in the tourist-ridden or residential parts of Italy and Switzerland, little clusters of wealthy aristocrats drawing dividends and pensions from the Far East, with a somewhat larger group of professional retainers and tradesmen and a larger body of personal servants and workers in the transport trade and in the final stages of production of the more perishable goods; all the main arterial industries would have disappeared, the staple foods and manufactures flowing in as tribute from Asia and Africa." "We have foreshadowed the possibility of even a larger alliance of Western States, a European federation of great powers which, so far from forwarding the cause of world civilization, might introduce the gigantic peril of a Western parasitism, a group of advanced industrial nations, whose upper classes drew vast tribute from Asia and Africa, with which they supported great tame masses of retainers, no longer engaged in the staple industries of agriculture and manufacture, but kept in the performance of personal or minor industrial services under the control of a new financial aristocracy. Let those who would scout such a theory" (he should have said: prospect) "as undeserving of consideration examine the economic and social condition of districts in Southern England today which are already reduced to this condition, and reflect upon the vast extension of such a system which might be rendered feasible by the subjection of China to the economic control of similar groups of financiers, investors, and political and business officials, draining the greatest potential reservoir of profit the world has ever known, in order to consume it in Europe. The situation is far too complex, the play of world forces far too incalculable, to render this or any other single interpretation of the future very probable; but the influences which govern the Imperialism of Western Europe today are moving in this direction, and, unless counteracted or diverted, make towards such consummation."*

* Hobson, *op. cit.*, pp. 103, 205, 144, 335, 386.

The author is quite right: *if* the forces of imperialism were not counteracted they would lead precisely to what he has described. The significance of a "United States of Europe" in the present imperialist situation is correctly appraised. He should merely have added that *also within* the working-class movement the opportunists, who are for the moment victorious in most countries, are "making" systematically and unswervingly towards that very consummation. Imperialism, which means the division of the world and the exploitation of other countries besides China, and means high monopoly profits for a handful of very rich countries, creates the economic possibility of bribing the upper strata of the proletariat, and thereby fosters, gives shape to, strengthens opportunism. We must not, however, forget the forces which counteract imperialism in general, and opportunism in particular, and which the social-liberal Hobson is naturally unable to perceive.

The German opportunist Gerhard Hildebrand, who was once expelled from the Party for defending imperialism, and who could today be a leader of the so-called "Social-Democratic" Party of Germany, supplements Hobson well by advocating a "United States of Western Europe" (without Russia) for the purpose of "joint" action ... against the African Negroes, against the "great Islamic movement," for the maintenance of a "powerful army and navy," against a "Sino-Japanese coalition,"* etc.

The description of "British imperialism" in Schulze-Gaevernitz's book reveals the same parasitical traits. The national income of Britain approximately doubled from 1865 to 1898, while the income "from abroad" increased *ninefold* in the same period. While the "merit" of imperialism is that it "trains the Negro to habits of industry" (you cannot manage without coercion...), the "danger" of im-

* Gerhard Hildebrand, *Die Erschütterung der Industriebherrschaft und des Industriosozialismus* (*The Shattering of the Rule of Industrialism and Industrial Socialism*), 1910, p. 229, et seq.

perialism lies in that "Europe will shift the burden of physical toil—first agricultural and mining, then the rougher industrial work—on to the coloured races, and itself be content with the role of rentier, and in this way, perhaps, pave the way for the economic, and later, the political emancipation of the coloured races."

An increasing proportion of land in Britain is being taken out of cultivation and used for sport, for the diversion of the rich. About Scotland—the most aristocratic place for hunting and other sports—it is said that "it lives on its past and on Mr. Carnegie" (the American multimillionaire). On horse racing and fox hunting alone Britain annually spends £14,000,000 (nearly 130 mln. rubles). The number of rentiers in Britain is about one million. The percentage of the productively employed to the total population is declining:

	Population	No. of workers in basic industries	Per cent of total population
	(millions)		
1851	17.9	4.1	23%
1901	32.5	4.9	15%

And in speaking of the British working class the bourgeois student of "British imperialism of the beginning of the twentieth century" is obliged to distinguish systematically between the "*upper stratum*" of the workers and the "*lower stratum of the proletariat proper*." The upper stratum furnishes the bulk of the membership of the co-operatives and trade unions, sports clubs and numerous religious sects. To this category is adapted the electoral system, which in Britain is still "*sufficiently restricted to exclude the lower stratum of the proletariat proper*"!! In order to present the condition of the British working class in a rosy light, only this upper stratum—which constitutes a *minority* of the proletariat—is usually spoken of. For instance, "the unemployment problem is mainly one of London and of the proletarian lower stratum, *to which the po-*

*liticians attach little importance. . . .** He should have said: to which the bourgeois politicians and "socialist" opportunists attach little importance.

One of the specific features of imperialism connected with the facts we are describing is the decline of emigration from imperialist countries and the increase of immigration into these countries from the more backward countries, where lower wages are paid. As Hobson observes, emigration from Britain declined after 1884. In that year the number of emigrants was 242,000, while in 1900 it was 169,000. Emigration from Germany reached the highest point in the decade, 1881 to 1890, with a total of 1,453,000, and fell, during the next two decades to 544,000 and to 341,000. On the other hand, there was an increase in the number of workers entering Germany from Austria, Italy, Russia and other countries. According to the 1907 census, there were 1,342,294 foreigners in Germany, of whom 440,800 were industrial workers and 257,329 agricultural.** In France, the workers employed in the mining industry are, "in great part" foreigners: Poles, Italians and Spaniards.*** In the United States, immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe are engaged in the most poorly paid jobs, while American workers provide the highest percentage of overseers or of the better-paid workers.**** Imperialism has the tendency to create privileged sections also among the workers, and to split them away from the broad masses of the proletariat.

It must be observed that in Britain the tendency of imperialism to split the workers and strengthen opportunism among them, to cause temporary decay in the working-class movement, was revealed much earlier than the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth cen-

* Schulze-Gaevernitz, *Britischer Imperialismus*, p. 301.

** *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs* [Statistics of the German Empire], Bd. 211.

*** Henger, *Die Kapitalsanlage der Franzosen* [French Investments], Stuttgart 1913.

**** Hourwich, *Immigration and Labor*, New York 1913.

ture. For two important distinctive features of imperialism became visible in Britain in the middle of the nineteenth century, viz., vast colonial possessions and a monopolist position in the world market. For several decades, Marx and Engels systematically traced this connection between opportunism in the working-class movement and the imperialist features of British capitalism. For example, on October 7, 1858, Engels wrote to Marx: "The English proletariat is actually becoming more and more bourgeois, so that this most bourgeois of all nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat *alongside* the bourgeoisie. For a nation which exploits the whole world this is of course to a certain extent justifiable." Almost a quarter of a century later, in a letter dated August 11, 1881, Engels speaks of the "very worst English ones [trade unions] which allow themselves to be led by men sold to, or at least paid by the middle class." In a letter to Kautsky, dated September 12, 1882, Engels wrote: "You ask me what the English workers think about colonial policy. Well, exactly the same as they think about politics in general. There is no workers' party here, you see, there are only Conservatives and Liberal-Radicals, and the workers gaily share the feast of England's monopoly of the world market and the colonies.* (Engels expressed similar ideas in the press in his preface to the second edition of *The Condition of the Working-Class in England*, which appeared in 1892.)

Causes and effects are clearly shown here. Causes: 1) exploitation of the whole world by this country; 2) its monopolist position in the world market; 3) its colonial monopoly. Effects: 1) a part of the British proletariat becomes increasingly bourgeois; 2) a part of it allows itself to be led by men bought or at least paid by the bourgeoisie. The

* *Briefwechsel von Marx und Engels*, Bd. II, S. 290; IV, 433.—Karl Kautsky, *Sozialismus und Kolonialpolitik*, Berlin 1907, p. 79; this pamphlet was written by Kautsky in those infinitely distant days when he was a Marxist.

imperialism of the beginning of the twentieth century completed the division of the world among a handful of states, each of which now exploits (in the sense of drawing super-profits from) a slightly smaller part of the "whole world" than Britain did in 1858; each of them occupies a monopolist position in the world market thanks to trusts, cartels, finance capital, and creditor and debtor relations; each of them to some degree enjoys a colonial monopoly (we have seen that of the 75 mln. sq. km. of the territory of *all* the colonies in the world, 65 mln. sq. km., or 86 per cent, belong to six powers; 61 mln. sq. km., or 81 per cent, belong to three powers).

The distinctive features of the present situation is the prevalence of such economic and political conditions as could not but increase the irreconcilability between opportunism and the general and fundamental interests of the working-class movement: imperialism has grown from an embryo into the dominant system; capitalist monopolies occupy first place in economics and politics; the division of the world has been completed; on the other hand, instead of the undivided monopoly of Britain, we see the struggle between a few imperialist powers for the right to share in this monopoly, a struggle characteristic of the entire beginning of the twentieth century. Opportunism cannot now be completely triumphant in the working-class movement of one country for decades as it was in Britain in the second half of the nineteenth century; but in a number of countries it has grown totally ripe, overripe, and rotten, and completely merged with bourgeois policy in the form of "social-chauvinism."^{*}

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First published as a separate pam- 262-71
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^{*} Russian social-chauvinism in its overt form represented by Messrs. the Potresovs, Chkhenkelis, Maslovs, etc., and in its covert form (Messrs. Chkheidze, Skobelev, Axelrod, Martov, etc.), also emerged from the Russian variety of opportunism, namely, Liquidationism.⁹⁷

THE IRISH REBELLION OF 1916*

Our theses⁹⁸ were written before this rebellion broke out, a rebellion which must serve as material for testing theoretical views.

The views of the opponents of self-determination lead to the conclusion that the vitality of small nations oppressed by imperialism is already sapped, that they can play no role against imperialism, that support of their purely national aspirations will lead to nothing, etc. The imperialist war of 1914-16 has provided *facts* which refute such conclusions.

The war has been an epoch of crisis for the West-European nations, for imperialism as a whole. Every crisis casts off the conventional, tears away outer wrappings, sweeps away the obsolete, reveals the deeper springs and forces. What has it revealed from the standpoint of the movement of oppressed nations? In the colonies there has been a series of attempts at rebellion, which of course the oppressing nations have done all they could to hide by means of the military censorship. Nevertheless, it is known that in Singapore the British brutally suppressed a mutiny among their Indian troops; that there have been attempts at rebellion in French Annam (see *Nashe Slovo*) and in the German Cameroons (see Junius's pamphlet); that in Europe, on the one hand, there has been a rebellion in Ireland, which the "freedom-loving" British, who have not

^{*} This is § 10 of V. I. Lenin's *The Discussion of Self-Determination Summed Up*.—Ed.

dared to extend conscription to Ireland, suppressed by executions; and, on the other, the Austrian Government condemned deputies of the Czech Diet to death "for treason," and shot entire Czech regiments for the same "crime."

This list is far from complete, of course. Nevertheless, it proves that, *in connection with* the crisis of imperialism the flames of national revolt have burst out *both* in the colonies *and* in Europe, that national sympathies and antipathies have manifested themselves in spite of draconic threats and measures of repression. And yet the crisis of imperialism has far from reached its highest point of development: the power of the imperialist bourgeoisie has not yet been undermined (the war of "exhaustion" may bring that about, but has not done so yet); the proletarian movements in the imperialist countries are still very feeble. What will happen when the war has led to utter exhaustion, or when in at least one of these countries the blows of proletarian struggle cause bourgeois rule to shake as they shook tsarist rule in 1905?

In the *Berner Tagwacht*, the organ of the Zimmerwaldists, including some Lefts, an article on the Irish rebellion appeared in the issue of May 9, 1916, entitled "A Dead Letter" and signed with the initials K.R. In this article the Irish rebellion was declared to be nothing more nor less than a "putsch," for, the author argues, "the Irish problem was an agrarian problem," the peasants had been appeased by reforms, and the nationalist movement was now a "purely urban, petty-bourgeois movement which, notwithstanding the sensation it caused, had not much social backing."

It is not surprising that this monstrously doctrinaire and pedantic opinion coincides with the opinion of a Russian national-liberal, the Cadet Mr. A. Kulisher (*Rech*, No. 102, April 15, 1916), who also dubbed the rebellion "the Dublin putsch."

It is to be hoped that, in accordance with the adage, "it's an ill wind that blows nobody any good," many com-

rades who have failed to realize the morass they are sinking into by repudiating "self-determination" and by treating the national movements of small nations with disdain, will have their eyes opened now by the fact of the opinion of a representative of the imperialist bourgeoisie "accidentally" coinciding with that of a Social-Democrat!!

The term "putsch," in the scientific sense of the word, may be employed only when the attempt at insurrection has revealed nothing but a circle of conspirators or stupid maniacs, and has aroused no sympathy among the masses. The centuries-old Irish national movement, having passed through various stages and combinations of class interests, expressed itself, incidentally, in a mass Irish National Congress in America (*Vorwärts*, March 20, 1916), which called for Irish independence—it expressed itself in street fighting conducted by a section of the urban petty bourgeoisie *and a section of the workers* after a long period of mass agitation, demonstrations, suppression of the press, etc. Whoever calls *such* an uprising a "putsch" is either a hardened reactionary, or a doctrinaire hopelessly incapable of picturing a social revolution as a living thing.

For to imagine that social revolution is *conceivable* without revolts by small nations in the colonies and in Europe, without the revolutionary outbursts of a section of the petty bourgeoisie *with all its prejudices*, without a movement of politically non-conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against landlord, church, monarchal, national and other oppression—to imagine that means *repudiating social revolution*. Very likely one army will line up in one place and say, "We are for socialism," while another will do so in another place and say, "We are for imperialism," and that will be the social revolution! Only from such a ridiculously pedantic angle could one label the Irish rebellion a "putsch."

Whoever expects a "pure" social revolution will *never* live to see it. Such a person pays lip service to revolution without understanding what revolution really is.

The Russian Revolution of 1905 was a bourgeois-democratic revolution. It consisted of a series of battles fought by *all* the discontented classes, groups and elements of the population. Among them were masses imbued with the crudest prejudices, with the vaguest and most fantastic aims of struggle; there were small groups which accepted Japanese money, there were speculators and adventurers, etc. *Objectively*, the mass movement was shattering tsarism and paving the way for democracy; for that reason the class-conscious workers led it.

The socialist revolution in Europe *cannot be* anything but an outburst of mass struggle by all and sundry oppressed and discontented elements. Sections of the petty bourgeoisie and of the backward workers will inevitably participate in it—without such participation, *mass* struggle is *not* possible, *no* revolution is possible—and just as inevitably will they bring into the movement their prejudices, their reactionary fantasies, their weaknesses and errors. But *objectively* they will attack *capital*, and the class-conscious vanguard of the revolution, the advanced proletariat, expressing this objective truth of the heterogeneous and discordant, motley and outwardly incohesive mass struggle, will be able to unite and direct it, to capture power, to seize the banks, to expropriate the trusts hated by all (though for different reasons!), and to introduce other dictatorial measures that in their totality constitute the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the victory of socialism, which, however, will by no means immediately “purge” itself of petty-bourgeois slag.

Social-Democracy, we read in the Polish theses⁹⁹ (1,4), “must utilize the struggle of the young colonial bourgeoisie against European imperialism *in order to sharpen the revolutionary crisis in Europe.*” (Authors’ italics.)

Is it not clear that it is least of all permissible to contrast Europe to the colonies in *this* respect? The struggle of the oppressed nations in *Europe*, a struggle capable of going to the length of insurrection and street fighting, of

breaking down the iron discipline in the army and martial law, will “sharpen the revolutionary crisis in Europe” infinitely more than a much more developed rebellion in a remote colony. A blow delivered against British imperialist bourgeois rule by a rebellion in Ireland is of a hundred times greater political significance than a blow of equal weight in Asia or in Africa.

The French chauvinist press recently reported that the 80th issue of an illegal journal, *Free Belgium*, had appeared in Belgium. Of course, the French chauvinist press very often lies, but this piece of news resembles the truth. Whereas the chauvinist and Kautskyist German Social-Democracy has failed to establish a free press for itself during the two years of war, and has servilely borne the yoke of military censorship (only the Left radical elements, be it said to their honour, have published pamphlets and manifestoes in spite of the censorship)—an oppressed civilized nation has replied to a military oppression unparalleled in ferocity by establishing an organ of revolutionary protest! The dialectics of history are such that small nations, powerless as an *independent* factor in the struggle against imperialism, play the part of one of the ferments, one of the bacilli, which help the *real* anti-imperialist force to come on the scene, namely, the socialist proletariat.

The General Staffs in the present war assiduously strive to utilize every national and revolutionary movement in the camp of their enemy: the Germans utilize the Irish rebellion, the French—the Czech movement, etc. From their own standpoint they are acting quite properly. A serious war cannot be treated seriously if advantage is not taken of the slightest weakness of the enemy, if every opportunity is not seized, the more so since it is impossible to know beforehand at what moment, and with what force some powder magazine may “explode” somewhere. We would be very poor revolutionaries if, in the great liberation war of the proletariat for socialism, we did not know

how to utilize *every* popular movement against the *various* calamities of imperialism in order to sharpen and extend the crisis. If, on the one hand, we were to declare and to repeat in a thousand keys that we are "opposed" to all national oppression and, on the other hand, we were to describe as a "putsch" the heroic revolt of the most mobile and enlightened section of certain classes in an oppressed nation against its oppressors, we would be sinking to the same stupid level as the Kautskyites.

The misfortune of the Irish is that they have risen prematurely, when the European revolt of the proletariat has *not yet* matured. Capitalism is not so harmoniously built that the various springs of rebellion can of themselves merge at one effort, without reverses and defeats. On the other hand, the very fact that revolts break out at different times, in different places, and are of different kinds, guarantees wide scope and depth to the general movement; only in premature, partial, scattered and therefore unsuccessful, revolutionary movements do the masses gain experience, acquire knowledge, gather strength, get to know their real leaders, the socialist proletarians, and in this way prepare for a general onslaught, in the same way as separate strikes, demonstrations, local and national, outbreaks in the army, outbursts among the peasantry, etc., prepared the way for the general onslaught in 1905.

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ABOUT A CARICATURE OF MARXISM AND "IMPERIALIST ECONOMISM"

(Excerpts)

Our theses¹⁰⁰ (§ 6) state that to be concrete not less than *three* different types of countries must be distinguished when dealing with self-determination. (It was clearly impossible to discuss each separate country in general theses.) First type: the advanced countries of West Europe (and America), where the national movement is a thing of the *past*. Second type: East Europe, where it is a thing of the *present*. Third type: semi-colonies and colonies, where it is largely a thing of the *future*.

Is this correct or not? *This* is what P. Kievsky should have levelled his criticism at. But he has not even noted *what* the theoretical problems consist of! He fails to see that unless he refutes the above-mentioned proposition (in § 6) of our theses—and it cannot be refuted because it is correct—his disquisitions about the "epoch" resemble a man brandishing his sword but striking no blows.

"In contrast to V. Ilyin's¹⁰¹ opinion," he writes at the end of his article, "we assume that for the majority (!) of Western (!) countries the national problem has not been settled. . . ."

And so the national movements of the French, Spaniards, British, Dutch, Germans and Italians were not consummated in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and earlier? At the beginning of the article the concept "epoch of imperialism" is distorted to make it ap-

pear that the national movement has been consummated in general and not only in the advanced Western countries. At the end of the same article the "national problem" is declared "not settled" in *precisely* the Western countries!! Is that not a muddle?

In the Western countries the national movement is a thing of the distant past. In Britain, France, Germany, etc., the "fatherland" is a dead letter, it has played its historical role, i.e., the national movement cannot yield here anything progressive, anything that will elevate new masses to a new economic and political life. History's next step is not transition from feudalism or from patriarchal savagery to national progress, to a cultured and politically free fatherland, but transition from a "fatherland" that has outlived its day, that is capitalistically overripe, to socialism.

In East Europe the situation is different. As far as the Ukrainians and Byelorussians, for instance, are concerned, only a dream-dweller on Mars could deny that the national movement has not yet been consummated there, that the awakening of the masses to the full use and knowledge of their mother tongue and literature (and this is an absolute condition and a concomitant of the complete development of capitalism, of the complete penetration of exchange to the very last peasant family) is *still* going on there. The "fatherland" is historically not *yet* quite a dead letter there. "Defence of the fatherland" may there *still* be defence of democracy, of one's native language, of political liberty against oppressing nations, against mediaevalism, whereas the British, French, Germans and Italians lie now when they speak of defending their fatherland in the present war, because actually what they are defending is *not* their native language, *not* their right to national development, but their rights as slave-holders, their colonies, the "spheres of influence" of their finance capital in foreign countries, etc.

In the semi-colonies and colonies the national movement is, historically, still younger than in East Europe.

P. Kievsky's main perplexity, and it runs right through his article, is: why preach and—when we are in power—give effect to the right of nations to *secession*, when the whole of development is towards the *fusion* of nations? For the same reason, we reply, that we preach the dictatorship of the proletariat, and when we are in power, we shall give effect to it, although the whole of development is towards the abolition of the forcible rule of one part of society over another. Dictatorship is the rule of part of society over the whole of society and, besides, a rule directly based on force. The dictatorship of the proletariat, as the only thoroughly revolutionary class, is essential for overthrowing the bourgeoisie and beating off their attempts at counter-revolution. The dictatorship of the proletariat is such an important issue that no one who denies it or only recognizes it in words can be a member of the Social-Democratic Party. But it cannot be gainsaid that in individual cases, by way of exception, for instance in some small state, after the social revolution has been accomplished by a neighbouring big state, a peaceful surrender of power by the bourgeoisie is *possible* if they are convinced that resistance is hopeless and their members prefer to retain their heads. Of course, it is much more likely that even in small states socialism will *not* be established without civil war, and therefore the *sole* programme of international Social-Democracy must be the recognition of such war, although there is no room in our ideal for violence against people. The same applies *mutatis mutandis* (with *due* alterations) to nations. We stand for their fusion, but there can be no transition *nowadays* from forced fusion, annexation, to voluntary fusion, without the right of secession. We recognize—and quite properly—the primacy of the economic factor, but to interpret it *à la* P. Kievsky is tantamount to drawing a caricature of Marxism. Even the trusts, even the banks under modern imperialism, which are alike inevitable under developed capitalism, are not alike in their concrete shape in different countries. All the

more is it the case that, despite their homogeneity in the main, the political forms in the advanced imperialist countries—America, Britain, France, Germany—are not alike. The same diversity will manifest itself on the road mankind will traverse from the imperialism of today to the socialist revolution of tomorrow. All nations will come to socialism; that is inevitable. But they will all do so in not quite the same way. Each will contribute something specific in this or that form of democracy, this or that variety of the dictatorship of the proletariat, this or that pace of socialist transformation in the different aspects of social life. Nothing is more wretched theoretically and more ridiculous practically than “in the name of historical materialism,” to paint the future in *this* respect a monotonous grey. That would be a primitive daub, and nothing more. And even if reality showed that *before* the first victory of the socialist proletariat only 1/500 of the now oppressed nations are emancipated and secede, and that *before* the last victory of the socialist proletariat on earth (i.e., during the vicissitudes of the already-begun socialist revolution) also only 1/500 of the oppressed nations secede, and that for a very short time—even in that event we would be right in theory and in practical politics to advise the workers not to allow the thresholds of their Social-Democratic parties to be crossed by Socialists of oppressing nations who do not recognize and do not propagate the right of *all* oppressed nations to secede. For we really do not and cannot know how many oppressed nations will in practice require to secede in order to be able to contribute their mite to the diversity of *forms* of democracy and of *forms* of transition to socialism. And that the denial of the right of secession is now an infinite theoretical falsity and a practical service to the chauvinists of the oppressing nations is something we know, see and feel daily.

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Vol. 23, pp. 26-28 and 57-58

ABOUT THE SLOGAN OF “DISARMAMENT”

(Excerpt)

P.S. On p. 287 of the latest issue of the British *Socialist Review* (September 1916), organ of the opportunist Independent Labour Party, we find a resolution of that Party's Newcastle Conference, declaring its refusal to support *every* war entered into by *any* government even if such war be “nominally” of a “defensive” character. And in an editorial article on p. 205 we meet the following statement: “In no degree do we approve the Sinn Fein rebellion” (the Irish rebellion of 1916). “We do not approve armed rebellion at all, any more than any other form of militarism and war.”

Is there any need to show that *these* “anti-militarists,” *such* supporters of disarmament in a country which is a great, and not a small, power, are the worst opportunists? Yet they are quite right from the theoretical point of view in regarding armed uprising as “one of the forms” of militarism and war.

Written in October 1916
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Vol. 23, p. 93

IMPERIALISM AND THE SPLIT IN SOCIALISM

Is there any connection between imperialism and that monstrous and disgusting victory which opportunism (in the shape of social-chauvinism) has gained over the labour movement in Europe?

That is the fundamental question of contemporary socialism. And having in our Party literature fully established, first, the imperialist character of our epoch and of the present war, and, second, the inseparable historical connection between social-chauvinism and opportunism, and also the identity of their ideological-political content, we can and must proceed to analyse this fundamental question.

We must begin with as precise and full a definition of imperialism as possible. Imperialism is a specific historical stage of capitalism. Its specific character is threefold: imperialism is (1) monopoly capitalism; (2) parasitic, or decaying capitalism; (3) moribund capitalism. The supplanting of free competition by monopoly is the fundamental economic feature, the *essence* of imperialism. Monopoly manifests itself in five principal forms: 1) cartels, syndicates and trusts; the concentration of production has reached the stage where it has given rise to these monopolist associations of capitalists; 2) the monopolist position of the big banks—3 to 5 gigantic banks manipulate the whole economic life of America, France, Germany; 3) seizure of the sources of *raw material* by the trusts and the financial oligarchy (finance capital is monopolist in-

dustrial capital merged with bank capital); 4) the division (economic) of the world by international cartels *has begun*. Such international cartels, which command the *entire* world market and divide it “amicably” among themselves—until war *redivides* it—already number over a *hundred*! The export of capital, a highly characteristic phenomenon distinct from the export of commodities under non-monopoly capitalism, is closely linked with the economic and territorial-political division of the world; 5) the territorial division of the world (colonies) is *finished*.

Imperialism, as the highest stage of capitalism in America and Europe, and later in Asia, fully developed in the period of 1898-1914. The Spanish-American War (1898), the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05) and the economic crisis in Europe in 1900 are the chief historical landmarks in the new era of world history.

That imperialism is parasitic or decaying capitalism is manifested first of all in the tendency to decay characteristic of *all* monopoly where there is private ownership of the means of production. The difference between the democratic-republican and the reactionary-monarchist imperialist bourgeoisie is obliterated precisely because they are both rotting alive (which by no means precludes an extraordinarily rapid development of capitalism in individual industries, individual countries, and individual periods). Secondly, the decay of capitalism is manifested in the creation of a huge stratum of *rentiers*, capitalists who live by “clipping coupons.” In the four leading imperialist countries—Britain, U.S.A., France and Germany—capital in securities amounts to from 100 to 150 *milliard* francs each, which means an annual income of not less than 5 to 8 milliard per country. Thirdly, capital export is parasitism in the highest measure. Fourthly, “finance capital tends towards domination, not towards freedom.” Political reaction *all along* the line is a characteristic feature of impe-

rialism. Corruption, bribery on a huge scale, and gigantic frauds of all kinds. Fifthly, the exploitation of oppressed nations that is inseparably connected with annexations, and especially the exploitation of colonies by a handful of "great" powers, increasingly transforms the "civilized" world into a parasite on the body of hundreds of millions of uncivilized nations. The Roman proletariat lived at the expense of society. Contemporary society lives at the expense of the modern proletariat. Marx specially stressed this profound observation of Sismondi.¹⁰² Imperialism somewhat changes the situation. A privileged upper stratum of the proletariat in the imperialist countries lives partly at the expense of hundreds of millions of members of uncivilized nations.

It is clear why imperialism is *moribund* capitalism, capitalism in *transition* to socialism: monopoly, which grows *out of* capitalism, is *already* capitalism dying out, the beginning of its transition to socialism. The tremendous *socialization* of labour by imperialism (what the apologists—the bourgeois economists—call "interlocking") means the same thing.

In advancing this definition of imperialism, we come into complete contradiction with K. Kautsky, who refuses to regard imperialism as a "phase of capitalism" and defines imperialism as the *policy* "preferred" by finance capital, as the tendency of "industrial" countries to annex "agrarian" countries.* Kautsky's definition is thoroughly false from the theoretical standpoint. What distinguishes imperialism is the domination *not* of industrial but of finance capital, the striving to annex *not* only agrarian countries, but *every kind* of country. Kautsky *divorces* the politics of imperialism from its economics, he divorces

* "Imperialism is a product of highly developed industrial capitalism. It consists in the striving of every industrial capitalist nation to subjugate and annex ever more *agrarian* territories, irrespective of the nations that inhabit them" (Kautsky in *Neue Zeit*, September 11, 1914).

monopoly in politics from monopoly in economics, in order to pave the way for his vulgar bourgeois reformism, such as "disarmament," "ultra-imperialism" and similar nonsense. The aim and object of this theoretical falsity is to obscure the *most profound* contradictions of imperialism and thus to justify the theory of "unity" with the apologists of imperialism, the frank social-chauvinists and the opportunists.

We have already dwelt sufficiently on this break of Kautsky's with Marxism in *Sotsial-Demokrat* and *Kommunist*. Our Russian Kautskyites, the Organization Committee supporters, headed by Axelrod and Spektator, including Martov and to a large extent Trotsky, preferred tacitly to ignore the issue of Kautskyism as a trend. They have not dared to defend what Kautsky has written during the war, confining themselves either to simply praising Kautsky (Axelrod in his German pamphlet, which the Organization Committee *has promised* to publish in Russian) or to quoting private letters of Kautsky (Spektator), in which he asserts that he belongs to the opposition, and jesuitically tries to nullify his chauvinist declarations.

Let it be noted that in his "conception" of imperialism—which is tantamount to embellishing imperialism—Kautsky takes a step backwards not only compared with Hilferding's *Finance Capital* (no matter how assiduously Hilferding himself now defends Kautsky and "unity" with the social-chauvinists!) but also compared with the *social-liberal*, J. A. Hobson. This English economist, who lays not the slightest claim to being called a Marxist, much more profoundly defines imperialism and reveals its contradictions in his work of 1902.* Here is what that writer (in whose book one can find nearly all Kautsky's pacifist and "conciliatory" banalities) wrote on the highly important subject of the parasitic nature of imperialism:

* J. A. Hobson, *Imperialism*, London 1902.

Two sets of circumstances, in Hobson's opinion, weakened the power of the old empires: 1) "economic parasitism," and 2) the formation of their armies from subject peoples. "There is first the habit of economic parasitism, by which the ruling State has used its provinces, colonies, and dependencies in order to enrich its ruling class and to bribe its lower classes into acquiescence." Concerning the second circumstance, Hobson writes:

"One of the strangest symptoms of the blindness of imperialism" (these songs about the "blindness" of imperialists come more appropriately from the social-liberal Hobson than from the "Marxist" Kautsky) "is the reckless indifference with which Great Britain, France and other imperial nations are embarking on this perilous dependency. Great Britain has gone farthest. Most of the fighting by which we have won our Indian Empire has been done by natives; in India, as more recently in Egypt, great standing armies are placed under British commanders; almost all the fighting associated with our African dominions, except in the southern part, has been done for us by natives."

The prospect of the partition of China drew from Hobson the following economic appraisal: "The greater part of Western Europe might then assume the appearance and character already exhibited by tracts of country in the South of England, in the Riviera, and in the tourist-ridden or residential parts of Italy and Switzerland, little clusters of wealthy aristocrats drawing dividends and pensions from the Far East, with a somewhat larger group of professional retainers and tradesmen and a larger body of personal servants and workers in the transport trade and in the final stages of production of the more perishable goods; all the main arterial industries would have disappeared, the staple foods and manufactures flowing in as tribute from Asia and Africa." "We have foreshadowed the possibility of even a larger alliance of Western States, a European federation of great Powers which, so far from

forwarding the cause of world civilization, might introduce the gigantic peril of a Western parasitism, a group of advanced industrial nations, whose upper classes drew vast tribute from Asia and Africa, with which they supported great tame masses of retainers, no longer engaged in the staple industries of agriculture and manufacture, but kept in the performance of personal or minor industrial services under the control of a new financial aristocracy. Let those who would scout such a theory" (he should have said: prospect) "as undeserving of consideration examine the economic and social condition of districts in Southern England today which are already reduced to this condition, and reflect upon the vast extension of such a system which might be rendered feasible by the subjection of China to the economic control of similar groups of financiers, investors" (rentiers), "and political and business officials, draining the greatest potential reservoir of profit the world has ever known, in order to consume it in Europe. The situation is far too complex, the play of world forces far too incalculable, to render this or any other single interpretation of the future very probable; but the influences which govern the Imperialism of Western Europe today are moving in this direction, and, unless counteracted or diverted, make towards such consummation."

Hobson, the social-liberal, fails to see that they can *only* be "counteracted" by the revolutionary proletariat and *only* in the shape of a social revolution. But then he is a social-liberal! Nevertheless, as early as 1902 he superbly tackled the problem of the significance of a "United States of Europe" (be it said for the benefit of the Kautskyite Trotsky!) and of all that is now being glossed over by the *hypocritical Kautskyites* of various countries, namely, that the *opportunists* (social-chauvinists) are, together with the imperialist bourgeoisie, working *precisely* towards the creation of an imperialist Europe on the backs of Asia and Africa, and that objectively the *opportunists* are a section

of the petty bourgeoisie and of certain working-class strata that have been *bribed* out of imperialist super-profits and converted into *watchdogs* of capitalism and *corrupters* of the labour movement.

We have repeatedly pointed, both in articles and in resolutions of our Party, to this economic, this most profound connection between the imperialist bourgeoisie and the opportunism now victorious (for long?) in the labour movement. It is from this, incidentally, that we have drawn the conclusion that a split with the social-chauvinists is inevitable. Our Kautskyites have preferred to evade the issue! Martov, for instance, uttered in his lectures a sophistry which in the *Bulletin of the Foreign Secretariat of the Organization Committee* (No. 4, April 10, 1916) is expressed in the following way: . . . "The cause of revolutionary Social-Democracy would be in a sad, even a hopeless plight if those groups of workers who in mental development approach most closely to the 'intelligentsia' and who are the most highly skilled fatally drifted away from it towards opportunism. . . ."

By means of the silly word "fatally" and a certain "sleight-of-hand," the *fact is evaded* that *certain* working-class strata *have already drifted away* to opportunism and to the imperialist bourgeoisie! And all that the sophists of the O.C. want is to *evade* this fact! They dispose of the matter with the "official optimism" which the Kautskyite Hilferding and many other flaunt at the present time: objective conditions—they aver—guarantee the unity of the proletariat and the victory of the revolutionary trend! We, they aver, are "optimists" regarding the proletariat!

Actually, however, all these Kautskyites—Hilferding, the O.C.-ites, Martov and Co.—are *optimists* . . . regarding *opportunism*. That is the point!

The proletariat is the child of capitalism—of world, and not only European, and not only imperialist, capitalism.

On a world scale, fifty years sooner or fifty years later—from the standpoint of *this* scale the problem is a minor one—the "proletariat" of course "will be" united, and revolutionary Social-Democracy will "inevitably" be victorious within it. But that is not the point, Messrs. Kautskyites. The point is that now in the imperialist countries of Europe *you are fawning* on the opportunists, who are *alien* to the proletariat as a class, who are the servants, the agents of the bourgeoisie and the vehicles of its influence, and *unless* the labour movement *rids itself* of them, it will remain a *bourgeois labour movement*. Your advocacy of "unity" with the opportunists, with the Legiens and Davids, the Plekhanovs or Chkhenkelis and Potresovs, etc., is, objectively, a defence of the *enslavement* of the workers by the imperialist bourgeoisie through the medium of its best agents in the labour movement. The victory of revolutionary Social-Democracy on a world scale is absolutely inevitable, but it is proceeding and will proceed, is taking and will take place only *against* you, it will be a victory *over* you.

These two trends, even *two* parties, in the contemporary labour movement, which in 1914-16 have so obviously parted ways all over the world, were *traced by Engels and Marx in Britain* during several *decades*, roughly from 1858 to 1892.

Neither Marx nor Engels lived to see the imperialist epoch of world capitalism, which began not earlier than 1898-1900. But it was a peculiar feature of Britain that from the middle of the nineteenth century she already revealed at least *two* major distinguishing features of imperialism: 1) vast colonies, and 2) monopoly profit (due to her monopolist position on the world market). In both respects Britain at that time was an exception among capitalist countries, and Engels and Marx, analysing this exception, quite clearly and definitely indicated its *connection* with the victory (temporary) of opportunism in the British labour movement.

In a letter to Marx, dated October 7, 1858, Engels wrote: "...The English proletariat is actually becoming more and more bourgeois, so that this most bourgeois of all nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat *alongside* the bourgeoisie. For a nation which exploits the whole world this is of course to a certain extent justifiable." In a letter to Sorge, dated September 21, 1872, Engels informs him that Hales kicked up a big row in the Federal Council of the International and secured a vote of censure on Marx for saying that "the English labour leaders had sold themselves." Marx wrote to Sorge on August 4, 1874: "As to the urban workers here" (in England), "it is a pity that the whole pack of leaders did not get into Parliament. This would be the surest way of getting rid of the whole lot." In a letter to Marx, dated August 11, 1881, Engels speaks about "those very worst English trade unions which allow themselves to be led by men sold to, or at least paid by the middle class." In a letter to Kautsky, dated September 12, 1882, Engels wrote: "You ask me what the English workers think about colonial policy. Well, exactly the same as they think about politics in general... There is no workers' party here, you see, there are only Conservatives and Liberal-Radicals, and the workers gaily share the feast of England's monopoly of the world market and the colonies."

On December 7, 1889, Engels wrote to Sorge: "...The most repulsive thing here" (in England) "is the bourgeois 'respectability' which has grown deep into the bones of the workers... And even Tom Mann, whom I regard as the best of the lot, is fond of mentioning that he will be lunching with the Lord Mayor. If one compares this with the French, one realizes what a revolution is good for after all." In a letter, dated April 19, 1890: "But *under* the surface the movement" (of the working class in England) "is going on, is embracing ever wider sections and mostly just among the hitherto stagnant *lowest*" (Engels's italics)

"strata. The day is no longer far off when this mass *will* suddenly *find itself*, when it will dawn upon it that it itself is this colossal mass in motion." On March 4, 1891: "The failure of the collapsed Dockers' Union; the 'old' conservative trade unions, *rich* and therefore cowardly, remain alone on the field..." September 14, 1891: At the Newcastle Trades Union Congress the old unionists, opponents of the eight-hour day, were defeated "and the bourgeois papers recognize the defeat of the *bourgeois labour party*" (Engels's italics throughout)...

That these ideas, repeated by Engels over the course of decades, were also expressed by him publicly, in the press, is proven by his preface to the second edition of *The Condition of the Working-Class in England*, 1892. Here he speaks of an "aristocracy among the working class," of a "privileged minority of the workers," in contradistinction to the "great mass of working people." "A small privileged, protected minority" of the working class alone was "permanently benefited" by Britain's privileged position in 1848-68, whereas "the great bulk of them experienced at best but a temporary improvement." "With the breakdown of that" (England's industrial) "monopoly, the English working class will lose that privileged position..." The members of the "new" unions, the unions of the unskilled workers, "had this immense advantage, that their minds were virgin soil, entirely free from the inherited 'respectable' bourgeois prejudices which hampered the brains of the better situated 'old unionists'..." "The so-called workers' representatives" in England are people "who are forgiven their being members of the working class because they themselves would like to drown their quality of being workers in the ocean of their liberalism..."

We have deliberately quoted the direct statements of Marx and Engels at rather great length in order that the reader may study them *as a whole*. And they should be studied, they are worth carefully pondering over. For they

are the *pivot* of the tactics in the labour movement that are dictated by the objective conditions of the imperialist epoch.

Here, too, Kautsky has already attempted to "befog the issue" and to substitute for Marxism a sentimental spirit of conciliation with the opportunists. Arguing against the avowed and naïve social-imperialists (like Lensch), who justify Germany's participation in the war as a means of destroying Britain's monopoly, Kautsky "*corrects*" this obvious falsehood by another equally obvious one. Instead of a cynical falsehood he employs an unctuous one! Britain's *industrial* monopoly, he says, has long ago been broken, has long ago been destroyed, and there is nothing left to destroy.

Why is this argument false?

Because, firstly, it overlooks Britain's *colonial* monopoly. Yet Engels, as we have seen, pointed to this very clearly as early as 1882, thirty-four years ago! Although Britain's industrial monopoly has been destroyed, her colonial monopoly not only remains, but has become extremely accentuated, for the whole world is already divided up! By means of this sugary lie Kautsky smuggles in the bourgeois-pacifist and opportunist-philistine idea that "there is nothing to fight about." On the contrary, not only have the *capitalists* something to fight about now, but they *cannot help* fighting if they want to preserve capitalism, for without a forcible redivision of the colonies the *new* imperialist countries cannot obtain the privileges enjoyed by the older (*and weaker*) imperialist powers.

Secondly, why does Britain's monopoly explain the victory (for a time) of opportunism in Britain? Because monopoly yields *super-profits*, i.e., a surplus of profits over and above the capitalist profits normal and customary all over the world. Of these super-profits the capitalists *can* devote a part (and no small one at that!), in order to bribe *their own* workers, to create something like an alliance (remember the famous "alliances" of the British trade

unions with their employers, described by the Webbs) between the workers of the given nation and their capitalists *against* the other countries. Britain's industrial monopoly was destroyed at the end of the nineteenth century. That is beyond dispute. But *how* did that destruction take place? Did it do so in such a way that *all* monopoly disappeared?

If that were the case, Kautsky's "theory" of conciliation (with the opportunists) would to a certain extent be justified. But the whole point is that it is *not* the case. Imperialism *is* monopoly capitalism. Every cartel, trust, syndicate, every giant bank *is* a monopoly. Super-profits have not disappeared; they still remain. The exploitation of *all* other countries by one privileged, financially wealthy country remains and has been intensified. A handful of wealthy countries—there are only four of them, if we mean independent, really gigantic, "modern" wealth: Britain, France, the United States and Germany—have developed monopoly to vast proportions, they obtain *super-profits* running into hundreds, if not thousands, of millions, they "ride on the backs" of hundreds upon hundreds of millions of people in other countries and fight among themselves for the division of the particularly rich, particularly fat and particularly easy spoils.

This in fact is the economic and political essence of imperialism, the profound contradictions of which Kautsky glosses over instead of exposing.

The bourgeoisie of a "great" imperialist power *economically can* bribe the upper strata of "its" workers by devoting a hundred million francs a year or so to this purpose, for its *super-profits* most likely amount to about a thousand million. And how this little sop is divided among the labour ministers, "labour representatives" (remember Engels's splendid analysis of this term), labour members of War Industry Committees, labour officials, workers belonging to the narrow craft unions, office employees, etc., etc., is a secondary question.

Between 1848 and 1868, and to a certain extent later, Britain alone enjoyed a monopoly; *that is why* opportunism was able to prevail in Britain for decades. There *were no* other countries possessing either very rich colonies or an industrial monopoly.

The last third of the nineteenth century was marked by the transition to the new imperialist epoch. Monopoly is enjoyed by the finance capital *not* of one, but of several, though very few, Great Powers. (In Japan and Russia the monopoly of military power, vast territories, or special facilities for robbing minority nationalities, China, etc., partly supplements, partly replaces the monopoly of contemporary finance capital.) That Britain's monopoly *was able* to remain *unchallenged* for decades follows from this difference. The monopoly of contemporary finance capital is being furiously challenged; the epoch of imperialist wars has begun. In those days it was possible to bribe and corrupt the working class of *one* country for decades. Now that is improbable, if not impossible. On the other hand, *every* imperialist "great" power can and does bribe *smaller* (compared with 1848-68 in Britain) strata of the "labour aristocracy." In those days a "*bourgeois labour party*," to use Engels's remarkably profound expression, was able to take shape in only one country, because it alone enjoyed a monopoly, but it did so for a long time. Now a "*bourgeois labour party*" is *inevitable* and typical in *all* imperialist countries; but in view of their desperate struggle for the division of the spoils, it is improbable that such a party can prevail for long in a number of countries. For the trusts, the financial oligarchy, high prices, etc., while *permitting* the bribery of handfuls of the top strata, are increasingly oppressing, crushing, ruining and torturing the *mass* of the proletariat and the semi-proletariat.

On the one hand, there is the tendency of the bourgeoisie and the opportunists to convert a handful of very rich and privileged nations into "eternal" parasites on the

body of the rest of mankind, to "rest on the laurels" of the exploitation of Negroes, Indians, etc., keeping them in subjection with the aid of the excellent technique of extermination provided by modern militarism. On the other hand, there is the tendency of the *masses*, who are more oppressed than ever and who bear the whole brunt of imperialist wars, to cast off this yoke and to overthrow the bourgeoisie. It is in the struggle between these two tendencies that the history of the labour movement will now inevitably develop. For the first tendency is not accidental, but has an economic "basis." The bourgeoisie have already begotten, fostered and secured themselves "bourgeois labour parties" of social-chauvinists in *all* countries. The differences between a definitely formed party, like Bissoleti's in Italy, for example, a party that is fully social-imperialist, and let us say, the semi-formed near-party of the Potresovs, Gvozdevs, Bulkins, Chkheidzes, Skobelevs and Co., are immaterial. The important thing is that economically the desertion of the stratum of the labour aristocracy to the bourgeoisie has matured and become a reality, while as to the particular political form this economic fact, this shifting of the relations between classes will assume, that will involve no special "difficulty."

On the economic basis referred to, the political institutions of modern capitalism—press, parliament, trade unions, congresses, etc.—have created *political* privileges and sops that correspond to the economic privileges and sops given to the respectful, meek, reformist and patriotic office employees and workers. Lucrative and soft jobs in the Cabinet or on the War Industry Committee, in Parliament and on diverse committees, on the editorial staffs of "substantial," legally published newspapers or on the management councils of no less substantial "bourgeois serving" trade unions—these are the things with which the imperialist bourgeoisie attracts and rewards the representatives and adherents of the "bourgeois labour parties."

The mechanics of political democracy work in the same direction. Nothing can be done in our time without elections; nothing can be done without the masses, and the following of the masses in this era of printing and parliamentarism *cannot* be gained without a widely-ramified, systematically-operated, well-equipped system of flattery, lies, fraud, juggling with fashionable and popular catch-words, and promises—right and left—of all sorts of reforms and blessings to the workers so long as they renounce the revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. I would call this system Lloyd-Georgism, after one of the foremost and most dexterous representatives of this system in the classic land of the “bourgeois labour party,” the British Minister Lloyd George. A first-class bourgeois manipulator, a political trickster, a popular orator who will deliver any speeches you like, even r-r-revolutionary ones, to a labour audience, and a man who is capable of obtaining fairly large-sized sops for obedient workers in the shape of social reforms (insurance, etc.), Lloyd George serves the bourgeoisie splendidly,* and serves it precisely *among* the workers, brings its influence *precisely* to the proletariat, to the place where it is most needed and where it is most difficult to capture the masses morally.

And is there such a great difference between Lloyd George and the Scheidemanns, Legiens, Hendersons and Hyndmans, Plekhanovs, Renaudels & Co.? Of the latter, it may be objected, some will return to the revolutionary socialism of Marx. That is possible, but it is an insignificant difference in degree, if the question is regarded from its political, i.e., its mass aspect. Certain individuals among the present social-chauvinist leaders may return to the

* I recently read in an English magazine an article by a Tory, a political opponent of Lloyd George, entitled “Lloyd George from the Tory Standpoint.” The war opened the eyes of this opponent to what an excellent servant of the bourgeoisie this Lloyd George is! The Tories have made their peace with him!

proletariat. But the social-chauvinist or (what is the same thing) opportunist *trend* can neither disappear nor “return” to the revolutionary proletariat. Wherever Marxism is popular among the workers, this political trend, this “bourgeois labour party” will invoke and swear by Marx. They cannot be prohibited from doing so, just as a trading firm cannot be prohibited from using any particular label, sign, or advertisement. It has always been the case in history that after the death of revolutionary leaders who were popular among the oppressed classes, these leaders’ enemies have attempted to appropriate their names so as to deceive the oppressed classes.

The fact is that “bourgeois labour parties,” as a political phenomenon, have already been formed in *all* the advanced capitalist countries, and that unless a determined and relentless struggle is waged all along the line against these parties—or groups, trends, etc., it is all the same—there can be no question of a struggle against imperialism, or of Marxism, or of a socialist labour movement. The Chkheidze group, *Nashe Dyelo* and *Golos Truda* in Russia, and the O.C.-ites abroad are nothing but varieties of one *such* party. We have not the slightest grounds for thinking that these parties will disappear *before* the social revolution. On the contrary, the nearer the revolution approaches, the more strongly it flares up, the more sudden and violent the transitions and leaps in its progress, the greater will be the part played in the labour movement by the struggle of the revolutionary mass stream against the opportunist, petty-bourgeois stream. Kautskyism is not an independent trend at all, because it has no roots either in the masses or in the privileged stratum which has deserted to the bourgeoisie. But the danger of Kautskyism lies in the fact that, utilizing the ideology of the past, it endeavours to reconcile the proletariat to the “bourgeois labour party,” to preserve the unity of the proletariat with that party and thereby enhance the latter’s prestige. The overt social-chauvinists no longer have a mass following: Lloyd

George has been hissed down at workers' meetings in Britain; Hyndman has resigned from the party; the Renaudels and Scheidemanns, the Potresovs and Gvozdevs are protected by the police. The covert defence of the social-chauvinists by the Kautskyites is much more dangerous.

One of the most widespread sophistries of Kautskyism is its reference to the "masses." We do not want, they say, to break away from the masses and mass organizations! But just think how Engels treated the problem. In the nineteenth century the "mass organizations" of the British trade unions were on the side of the bourgeois labour party. Marx and Engels did not reconcile themselves to it on this ground, but exposed it. They did not forget, firstly, that the trade-union organizations directly embrace a *minority of the proletariat*. In Britain then, as in Germany now, not more than one-fifth of the proletariat were organized. It cannot be seriously thought that it is possible under capitalism to organize the majority of the proletariat. Secondly—and this is the main point—it is not so much a question of the size of an organization as of the real, objective meaning of its policy: does this policy represent the masses, does it serve the masses, i.e., does it aim at the liberation of the masses from capitalism, or does it represent the interests of the minority, of the minority's reconciliation with capitalism? The latter was true of Britain in the nineteenth century, and it is true now of Germany, etc.

Engels draws a distinction between the "bourgeois labour party" of the *old* trade unions—the privileged minority—and the "*lowest strata*," the real majority, and he appeals to them as *not* infected with "bourgeois respectability." This is the essence of Marxist tactics!

We cannot—nor can anybody else—calculate what portion of the proletariat is following and will follow the social-chauvinists and opportunists. That will be revealed only by the struggle, it will be definitely decided only by the socialist revolution. But we know for certain that the "defenders of the fatherland" in the imperialist war *rep-*

resent only a minority. And it is therefore our duty, if we wish to remain Socialists, to go down *lower* and *deeper*, to the real masses. That is the whole meaning and the whole substance of the struggle against opportunism. By exposing the fact that the opportunists and social-chauvinists are really betraying and selling the interests of the masses, that they are defending the temporary privileges of a minority of the workers, that they are the vehicles of bourgeois ideas and influence, that they are really allies and agents of the bourgeoisie, we teach the masses to distinguish their true political interests, to fight for socialism and for the revolution through all the long and painful vicissitudes of imperialist wars and imperialist armistices.

The only Marxist line in the world labour movement is to explain to the masses the inevitability and necessity of breaking with opportunism, to educate them for revolution by waging a relentless struggle against opportunism, to utilize the experience of the war for the purpose of exposing all the vileness of national-Liberal Labour policy, and not of concealing it.

In the next article, we shall attempt to sum up the principal features that distinguish this line from Kautskyism.

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THE STATE OF AFFAIRS IN THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL*

16. The international obligations of the working class of Russia are coming to the forefront with particular force precisely now.

Only the lazy do not swear by internationalism these days. Even the chauvinist defencists, even Messrs. Plekhanov and Potresov, even Kerensky, call themselves internationalists. All the more urgently is it the duty of the proletarian party clearly, precisely and definitely to oppose internationalism in deeds to internationalism in words.

Mere appeals to the workers of all countries, empty assurances of devotion to internationalism, direct or indirect attempts to fix a "sequence" of revolutionary proletarian actions in the various belligerent countries, laborious efforts to conclude "agreements" between the Socialists of the belligerent countries *on the question* of the revolutionary struggle, pother over the summoning of socialist congresses *for the purpose* of a peace campaign, etc., etc.,—no matter how sincere the authors of such ideas, attempts, or plans may be—amount, as far as their *objective* significance is concerned, to mere phrase-mongering, and *at best* are innocent and pious wishes, fit only to conceal the *deception* of the masses by the chauvinists. The *French* social-chauvinists, who are the most adroit and best-versed in methods of parliamentary juggling, have long ago bro-

* Excerpt from V. I. Lenin's pamphlet *The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution*.—Ed.

ken the record for incredibly loud and resonant pacifist and internationalist phrases *coupled with* the unprecedentedly brazen betrayal of socialism and the International, the acceptance of posts in governments waging the imperialist war, the voting of credits *or loans* (as Chkheidze, Skobelev, Tsereteli and Steklov have been doing recently in Russia), opposition to the revolutionary struggle in their *own country*, etc., etc.

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

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

Everything else is deception and Manilovism.¹⁰³

In the period of over two years of the war the international socialist and working-class movement in *every country* has evolved three trends. Whoever ignores *reality* and refuses to recognize the existence of these three trends, to analyse them, to fight persistently for the trend that is really internationalist, dooms himself to impotence, helplessness and errors.

The three trends are:

1) The social-chauvinists, i.e., Socialists in words and chauvinists in deeds, people who recognize "defence of the fatherland" in imperialist war (and above all in the present imperialist war).

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

Such are the majority of the official leaders of the official Social-Democratic parties in *all countries*—Messrs. Plekhanov and Co. in Russia, the Scheidemanns in Germany, Renaudel, Guesde and Sembat in France, Bissolati and Co. in Italy, Hyndman, the Fabians and the Labour-

ites (the leaders of the "Labour Party") in Britain, Branting and Co. in Sweden, Troelstra and his party in Holland, Stauning and his party in Denmark, Victor Berger and the other "defenders of the fatherland" in America, and so forth.

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

All those who belong to the "Centre" vow and swear that they are Marxists and internationalists, that they are for peace, for exerting every kind of "pressure" on the governments, for advancing every kind of "demand" on their own government that it "ascertain the will of the people for peace," that they are for all sorts of peace campaigns, for peace without annexations, etc., etc.—*and for peace with the social-chauvinists*. The "Centre" is for "unity," the "Centre" is opposed to a split.

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

The fact of the matter is that the "Centre" is not convinced of the necessity for a revolution against one's own government; it does not preach revolution; it does not carry on a wholehearted revolutionary struggle; and invents the tritest, ultra-"Marxist"-sounding *excuses* for avoiding it.

The social-chauvinists are our *class enemies, bourgeois* within the working-class movement. They represent a stratum, or groups, or sections of the working class which *objectively* have been bribed by the bourgeoisie (by better wages, positions of honour, etc.), and which help *their* bourgeoisie to plunder and oppress small and weak peoples and to fight *over* the division of the capitalist spoils.

The "Centre" consists of routine-worshippers, depraved by rotten legality, corrupted by the atmosphere of parliamentarism, etc., bureaucrats accustomed to snug positions

and "soft" jobs. Historically and economically speaking, they do not represent a *separate* stratum but merely the *transition* from a past phase of the working-class movement—from the phase between 1871 and 1914, which yielded much of value, particularly in the art the proletariat must possess, of slow, sustained, systematic, organizational work on a large and very large scale—to a phase that is new, and has become *objectively* necessary since the outbreak of the first imperialist world war, which inaugurated *the era of social revolution*.

The chief leader and representative of the "Centre" is Karl Kautsky, the most outstanding authority in the Second International (1889-1914). Since August 1914 he has presented a picture of utter bankruptcy as a Marxist, of unheard-of spinelessness, and of the most wretched vacillations and betrayals. This "Centrist" trend includes Kautsky, Haase, Ledebour and the so-called "workers' or labour group"¹⁰⁴ in the Reichstag; in France it includes Longuet, Pressemane and the so-called "minoritaires"¹⁰⁵ (Mensheviks) in general; in Britain, Philip Snowden, Ramsay MacDonald and many other leaders of the Independent Labour Party, and in part, of the British Socialist Party; Morris Hillquit and many others in the United States; Turati, Treves, Modigliani and others in Italy; Robert Grimm and others in Switzerland; Victor Adler and Co. in Austria; the party of the Organization Committee—Axelrod, Martov, Chkheidze, Tsereteli and others in Russia, and so forth.

It goes without saying that at times individual persons unconsciously drift from the social-chauvinists to the "Centrist" position, and vice versa. Every Marxist knows that classes differ from one another, despite the fact that individuals pass freely from one class to another; similarly, *trends* in political life differ from one another, despite the fact that individuals pass freely from one trend to another, and despite attempts and efforts to *amalgamate* the trends.

3) The third trend, internationalists in deeds, is most closely represented by the "Zimmerwald Left." (We reprint as a supplement its manifesto¹⁰⁶ of September 1915, in order that the reader may become acquainted in the original with the inception of this trend.)

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

The most outstanding representatives of this trend are: in Germany the Spartacus Group, or International Group,¹⁰⁷ to which Karl Liebknecht belongs. Karl Liebknecht is the most celebrated representative of this trend and of the *new*, genuine, proletarian International.

Karl Liebknecht called upon the workers and soldiers of Germany *to turn their guns against their own* government. Karl Liebknecht did that openly from the tribune of Parliament (the Reichstag). He then went to a demonstration on Potsdamer Platz, one of the largest public squares in Berlin, with illegally printed leaflets proclaiming the slogan "Down With the Government!" He was arrested and sentenced to *hard labour*. He is now serving his term in a German penal prison, as are *hundreds*, if not thousands, of *true* German Socialists who have been imprisoned for their fight against the war.

Karl Liebknecht in his speeches and letters mercilessly attacked not only *his own* Plekhanovs and Potresovs (Scheidemanns, Legiens, Davids and Co.), *but also his own*

Centrists, his own Chkheidzes and Tseretelis (Kautsky, Haase, Ledebour and Co.).

Karl Liebknecht and his friend, Otto Rühle, two out of one hundred and ten deputies, violated discipline, destroyed the "unity" with the "Centre" and the chauvinists, and *went against all of them*. Liebknecht *alone* represents socialism, the proletarian cause, the proletarian revolution. *All* the rest of German Social-Democracy, as aptly expressed by Rosa Luxemburg (also a member and one of the leaders of the Spartacus Group), is a "*stinking corpse*."

Another group of internationalists in deeds in Germany is that gathered around the Bremen paper *Arbeiterpolitik*.¹⁰⁸

In France, closest to the internationalists in deeds are: Lorient and his friends (Bourderon and Merrheim have slid down to social-pacifism), and also the Frenchman Henri Guilbeaux, who publishes in Geneva the magazine *Demain*; in Britain, the *Trade Unionist*¹⁰⁹, and *part* of the members of the British Socialist Party and of the Independent Labour Party (for instance, Russell Williams, who openly called for a break with the leaders who have *betrayed* socialism), the Scottish school-teacher Socialist *McLean*, who has been sentenced to *hard labour* by the bourgeois government of Britain for his revolutionary fight against the war, and hundreds of British Socialists who are in jail for the same offence. They, and they alone, are internationalists *in deeds*. In America, the Socialist Labour Party and those elements within the opportunist Socialist Party who in January 1917 began the publication of the paper, *The Internationalist*,¹¹⁰ in Holland, the Party of the "Tribunists," who publish the paper *Tribune* (Pannekoek, Herman Gorter, Wynkoop, and Henrietta Roland-Holst, who, although Centrist at Zimmerwald, has now joined our ranks); in Sweden, the party of the Young or Left, led by Lindhagen, Ture Nermann, Carlsson, Stroem and Z. Höglund, who at Zimmerwald was person-

ally active in founding the "Zimmerwald Left," and who is now in prison for his revolutionary fight against the war; in Denmark, Trier and his friends, who have left the now purely *bourgeois* "Social-Democratic" Party of Denmark headed by the *Minister* Stauning; in Bulgaria, the "Tesnyaki"; in Italy, the nearest are Constantin Lazzari, secretary of the party, and Serrati, editor of the central organ, *Avanti*; in Poland, Radek, Hanecki and other leaders of the Social-Democrats united under the "Regional Administration," and Rosa Luxemburg, Tyszka and other leaders of the Social-Democrats united under the "Chief Administration"; in Switzerland, those of the Left who drew up the case for the "referendum" (January 1917) aimed at fighting the social-chauvinists and the "Centre" in *their own* country and who at the Zurich Cantonal Socialist Convention held at Töss, on February 11, 1917 moved a consistently revolutionary resolution against the war; in Austria, Friedrich Adler's young Left-wing friends, who operated partly in the Karl Marx Club in Vienna, now closed by the arch-reactionary Austrian Government, which is ruining Fr. Adler's life for his heroic, although ill-considered, shooting of a minister, and so on.

What matters here is not the shades of opinion which exist even among the Lefts. What matters is the *trend*. The most important thing is that it is not easy to be an internationalist in deeds during a frightful imperialist war. Such people are few; but it is on such people *alone* that the future of socialism depends; they *alone* are *the leaders of the masses*, and not corrupters of the masses.

The difference between the reformists and the revolutionaries among the Social-Democrats and Socialists generally was objectively bound to undergo a change under the conditions of the imperialist war. Those who confine themselves to "demanding" of the bourgeois governments that they conclude peace or "ascertain the will of the peoples for peace," etc., are *actually* slipping into reforms. *For,*

objectively, *the problem of the war* can be solved only in a *revolutionary way*.

There is no way out of the war to a democratic, non-coercive peace, to the liberation of the peoples from the burden of paying *milliards* as interest to the capitalists, who have grown rich on "the war," except through a revolution of the proletariat.

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

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

Dated April 10, 1917

First published as a separate pamphlet in September 1917

Vol. 24, pp. 53-58

REPORT ON THE CURRENT SITUATION*

(Excerpt)

The resolution on the current situation falls into three parts. The first characterizes the objective conditions created by the imperialist war, the position in which world capitalism finds itself; the second describes the condition of the international proletarian movement; the third indicates the tasks of the Russian working class when power passes into its hands. In the first part I formulate the conclusion that during the war capitalism has developed even more than before the war. It has already taken possession of entire fields of production. As early as 1891, twenty-seven years ago, when the Germans adopted their Erfurt Programme, Engels said that one could not continue to interpret capitalism as the absence of planning.¹¹¹ That was now obsolete. If there were trusts, planning was no longer absent. Particularly in the twentieth century has capitalism made gigantic strides, and the war has done what twenty-five years did not do. State control of industry has made progress not only in Germany but also in Britain. There has been a transition from monopoly in general to state monopoly. The objective state of affairs has shown that the war has accelerated the development of capitalism, and it has progressed from capitalism to imperialism, from monopoly to state control. All this has brought the social-

* Delivered at the Seventh All-Russian Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. (B.), April 24 (May 7), 1917.—*Ed.*

ist revolution nearer and created the objective conditions for it. Thus the socialist revolution has been brought closer by the course of the war.

Britain before the war was a country of the utmost freedom, a fact which politicians of the Cadet type of party never fail to point out. Freedom existed there because no revolutionary movement existed there. The war immediately changed all that. A country in which nobody can remember the freedom of the socialist press having been attacked for decades at once adopted a purely tsarist censorship, and all prisons were filled with Socialists. The capitalists over there had learnt in the course of centuries to govern the people without the use of force, and if they resorted to force it means that they felt the revolutionary movement was growing, that they could not act otherwise.

First published in full in 1921

Vol. 24, pp. 209-10

WAR AND REVOLUTION*

(Excerpt)

The question of war and revolution has been raised so often recently in the entire press and at every public meeting that very likely many of you are not only well acquainted with many aspects of the problem, but have already succeeded in getting bored. I have not yet had a single opportunity to address, or even to attend, Party or public meetings at all in this district, so that maybe I risk repeating or not dealing in sufficient detail with those aspects of the problem that are of very great interest to you.

It seems to me that the chief thing usually forgotten on the subject of the war, the thing not given sufficient attention, the chief source of so many arguments and perhaps, I would say, of empty, hopeless, idle arguments, the main question forgotten is: what is the class character of the war? What caused it to break out? What classes are waging it? What historical and historico-economic conditions gave rise to it? As far as I have been able, at public and at Party meetings, to follow how the question of the war is dealt with, I have reached the conclusion that the reason why numerous misunderstandings arise on the subject is that quite often, when we discuss the question of the war, we speak in totally different languages.

From the viewpoint of Marxism, i.e., contemporary scientific socialism, the main question, when Socialists dis-

* Lecture delivered on May 14 (27), 1917.—Ed.

cuss how to assess a war and what attitude to adopt towards it, is what the war is being waged for, what classes prepared it and shaped its course. We Marxists do not belong to the category of unqualified opponents of all war. We say: our aim is to achieve the socialist system of society, which, by eliminating the division of mankind into classes, by eliminating all exploitation of man by man, and of one nation by other nations, will inevitably eliminate every possibility of war whatsoever. But in the war for this socialist system of society we shall inevitably come up against conditions under which the class struggle within each separate nation may interweave with a war fought between different nations that is engendered by this very class struggle. Hence, we cannot rule out the possibility of revolutionary wars, i.e., wars resulting from the class struggle, waged by revolutionary classes, and of direct and immediate revolutionary significance. Still less can we rule this out when we remember that though the history of European revolutions during the last century, during, say, 125 to 135 years, includes wars of which the majority have been reactionary, it also includes revolutionary wars, such as the war of the French revolutionary masses against united monarchist, backward, feudal and semi-feudal Europe. At the present time, also, no deception of the masses is more widespread in Western Europe, and latterly here in Russia, too, than that of referring to the example of revolutionary wars. There are wars and wars. We have to be clear as to what historical conditions gave rise to the present war, what classes are waging it, and for what ends. Unless we are, we shall be condemning all our arguments about the war to utter futility, to be purely wordy and fruitless controversy. That is why I take the liberty, since you have made your subject the relation between war and revolution, to deal in detail with this aspect of the matter.

Everybody knows the dictum of Clausewitz, one of the most famous writers on the philosophy and the history of

wars, which reads: "War is the continuation of policy by other means." This dictum belongs to a writer who surveyed the history of wars and drew philosophic lessons from it—soon after the epoch of the Napoleonic wars. That writer, whose chief ideas have undoubtedly become the property of every thinking person nowadays, carried on a fight nearly eighty years ago against the philistine and ignorant prejudice that you can separate war from the policy of the governments concerned and the classes concerned, that war can even be regarded as plain aggression that disturbs the peace, after which comes the restoration of this disturbed peace. There was a fight, as it were, and then reconciliation. This is a vulgar and ignorant view, one refuted dozens of years ago and refuted now by any at all attentive analysis of any historical epoch of wars.

War is the continuation of policy by other means. Every war is bound up indissolubly with the political system from which it arises. The very policy which a certain state, a certain class within that state, pursued for a long time before the war, is inevitably and unavoidably continued by that same class during the war, changing only the form of action.

War is the continuation of policy by other means. When the French revolutionary townspeople and revolutionary peasants at the end of the eighteenth century overthrew their monarchy by revolutionary means and established a democratic republic—settled with their monarch, and in revolutionary fashion with their landlords, too—that policy of the revolutionary class could not but shake all the rest of autocratic, tsarist, royal, and semi-feudal Europe to its foundations. And the inevitable continuation of this policy pursued by the revolutionary class victorious in France was the wars in which all the monarchist nations of Europe, constituting their famous coalition, lined up against revolutionary France, and waged a counter-revolutionary struggle against it. Just as within the country the revolutionary people of France then for the first time

displayed revolutionary energy on a scale unknown for centuries, so in the war at the close of the eighteenth century it displayed similar gigantic revolutionary creative activity, refashioning its entire system of strategy, breaking with all the old rules and habits of war, replacing the old troops with a new revolutionary, people's army, and introducing a new way of waging war. This example, it seems to me, deserves particular attention, because it shows us clearly something now forgotten at every step by bourgeois newspapermen when they play on the prejudices and the philistine ignorance of the quite undeveloped masses, who do not understand this indissoluble economic and historical connection between every war and the policy preceding it of each country, each class that was in power before the war and achieved its aims by so-called "peaceful" means. So-called because the ruthless methods required, for example, to ensure "peaceful" domination over the colonies, can hardly be called peaceful.

Peace prevailed in Europe, but continued because the European peoples' domination over hundreds of millions of colonial inhabitants was effected by constant, uninterrupted, never-ending wars which we, Europeans, do not consider to be wars, because all too often they resembled not wars, but the most brutal slaughter, extermination of unarmed peoples. The position, however, is that to understand the present war we must first take a general view of the policies of the European powers as a whole. We have not to take individual examples, or individual cases, which can always be easily torn out of the context of social phenomena and are valueless because an opposite example can also be easily cited. No, we have to take the entire policy of the entire system of European states in their economic and political interrelation, if we are to understand how this system steadily and inevitably gave rise to the present war.

We are constantly witnessing attempts, particularly by the capitalist press—whether monarchist or republican—

to give the present war a historical significance that is alien to it. For example, no device is more frequently resorted to in the French Republic than that of presenting this war fought by France as a continuation and a copy of the wars of the Great French Revolution of 1792. No device for deceiving the French masses, the French workers and the workers of all countries, is more widespread than that of transferring to our epoch the "jargon," the separate slogans of that epoch, and than the attempt to present matters as though now, too, Republican France is defending its liberty against monarchy. The "little" circumstance is forgotten that then, in 1792, war was waged in France by a revolutionary class which had accomplished an unparalleled revolution, by unexampled mass heroism had utterly destroyed the French monarchy, and had risen against a united monarchist Europe for no other aim than that of continuing its revolutionary struggle.

The war in France was a continuation of the policy of the revolutionary class that had effected the revolution, won the Republic, settled with the French capitalists and landlords with an energy unparalleled before then and was waging revolutionary war on behalf of that policy, in continuation of it, against united monarchist Europe.

Now, however, we are faced primarily with alliances of two groups of capitalist powers. We are faced with all the great world capitalist powers—Britain, France, America, and Germany—whose entire policy over a number of decades has been based on incessant economic rivalry, the issue being how to rule the whole world, how to throttle the small nationalities, how to ensure themselves threefold and even tenfold profits on their banking capital, which has made the entire world its sphere of influence. That is what the real policies of Britain and Germany amount to. I stress this. We must never tire of doing so, because if we forget it we shall fail to understand anything about the present war and shall then be helpless in the power of any bourgeois publicist who foists deceitful phrases upon us.

The real policies of the two groups of supreme capitalist giants—Britain and Germany, which together with their allies have moved into action against each other—these policies pursued for decades before the war, must be studied and understood in their entirety. If we did not do this we would not only be forgetting the basic demand of scientific socialism and of all social science in general, but would be depriving ourselves of the possibility of understanding anything whatever about the present war. We would be putting ourselves into the power of the deceiver Milyukov, who is stirring up chauvinism and hatred of one nation for another by methods applied everywhere without exception—methods which Clausewitz, whom I mentioned at the outset, wrote about eighty years ago, deriding the view then already that war is a case of nations living in peace and then fighting one another! As though that is true! Can a war really be explained without linking it up with the preceding policy of the given country, the given system of countries, the given classes? I repeat: that is the basic question, one which is constantly forgotten, and it is the failure to understand this which turns nine-tenths of the discussions about the war into mere squabbling and an exchange of empty phrases. We say that if you have not studied the policies of both groups of belligerent powers over a period of decades—to avoid using chance facts, to avoid seizing on isolated examples—if you have not shown the connection between this war and the policies preceding it, you understand nothing about this war!

These policies show us just one thing: incessant economic rivalry between two supreme world giants, capitalist economies. On the one hand, there is Britain, a country which owns the greater part of the globe, a country which ranks first in wealth, which has created this wealth not so much by the labour of its own workers, but mainly by the exploitation of innumerable colonies, by the immeasurable power of the British banks, which have evolved into a numerically tiny group—some three, four or five—of giant

banks heading all the other ones, handling hundreds of milliards of rubles, and doing so in such a way that it can be said without any exaggeration that nowhere on earth is there a patch of land which this capital has not laid its heavy hand on, nowhere on earth is there a patch of land which is not enmeshed in thousands of threads of British capital. At the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries this capital grew to such dimensions that its activities extended far beyond the borders of individual states and formed a group of giant banks possessed of fabulous wealth. Having generated this tiny number of banks, it enmeshed the whole world in this network possessing hundreds of milliards of rubles. That is the main thing in Britain's economic policy, and in France's economic policy, about which French writers themselves, for instance contributors to *L'Humanité*, a newspaper now directed by ex-Socialists (including, for example, none other than the well-known financial writer Lysis), stated several years before the war: "France is a financial monarchy, France is a financial oligarchy, France is the whole world's money-lender."

On the other hand, in opposition to this, mainly Anglo-French group, there came forward another capitalist group, an even more rapacious, even more predatory one, a group of those who came to partake of the viands of capitalism when all seats at the table were occupied, but who introduced into the struggle new methods of developing capitalist production, improved technique, unparalleled organization, which transformed the old capitalism, the capitalism of the era of free competition, into the capitalism of huge trusts, syndicates, and cartels. This group introduced state control into capitalist production, combining the gigantic forces of capitalism and the gigantic forces of the state to form a single mechanism which brought tens of millions of people into the single organization of state capitalism. Here you have the economic history, the diplomatic history covering several decades, which nobody can escape. It alone

leads you to the proper solution of the problem of war and to the conclusion that the present war, too, is the product of the policies of the classes that have come to grips in it, of the two supreme giants who long before the war enveloped the whole world, all countries, in a network of financial exploitation, and partitioned the globe economically among themselves before the war broke out. They were bound to clash, because a redivision of this domination from the viewpoint of capitalism had become inevitable.

The old division was based on the fact that over a period of several centuries Britain ruined her former competitors. A former competitor of hers was Holland, which dominated the whole world; so, too, was France, which waged war for domination for nearly a hundred years. Protracted warfare enabled Britain, on the basis of her economic strength, the strength of her merchant capital, to establish her unchallenged sway over the world. Then a new beast of prey appeared on the scene: in 1871 a new capitalist power came into being, whose development was incomparably more rapid than Britain's. That is the basic fact. You will not find a single book on economic history that does not admit this indisputable fact—of Germany's more rapid development. This rapid development of capitalism in Germany was the development of a young and lusty beast of prey that appeared in the concert of European powers and said: "You ravaged Holland, you defeated France, you seized control of half the world. Be good enough to give us our proper share." And what does "proper share" mean? How is it to be determined in the capitalist world, in the world of banks? There strength is determined by the number of banks, there strength is determined in the way described with purely American frankness and purely American cynicism by an American multimillionaire publication, when it declared: "The war in Europe is being waged for world domination. To dominate the world two things are needed: dollars and banks. Dollars we have, banks we shall open, and shall dominate the world." That statement was

made by a leading American multimillionaire newspaper. I must say that these cynical words of a conceited and insolent American multimillionaire contain a thousand times more truth than do thousands of articles by bourgeois liars who represent this war as one waged over national interests, national issues of some sort, and put forward a similar quite obvious lie which casts history aside altogether and takes a particular case, such as that of the German vultures having assaulted Belgium. That undoubtedly did take place. Yes, that group of vultures assaulted Belgium with unheard-of ferocity, but did the same as the other group of them did yesterday by other means, and are doing today to other peoples.

When we argue about annexations—that, surely, is a problem contained in what I have tried to expound briefly to you as the history of the economic and diplomatic relations that occasioned the present war—when we argue about annexations, we always forget that they are what this war is being waged for: it is for the division of conquered territories, or, more popularly, for the division of the spoils plundered by the two gangs of robbers. And when we argue about annexations, we constantly come across methods which from the angle of science are beneath all criticism and from the angle of public writing can be called nothing but gross deception. Ask a Russian chauvinist or social-chauvinist, and he will give you an excellent explanation of what annexation by Germany means. He understands that perfectly. But he will never answer your request for a general definition of annexation that will fit Germany, Britain, and Russia. No, he will never do that! *Rech* (to pass from theory to practice) poked fun at our *Pravda* and said, "Those *Pravda* people consider Courland a case of annexation! How can you talk to such people?" And when we replied: "Please give us a definition of annexation that will fit the Germans, the British, and the Russians, and we add that if you evade this issue we shall unmask you on the spot," *Rech* kept silent. We maintain that

no newspaper, either of the chauvinists in general, who simply say that the fatherland must be defended, or of the social-chauvinists, has ever given a definition of annexation that covers both Germany and Russia, that is applicable to either side. And it cannot give such a definition, because all this war is the continuation of a policy of annexations, i.e., of conquest, of capitalist robbery on the part of both sides, both belligerent groups. And it is therefore understandable that the question of who of the two robbers first drew his knife is of no importance whatever to us. Take the history of the naval and military expenditures of both groups over a period of decades. Take the history of the little wars they waged before the big one—"little" because only a few Europeans perished in those wars, whereas hundreds of thousands perished who belonged to the nations they were throttling, to the nations which, from their viewpoint, are not even considered to be such (merely Asians, Africans—can you call them nations?); the wars against those nations were of the following kind: they machine-gunned them, unarmed as they were. Can you call that war? Why, it is not really war, you can forget about it. That is their attitude to this sheer deception of the masses.

The present war is a continuation of the policy of conquest, of the shooting of entire nationalities, of unparalleled atrocities by the Germans and the British in Africa, and the British and the Russians in Persia. Who of them committed most I do not know. It was over these conquests that the German capitalists regarded them as enemies. Ah, they said, you are strong because you are rich? But, then, we are stronger than you, and therefore have the same "sacred" right to plunder. That is what the real history of British and German finance capital boils down to during several decades preceding the war. That is what the history of Russo-German, Russo-British, and German-British relations boils down to. There you have the clue to an understanding of what the war is being fought for. That is

why the stories spread about the cause of the outbreak of the war are nothing but dupery and deception. Forgetting the history of finance capital, the history of how this war matured over the issue of redivision, they depict the matter as follows: two nations lived at peace with each other. Then one attacked the other, which defended itself. All science is forgotten, and the banks are forgotten. The peoples are urged to take up arms, and so are the peasants, who do not know what politics are. You have to defend, that is all! If one reasons that way, the consistent thing to do would be to close down all newspapers, burn all books, and forbid all talk in the press about annexations. That way of reasoning can lead one to justify this view on annexations. They cannot tell the truth about annexations because the whole history of Russia, Britain, and Germany has been one of continuous, ruthless, sanguinary war over annexations. In Persia and in Africa ruthless wars were waged by the Liberals, who had political offenders flogged in India for daring to advance demands which were being fought for here in Russia. The French colonial troops likewise oppressed peoples. Here you have the preceding history, the real history, one of unprecedented plunder! That is the policy of those classes, which the present war is the continuation of. That is why on the issue of annexations they cannot give the reply we give, when we say: any nation united to another one, not by the voluntary choice of its majority but by decision of a king or government, is an annexed nation. To abandon annexation means to grant each nation the right to form a separate state or to live in union with whomever it likes. An answer of that kind is perfectly clear to every worker who is at all class-conscious.

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No. 93, April 23, 1929

Vol. 24, pp. 362-71

THE STATE AND REVOLUTION

(Excerpt)

1. WHEREIN LAY THE HEROISM OF THE COMMUNARDS' ATTEMPT?

It is well known that in the autumn of 1870, a few months before the Commune, Marx warned the Paris workers that any attempt to overthrow the government would be the folly of despair. But when, in March 1871, a decisive battle was *forced* upon the workers and they accepted it, when the uprising had become a fact, Marx greeted the proletarian revolution with the greatest enthusiasm, in spite of unfavourable auguries. Marx did not assume the rigidly pedantic attitude of condemning an "untimely" movement as did the ill-famed Russian renegade from Marxism, Plekhanov, who, in November 1905, wrote encouragingly about the workers' and peasants' struggle, but, after December 1905, cried, liberal fashion: "They should not have taken to arms."

Marx, however, was not only enthusiastic about the heroism of the Communards who, as he expressed it, "stormed heaven." Although the mass revolutionary movement did not achieve its aim, he regarded it as a historic experience of enormous importance, as a certain advance of the world proletarian revolution, as a practical step that was more important than hundreds of programmes and arguments. To analyse this experiment, to draw tactical lessons from it, to re-examine his theory in the light of it—that was the task that Marx set himself.

The only "correction" Marx thought it necessary to make in the *Communist Manifesto*, he made on the basis of the revolutionary experience of the Paris Communards.

The last preface to the new German edition of the *Communist Manifesto*, signed by both its authors, is dated June 24, 1872. In this preface the authors, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, say that the programme of the *Communist Manifesto* "has in some details become antiquated," and they go on to say:

"...One thing especially was proved by the Commune, viz., that 'the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes'..."¹²

The authors took the words that are in single quotation marks in this passage from Marx's book, *The Civil War in France*.

Thus, Marx and Engels regarded one principal and fundamental lesson of the Paris Commune as being of such enormous importance that they introduced it as a substantial correction to the *Communist Manifesto*.

It is extremely characteristic that it is precisely this substantial correction that has been distorted by the opportunists, and its meaning probably is not known to nine-tenths, if not ninety-nine hundredths, of the readers of the *Communist Manifesto*. We shall deal with this distortion more fully further on, in a chapter devoted specially to distortions. Here it will be sufficient to note that the current, vulgar "interpretation" of Marx's famous utterance just quoted is that Marx here allegedly emphasizes the idea of slow development in contradistinction to the seizure of power, and so on.

As a matter of fact, *exactly the opposite is the case*. Marx's idea is that the working class must *break up, smash* the "ready-made state machinery," and not confine itself merely to laying hold of it.

On April 12, 1871, i.e., just at the time of the Commune, Marx wrote to Kugelmann:

Писанное в Париже
24 июня 1871 г.
Фр. Ивановский
Владимир Ильич Ленин
Ивановский
Письмо к Кугельману о готовности и времени
преобразования в революцию

Преобразование.

Вопрос о готовности преобразования в настоящее время является особенно важным в Германии и Франции, так как в этих странах революционная война является неизбежной. Вопрос о готовности преобразования является вопросом о возможности осуществления революции. Вопрос о готовности преобразования является вопросом о возможности осуществления революции. Вопрос о готовности преобразования является вопросом о возможности осуществления революции.

Преобразование является необходимым условием осуществления революции. Преобразование является необходимым условием осуществления революции. Преобразование является необходимым условием осуществления революции. Преобразование является необходимым условием осуществления революции. Преобразование является необходимым условием осуществления революции.

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Писанное в Париже
24 июня 1871 г.
Фр. Ивановский
Владимир Ильич Ленин
Ивановский
Письмо к Кугельману о готовности и времени
преобразования в революцию

“...If you look at the last chapter of my *Eighteenth Brumaire*, you will find that I declare that the next attempt of the French Revolution will be no longer, as before, to transfer the bureaucratic-military machine from one hand to another, but *to smash it*” (Marx’s italics—the original is zerbrechen), “and this is the preliminary condition for every real people’s revolution on the Continent. And this is what our heroic Party comrades in Paris are attempting.” (*Neue Zeit*, XX, 1, 1901-02, p. 709.) (The letters of Marx to Kugelmann have appeared in Russian in no less than two editions, one of which I edited and supplied with a preface.)

The words, “to smash the bureaucratic-military state machine,” briefly express the principal lesson of Marxism regarding the tasks of the proletariat during a revolution in relation to the state. And it is precisely this lesson that has been not only completely forgotten, but positively distorted by the prevailing, Kautskyite, “interpretation” of Marxism!

As for Marx’s reference to *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, we have quoted the corresponding passage in full above.

It is interesting to note, in particular, two points in the above-quoted argument of Marx. First, he restricts his conclusion to the Continent. This was understandable in 1871, when Britain was still the model of a purely capitalist country, but without a militarist clique and, to a considerable degree, without a bureaucracy. Hence, Marx excluded Britain, where a revolution, even a people’s revolution, then seemed possible, and indeed was possible, *without* the preliminary condition of destroying the “ready-made state machinery.”

Today, in 1917, in the epoch of the first great imperialist war, this restriction made by Marx is no longer valid. Both Britain and America, the biggest and the last representatives—in the whole world—of Anglo-Saxon “liberty,” in the sense that they had no militarist cliques and bureaucracy,

have completely sunk into the all-European filthy, bloody morass of bureaucratic-military institutions which subordinate everything to themselves, trample everything underfoot. Today, in Britain and in America, too, “the preliminary condition for every real people’s revolution” is the *smashing*, the *destruction* of the “ready-made state machinery” (ready-made—brought in those countries in the years 1914-17 to “European,” imperialist, perfection.)

Secondly, particular attention should be paid to Marx’s extremely profound remark that the destruction of the bureaucratic-military state machine is “the preliminary condition for every real *people’s* revolution.” This idea of a “people’s” revolution seems strange coming from Marx, so that the Russian Plekhanovites and Mensheviks, those followers of Struve who wish to be regarded as Marxists, might possibly declare such an expression to be a “slip of the pen” on Marx’s part. They have reduced Marxism to such a state of wretchedly liberal distortion that nothing exists for them beyond the antithesis between bourgeois revolution and proletarian revolution—and even this antithesis they interpret in an extremely lifeless way.

If we take the revolutions of the twentieth century as examples, we shall, of course, have to admit that the Portuguese and the Turkish revolutions are both bourgeois revolutions. Neither of them, however, is a “people’s” revolution, inasmuch as in neither does the mass of the people, its enormous majority, come out actively, independently, with its own economic and political demands to any noticeable degree. On the contrary, although the Russian bourgeois revolution of 1905-07 displayed no such “brilliant” successes as at times fell to the lot of the Portuguese and Turkish revolutions, it was undoubtedly a “real people’s” revolution, since the mass of the people, the majority of them, the very “lowest” social strata, crushed by oppression and exploitation, rose independently and placed on the entire course of the revolution the impress of *their* demands, of *their* attempts to

build in their own way a new society in place of the old society that was being destroyed.

In Europe, in 1871, there was not a single country on the Continent in which the proletariat constituted the majority of the people. A "people's" revolution, one that actually swept the majority into its stream, could be such only if it embraced both the proletariat and the peasantry. These two classes then constituted the "people." These two classes are united by the fact that the "bureaucratic-military state machine" oppresses, crushes, exploits them. *To smash* this machine, *to break it up*—this is truly in the interest of the "people," of the majority of them, of the workers and most of the peasants, this is "the preliminary condition" for a free alliance between the poorest peasants and the proletarians, whereas without such an alliance democracy is unstable and socialist transformation is impossible.

As is well known, the Paris Commune was indeed working its way toward such an alliance, although it did not reach its goal owing to a number of circumstances, internal and external.

Consequently, in speaking of a "real people's revolution," Marx, without in the least forgetting the peculiar characteristics of the petty bourgeoisie (he spoke a great deal about them and often), took strict account of the actual balance of class forces in the majority of Continental countries in Europe in 1871. On the other hand, he stated that the "smashing" of the state machine is required by the interests of both the workers and the peasants, that it unites them, that it faces them with the common task of removing the "parasite" and of replacing it by something new.

By what exactly?

Written in August-September 1917

Published as a separate pamphlet in 1918

Vol. 25, pp. 385-89

"LEFT" CHILDISHNESS AND THE PETTY-BOURGEOIS MENTALITY

(Excerpt)

The following circumstance is also exceedingly instructive.

When we argued in the Central Executive Committee with Comrade Bukharin, he remarked, among other things, that on the issue of high salaries for specialists "we" (evidently "we," the "Left Communists"¹¹³) are "to the right of Lenin," for we see no departure from principles here, if we bear in mind Marx's words that under certain circumstances it would be most expedient for the working class to "buy out the whole lot of them" (the whole lot of capitalists, i.e., to *buy out* from the bourgeoisie the land, mills, factories and other means of production).

This exceedingly interesting remark reveals firstly that Bukharin stands head and shoulders above the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and the anarchists, that he is not at all hopelessly immersed in phrases, but on the contrary is trying to ponder the *concrete* difficulties of the transition—the tortuous and arduous transition—from capitalism to socialism.

Secondly, this remark reveals a still more obvious mistake of Bukharin's.

Indeed, ponder over Marx's idea.

He was dealing with Britain of the seventies of last century, with the culminating period of pre-monopoly

capitalism, with a country where a militarist clique and a bureaucracy least existed, where most opportunity existed of winning socialism "peacefully," in the sense of the workers' "buying out" the bourgeoisie. And Marx said: under certain circumstances the workers will not at all refuse to buy out the bourgeoisie. Marx did not tie his hands—or those of the future leaders of the socialist revolution—as to the forms, ways and means of bringing about the revolution, since he understood perfectly well what a host of new problems would then arise, that the whole situation would change in the course of the revolution, that it would change *frequently* and *considerably* in the course of the revolution.

Well, in Soviet Russia, *after* the capture of power by the proletariat, *after* the military and sabotaging resistance of the exploiters has been suppressed, is it not obvious that *some* conditions have arisen similar in type to those that might have arisen in Britain half a century ago had a peaceful transition to socialism begun there at that time? The submission of the capitalists to the workers in Britain could then have been secured by the following circumstances: (1) the complete predominance of the workers, the proletarians, among the population owing to the absence of a peasantry (in Britain in the seventies there were signs fostering the hope that socialism would make exceedingly rapid progress among the rural workers); (2) the excellent state of trade-union organization of the proletariat (at that time Britain was the leading country in this respect); (3) the relatively high cultural level of the proletariat trained by the century-old development of political liberty; (4) the long habit of Britain's excellently organized capitalists—at that time they were the best organized capitalists in the world (now they have lost that primacy to the Germans)—of settling political and economic problems by compromise. It was these conditions that enabled the idea to arise then that the *peace-*

ful submission of Britain's capitalists to its workers was possible.

In our country this submission is ensured at the present moment by certain fundamental premises (the victory in October and the suppression, from October to February, of the military and sabotaging resistance of the capitalists). In our country, *instead of* the complete predominance of the workers, the proletarians, among the population, and of their high level of organization, a factor of victory was the support received by the proletarians from the poor and rapidly ruined peasantry. In our country, finally, there is no high cultural level nor habit of compromise. If we think over these concrete conditions it will be clear that we can and must now *combine* methods of ruthless punishment* of capitalists who are uncultured, who will not agree to any "state capitalism," who will not entertain any idea of compromise, and who continue to obstruct the measures of the Soviets by their speculation, bribery of the poor, etc.,—with *methods of compromise* with, or of buying out, the cultured capitalists, who agree to "state capitalism," are capable of carrying it into life, and are useful to the proletariat as clever and experienced organizers of *huge* enterprises that really cater for tens of millions of people.

Bukharin is a superbly educated Marxist economist. That is why he remembered that Marx was profoundly right in teaching the workers that it was important to re-

* Here too we must look the truth in the face: we still have little of the ruthlessness necessary for the success of socialism, and little not for lack of determination. We have enough determination. But we lack the ability to *catch* with sufficient speed sufficient speculators, marauders and capitalists—those who violate the measures of the Soviets. For this "ability" only comes with the organization of accounting and control! Secondly, the courts lack sufficient firmness; instead of shooting grafters, they sentence them to six months' imprisonment. Both these shortcomings of ours spring from the same social root: the influence of the vast petty-bourgeois mass, its spinelessness.

tain the organization of production on the biggest scale for the very purpose of facilitating the transition to socialism, and that it was perfectly permissible to entertain the idea of *paying the capitalists well*, of buying them out, *if* (as an exception: Britain was then an exception) circumstances should take the turn of constraining the capitalists to submit peacefully and pass on to socialism in cultured, organized fashion, on the basis of being bought out.

But Bukharin fell into error because he did not ponder the concrete situation peculiar to Russia at the present moment, a quite exceptional moment, when we, the proletariat of Russia, are *ahead* of all the Britains or Germanys you like as to our political system, the strength of the workers' political power, while at the same time are *behind* the most backward of the West-European countries as to the organization of a decently working state capitalism, as to level of culture, degree of readiness in respect of material production to "introduce" socialism. Is it not clear that this peculiar situation gives rise at the present moment to the need for a peculiar kind of "buying out," one that the workers will have to propose to the most cultured, most talented, organizationally most capable capitalists who are ready to enter the service of the Soviets and conscientiously help to get "state" production going on a large and huge scale? Is it not clear that the situation being such a peculiar one, we must strive to avoid two kinds of mistakes, each of which is petty-bourgeois in its own way? On the one hand, it would be an irreparable mistake to declare that once it is admitted that our economic "forces" and political strength do not correspond, "it follows" that we should not have taken power. That is the line of reasoning of "men who live in shells";¹¹⁴ they forget that "correspondence" never will occur, that it cannot occur in the development of nature, or in the development of society, that only as a result of a number of attempts—each one of which, taken separate-

ly, will be one-sided, will suffer from a certain non-correspondence—will an integral socialism arise from the revolutionary co-operation of the proletarians of *all* countries.

On the other hand, it would be an obvious mistake to give a free hand to ranters and phrase-mongers, who allow their "flaming" revolutionary spirit to run away with them but are incapable of revolutionary work that is persistent, considered, carefully weighed, and takes account of the most difficult transitions.

Dated May 5, 1918

Published in May 1918 in
Pravda

Vol. 27, pp. 309-12

REPLY TO THE DEBATE ON THE REPORT
ON THE CURRENT SITUATION*

(Excerpts)

In 1914 the International died because the workers of all countries united with their national bourgeoisie and split among themselves. Now this split is coming to an end. Perhaps you have read recently that in Britain the Scottish school-teacher and trade-unionist McLean has been sentenced a second time, for a term of five years—the first time he got eighteen months for exposing the war and speaking of the criminal nature of British imperialism. By the time he was released, the Soviet Government already had its representative in Britain in the person of Litvinov, who immediately appointed McLean as a Consul, a representative of the Soviet Russian Federative Republic in Britain. The Scottish workers greeted this appointment with enthusiasm. The British Government prosecuted McLean for a second time, not only as a Scottish school-teacher, but also as a Consul of the Federative Soviet Republic. McLean is in prison because he came out openly as a representative of our government, yet we have never seen this man, he has never belonged to our Party, he is the beloved leader of the Scottish workers, but we joined with him, the Russian and Scottish workers united against the British Government despite the fact that it

* Delivered at the Fourth Conference of Moscow Trade Unions and Factory Committees on June 28, 1918.—Ed.

is buying the Czechoslovaks¹¹⁵ and is furiously pursuing a policy of dragging the Russian Republic into the war. Here is proof that in all countries, regardless of their position in the war—both in Germany, which is warring against us, and in Britain, which wants to get hold of Baghdad and finish off the strangling of Turkey—the workers make common cause with the Russian Bolsheviks, with the Russian Bolshevik revolution.

Somebody has handed up a slip of paper with the following question: "Why are counter-revolutionary newspapers still appearing?" One of the reasons is that among the printing workers, too, there are elements who are bribed by the bourgeoisie. (*Noise. Shouts: "It's not true!"*) You can shout as much as you like, but you won't stop me from telling the truth, which all the workers know and which I have just begun to explain. When a worker has a high opinion of his private earnings in the bourgeois press, when he says: "I want to maintain the high earnings I get for helping the bourgeoisie to sell poison, for instilling poison into the people," then I say: such workers are as good as bribed by the bourgeoisie (*applause*), not in the sense that any individual one of them has been hired. I do not mean it in that sense, but in the sense in which all Marxists have spoken against British workers who conclude alliances with their capitalists. All of you who have read trade-union literature know that in that country not only do trade unions exist, but there are joint bodies which unite the workers and the capitalists of specific trades for the purpose of raising prices, of plundering everybody else. All Marxists, all Socialists in all countries, point their fingers at such specimens and, beginning with Marx and Engels, have talked about workers bribed by the bourgeoisie due to lack of class-consciousness or pursuit of craft interests. They have sold their birthright, the right to socialist revolution, by ally-

ing themselves with their capitalists against the vast majority of the workers and oppressed toiling strata in their own countries, against their own class. The same thing is going on in our country. When we find groups of workers here and there who say: "What concern is it of ours that what we set up is opium, poison, nothing but lies and provocation? I get my high wages and don't care a damn about other people." Such workers we shall brand; such workers we have always told, and told openly, in all our literature, that they are abandoning the working class and deserting to the bourgeoisie. (*Applause.*)

Published in 1918 in the official report of the Conference

Vol. 27, pp. 444-46

**SPEECH AT A JOINT MEETING OF THE ALL-RUSSIAN
CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, THE MOSCOW
SOVIET, AND MOSCOW FACTORY COMMITTEES AND
TRADE UNIONS**

July 29, 1918

(*Excerpt*)

(*Applause, which grows to an ovation.*) Comrades, on more than one occasion we have had, in the Party press, in Soviet institutions, and in our propaganda among the masses, to point out that the period before the new harvest is a most difficult, severe and critical one for the socialist revolution begun in Russia. Now, I think, we must say that we have reached the culminating point of this critical situation. This has happened because those who support an imperialist peace, who support the imperialist countries, on the one hand, and those who support the Soviet Socialist Republic, on the other, have now fully and definitely taken sides. First of all it should be said that from the military angle the Soviet Republic's position has become quite clear only now. Many people at first regarded the Czechoslovak revolt as an episode among the rebellions of the counter-revolution. We attached insufficient weight to the press reports about the participation of British and French capital, of the British and French imperialists, in this revolt. We should now recall how events have developed at Murmansk, among the troops in Siberia, and in the Kuban Region, how the Brit-

ish and French, in association with the Czechoslovaks, the British bourgeoisie directly participating, have tried to overthrow the Soviets. All these facts now show that the Czechoslovak movement was one of the links designed long ago to strangle Soviet Russia by a systematic policy of the British and French imperialists aimed at drawing Russia back into the ring of imperialist wars. This crisis must now be settled by the broad masses of Soviet Russia, since it confronts us now as a fight to safeguard the Soviet Socialist Republic not only against the Czechoslovaks, as against a counter-revolutionary outbreak, not only against counter-revolutionary outbreaks in general, but as a fight against the onslaught of the entire imperialist world.

I would like first of all to remind you that the direct and immediate participation of British and French imperialism in the Czechoslovak revolt has long been established; I will remind you of the article published on June 28 in *Průkopník Svobody* (*Banner of Freedom*), central organ of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, and reproduced in our press:

"On March 7 a Department of the National Council received a first contribution from the French consul amounting to 3 million rubles.

"The money was handed to a Mr. Šíp, an official of the Department of the National Council.

"On March 9 the same Mr. Šíp was paid 2 millions more; on March 25 Šíp received 1 million, on March 26 Mr. Bohumil Čermák, vice-chairman of the National Council, received 1 million, and on April 3 Mr. Šíp again received 1 million.

"In all, between March 7 and April 4, the French consul paid the Department of the National Council 8 millions.

"On unspecified dates the following payments were made: 1 million to Mr. Šíp, 1 million to Mr. Bohumil Čermák, and again 1 million to Mr. Šíp.

"In addition, the sum of 188,000 rubles was paid to a person unknown. Total 3,188,000. Added to the 8 millions mentioned above, we get a total of 11,188,000 paid by the French Government to the Department of the National Council.

"A sum of 80,000 pounds sterling was received by the Department from the British consul. Thus, from March 7 to the day of the revolt the leaders of the National Czech Council received from the French and British governments nearly 15 millions, for which sum the Czechoslovak army was sold to the French and British imperialists."

Of course, the majority of you read that item in the press at the time; of course, we never doubted that the British and French imperialists and financiers would move heaven and earth to overthrow the Soviet system, to burden it with all sorts of difficulties. At that time, however, we did not yet have before us the whole chain of events showing that what we are dealing with here is a systematic and steadfast, military and financial counter-revolutionary campaign against the Soviet Republic, apparently planned long ago and prepared for months by all the representatives of Anglo-French imperialism. Now, when we take the events as a whole, when we put the Czechoslovak counter-revolutionary movement alongside the landing of troops at Murmansk, where, as we know, the British disembarked over 10,000 men, and, on the pretext of protecting Murmansk have in fact advanced and occupied Kem and Soroki, moved east of Soroki, and proceeded to shoot our Soviet officials; when we read in the newspapers that many thousand railway and other workers of the Far North are fleeing from these saviours and liberators, or to speak bluntly, from these new imperialist marauders who are tearing Russia to pieces from the other end—when we put all these facts together, the general connection between the events becomes clear to us. At the same time we have recently obtained fresh confirmation of the real character of the Anglo-French offensive against Russia.

For geographical reasons, if for no others, it is clear that the form of this imperialist offensive against Russia cannot be the same as that in Germany. There is no common frontier with Russia, as in the case of Germany, nor is there the same number of troops. The predominantly

colonial and naval character of Britain's armed might has long, for many decades, compelled the British in their wars of conquest to attack differently, to make it their main objective to cut off the country they are attacking from its sources of supply, and to prefer the method of strangulation, in the guise of rendering assistance, to the method of forthright, direct, sharp, incisive military violence. From information we have lately received it appears that Anglo-French imperialism undoubtedly assisted Alexeyev, who has long been known to the Russian soldiers and workers and who recently captured the village of Tikhoretskaya. There the uprising has assumed more definite forms, and again, apparently because Anglo-French imperialism had a hand in it.

Finally, yesterday we got the news that Anglo-French imperialism has succeeded in making a very effective move in Baku. They have managed to secure a majority of about 30 votes in the Baku Soviet against our Party, against the Bolsheviks and those Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, unfortunately very few in number, who have not followed the Moscow Left S.R.s' despicable adventure and gross treachery,¹¹⁶ but have remained on the side of the Soviets against imperialism and war. It is against this core, loyal to the Soviet Government, which has hitherto had a majority in the Baku Soviet, that the Anglo-French imperialists have managed this time to secure a majority of 30 votes owing to the bulk of the Dashnaktsutyun Party,¹¹⁷ the Armenian semi-socialists, having gone against us and deserted to them. (*Reads telegram*):

"On July 26 the Ajikabul detachment, by order of People's Commissar Korganov, withdrew from Ajikabul to positions near Alyat. After the withdrawal of the Shemakha detachment from Shemakha and Maraza, the enemy started an offensive along the valley of the River Pirsagat.¹¹⁸ At the village of Kubaly the first clash with the vanguard took place.

"At the same time a large cavalry unit began to move from the Kura in the south towards Pirsagat station. In this situation, to hold Ajikabul station would have required all available forces to be

stretched in three directions: westward of Ajikabul and to the north and south of Navagi-Pirsagat valley. Such a long front would have deprived us of reserves and in the absence of cavalry would have prevented us from dealing a blow to the enemy, and had the front been breached in the north or south, would have placed the Ajikabul group in a difficult position. Because of this and with a view to maintaining the troops' strength, the order was given for the Ajikabul detachment to withdraw to the Alyat positions. The withdrawal was accomplished in perfect order. Important track and Ajikabul station structures, and kerosene and oil cisterns were blown up. In Daghestan the enemy is becoming active in connection with the general offensive. On July 24 the enemy attacked in four directions with large troop concentrations. After twenty-four hours of fighting we occupied the trenches of the enemy, who dispersed in the woods. Night prevented further pursuit. On July 24 we were informed from Shura of battles in our favour, the scene of operations being the city outskirts. The enemy are putting up a stubborn and organized fight, their forces being commanded by former Daghestan officers. Daghestan peasants are taking an active part in the fighting near Shura.

"The Right-wing parties in Baku have raised their heads and have been campaigning energetically for the British to be called in. This agitation is strongly supported by the army command and is being spread among the front-line troops. Pro-British propaganda has disorganized the army. Of late the idea of seeking British aid has become very popular among the despairing, worn-out masses.

"Under the influence of the lying, provocative activity of the Right-wing parties, the Caspian naval flotilla has adopted several contradictory resolutions about the British. Deceived by British hirelings and volunteer agents it has until very recently blindly believed in British support being sincere.

"The latest reports say that the British are advancing in Persia and have occupied Resht (Gilan). In Resht, the British fought for four days against Kuchuk-Khan and the German-Turkish bands that had joined him, headed by the Mussavatists who had fled from Baku. After the battle of Resht the British asked for our help, but our representatives in Persia refused it. The British were victorious in Resht. But they have almost no forces in Persia. We have learned that in Enzeli fifty men is all they have. They are in need of petrol and offer us automobiles for it. They cannot advance without petrol.

"On July 25 a second meeting of the Soviet of Deputies was held to discuss the political and military situation, and the Right-wing parties raised the question of the British. Comrade Shaumyan, Commissar Extraordinary for the Caucasus, referring to the resolution passed by the Fifth Congress of Soviets and to Stalin's telegram on behalf of the Central Council of People's Commissars, declared that

it was impermissible to invite the British and demanded that the question of inviting them be withdrawn from the agenda. Comrade Shaumyan's demand was rejected by an insignificant majority, whereupon Comrade Shaumyan, as representative of the central authorities, strongly protested. The report of the delegates who had gone to the front was then heard. By a majority of 259, the votes of the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, Right Dashnaks and Mensheviks, against 236, the votes of the Bolsheviks, Left Socialist-Revolutionaries, and Left Dashnaks, a resolution was passed to invite the British and set up a government consisting of representatives of all Soviet parties recognizing the authority of the Council of People's Commissars. The resolution was severely condemned by the Left sector. Shaumyan declared that he considered the decision adopted to be a shameful betrayal of, and black ingratitude to, the workers and peasants of Russia, and that as representative of the central authorities he disclaimed all responsibility for it. It was announced on behalf of the Bolshevik group, the Left S.-R.s, and the Left Dashnak group that they would not enter the coalition government and that the Council of People's Commissars would resign. Comrade Shaumyan announced on behalf of the three Left groups that a government which, by inviting the British imperialists, actually broke with the Soviets of Russia, would get no support from Soviet Russia. As a result of its treacherous policy, the local Soviet of Deputies, by inviting the British, has lost Russia and the parties supporting the Soviets.

"The Right-wing parties are in a state of utter consternation owing to the decision of the Council of People's Commissars to resign. Following the receipt of news about the situation that has arisen, the mood in the districts and at the front has undergone a sharp change. The sailors realize that they have actually been deceived by the traitors, who aim to break with Russia and destroy Soviet rule. The masses are changing their attitude to the British. Yesterday a special meeting of the Executive Committee was held in connection with the resignation of the Council of People's Commissars. It was decided that all People's Commissars would remain at their posts and would carry on the work they had been doing previously pending a decision of the question of power at a meeting of the Soviet on July 31. The Executive Committee has resolved to take urgent measures to combat the ripening counter-revolution. The enemy are doing their work under cover of the Anglo-French parties. Press Bureau of the Baku Council of People's Commissars."

You will have observed again and again that there are groups in the Soviets here which call themselves Socialists, but have never severed their connections with the

bourgeoisie. In Baku, also, such groups have declared this time in favour of inviting British troops to defend the city. We know only too well the meaning of such an invitation to the imperialist troops to protect the Soviet Republic. We know what sort of invitation was extended by the bourgeoisie, by some of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and by the Mensheviks. We know what sort of invitation was extended by the Menshevik leaders in Tiflis, in Georgia.

We can now say that the only party which did not invite the imperialists and did not enter into any rapacious alliance with them, but only withdrew when the oppressors took the offensive, was the Bolshevik, Communist Party. (*Applause.*) We know that in the Caucasus the position of our communist comrades has been particularly difficult, because on all sides they have been betrayed by the Mensheviks, who have concluded a direct alliance with the German imperialists, on the pretext, of course, of defending Georgia's independence.

You all know very well that that Georgian independence has turned into the purest humbug. Actually it is the occupation and complete seizure of Georgia by the German imperialists, an alliance of German bayonets and the Menshevik government against the Bolshevik workers and peasants. Therefore, our Baku comrades have been a thousand times right in saying to themselves, while not closing their eyes to the danger of the situation: we would never be against peace with an imperialist power on condition of ceding them part of our territory if this inflicted no damage upon us, did not involve our troops in an alliance with the oppressors' bayonets, and did not deprive us of the opportunity of continuing our transformative socialist activities.

If, however, the position is that inviting the British ostensibly to protect Baku means inviting a country which has already swallowed up all of Persia and which for long has been gathering its armed forces so as to seize the South Caucasus, i.e., means surrendering to Anglo-

French imperialism, we can say without a moment's doubt or hesitation that, difficult as the position of our Baku comrades may be, they have, in refusing to conclude such a peace, taken the only step worthy of those who are Socialists not in words but in deeds. Determined refusal to enter into any agreement with the Anglo-French imperialists is the only correct step the Baku comrades can take, since the imperialists cannot be invited without converting an independent socialist government, even though situated on isolated territory, into a slave of the imperialist war.

We therefore have not the slightest doubt about the significance of the Baku incident in the general course of events. Yesterday the news arrived that a number of Central Asian towns are in the throes of a counter-revolutionary uprising which is obviously supported by the British. Entrenched in India and having completely subjugated Afghanistan, they have long ago created a vantage-ground for themselves from which to extend their colonial possessions, to strangle nations, and to attack Soviet Russia. Well then, when we clearly perceive these separate links, the present military and strategic position of our republic assumes definite shape. Murmansk in the North, the Czechoslovak front in the East, Turkestan, Baku and Astrakhan in the South-East—we see that almost all the segments of the ring forged by Anglo-French imperialism are interconnected.

We now see perfectly well that the landlords, capitalists and kulaks, all of whom, of course, for reasons that are quite legitimate as far as they are concerned, are consumed with hatred for the Soviets, have taken action here too, adopting slightly different methods than the landlords, capitalists and kulaks have done in the Ukraine and in other localities isolated from Russia. Lackeys of Anglo-French imperialism that they are, they have stopped at nothing, doing all they possibly could against the Soviets. With their Russian forces alone they could

do nothing, and so they decided not to resort to speeches or manifestoes, in the way Messrs. the Martovs do, but employed weightier methods of struggle—military action. It is to this circumstance that your attention must be drawn most of all; it is upon this that we must concentrate all our agitation, all our propaganda, and, correspondingly, shift the centre of gravity of all our Soviet work.

The basic fact is that the imperialist forces of the other coalition are active now; not the German but the Anglo-French coalition, which has seized part of our territory and is basing itself on it. Whereas hitherto Russia's geographical position has prevented them from attacking our country directly, now the Anglo-French imperialists, who for four years have inundated the whole world with blood so as to gain global ascendancy, have gone a roundabout way and come right up to Russia with a view to strangling the Soviet Republic and to plunging it into the imperialist war. You know perfectly well, comrades, that ever since the October Revolution our chief aim has been to stop the imperialist war. But we have never entertained the illusion that international imperialism can be overthrown by the proletariat and the revolutionary masses of any single country, however heroic in spirit, however well organized and disciplined they may be. That can be done only by the concerted effort of the proletariat of all countries.

But what we have done is that in one country all connections have been broken with the capitalists of the whole world. Not a single thread connects, or ever will connect, our government with any imperialists at all, whatever course our revolution takes in the future. What we have done is that during the eight months we have been in power the revolutionary movement against imperialism has taken a tremendous step forward, and that in one of the principal centres of imperialism, in Germany, things developed in January of this year to the point of

an armed clash and the bloody suppression of that movement. We have done our revolutionary work as no revolutionary government has in any country, and have done it on an international, on a world scale. But we have not fooled ourselves into believing that we could achieve it by the efforts of one country. We have known that our efforts are inevitably leading to world revolution and that the war begun by the imperialist governments cannot be ended by these governments. It can only be ended by the efforts of the entire proletariat and it has been our task, as a proletarian Communist Party, in the period we have been in power, at a time when capitalist bourgeois rule has continued in the other countries—our immediate task has been, I repeat, to retain this power, this torch of socialism, so that it might continue to shower as many sparks as possible upon the ever-growing conflagration of the socialist revolution.

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Vol. 28, pp. 1-8

SPEECH AT A MEETING OF THE WARSAW REVOLUTIONARY REGIMENT

August 2, 1918

NEWSPAPER REPORT

(Comrade Lenin's appearance in the hall is greeted with enthusiastic applause and the powerful strains of the "Internationale"). "I think," said Comrade Lenin, "that we, both Polish and Russian revolutionaries, are now burning with the one desire to do everything to defend the gains of the first mighty socialist revolution, which will inevitably be followed by a series of revolutions in other countries. Our difficulty is that we had to take action much earlier than the workers of the more cultured, more civilized countries.

"The world war was caused by the forces of international capital, of two coalitions of vultures. For four years the world has been flowing with blood, in order to settle which of these two vulturous imperialisms shall rule the globe. We feel and sense that this criminal war cannot end in victory for either one side or the other. With every passing day it is becoming increasingly clear that not the imperialists, but a victorious workers' revolution can end it. And the worse the position of the workers now becomes in all countries, the more ferociously proletarian free speech is persecuted, the more desperate are the bourgeoisie, for they cannot cope with the growing movement. We have for a time become separated from the main body of

the socialist army, who are full of hope as they watch us and say to their bourgeoisie: however much you vent your fury, we shall follow the Russian example and do what the Russian Bolsheviks have done."

"We wanted peace," continued Comrade Lenin. "It was just because Soviet Russia proposed peace to the whole world¹¹⁹ that in February German troops were flung against us. Now, however, we see with our own eyes that the one imperialism is no better than the other. Both of them have lied, and lie now, when they say they are waging a war of liberation. Just as robber Germany exposed itself with the utterly shameful Brest Peace,¹²⁰ so is Anglo-French capital doing now. The British and French are now making their last effort to draw us into the war. For 15 millions, through generals and other officers, they have now bought new slaves, the Czechoslovaks, with a view to involving them in the adventure of turning the Czechoslovak revolt into a Whiteguard-landlord movement. And strange to say, all this, it seems, is being done to 'defend' Russia. The 'freedom-loving' and 'fair' Britons oppress all and sundry, seize Murmansk, British cruisers come right up to Arkhangelsk and bombard the coastal batteries—all in order to 'defend' Russia. It is quite clear that they want to encircle Russia in a ring of imperialist plunderers and to crush it for having exposed and torn up their secret treaties.

"Our revolution has resulted in the workers of Britain and France indicting their governments. In Britain, where civil peace has prevailed and where the resistance of workers to socialism has been strongest, for they too have participated in plundering the colonies, the workers are now veering round and tearing up the civil peace with the bourgeoisie.

"The workers of France are condemning the policy of intervention in Russia's affairs. That is why the capitalists of these countries are staking their all.

"The fact of Soviet Russia's existence and vitality makes them furious.

"We know that the war is coming to an end; we know that they are not able to end it; we know that we have a reliable ally. We must therefore exert every energy, make a decisive effort. Either the rule of the kulaks, capitalists, and the Tsar, as was the case in the unsuccessful revolutions of the West, or the rule of the proletariat. Your job, as you go to the front, is above and most of all to remember that this war alone, the war of the oppressed and exploited against the violators and plunderers, is legitimate, just and sacred.

"An alliance is now being effected between the revolutionaries of different nations—something that the finest people have dreamt of; a real alliance of workers, and not of intellectual dreamers.

"In overcoming national hatred and mistrust lies the guarantee of victory.

"The great honour has befallen you of upholding sacred ideas arms in hand, and by fighting along with your front-line enemies of yesterday—Germans, Austrians, and Hungarians, of giving practical effect to the international brotherhood of nations.

"And, comrades, I am confident that if you muster all your military forces into a mighty international Red Army, and hurl these iron battalions against the exploiters, against the oppressors, against the reactionary thugs of the whole world, making 'Victory or Death!' your battle-cry—no imperialist force will hold out against us!" (*The concluding words of the beloved leader were drowned in prolonged and stormy applause.*)

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Vol. 28, pp. 21-23

LETTER TO THE AMERICAN WORKERS

(Excerpt)

But the four years of the imperialist slaughter of nations have not passed in vain. The deception of the peoples by the blackguards of both robber groups, British and German, has been utterly exposed by indisputable and obvious facts. The results of four years of war have revealed the general law of capitalism as applied to war between robbers for the division of the spoils: the richest and strongest have profited and plundered most; the weakest have been utterly robbed, rent, crushed and strangled.

The British imperialist robbers were the strongest as regards the number of "colonial slaves." The British capitalists have not lost an inch of "their" territory (i.e., territory they have plundered in the course of centuries), but they have seized all the German colonies in Africa, they have seized Mesopotamia and Palestine, they have secured a stranglehold on Greece, and have begun to plunder Russia.

The German imperialist robbers were the strongest as regards the organization and discipline of "their" armies, but weaker in regard to colonies. They have lost all their colonies, but they have plundered half of Europe and have throttled the largest number of small countries and weak nations. What a great war of "liberation" on both sides! How well the robbers of both groups, the Anglo-French and the German capitalists, together with their lackeys, the social-chauvinists, i.e., the Socialists who went over

to the side of "their own" bourgeoisie, have "defended their country!"

The American multimillionaires were, perhaps, richer than all, and geographically the most secure. They have profited more than all the rest. They have converted all, even the richest countries, into their tributaries. They have plundered hundreds of milliards of dollars. And every dollar is stained with filth: the filthy secret treaties between Britain and her "allies," between Germany and her vassals, treaties for the division of the spoils, treaties of mutual "aid" in oppressing the workers and persecuting the internationalist Socialists. Every dollar is stained with the filth of "profitable" war contracts, which in every country have made the rich richer and the poor poorer. And every dollar is stained with blood—from the ocean of blood shed by the ten million killed and twenty million maimed in the great, noble, liberating and holy war to decide whether the British or the German robbers are to get most of the spoils, whether the British or the German thugs are to be *foremost* in throttling the weak nations all over the world.

While the German robbers have broken the record in war atrocities, the British have broken the record not only in the number of colonies they have seized, but also in the subtlety of their disgusting hypocrisy. This very day, the Anglo-French and American bourgeois newspapers are spreading lies and slander about Russia in millions and millions of copies, and are hypocritically justifying their predatory campaign against her on the plea that they want to "protect" Russia from the Germans!

It does not require many words to refute this despicable and hideous lie; it is sufficient to point to one well-known fact. When the Russian workers overthrew their imperialist government in October 1917, the Soviet government, the government of the revolutionary workers and peasants, openly proposed a just peace, a peace without annexations or indemnities, a peace that fully guaranteed

equal rights to all nations—and it proposed such a peace to *all* the belligerent countries.

It was the Anglo-French and the American bourgeoisie who refused to accept our proposal; it was they who refused to even talk to us about a general peace! It was *they* who betrayed the interests of all nations; it is they who have prolonged the imperialist slaughter!

It was they who, banking on dragging Russia into the imperialist war again, refused to take part in peace negotiations and thereby gave a free hand to the no less predatory German capitalists who imposed upon Russia the annexationist and coercive Brest Peace!

It is difficult to imagine a more disgusting piece of hypocrisy than the way the Anglo-French and American bourgeoisie are now “blaming” us *for* the Brest Peace. The very capitalists of the countries which could have turned the Brest negotiations into general negotiations for a general peace are now our “accusers!” The Anglo-French imperialist vultures who have profited from the plunder of colonies and from the slaughter of peoples, have prolonged the war for nearly a whole year since Brest, and yet they “accuse” *us*, the Bolsheviks, who proposed a just peace to all countries, they accuse *us*, who tore up, published and exposed to public disgrace the secret criminal treaties concluded between the ex-tsar and the Anglo-French capitalists.

The workers of the whole world, no matter what country they live in, greet us, sympathize with us, applaud us for having broken the iron shackles of imperialist ties, of filthy imperialist treaties, the chains of imperialism—for having broken through to freedom, making the heaviest sacrifices to do so—for having, as a socialist republic, although torn and plundered by the imperialists, got *out* of the imperialist war and raised the banner of peace, the banner of socialism, in sight of the whole world.

It is not surprising that the international imperialist gang hate us for this, that they “accuse” us, that all the

lackeys of the imperialists, including our Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, also “accuse” us. The hatred these watchdogs of imperialism express for the Bolsheviks, and the sympathy of the class-conscious workers of all countries convince us more than ever of the justice of our cause.

He is no Socialist who fails to understand that for the sake of achieving victory over the bourgeoisie, for the sake of securing the transfer of power to the workers, for the sake of *starting* the international proletarian revolution, one should and must have *no* hesitation in making the heaviest sacrifices, including the sacrifice of part of one’s territory, the sacrifice of suffering heavy defeats at the hands of imperialism. He is no Socialist who has not proved in *deeds* his readiness to agree to “his” country making the greatest sacrifices so long as the cause of the socialist revolution really progresses.

For the sake of “their” cause, that is, for the sake of winning world hegemony, the imperialists of Britain and Germany have not stopped at utterly ruining and throttling a whole number of countries, from Belgium and Serbia to Palestine and Mesopotamia. Well, must the Socialists for the sake of “their” cause, for the sake of liberating the working people of the whole world from the yoke of capital, for the sake of winning universal lasting peace, wait until a path is found that involves no sacrifice? Must they fear to begin battle until easy victory is “guaranteed,” must they place the security and integrity of “their,” bourgeois created, “fatherland” above the interests of the world socialist revolution? Thrice worthy of contempt are those blackguards in the international socialist movement, those servile followers of bourgeois morality who think that way.

The Anglo-French and American imperialist vultures “accuse” us of concluding an “agreement” with German imperialism. What hypocrites! What scoundrels they are to slander the workers’ government, while shivering with

fear at the sympathy displayed towards us by the workers of "their" own countries! But their hypocrisy will be exposed. They pretend not to see the difference between an agreement concluded by "Socialists" with the bourgeoisie (their own or foreign) *against the workers*, against the working people, and an agreement concluded *for the protection* of the workers who have defeated their bourgeoisie, concluded with the bourgeoisie of one national colour *against the bourgeoisie* of another colour in order that the proletariat may take advantage of the contradictions between the different groups of the bourgeoisie.

Actually, every European sees this difference very well, and, as I shall show in a moment, the American people have had a particularly striking "experience" of it in their own history. There are agreements and agreements, there are *fagots et fagots*, as the French say.

When in February 1918 the German imperialist vultures hurled their troops against unarmed, demobilized Russia, which relied on the international solidarity of the proletariat before the international revolution had fully matured, I did not hesitate for a moment to enter into an "agreement" with the French monarchists. The French Captain Sadoul, who, in words, sympathized with the Bolsheviks, but actually was a loyal and faithful servant of French imperialism, brought the French officer de Lubersac to see me. "I am a monarchist. My only purpose is to secure the defeat of Germany," de Lubersac declared to me. "That goes without saying (*cela va sans dire*)," I replied. But that did not in the least prevent me from entering into an "agreement" with de Lubersac concerning services that French army officers, explosive experts, were ready to render us by blowing up railway tracks in order to hinder the German invasion. That was an example of an "agreement" of which every class-conscious worker will approve, an agreement in the interests of socialism. The French monarchist and I shook hands, although we knew that each of us would willingly hang his "partner."

But for a time our interests coincided. Against the advancing rapacious Germans, *we*, in the interests of the Russian and the international socialist revolution, utilized the equally rapacious counter-interests of *other* imperialists. In this way we served the interests of the working class of Russia and of other countries, we strengthened the proletariat and weakened the bourgeoisie of the whole world, we resorted to what is most legitimate and obligatory in *every* war—manoeuvring, zigzagging, retreating in anticipation of the moment when the rapidly maturing proletarian revolution in a number of advanced countries *comes to a head*.

And however much the Anglo-French and American imperialist sharks fume with rage, however much they slander us, however many millions they spend on bribing the Right Socialist-Revolutionary, Menshevik and other social-patriotic newspapers, *I will not hesitate a second* to enter into a *similar* "agreement" with the German imperialist vultures if an attack upon Russia by Anglo-French troops calls for it. And I know perfectly well that my tactics will be approved by the class-conscious proletariat of Russia, Germany, France, Britain, America—in short, of the whole civilized world. Such tactics will ease the task of the socialist revolution, will hasten its advent, will weaken the international bourgeoisie, will strengthen the position of the working class engaged in vanquishing them.

The American people employed these tactics long ago to the advantage of their revolution. When they waged their great war of liberation against the British oppressors they also were faced with the French and the Spanish oppressors, to whom part of what is now the United States of North America belonged. In their arduous war for freedom, the American people also entered into "agreements" with some of their oppressors against others, for the purpose of weakening the oppressors and of strengthening those who were waging a revolutionary struggle

against oppression, for the purpose of serving the interests of the oppressed *masses*. The American people took advantage of the strife between the French, the Spanish and the British; sometimes they even fought along with the forces of the French and Spanish oppressors against the British oppressors; first they vanquished the British and then freed themselves (partly by redemption) from the French and the Spanish.

Historical action is not the pavement of the Nevsky Prospekt, said the great Russian revolutionary Chernyshevsky.¹²¹ Anybody who "allows" of proletarian revolution only "on condition" that it proceeds easily and smoothly, that combined action by the proletarians of different countries takes place straight away, that a guarantee against defeats is given in advance, that the road of the revolution is wide, free and straight, that it will not be necessary at times during the march to victory to make the heaviest sacrifices, to "bide one's time in a beleaguered fortress," or to make one's way along extremely narrow, impassable, winding and dangerous mountain tracks—such a one is no revolutionary, has not freed himself from the pedantry of the bourgeois intelligentsia, will in fact be found to be constantly slipping into the camp of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, just as did our Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and even (though less frequently) Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.

Dated August 20, 1918

Pravda, No. 178 August 22,
1918

Vol. 28, pp. 45-50

SPEECH AT A MEETING IN THE POLYTECHNICAL MUSEUM

August 23, 1918

(Excerpt)

(*Stormy applause.*) What is our programme? To win socialism. At the present stage of the world war there is no way out of it except by the victory of socialism. But many people do not understand this. Now the majority of mankind are against the bloody slaughter, but cannot understand that it is directly connected with the capitalist system. The horrors of the present war are evident even to the bourgeoisie, but they are not the ones to connect the end of the war with the end of the capitalist system. . . . This main idea, however, has always distinguished the Bolsheviks and revolutionary Socialists of all other countries from those who want to bring peace on earth while retaining the capitalist system inviolate.

Why are wars waged? We know that most wars have been waged for the interests of dynasties, and have been called dynastic wars. But sometimes wars have been waged for the interests of the oppressed. Spartacus set a war going in defence of an enslaved class. Wars of the same kind were waged in the epoch of colonial oppression, which has not ceased to this day; they were waged in the epoch of slavery, etc. These were just wars, and cannot be condemned.

When, however, we speak of the present European war and condemn it, we do so only because it is waged by an oppressing class.

What are the aims of the present war? If we are to believe the diplomats in all countries, it is being waged by France and Britain in defence of small nationalities against barbarians, the German Huns; by Germany it is being waged against Cossack barbarians who are threatening the cultured German people, and in defence of the fatherland against enemies attacking it.

But we know that this war was prepared, drew ever closer, and was inevitable. It was just as inevitable as war is between the United States and Japan. What made it inevitable?

The fact that capitalism has concentrated the world's wealth in the hands of individual states, has divided up the earth to the last bit. Any further division, any further enrichment can only take place at the expense of others, by one state gaining at the expense of another. Force alone can decide the issue—hence war among the global vultures became inevitable.

Till now two principal concerns have headed the present war—Britain and Germany. Britain was the strongest colonial country. Although Britain's own population is not more than 40 millions, the population of its colonies exceeds 400 millions. Since distant times, by right of might, it has seized the colonies of others, seized enormous territory, and benefited by their exploitation. Economically, however, it has fallen behind Germany during the past fifty years. The industry of Germany has outstripped that of Britain. Large-scale state capitalism has combined in Germany with the bureaucracy, and Germany has beaten the record.

The contest for supremacy between these two giants could not be decided except by force.

Time was when Britain, by right of might, seized lands from Holland, Portugal, etc.; today, however, Germany has

come on the scene and declared that its turn has come to get rich at somebody else's expense.

That is the issue: it is a fight to divide the world between the strongest. And since both sides have capital running into hundreds of millions, the fight between them has become world-wide.

We know how many secret crimes have been perpetrated during this war. The secret treaties we have published have proved that the phrases employed to explain why war was being waged were nothing but empty words, and that all states, including Russia, were bound by filthy treaties whereby they sought enrichment at the expense of the small and weak nations. As a result, the strong have become still richer; the weak have been crushed.

Individuals cannot be accused of having started the war. It is wrong to charge kings and tsars with having created the present shambles—it was capital that did so. Capitalism has reached a deadlock. This deadlock is nothing but imperialism, which has dictated war among rivals all over the world.

When they declared war and said they did so to liberate the small nations it was the biggest of lies. Both vultures stand there and continue to cast bloodthirsty glances at each other, while near by quite a number of small nations lie crushed.

First published in full in 1926

Vol. 28, pp. 61-63

**SPEECH AT A
PRESNYA DISTRICT WORKERS' CONFERENCE**

December 14, 1918

(Excerpt)

No matter how much the press in Britain and France have tried to hide the truth, it is now forcing its way into the open. The workers feel and understand that the revolution in Russia is their revolution, a workers', socialist revolution. And even in France and Britain we now witness a movement among the workers with the watch-words: "Withdraw the troops from Russia!", "Those who make war on Russia are criminals!" In London the Socialists recently held a meeting in Albert Hall. Despite all the efforts of the British Government to prevent the truth leaking out, we learn that the demand "Withdraw the troops from Russia!" was raised at the meeting, and all the Labour leaders stated that the British Government's policy was one of robbery and violence. We also learn that McLean—he used to be a teacher in Scotland—called upon the workers of the most industrial parts of Britain to strike, declaring that the war was a war of plunder. They imprisoned him at the time. Then he was imprisoned a second time. But when the revolutionary movement broke out in Europe, McLean was released, and he was nominated for a parliamentary seat in Glasgow, one of the largest cities in the North of England and Scotland. This shows that the British labour movement with its rev-

olutionary demands is becoming stronger and stronger. The British Government has been compelled to free McLean, its bitterest enemy, a man who calls himself a British Bolshevik.

In France, where the workers are still in the grip of chauvinism, where people think that the war is only being waged to defend their country, revolutionary sentiments are growing. You know that now, when Britain and France have beaten the Germans, they have presented them with terms a hundred times severer¹²² than the terms of the Brest Peace. Revolution in Europe is now becoming a reality. The Allies boasted that they were bringing Germany release from the Kaiser and militarism, but they have sunk to playing the part performed by Russian troops in the days of Nicholas I, when Russia was a land of ignorance, when Nicholas I drove Russian troops to strangle the Hungarian revolution. That was more than 60 years ago, under the old feudal order. But now Britain and other free countries have turned into hangmen, and imagine it is within their power to crush the revolution and to force the truth into silence. This truth, however, will surmount all obstacles in both France and Britain, and the workers will understand that they were deceived and drawn into the war not to liberate France or Britain, but to plunder a foreign country. As to France, we have news that in the Socialist Party, which till now has been among the supporters of defence of the fatherland, hearty sympathy is being expressed for the Soviet Republic and protests are being made against armed intervention in Russia.

First published in full in 1950

Vol. 28, pp. 333-34

REPLY TO QUESTIONS AT A SESSION
OF THE PETROGRAD SOVIET

March 12, 1919

(Excerpt)

Under capitalism quite a few workers in the big cities lived by producing articles of luxury. In the Soviet Republic we shall have to leave these workers unemployed for a time. We say to them: "Take up some other, useful work." One such worker may reply: "I was doing delicate work; I was a jeweller; it was a clean job; I worked for good bosses. And now the ragamuffins have come and sent these good bosses packing. I want to get back to capitalism." Such people will argue in favour of going back to capitalism or, as the Mensheviks say, of going forward to sound capitalism and sound democracy. You may find several hundred workers who will say: "We lived well under sound capitalism." People who lived well under capitalism constituted an insignificant minority, but we protect the interests of the majority, who lived badly under capitalism. (*App'ause.*) Sound capitalism led to the world slaughter in the freest of countries. There can be no sound capitalism, but there is a capitalism which, in the freest republic, such as the cultured, rich, technically advanced American republic, where democratic capitalism, the most republican capitalism, exists, led to the most furious world-wide slaughter for the sake of plundering the whole world. Among its fifteen million workers you will find a

few thousand in the whole country who lived splendidly under capitalism. In rich countries there are more such workers, because a considerably larger number of millionaires and multimillionaires are there to employ them. They serve these handfuls of people and are particularly well paid by them. Take the hundreds of British millionaires; they have piled up millions upon millions out of plundering India and numerous colonies. It cost them nothing to throw sops to ten or twenty thousand workers, to pay double or even higher wages so that they may serve them particularly well. I once read the reminiscences of an American barber whom a multimillionaire paid a dollar a day for shaving him. That barber wrote a whole book extolling his rich patron and the remarkable life he led. For an hour's regular morning visit to his financial majesty he pocketed a dollar a day, was satisfied and wanted nothing but capitalism. You have to be on your guard against those who come with such arguments. The overwhelming majority of the workers have never been in such a position. We Communists all over the world defend the interests of the vast majority of the working people, while an insignificant minority of them have been bribed by the capitalists with high wages, and been turned into faithful servants of capital. Just as under serfdom there were individuals, peasants who said to the landlords: "We are your slaves" (this was after the emancipation), "we shall not leave you." Were there many of them? Quite a few. Could reference to them serve to reject the struggle against serfdom? Of course, not. So now reference to the minority of workers who were well paid for working on bourgeois newspapers, for producing articles of luxury, or rendering personal services to multimillionaires cannot serve to refute communism.

SPEECH ON THE ORGANIZATION OF A FARM WORKERS' TRADE UNION*

(Excerpt)

Recently I had occasion to talk with a prominent Englishman who came to Russia during the war. Previously he had been a supporter of capitalism, but subsequently, during our revolution, developed splendidly, at first to the level of a Menshevik, and now to that of a Bolshevik. Now when I happened to talk with him about working conditions in Britain—there are no peasants there; they only have big capitalists and farm workers—he said: “I’m not at all cheerful about that, because our agricultural workers live under feudal, not capitalist, conditions—so downtrodden, dulled, weighed down with work are they, so difficult is it for them to organize.” And that in the foremost country, where an attempt to set up a farm workers’ union was made by a British farm labourer half a century ago. Such is the progress made in free capitalist countries!

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No. 4-5

Vol. 29, pp. 21-22

THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL AND ITS PLACE IN HISTORY

The imperialists of the “Entente” countries are blockading Russia, striving to cut off the Soviet Republic, as a seat of infection, from the capitalist world. These people, who boast about their “democratic” institutions, are so blinded by their hatred of the Soviet Republic that they do not see how ridiculous they are making themselves. Just think, the advanced, most civilized and “democratic” countries, armed to the teeth and enjoying undivided military sway over the whole world, are mortally afraid of the *ideological* infection coming from a ruined, starving, backward, and even, as they assert, semi-savage country!

Just this contradiction alone is opening the eyes of the toiling masses in all countries and helping to expose the hypocrisy of the imperialists Clemenceau, Lloyd George, Wilson and their governments.

We are being helped, however, not only by the capitalists’ blind hatred of the Soviets, but also by their bickering among themselves, which induces them to put spokes in each other’s wheels. They have entered into a veritable conspiracy of silence, for they are desperately afraid of the spread of true information about the Soviet Republic in general, and of its official documents in particular. Yet, *Le Temps*, the principal organ of the French bourgeoisie, has published a report of the foundation in Moscow of the Third, Communist, International.

* Delivered at the First Congress of Farm Workers of Petrograd Gubernia, March 13, 1919.—Ed.

For this we express our most respectful thanks to the principal organ of the French bourgeoisie, to this leader of French chauvinism and imperialism. We are prepared to send an illuminated address to *Le Temps* in token of our appreciation of the effective and able assistance it is giving us.

The manner in which *Le Temps* compiled its report on the basis of our radio broadcasts clearly and fully reveals the motive that prompted this organ of the money-bags. It wanted to have a dig at Wilson, as if to say: look at the people you allow yourself to negotiate with! The wise-acs who write to the order of the money-bags do not see that their attempt to frighten Wilson with the bogey of the Bolsheviks is becoming, in the eyes of the toiling masses, an advertisement for the Bolsheviks. Once more, our most respectful thanks to the organ of the French millionaires!

The Third International has been founded when the international situation is such that no prohibitions, no petty and miserable devices of the "Entente" imperialists or of capitalist lackeys like the Scheidemanns in Germany and the Renners in Austria, can prevent the spread of news about this International, and of sympathy for it, among the working class of the world. This situation has been brought about by the proletarian revolution, which is manifestly growing everywhere by leaps and bounds. It has been brought about by the *Soviet* movement among the toiling masses, which has already achieved such strength as to become really *international*.

The First International (1864-72) laid the foundation of an international organization of the workers for the preparation of their revolutionary onslaught on capital. The Second International (1889-1914) was an international organization of the proletarian movement whose growth was in *breadth*, at the cost of a temporary fall in the revolutionary level, a temporary strengthening of opportun-

ism, which in the end led to the disgraceful collapse of this International.

The Third International actually arose in 1918, when the long years of struggle against opportunism and social-chauvinism, especially during the war, led to the formation of Communist Parties in a number of countries. Officially, the Third International was founded at its First Congress, in March 1919, in Moscow. And the most characteristic feature of this International, its mission of fulfilling, of implementing the precepts of Marxism, and of achieving the age-old ideals of socialism and the working-class movement—this most characteristic feature of the Third International has manifested itself immediately in the fact that the new, third, "International Working Men's Association" *has already begun to coincide*, to a certain extent, with the *Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*.

The First International laid the foundation of the proletarian, international struggle for socialism.

The Second International marked a period of preparation of the soil for the broad, the mass spread of the movement in a number of countries.

The Third International has gathered the fruits of the work of the Second International, discarded its opportunist, social-chauvinist, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois dross, and *has begun to implement* the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The international alliance of the parties which are leading the most revolutionary movement in the world, the movement of the proletariat for the overthrow of the yoke of capital, now rests on an unprecedentedly firm base, in the shape of several *Soviet republics*, which are giving embodiment to the dictatorship of the proletariat, and to its victory over capitalism on an international scale.

The epoch-making significance of the Third, Communist, International lies in the fact that it has begun to give effect to Marx's cardinal slogan, the slogan which sums up the centuries of development of socialism and the working-

class movement, the slogan which is expressed in the concept: dictatorship of the proletariat.

This prevision, this theory—the prevision, the theory of a genius—is becoming a reality.

This Latin phrase has now been translated into the languages of all the peoples, of contemporary Europe—more, into all the languages of the world.

A new era in world history has begun.

Mankind is throwing off the last form of slavery: capitalist, or wage slavery.

By emancipating itself from slavery, mankind is for the first time passing to real freedom.

How is it that the first country to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, to organize a Soviet Republic, was one of the most backward countries of Europe? We shall hardly be wrong if we say that it is this contradiction between the backwardness of Russia and the “leap” she has made to a higher form of democracy, across bourgeois democracy to Soviet, or proletarian, democracy—it is this contradiction that has been one of the causes (apart from the dead weight of opportunist habits and philistine prejudices that burdened the majority of the Socialist leaders) of the particular difficulty or the delay in understanding the role of the Soviets in the West.

The working masses all over the world instinctively grasped the significance of the Soviets as an instrument in the proletarian struggle and as a form of the proletarian state. But corrupted by opportunism, the “leaders” continued, and still continue, to worship bourgeois democracy, which they call “democracy” in general.

Is it surprising that the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat has brought out primarily the “contradiction” between the backwardness of Russia and her “leap” across bourgeois democracy? It would have been surprising had history granted us the establishment of a *new* form of democracy *without* a number of contradictions.

If any Marxist, or any person indeed who is familiar with modern science at all, were asked whether it is likely that the transition of the various capitalist countries to the dictatorship of the proletariat will be even or harmoniously proportionate, his answer would undoubtedly be: “No.” There never has been nor could there be even, harmonious, or proportionate development in the capitalist world. Each country has developed with particular salience now one, now another aspect or feature or group of attributes of capitalism and of the working-class movement. The process of development has been uneven.

When France was making her great bourgeois revolution and rousing the whole European Continent to a historically new life, it was Britain that headed the counter-revolutionary coalition, although at that time she was much more developed capitalistically than France. And the British working-class movement of that period brilliantly anticipated much that was contained in the future Marxism.

When Britain gave the world Chartism, the first broad, truly mass and politically organized proletarian revolutionary movement, on the European Continent bourgeois revolutions, most of them weak, were taking place, while in France, the first great civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie broke out. The bourgeoisie defeated the various national detachments of the proletariat one by one, and in different ways in different countries.

Britain was the model country where, as Engels put it, the bourgeoisie had produced, together with a bourgeois aristocracy, a most bourgeois upper stratum of the proletariat.¹²³ As far as the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat was concerned, this advanced capitalist country lagged several decades behind. France exhausted the strength of the proletariat, as it were, in two heroic working-class risings against the bourgeoisie, very considerable contributions to world-historical development, that took place in 1848 and 1871. The hegemony in the Interna-

tional of the working-class movement then passed to Germany; that was in the seventies, when she lagged economically behind Britain and France. But when Germany outstripped these two countries economically, i.e., by the second decade of the twentieth century, the Marxist workers' party of Germany, that model for the whole world, proved to be headed by a handful of utter scoundrels, of the most filthy blackguards—from Scheidemann and Noske to David and Legien—who had sold themselves to the capitalists, of the most loathsome hangmen, drawn from the workers' ranks, who were in the service of the monarchy and the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie.

World history is marching unswervingly towards the dictatorship of the proletariat, but is doing so by paths that are anything but smooth, simple and straight.

When Karl Kautsky was still a Marxist and not the renegade from Marxism he became when he began to champion unity with the Scheidemanns, and bourgeois democracy in opposition to Soviet, or proletarian, democracy, he wrote an article—this was at the outset of the twentieth century—entitled "The Slavs and Revolution." In this article he traced the historical conditions that pointed to the possibility of the hegemony in the international revolutionary movement passing to the Slavs.

And so it has. Hegemony in the revolutionary proletarian International has passed for a time—for a short time, it goes without saying—to the Russians, just as at various periods of the nineteenth century it was in the hands of the British, then of the French, then of the Germans.

I have had occasion more than once to say that, compared with the advanced countries, it was easier for the Russians to *begin* the great proletarian revolution, but that it will be more difficult for them to *continue* it and carry it to final victory, in the sense of the complete organization of a socialist society.

It was easier for us to begin, firstly, because the unusual—for twentieth-century Europe—political backward-

ness of the tsarist monarchy evoked a revolutionary onslaught of the masses that was of unusual strength. Secondly, Russia's backwardness merged in a peculiar way the proletarian revolution against the bourgeoisie with the peasant revolution against the landlords. That is where we started in October 1917, and we would not have achieved victory so easily then if we had not started there. As long ago as 1856, Marx spoke, in reference to Prussia, of the possibility of a peculiar combination of proletarian revolution and peasant war.¹²⁴ From the beginning of 1905 the Bolsheviks advocated the idea of a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. Thirdly, the 1905 revolution contributed enormously to the political education of the worker and peasant masses, with respect both to familiarizing their vanguard with "the last word" of socialism in the West, and to the revolutionary *action* of the masses. Without the "dress rehearsal" of 1905, the revolution of 1917—both the bourgeois, February revolution, and the proletarian, October revolution—would have been impossible. Fourthly, Russia's geographical conditions permitted her to hold out longer than other countries could have done against the military superiority of the capitalist, advanced countries. Fifthly, the peculiar attitude of the proletariat towards the peasantry facilitated the transition from the bourgeois revolution to the socialist revolution, made it easier for the urban proletarians to influence the semi-proletarian, poorer sections of the rural toilers. Sixthly, long schooling in strike action and the experience of the European mass working-class movement facilitated the rise—in a profound and rapidly intensifying revolutionary situation—of so unique a form of proletarian revolutionary organization as the *Soviets*.

This list, of course, is incomplete; but it will suffice for the time being.

Soviet, or proletarian, democracy was born in Russia. Following the Paris Commune a second epoch-making step

was taken. The proletarian-peasant Soviet Republic has proved to be the first stable socialist republic in the world. As a *new type of state* it cannot die. It no longer stands alone.

For the continuance, and completion, of the work of building socialism, much, very much is still required. Soviet republics in more cultured countries, where the proletariat has greater weight and influence, have every chance of surpassing Russia once they take the path of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The bankrupt Second International is now dying and rotting alive. Actually, it is playing the role of lackey of the international bourgeoisie. It is a truly yellow International. Its leading ideological leaders, such as Kautsky, laud *bourgeois* democracy and call it "democracy" in general, or—what is still more stupid and still more crude—"pure democracy."

Bourgeois democracy has outlived its day, just as the Second International has, though it performed historically necessary and useful work when the task of the moment was to train the working-class masses within the framework of this bourgeois democracy.

The most democratic bourgeois republic never was and never could be anything but a machine for the suppression of the toilers by capital, an instrument of the political rule of capital, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The democratic bourgeois republic promised and proclaimed majority rule, but it could never put this into effect as long as private ownership of the land and other means of production existed.

"Freedom" in the bourgeois democratic republic was actually freedom *for the rich*. The proletarians and toiling peasants could and should have utilized it for the purpose of preparing their forces to overthrow capital, to overcome bourgeois democracy, but *in fact* the toiling masses were, as a general rule, unable to enjoy democracy under capitalism.

Soviet, or proletarian, democracy has for the first time in the world created *democracy* for the masses, for the toilers, for the workers and small peasants.

Never yet has the world seen political power wielded by the *majority* of the population, power *actually* wielded by this majority, as it is under Soviet rule.

It suppresses the "freedom" of the exploiters and their accomplices; it deprives them of "freedom" to exploit, "freedom" to batten on starvation, "freedom" to fight for the restoration of the rule of capital, "freedom" to compact with the foreign bourgeoisie against the workers and peasants of their own country.

Let the Kautskys champion such freedom. To do so one must be a renegade from Marxism, a renegade from socialism.

In nothing is the bankruptcy of the ideological leaders of the Second International, such as Hilferding and Kautsky, so strikingly expressed as in their utter inability to understand the significance of Soviet, or proletarian, democracy, its relation to the Paris Commune, its place in history, its necessity as a form of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The newspaper *Die Freiheit*, organ of the "independent" (alias middle-class, philistine, petty-bourgeois) German Social-Democratic Party, in its issue No. 74 of February 11, 1919, published a manifesto "To the Revolutionary Proletariat of Germany."

This manifesto is signed by the Party executive and by all its members in the "National Assembly," the German "Uchredilka."*

This manifesto accuses the Scheidemanns of wanting to abolish the *Soviets*, and proposes—don't laugh!—that the Soviets be *combined* with the Uchredilka, that the Soviets be granted certain political rights, a certain place in the Constitution.

* Constituent Assembly.—Ed.

To reconcile, to unite the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat! How simple! What a brilliantly philistine idea!

The only pity is that it was tried in Russia, under Kerensky, by the united Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, those petty-bourgeois democrats who imagine themselves Socialists.

Whoever has read Marx and failed to understand that in capitalist society, at every acute moment, in every serious class conflict, only the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the dictatorship of the proletariat is possible, has understood nothing of either the economic or the political doctrines of Marx.

But the brilliantly philistine idea of Hilferding, Kautsky and Co. of peacefully combining the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat requires separate examination, if exhaustive treatment is to be given to the economic and political absurdities with which this most remarkable and comical manifesto of February 11 is loaded. That will have to be put off for another article.

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THE TASKS OF THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

(*Ramsay MacDonald on the Third International*)

The French social-chauvinist newspaper *L'Humanité*, issue No. 5475, dated April 14, 1919, contains an editorial by Ramsay MacDonald, the well-known leader of the British so-called Independent Labour Party, which is actually an opportunist party that has always been dependent on the bourgeoisie. This article is so typical of the position taken by the *trend* which it is customary to call the "Centre" and which was called by that name at the First Congress of the Communist International in Moscow that we quote it *in full* together with the introductory lines of the *L'Humanité* editorial board:

THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL

Our friend Ramsay MacDonald was the authoritative leader of the Labour Party in the House of Commons before the war. A convinced Socialist and firm believer, he considered it his duty to condemn the war as imperialist, in contrast to those who welcomed it as a war for a righteous cause. Consequently, after August 4th he resigned from his position of leader of the Labour Party, and together with comrades in the Independent Labour Party and our admirable Keir Hardie, did not fear to declare war on war.

This required heroism day by day.

MacDonald showed by his example that courage, in the words of Jaurès, "consists in not submitting to the law of the triumphant lie and in not serving as the echo of the applause of imbeciles and the catcalling of fanatics."

In the Khaki* Election held at the end of November, MacDonald was defeated by Lloyd George. But we may rest assured that MacDonald will have his revenge, and that in the very near future.

The rise of separatist tendencies in the national and international policies of socialism has been a misfortune for the socialist movement.

It is, however, not bad that there are shades of opinion and variations of method within socialism. Our socialism is still in the experimental stage.

Its basic principles are fixed, but the method of best applying them, the combinations which will bring about the triumph of the revolution, the manner in which the socialist state is to be built are still problems to be discussed, and the last work concerning them has not yet been spoken. Only deep study of all these points can lead us to sublimer truth.

Extremes may clash, and such a struggle may serve to fortify socialist views; but evil commences when everybody considers everybody else a traitor, a believer fallen from grace, one who deserves to have the gates of the Party slammed in his face.

When Socialists are possessed by the spirit of dogmatism, like that which in former days of Christianity preached civil war for the greater glory of God and the discomfiture of the devil, the bourgeoisie may sleep in peace, for the days of its rule are not yet ended, no matter how great the local and international successes achieved by socialism.

At the present moment our movement is unfortunately encountering a new obstacle. A new International has been proclaimed in Moscow.

I am very much grieved over this, for the Socialist International is at present sufficiently open to all forms of socialist thought, and in spite of all theoretical and practical disagreements engendered within it by Bolshevism I see no reason why its Left wing should separate from the Centre and form an independent group.

It must first of all be remembered that we are still living in the infancy of the revolution. The forms of government that have sprung up from the political and social debris wrought by the war have not yet stood the test and have not yet been definitely established.

A new broom sweeps remarkably clean at first, but nobody can tell for sure beforehand how it will work in the end.

* Called "Khaki" election by soldiers who were ordered to vote for the Government candidates.

Russia is not Hungary, Hungary is not France, France is not Britain, and therefore anyone who introduces a split in the International after the experience of some one nation displays criminal narrow-mindedness.

Besides, what is Russia's experience really worth? Who can answer that? The Allied governments are afraid to let us enlighten ourselves. But there are two things we do know.

First and foremost, that there was no prepared plan according to which the revolution was accomplished by the present Russian Government. It developed according to the course of events. Lenin started his attack on Kerensky by demanding a Constituent Assembly. Events led him to suppress this Assembly. When the socialist revolution broke out in Russia no one thought the Soviets would take the place in the government which they did.

Subsequently Lenin quite justly exhorted Hungary not to copy Russia slavishly but to allow the Hungarian revolution to evolve according to its own character.

The evolution and fluctuations exhibited in the experiences we are going through at the present time should on no account call forth a split in the International.

All socialist governments need the help and advice of the International. It is necessary that the International should watch their experiences with an alert eye and an open mind.

I have just heard from a friend who recently saw Lenin that no one is more free in his criticism of the Soviet Government than Lenin himself.

* * *

If the post-war disorders and revolutions do not justify a split, does the latter not find justification in the attitude which some socialist factions took during the war? I frankly admit that here the grounds may seem more justified. But if there really is some excuse for schism in the International, this question was at any rate posed most unhappily at the Moscow Conference.

I am one of those who consider that the discussion at the Berne Conference on who was responsible for the war *was merely a concession to non-socialist public opinion.*

At Berne it not only was impossible to adopt on this question a decision that would be of some historical value (although it might have some political value), but even the question itself was not broached properly.

The condemnation of the German majority (a condemnation which that majority fully deserved and with which I have very gladly associated myself) could not serve as an exposition of the origin of the war.

The Berne debate was not accompanied by a frank discussion of the views held by other Socialists concerning the war.

They produced no formula of conduct for Socialists during a war. All the International had said before then was that in a war of national defence Socialists must unite with the other parties.

Under these circumstances whom are we going to condemn?

Some of us knew that what the International had said meant nothing and did not constitute a practical guide for action.

We knew that such a war would end in victory for imperialism and, being neither pacifists in the usual sense of the word nor anti-pacifists, we pursued a policy which in our opinion was the only one compatible with internationalism. *But the International* never prescribed to us any such rule of conduct.

That is why the moment the war began the International collapsed. It lost its authority and did not issue a single decision on the basis of which we would now have the right to condemn those who honestly carried out the resolutions of the international congresses.

In consequence, the attitude we should adopt today is the following: instead of parting ways on account of what has taken place, let us create a really active International which will guard the socialist movement during the period of revolution and reconstruction which we are going to traverse.

We must restore our socialist principles. We must place our international socialist conduct on firm foundations.

If, however, it appears that we differ essentially on these principles, if we do not arrive at any agreement on the issues of freedom and democracy, if our views on the conditions under which the proletariat may take power are definitely at variance, if finally it turns out that the war has infected some sections of the International with the virus of imperialism, then a split is possible.

But I do not think such a misfortune has happened.

That is why I regret the Moscow Manifesto as being premature, to say the least, and certainly useless; and I hope that my French comrades, upon whom as well as me during the sombre last four years so much slander and misfortune has been heaped, will not, in an outburst of impatience, be instrumental in breaking up international solidarity.

Otherwise their children will have to set up that solidarity once more, if the proletariat is ever to rule the world.

J. Ramsay MacDonald

The author of this article, as the reader can see, tries to prove that a split is unnecessary. On the contrary; that it is inevitable follows from the *way* the argument is put

by Ramsay MacDonald—that typical representative of the Second International and worthy colleague of Scheidemann and Kautsky, Vandervelde and Branting, and so on and so forth.

Ramsay MacDonald's article is a fine specimen of the smooth, euphonious, hackneyed, apparently socialistic phrases which have long served in all the advanced capitalist countries to conceal bourgeois policy within the working-class movement.

I

Let us begin with what is least important but especially characteristic. Like Kautsky (in his pamphlet *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat*), the author repeats the bourgeois lie that no one in Russia foresaw the role of the Soviets, that the Bolsheviks and I began to fight Kerensky only on the issue of the Constituent Assembly.

That is a bourgeois lie. Actually, as early as April 4, 1917, the first day after my arrival in Petrograd, I presented "theses" containing the demand for a *Soviet*, and not a *bourgeois-parliamentary*, republic. I repeated this many times under Kerensky in the press and at meetings. The Bolshevik Party solemnly and officially announced this in the decisions of its conference of April 29, 1917. Not to know this means *not to want* to know the truth about the socialist revolution in Russia. Not to want to understand that a bourgeois-parliamentary republic with a Constituent Assembly is a step forward as against the same sort of republic *without* a Constituent Assembly, and that a *Soviet* republic is two steps forward as compared with it, means to close one's eyes to the difference between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

To call oneself a Socialist and not to see this difference two years after the issue was raised in Russia and one and a half years after the victory of the Soviet revolution in Russia means stubbornly to remain completely captive

to "non-socialist public opinion," *that is to say*, to the ideas and the policy of the bourgeoisie.

A split with such people is necessary and inevitable, for the socialist revolution cannot be accomplished by joining hands with those who pull in the direction of the bourgeoisie.

And if "leaders" like Ramsay MacDonald or Kautsky, etc., have refused to overcome even so very small a "difficulty" as an acquaintance with the *documents* concerning the attitude of the Bolsheviks toward Soviet power, concerning the way this problem was posed before and after October 25 (November 7) 1917, would it not be ridiculous to expect such people to be ready and able to overcome the incomparably greater difficulties of the real struggle for a socialist revolution?

There are none so deaf as those who will not hear.

II

Let us pass on to the second untruth (from among the countless untruths in which the whole article by Ramsay MacDonald abounds, for in this article there are perhaps more untruths than words). This untruth is practically the most important one.

J. R. MacDonald asserts that until the war of 1914-18 the International only said that "in a war of national defence Socialists must unite with the other parties."

That is a monstrous, a glaring deviation from the truth.

Everybody knows that the Basle Manifesto of 1912 was unanimously adopted by all Socialists and that of all the documents of the International it alone refers precisely to the war between the British and the German group of imperialist robbers, which in 1912 everybody clearly saw was in preparation and which broke out in 1914. It was about this war that the Basle Manifesto said three things which MacDonald now passes over in silence, thereby committing an enormous crime against socialism and proving

that with people like him a split is necessary, because in fact they serve the bourgeoisie and not the proletariat.

These three things are the following:

the war that threatens cannot be justified one whit as being in the interest of national freedom;

in this war it would be a crime on the part of the workers to shoot at one another;

the war leads to proletarian revolution.

Here you have the three basic, fundamental truths, by "forgetting" which (though he put his signature to them before the war) MacDonald *in fact* goes over to the bourgeoisie against the proletariat and thereby proves that a split is necessary.

The Communist International will not agree to unity with parties which refuse to admit this truth and are incapable of demonstrating by their *deeds* their determination, readiness and ability to bring these truths home to the masses.

The Versailles Peace has proved even to the stupid and blind, even to the mass of short-sighted people, that the Entente was and is as bloody and filthy an imperialist vulture as Germany. Only hypocrites and liars could fail to see this, people who deliberately conduct the policy of the bourgeoisie in the working-class movement, direct agents and henchmen of the bourgeoisie (labour lieutenants of the capitalist class, as the American Socialists say), or people who have so far succumbed to bourgeois ideas and bourgeois influence that they are Socialists only in words, but in deeds are petty bourgeois, philistines, toadies to the capitalists. The difference between the first and the second category is important from the viewpoint of their personalities, i.e., for an appraisal of Tom, Dick or Harry among the social-chauvinists of all countries. For the politician, i.e., from the viewpoint of the relations among millions of people, among the classes, this difference is not substantial.

Those Socialists who during the war of 1914-18 failed to understand that it was a criminal, reactionary, predatory, imperialist war on both sides, are social-chauvinists, i.e., Socialists in words and chauvinists in deeds; friends of the working class in words, but in deeds lackeys of "their own" national bourgeoisie, individuals who help it to deceive the people by depicting as "national," "emancipatory," "defensive," "righteous" and so forth the war between the British and the German group of imperialist vultures, who are *equally* filthy, selfish, bloodthirsty, criminal, reactionary.

Unity with the social-chauvinists is betrayal of the revolution, betrayal of the proletariat, betrayal of socialism, desertion to the bourgeoisie, because it is "unity" with the *national bourgeoisie* of "one's own" country *against* the unity of the international revolutionary proletariat, is unity *with* the bourgeoisie *against* the proletariat.

The war of 1914-18 has definitely proved this. Let anyone who does not understand this remain in the yellow Berne International of social-traitors.¹²⁵

III

Ramsay MacDonald, with the amusing naïveté of a "drawing-room" Socialist who casts words to the winds without at all understanding their serious significance, without at all reflecting on the point that *words commit one to deeds*, declares: in Berne "a concession to non-socialist public opinion" was made.

Precisely! We regard the whole of the Berne International as yellow, treacherous and perfidious because the *whole* of its policy is a "*concession*" to the bourgeoisie.

Ramsay MacDonald knows perfectly well that we have built the Third International and broken unreservedly with the Second International because we became convinced that it was hopeless, incorrigible, played the part of a servant to imperialism, of a channel of bourgeois in-

fluence, bourgeois lies and bourgeois corruption in the labour movement. If in desiring to discuss the Third International Ramsay MacDonald evades the essence of the matter, beats about the bush, utters empty phrases and does not speak of what should be spoken about, that is his fault and his crime. For the proletariat needs the truth, and there is nothing more harmful to its cause than plausible, respectable, petty-bourgeois lies.

The problem of imperialism and of *its connection* with opportunism in the labour movement, with the betrayal of the workers' cause by labour leaders, was raised long, very long ago.

For a period of *forty* years, from 1852 to 1892, Marx and Engels constantly pointed to the fact that the upper stratum of the British working class was becoming increasingly *bourgeois* as a consequence of the country's peculiar economic conditions (colonies, monopoly of the world market, etc.). In the seventies of last century Marx won himself the honourable hatred of the despicable heroes of the Berne International trend of those days, of the opportunists and reformists, for branding many of the British trade-union leaders as men who had sold themselves to the bourgeoisie or were in its pay for services rendered to its class *from within* the labour movement.

During the Anglo-Boer War, the Anglo-Saxon press quite clearly raised the problem of imperialism as the latest (*and last*) stage of capitalism. If my memory serves me right, it was none other than Ramsay MacDonald who then resigned from the Fabian Society, that prototype of the Berne International, that nursery and model of opportunism, which Engels describes, with the power, clarity and truth of genius, in his correspondence with Sorge. "Fabian imperialism"—such was the common expression employed at that time in British socialist literature.

If Ramsay MacDonald has forgotten this, all the worse for him.

"Fabian imperialism" and "social-imperialism" are one and the same thing: socialism in words, imperialism in deeds, *the growth of opportunism into imperialism*. This has now become, during the war of 1914-18 and after, a *universal* fact. The failure to understand it shows the great blindness of the Berne, yellow, International, and is its great crime. Opportunism, or reformism, inevitably had to grow into the phenomenon of world-wide importance, *socialist imperialism*, or social-chauvinism, because imperialism singled out a handful of very rich, advanced nations, engaged in plundering the whole world, and thereby enabled the bourgeoisie of these countries, out of their monopolist super-profits (imperialism is monopoly capitalism), *to bribe the upper strata of the working class* of these countries.

The economic inevitability of this fact under imperialism can only go unseen by either utter ignoramuses or hypocrites who deceive the workers by repeating *commonplaces* about capitalism and in this way cover up the bitter truth that a *whole trend in socialism* has gone over to the imperialist bourgeoisie.

And from this fact two indisputable conclusions emerge.

First conclusion: the Berne International is in fact, from the angle of its real historical and political role, and irrespective of the good will and pious wishes of particular members of it, *an organization of agents of international imperialism* operating *within* the labour movement, permeating *it* with bourgeois influence, bourgeois ideas, bourgeois lies, and bourgeois corruption.

In countries where democratic parliamentary culture is of long standing, the bourgeoisie has excellently learned to operate by means not only of violence but also of deception, bribery and flattery, including the most subtle forms of these methods. It is not for nothing that the "lunches" given to British "labour leaders" (i.e., lieutenants of the bourgeoisie in fooling the workers) have acquired notoriety; Engels in his day spoke about them. To the

same order of facts belongs the "charming" reception given by M. Clemenceau to the social-traitor Merrheim, the courteous receptions given by Entente Ministers to the leaders of the Berne International, and so on and so forth. "You train 'em, and we buy 'em," said a clever capitalist Englishwoman to Mr. Social-imperialist Hyndman, who related in his memoirs how this lady, a person shrewder than all the leaders of the Berne International put together, appraised the "labours" of the socialist intellectuals in training workers to become socialist leaders.

During the war, when the Vanderveldes, Brantings and the whole gang of traitors organized "international" conferences, the French bourgeois newspapers were bitingly scornful, and rightly so. They said: "These Vanderveldes seem to be suffering from a sort of tic. Just as those who suffer from tic cannot utter a couple of phrases without strangely twitching the muscles of the face, so the Vanderveldes cannot make a political speech without repeating, parrot-like, the words internationalism, socialism, international working-class solidarity, proletarian revolution, etc. Let them repeat any sacramental formulas they like so long as they help to lead the workers by the nose and serve us, the capitalists, in waging the imperialist war and enslaving the workers."

Sometimes the British and French bourgeoisie are very clever and excellently appraise the servile role played by the Berne International.

Martov wrote somewhere: "You Bolsheviks hurl abuse at the Berne International but 'your own' friend Loriot is a member of it."

That is the argument of a rogue; for everybody knows that Loriot is openly, honestly and heroically fighting for the Third International. When in 1902 Zubatov organized meetings of workers in Moscow in order to gull them with "police socialism,"¹²⁶ the worker Babushkin, whom I knew since 1894 when he was in the workers' class I ran in Petersburg, who was one of the best and most devoted

worker *Iskra*-ists,¹²⁷ leaders of the revolutionary proletariat, and was shot in 1906 by Rennenkampf in Siberia, *used to attend the Zubatov meetings* in order to fight Zubatovism and to withdraw the workers from its clutches. Babushkin was no more a "Zubatovist" than Loriot is a "Berne-ist."

IV

Second conclusion: the Third, Communist, International has been formed so as to prevent "Socialists" from disposing of matters with the *verbal* recognition of revolution, examples of which are provided by Ramsay MacDonald in his article. Verbal recognition of revolution, which in fact concealed a thoroughly opportunist, reformist, nationalist, petty-bourgeois policy, was the basic sin of the Second International, and against this evil we are waging a life-and-death struggle.

When it is said that the Second International died after suffering shameful bankruptcy, one must be able to understand what this means. It means that opportunism, reformism, petty-bourgeois socialism went bankrupt and died. For the Second International rendered historic service, it has achievements to its credit that are *εἰς αἰῶνα* (everlasting), that the class-conscious worker will never renounce, namely: the creation of mass working-class organizations—co-operative, trade-union and political—the utilization of the bourgeois parliamentary system, and of all the institutions in general of bourgeois democracy, etc.

In order to really defeat opportunism, which caused the shameful death of the Second International, in order to really assist the revolution, the approach of which *even* Ramsay MacDonald is obliged to admit, it is necessary:

Firstly, to conduct all propaganda and agitation from the viewpoint of revolution as opposed to reforms, systematically explaining this opposition to the masses theoretically and practically, at every step of parliamentary, trade-

union, co-operative, etc., work. Under no circumstances to refrain (save in special cases, as an exception) from utilizing the parliamentary system and all the "liberties" of bourgeois democracy; not to reject reforms, but to regard them *only* as a *by-product* of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat. Not a single party affiliated to the Berne International meets these requirements. Not a single one of them betrays even an inkling of how to conduct *all* its propaganda and agitation, explaining the *difference* between reform and revolution, of how to train both the Party and the masses *unswervingly for revolution*.

Secondly, legal work must be combined with *illegal* work. The Bolsheviks always taught this, and did so with particular insistence during the war of 1914-18. The heroes of despicable opportunism ridiculed this and smugly extolled the "legality," "democracy," "liberty" of the West-European countries, republics, etc. Now, however, only out-and-out swindlers, who deceive the workers with phrases, can deny that the Bolsheviks proved to be right. There is not a single country in the world, even the most advanced and "freest" of the bourgeois republics, where bourgeois terror does not reign, where freedom to carry on agitation for the socialist revolution, to carry on propaganda and organizational work precisely in this direction, is not prohibited. The party which to this day has not admitted this under the rule of the bourgeoisie and does not carry on systematic, all-sided *illegal* work in spite of the laws of the bourgeoisie and of the bourgeois parliaments is a party of traitors and scoundrels who deceive the people by their verbal recognition of revolution. The place for such parties is in the yellow, Berne International. They will find no place in the Communist International.

Thirdly, unswerving and ruthless war must be waged for the complete expulsion from the labour movement of those opportunist leaders who showed their worth both

before and particularly during the war, both in the political sphere and particularly in the trade unions, and the co-operatives. The theory of "neutrality"¹²⁸ is a false and despicable evasion, which helped the bourgeoisie to capture the masses in 1914-18. Parties which stand for revolution in words but which in deeds fail to carry on undeviating work to spread the influence of precisely the revolutionary and only of the revolutionary party in every sort of mass organization of the workers are parties of traitors.

Fourthly, there must be no toleration of the fact that imperialism is condemned in words, while in deeds no revolutionary struggle is waged for the liberation of the colonies (and dependent nations) from one's *own* imperialist bourgeoisie. That is hypocrisy. That is the policy of the agents of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement (labour lieutenants of the capitalist class). The British, French, Dutch, Belgian, or other party which is hostile to imperialism in words but in deeds does not wage a revolutionary struggle within "its own" colonies for the *overthrow* of "its own" bourgeoisie, does not systematically assist the *revolutionary* work which has already begun everywhere in the colonies, and does not send arms and literature to the revolutionary parties in the colonies, is a party of scoundrels and traitors.

Fifthly, the height of hypocrisy is displayed in what is typical of the parties of the Berne International, viz., the recognition of revolution in words and the flaunting to the workers of high-sounding phrases about recognizing revolution, but in deeds the adoption of a purely reformist attitude to those beginnings, shoots, manifestations of the growth of revolution such as are all mass actions which break bourgeois laws, and go beyond the bounds of all legality, as, for example, mass strikes, street demonstrations, soldiers' protests, meetings among the troops, leaflet distribution in barracks, camps, etc.

If you ask any hero of the Berne International whether his party does such systematic work, he will answer you either with evasive phrases that conceal the fact of such work not being done, namely, that his party lacks organizations and the machinery for doing it, is incapable of doing it; or with declamations against "*putschism*" (hatching outbreaks), "anarchism," etc. And it is that which constitutes the betrayal of the working class by the Berne International, its desertion in fact to the camp of the bourgeoisie.

All the scoundrelly leaders of the Berne International expend much energy vowing their "sympathy" for revolution in general, and for the Russian Revolution in particular. But only hypocrites or simpletons can fail to understand that the particularly rapid successes of the revolution in Russia *are due* to the many years' work of the revolutionary party in the direction indicated: for years illegal machinery was systematically built up for directing demonstrations and strikes, for conducting work among the troops; a detailed study was made of methods; illegal literature was issued summing up experience acquired and educating the whole Party in the idea that revolution was necessary; leaders of the masses were trained for such events, etc., etc.

V

The most profound and radical differences, which sum up all that has been said above and explain the inevitability of an irreconcilable theoretical and practical-political struggle of the revolutionary proletariat against the Berne International, centre around the issues of the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war, and of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

That the Berne International is the captive of bourgeois ideology is best of all revealed by the fact that by failing to understand (or not desiring to understand, or pretend-

ing not to understand) the imperialist character of the war of 1914-18, it does not understand the inevitability of its transformation into civil war between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in all the advanced countries.

When the Bolsheviks, as far back as November 1914, pointed to this inevitability, the philistines of all countries retorted with stupid sneers, and among these philistines were all the leaders of the Berne International. Now, the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war has become a fact in a number of countries, not only in Russia but also in Finland, in Hungary, in Germany, and even in neutral Switzerland, and that civil war is maturing is observed, felt, and palpable in all advanced countries without exception.

To ignore this problem now (as Ramsay MacDonald does) or to try to *evade* the issue of the inevitability of civil war with sentimental conciliatory phrases (as Messrs. Kautsky & Co. do) is equivalent to direct betrayal of the proletariat, equivalent to actual desertion to the bourgeoisie. Because the real political leaders of the bourgeoisie have long understood the inevitability of civil war and are making excellent, thoughtful and systematic preparations for it and strengthening their positions in anticipation of it.

The bourgeoisie of the whole world are exerting all their strength, enormous energy, intellect and determination, stopping at no crime, and condemning whole countries to famine and utter extinction, in the preparations they are making to crush the proletariat in the impending civil war. The heroes of the Berne International, on the other hand, like simpletons, or hypocritical parsons, or pedantic professors, chant their old, worn-out, threadbare reformist song! No spectacle can be more revolting or more disgusting!

The Kautskys and MacDonalds continue to *frighten* the capitalists with the menace of revolution, to *scare* the bourgeoisie with the menace of civil war in order to ob-

tain concessions from them, their agreement to follow the reformist path. This is what all the writings, all the philosophy, all the policy of the entire Berne International amount to. We saw that miserable lackey's trick played in Russia in 1905 by the liberals (Cadets), and in 1917-19 by the Mensheviks and "Socialist-Revolutionaries." The servile souls of the Berne International never think of *imbuing* the masses with the consciousness of the inevitability and necessity of *defeating* the bourgeoisie in civil war, of pursuing a policy wholly dedicated to this aim, of elucidating, raising and solving all problems from this, and only from this, point of view. That is why our sole aim should be once and for all to push the incorrigible reformists, i.e., nine-tenths of the leaders of the Berne International, into the cesspool of the hirelings of the bourgeoisie.

The bourgeoisie *needs* such hirelings as enjoy the trust of a section of the working class, and as embellish and furbish the bourgeoisie with talk about the reformist path being possible, throw dust in the eyes of the people by such talk, and *divert* the people from revolution by giving glowing descriptions of the charms and possibilities of the reformist path.

All the writings of the Kautskys, and of our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, boil down to such glowing descriptions, to the whining of the cowardly philistine who fears revolution.

We are unable here to reiterate in detail what main economic causes have made inevitable the revolutionary path, and only the revolutionary path, made impossible any other solution of the problems history has placed on the order of the day than that of civil war. About this volumes must be and will be written. If Messrs. the Kautskys and other leaders of the Berne International do not understand this, all that can be said is: ignorance is less remote from the truth than prejudice.

For now, after the war, ignorant but sincere men of toil and supporters of the working people, understand the inevitability of revolution, of civil war and of the dictatorship of the proletariat far more easily than do the gentlemen stuffed with most learned reformist prejudices, the Kautskys, MacDonalds, Vanderveldes, Brantings, Turatis, and *tutti quanti*.*

As one of the particularly striking confirmations of the phenomenon observable everywhere, on a mass scale, namely, that of the growth of revolutionary consciousness among the masses, we may take the novels of Henri Barbusse, *Le Feu (Under Fire)* and *Clarté (Light)*. The former has already been translated into all languages, and in France 230,000 copies have been sold. The transformation of an absolutely ignorant rank-and-filer, utterly crushed by philistine ideas and prejudices, into a revolutionary precisely under the influence of the war is depicted with extraordinary power, talent and truthfulness.

The mass of proletarians and semi-proletarians are on our side and are coming over to us by leaps and bounds. The Berne International is a General Staff without an army, and will collapse like a house of cards if thoroughly exposed to the masses.

The name of Karl Liebknecht was used in the whole of the Entente bourgeois press during the war in order to deceive the masses: so as to depict the French and British imperialist pirates and plunderers as sympathizing with this hero, with this "sole honest German," as they said.

Now the heroes of the Berne International belong to the same organization as the Scheidemanns who engineered the murder of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, as the Scheidemanns who fulfilled the role of executioners, of working-class stock, who rendered hangman's service to the bourgeoisie. In words—hypocritical attempts to "condemn" the Scheidemanns (as if "condemning" makes

* All the others.—Ed.

any difference!). In deeds—belonging to the same organization as the murderers do.

In 1907 the late Harry Quelch was expelled by the German Government from Stuttgart for describing a gathering of European diplomats as a "thieves' supper."* The leaders of the Berne International are not only a thieves' supper, they are a vile assassins' supper.

They will not escape the justice of the revolutionary workers.

VI

Ramsay MacDonald disposes of the problem of the dictatorship of the proletariat in a couple of words as of the subject for a discussion on freedom and democracy.

No. It is time to act. Discussions are belated.

The most dangerous thing about the Berne International is its verbal recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat. These people are capable of recognizing everything, of signing everything, only to keep at the head of the labour movement. Kautsky now says that he is not opposed to the dictatorship of the proletariat! The French social-chauvinists and "Centrists" put their names to resolutions in favour of the dictatorship of the proletariat!

But they deserve not the slightest confidence.

It is not verbal recognition that is needed, but a complete rupture *in deeds* with the policy of reformism, with prejudices about bourgeois freedom and bourgeois democracy, the pursuit in deeds of the policy of revolutionary class struggle.

Attempts are made to recognize the dictatorship of the proletariat in words, in order secretly to drag in along with it the "will of the majority," "universal suffrage" (this is exactly what Kautsky does), bourgeois parliamentarism, rejection of the utter destruction, shattering, thorough smashing of the entire bourgeois machinery of

* See page 184 of this volume.—Ed.

state. These new evasions, new loop-holes of reformism, are to be feared most of all.

The dictatorship of the proletariat would be impossible if the majority of the population did not consist of proletarians and semi-proletarians. Kautsky & Co. try to falsify this truth by arguing that "the vote of the majority" is required for the dictatorship of the proletariat to be recognized as "correct."

Comical pedants! They fail to understand that voting within the bounds, the institutions, the customs of bourgeois parliamentarism is a *part* of the bourgeois state machinery that has to be broken and smashed from top to bottom *in order* to give effect to the dictatorship of the proletariat, in order to pass from bourgeois democracy to proletarian democracy.

They fail to understand that it is not voting at all but civil war that decides *all* serious political problems, when history places the dictatorship of the proletariat on the order of the day.

They fail to understand that the dictatorship of the proletariat is the rule of *one* class, which takes into its hands the *entire* machinery of the new state, and which *vanquishes* the bourgeoisie and *neutralizes* the whole of the petty bourgeoisie, the peasantry, the lower middle class and the intelligentsia.

The Kautskys and MacDonalds recognize the class struggle in words, but in deeds forget about it at the most decisive moment in the history of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat: at the moment when, having seized state power, and supported by the semi-proletariat, the proletariat with the aid of this power *continues* the class struggle until *classes are abolished*.

Like real philistines, the leaders of the Berne International repeat bourgeois-democratic catchwords about freedom, equality and democracy, but fail to see that they are repeating fragments of ideas concerning the free and equal *commodity owner*, fail to understand that the pro-

letariat needs a state not for "freedom," but *for the purpose of suppressing* its enemy, the exploiter, the capitalist.

The freedom and equality of the *commodity owner* are as dead as capitalism. And the Kautskys and MacDonalds will never revive it.

The proletariat needs the abolition of classes—such is the *real* content of proletarian democracy, of proletarian freedom (freedom *from* the capitalist, from commodity exchange), of proletarian equality (not equality of *classes*—that is the banality which the Kautskys, Vanderveldes and MacDonalds slip into—but the equality of the working people who *overthrow* capital and capitalism).

So long as classes exist the freedom and equality of classes are a bourgeois deception. The proletariat takes power, becomes the *ruling* class, smashes bourgeois parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy, suppresses the bourgeoisie, suppresses *all* the attempts of *all* other classes to return to capitalism, gives *real* freedom and equality to the working people (which are practicable only when the private ownership of the means of production *is abolished*), and gives them, not only the "right to," but the *real* use of, *what has been taken* from the bourgeoisie.

He who fails to understand *this* content of the dictatorship of the proletariat (or what is the same thing, Soviet power, or proletarian democracy) takes the name of the dictatorship of the proletariat in vain.

I cannot here develop these ideas in greater detail; I have done so in *The State and Revolution* and in the pamphlet *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*. I shall conclude by dedicating these remarks to the delegates to the Lucerne Congress (August 10, 1919) of the Berne International.

July 14, 1919

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LETTER TO SYLVIA PANKHURST¹²⁹

To Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst, in London

August 28, 1919

Dear Comrade,

I received your letter of July 16, 1919, only yesterday. I am extremely grateful to you for the information about Britain and will try to fulfil your request, i.e., reply to your question.

I have no doubt at all that many workers who belong to the best, most honest and sincerely revolutionary representatives of the proletariat are enemies of parliamentarism and of any participation in Parliament. The older capitalist culture and bourgeois democracy are in a given country, the more understandable this is, since the bourgeoisie in old parliamentary countries has excellently mastered the arts of hypocrisy and of fooling the people in a thousand ways, passing off bourgeois parliamentarism as "democracy in general" or as "pure democracy" and so on, cunningly concealing the million threads which bind Parliament to the stock exchange and the capitalists, utilizing a venal mercenary press and by every means exercising the power of money, the power of capital.

There is no doubt that the Communist International and the Communist Parties of the various countries would be making an irreparable mistake if they repulsed those workers who stand for Soviet power, but who are against participation in the parliamentary struggle. If we take the problem in its general form, theoretically, then it is this

very programme, i.e., the struggle for Soviet power, for the Soviet republic, which is able to unite and must now unite without fail all sincere, honest revolutionaries from among the workers. Very many anarchist workers are now becoming sincere supporters of Soviet power, and that being so, it proves them to be our best comrades and friends, the best of revolutionaries, who have been enemies of Marxism only through misunderstanding, or, more correctly, not through misunderstanding but because the official socialism prevailing in the epoch of the Second International (1889-1914) betrayed Marxism, fell into opportunism, perverted Marx's revolutionary teachings in general and his teachings on the lessons of the Paris Commune of 1871 in particular. I have written in detail about this in my book *The State and Revolution* and will therefore not dwell further on the problem.

What if in a given country those who are Communists by conviction and by their readiness to carry on revolutionary work, sincere partisans of Soviet power (the "Soviet system," as non-Russians sometimes call it), cannot unite owing to disagreement over participation in Parliament?

I should consider such disagreement immaterial at present, since the struggle for Soviet power is the political struggle of the proletariat in its highest, most class-conscious, most revolutionary form. It is better to be with the revolutionary workers when they are mistaken over some partial or secondary question, than with the "official" Socialists or Social-Democrats, if the latter are not sincere, firm revolutionaries, and are unwilling or unable to conduct revolutionary work among the working masses, but pursue correct tactics in regard to that partial question. And the question of parliamentarism is now a partial, secondary question. Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht were, in my opinion, correct when they defended participation in the elections to the bourgeois German Parliament, to the constituent "National

Assembly," at the January 1919 Conference of the Spartacists in Berlin, *against* the majority at the conference.¹³⁰ But, of course, they were still more correct when they preferred remaining with the Communist Party, which was making a partial mistake, to going with the direct traitors to socialism, like Scheidemann and his party, or with those servile souls, doctrinaires, cowards, spineless accomplices of the bourgeoisie, and reformists in practice, such as are Kautsky, Haase, Däumig and all this "party" of German "independents."

I am personally convinced that to renounce participation in the parliamentary elections is a mistake on the part of the revolutionary workers of Britain, but better to make that mistake than to delay the formation of a big workers' Communist Party in Britain out of all the trends and elements listed by you, which sympathize with Bolshevism and sincerely support the Soviet Republic. If, for example, among the B.S.P. there were sincere Bolsheviks who refused, because of differences over participation in Parliament, to merge at once in a Communist Party with trends 4, 6 and 7, then these Bolsheviks, in my opinion, would be making a mistake a thousand times greater than the mistaken refusal to participate in elections to the bourgeois British Parliament. In saying this I naturally assume that trends 4, 6 and 7, taken together, are really connected with the *mass* of the workers, and are not *simply* small intellectual groups, as is often the case in Britain. In this respect particular importance probably attaches to the Worker's Committees and Shop Stewards,¹³¹ which, one should imagine, are closely connected with the *masses*.

Indissoluble connection with the mass of the workers, the ability to agitate unceasingly among them, to participate in every strike, to respond to every demand of the masses—this is the chief thing for a Communist Party, especially in such a country as Britain, where until now (as incidentally is the case in all imperialist countries)

participation in the socialist movement, and the labour movement generally, has been confined chiefly to narrow upper strata of the workers, members of the labour aristocracy, in greater part thoroughly and hopelessly spoiled by reformism, held captive by bourgeois and imperialist prejudices. Without a struggle against this stratum, without the destruction of every trace of its prestige among the workers, without convincing the masses of the utter bourgeois corruption of this stratum, there can be no question of a serious communist workers' movement. That applies to Britain, to France, to America, and to Germany.

Those working-class revolutionaries who make parliamentarism the centre of their attacks are quite right inasmuch as these attacks serve to express their denial in principle of bourgeois parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy. Soviet power, the Soviet republic—this is what the workers' revolution has put in place of bourgeois democracy, this is the form of transition from capitalism to socialism, the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat. And criticism of parliamentarism is not only legitimate and necessary, as giving the case for the transition to Soviet power, but is quite correct, as being the recognition of the historically conditional and limited character of parliamentarism, its connection with capitalism and capitalism alone, of its progressive character as against the Middle Ages, and of *its reactionary character as against Soviet power*.

But the critics of parliamentarism in Europe and America, when they are anarchists or anarcho-syndicalists, are very often wrong in so far as they reject *all participation* in elections and parliamentary activity. Here they simply show their lack of revolutionary experience. We Russians, who have lived through two great revolutions in the twentieth century, are well aware what importance parliamentarism can have, and actually does have during a revolutionary period in general and *in the very midst of a*

revolution in particular. Bourgeois parliaments must be abolished and replaced by Soviet bodies. That is undoubted. It is undoubted now, after the experience of Russia, Hungary, Germany and other countries, that this *will absolutely take place* during proletarian revolution. Therefore, systematically to prepare the working masses for this, to explain in advance the importance to them of Soviet power, to conduct propaganda and agitation for it—all this is the *absolute* duty of the worker who wants to be a revolutionary in deeds. But we Russians fulfilled *that* task, operating in the parliamentary arena, *too*. In the tsarist, fake, landlord Duma our representatives knew how to carry on revolutionary and republican propaganda. In just the same way *Soviet propaganda* can and must be *carried on* in and from within the bourgeois parliaments.

Perhaps that will not be easy to achieve at once in this or that parliamentary country. But that is another question. Steps must be taken to ensure that these correct tactics are mastered by the revolutionary workers in all countries. And if the workers' party is really *revolutionary*, if it is really a *workers' party* (that is, connected with the masses, with the majority of the working people, with the *rank and file* of the proletariat and not merely with its upper stratum), if it is really a *party*, i.e., a firmly, effectively knit *organization of the revolutionary vanguard*, which knows how to carry on revolutionary work among the masses by all possible means, then such a party will surely be able to keep *its own* parliamentarians in hand, to make of them real revolutionary propagandists, such as Karl Liebknecht was, and not opportunists, not corrupters of the proletariat with bourgeois methods, bourgeois customs, bourgeois ideas, bourgeois poverty of ideas.

If that failed to be achieved in Britain at once, if, in addition, no union of the supporters of Soviet power proved possible in Britain because of a difference over parliamentarism and only because of that, then I should

consider a good step forward to complete unity the immediate formation of *two* Communist Parties, i.e., two parties which stand for the transition from bourgeois parliamentarism to Soviet power. Let one of these parties recognize participation in the bourgeois Parliament, and the other reject it; this disagreement is now so immaterial that the most reasonable thing would be not to split over it. But even the joint existence of two such parties would be immense progress as compared with the present situation, would most likely be a transition to complete unity and the speedy victory of communism.

Soviet power in Russia has not only shown by the experience of almost two years that the dictatorship of the proletariat is possible *even* in a peasant country and is capable, by creating a strong army (the best proof that organization and order prevail), of holding on in unbelievably, exceptionally difficult conditions.

Soviet power has done more: it has already conquered morally *throughout* the world, for the working masses everywhere, although they get only tiny fragments of the truth about Soviet power, although they hear thousands and millions of false reports about Soviet power, *are already for Soviet power*. It is already understood by the proletariat of the whole world that this power is the power of the working people, that it alone is salvation from capitalism, from the yoke of capital, from wars between the imperialists, and leads to lasting peace.

That is why defeats of individual Soviet republics by the imperialists are possible, but it is impossible to conquer the world Soviet movement of the proletariat.

With communist greetings,

N. Lenin

P.S.—The following cutting from the Russian press will give you an example of our information about Britain:

“London, 25.8 (via Belooostrov.) The London correspondent of the Copenhagen paper *Berlingske Tidende* wires on August 3rd con-

cerning the Bolshevik movement in Britain: 'The strikes which have occurred in the last few days and the recent revelations have shaken the confidence of the British in the immunity of their country to Bolshevism. At present the press is vigorously discussing this question, and the government is making every effort to establish that a "conspiracy" has existed for quite a long time and has had for its aim neither more nor less than the overthrow of the existing system. The British police have arrested a revolutionary bureau which, according to the press, had both money and arms at its disposal. *The Times* publishes the contents of certain documents found on the arrested men. They contain a complete revolutionary programme, according to which the entire bourgeoisie are to be disarmed; arms and ammunition are to be obtained for Soviets of Workers' and Red Army Departments and a Red Army formed; all government posts are to be filled by workers. Furthermore, it was planned to set up a revolutionary tribunal for political criminals and persons guilty of cruelly treating prisoners. It was proposed to confiscate all foodstuffs. Parliament and other organs of public government were to be dissolved and revolutionary Soviets created in their place. The working day was to be lowered to six hours and the minimum weekly wage raised to £7. All state and other debts were to be annulled. All banks, industrial and commercial enterprises and means of transport were to be declared nationalized.'

If this is true, then I must offer the British imperialists and capitalists, in the shape of their organ, the richest newspaper in the world, *The Times*, my respectful gratitude and thanks for their excellent propaganda on behalf of Bolshevism. Carry on in the same spirit, gentlemen of *The Times*, you are splendidly leading Britain to the victory of Bolshevism!

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HOW THE BOURGEOISIE USE RENEGADES

(Excerpt)

For forty years, from 1852 to 1892, Marx and Engels spoke of part (viz., the top strata, the leaders, the "aristocracy") of the workers in Britain *becoming increasingly bourgeois, owing to* that country's colonial advantages, her monopolies. It is clear as daylight that for quite a number of other countries the imperialist monopolies in the twentieth century were bound to create the same phenomenon as in Britain. In all the advanced countries we see corruption, bribery, desertion to the bourgeoisie by the *leaders of the working class* and its *top strata* in consequence of the sops handed out by the bourgeoisie, who provide these leaders with "soft jobs," give crumbs from their profits to these upper strata, shift the burden of the worst paid and hardest work to backward workers brought into the country, and enhance the privileges of the "labour aristocracy" as compared with the mass.

The war of 1914-18 gave conclusive proof of the treachery to socialism, of the desertion to the bourgeoisie by the *leaders and top strata* of the proletariat, by all the social-chauvinists, Gompers, Brantings, Renaudels, MacDonalds, Scheidemanns, etc. And it goes without saying that for a time part of the workers by sheer inertia follow these bourgeois scoundrels.

The Berne International of the Huysmans, Vanderveldes and Scheidemanns has now taken full shape as the yellow

International of these traitors to socialism. If they are not fought, if a split with them is not effected, there can be no question of any *real* socialism, of any *sincere* work for the benefit of the social revolution.

Let the German Independents¹³² try to sit between two stools; such is their destiny. Kautsky is kissed and embraced by the Scheidemanns as one of their "own"; Stampfer howls about it, and, truly, Kautsky is a real comrade of the Scheidemanns. As to Hilferding, who is also an Independent and a friend of Kautsky's, he proposed at Lucerne that the Scheidemanns be expelled from the International. Of course, the real leaders of the yellow International merely laughed at Hilferding, whose proposal was a piece of either extreme stupidity or extreme hypocrisy: to try to pass as a "Left" among the working masses and at the same time to retain a seat in the International of servitors of the bourgeoisie! But no matter how we explain the conduct of Hilferding, who is one of the leaders, there is no doubt about one thing: both the spinelessness of the "Independents" and the baseness of the Scheidemanns, Brantings, and Vanderveldes will inevitably cause the proletarian masses *to abandon the traitorous leaders* in ever increasing numbers. For quite a long time imperialism may split the workers in some countries, as the example of Britain has shown, but *unity* among the revolutionaries, unity between the masses and them, the ousting of the yellow leaders is progressing steadily on a world scale. The enormous successes of the Communist International prove this: a Communist Party has already been formed in America, in Paris the Committee for Restoring International Ties and the Trade-Union Defence Committee have come over to the Third International. In Paris two newspapers have crossed over to the Third International, namely, Raymond Péricat's *International* and Georges Anquetil's *Banned Publication (Bolshevik?)*. In Britain we are on the eve of the formation of a Communist Party, which has the backing of the best people in the British

Socialist Party, the Shop Stewards' Committees, the revolutionary industrialists, etc. The Swedish Lefts, the Norwegian Social-Democrats, the Dutch Communists, the Swiss and Italian socialist parties are now in the same ranks as the German Spartacists and Russian Bolsheviks.

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REPORT OF THE ALL-RUSSIAN
CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
AND THE COUNCIL
OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS*

(Excerpt)

And above all one asks oneself the question: how could such a miracle take place as that of the Soviet system holding out for two years in a backward, ruined and war-weary country, despite the stubborn struggle waged against it first by German imperialism, which at that time was considered omnipotent, and then by Entente imperialism, which a year ago settled accounts with Germany, was unrivalled and loded it over all countries on earth without exception? From the angle of a simple calculation of the forces involved, from the angle of a military assessment of these forces, it really is a miracle, because the Entente was and continues to be immeasurably stronger than we are. Nevertheless, the year under review is most of all noteworthy precisely for our having won a tremendous victory, so great a victory that I think we may say without exaggeration that our *main difficulties are already behind us*. However great the dangers and difficulties still ahead, the main ones are evidently behind us. We must get clarity on the reason for this, and, what is most important, must correctly determine our policy for the

* Delivered to the Seventh All-Russian Congress of Soviets, December 5, 1919.—Ed.

future, since the future will almost certainly on more than one occasion bring further attempts by the Entente to repeat their intervention, and will maybe bring the previous robber alliance between the international and Russian capitalists again into being for the purpose of restoring the power of the landlords and capitalists, of overthrowing Soviet rule in Russia, in a word, with the old aim of blotting out the centre of the world socialist conflagration—the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

Looking from this angle at the history of the Entente intervention and at the political lesson we have learned, I must say that this history is divided into three main stages, each of which has successively given us thorough-going and lasting victory.

The first stage, naturally the one more accessible and easier for the Entente, was their attempt to settle matters with Soviet Russia by means of their own troops. Of course, after the Entente had defeated Germany they had armies of millions of men that had not yet openly declared for peace and that did not immediately recover from the fright given them by German imperialism, which had been used to scare them in all the Western countries. At that time, of course, from the military angle, from the angle of foreign policy, it would have cost the Entente nothing to take a tenth part of their armies and despatch them to Russia. Note that they completely dominated the sea, had complete naval supremacy. Troop transportation and supplies were always entirely under their control. Had the Entente, which hated us as only the bourgeoisie can hate the socialist revolution, then been able at all successfully to fling even a tenth part of their armies against us, there cannot be the slightest doubt that the fate of Soviet Russia would have been settled and it would have met that of Hungary.

Why did the Entente fail to achieve this? They landed troops in Murmansk. The drive into Siberia was under-

taken with the aid of Entente troops, and Japanese troops continue to hold a distant slice of Eastern Siberia, while military units, even though not big ones, of all the Entente states were to be found all over Western Siberia. Then French troops were landed in the south of Russia. That was the first stage of international intervention in our affairs, the first attempt, so to speak, to crush the Soviets with troops taken by the Entente from their own countries, i.e., with workers and peasants of the more advanced countries, who were splendidly equipped; and, generally speaking, as far as the technical and material prerequisites for the campaign were concerned, there was nothing that the Entente were lacking in. No obstacles faced them. How, then, are we to explain the failure of that attempt? It ended in the Entente having to withdraw their troops from Russia, because the Entente troops proved incapable of waging a struggle against revolutionary Soviet Russia. That, comrades, has always been our main and principal argument. From the very outset of the revolution, we have said that we constitute a party of the international proletariat, and that, however great the difficulties facing the revolution, the time would come when, at the most decisive moment, the sympathy, the solidarity of the workers oppressed by international imperialism would make itself felt. We were accused on that account of being Utopians. While we cannot always count on action by the proletariat, or on its success in all cases when it does take place, at any rate we may say that during these two years of the world's history we have proved right a thousand times over. The attempt of the British and French to crush Soviet Russia with their own troops, an attempt that promised them certain and very easy success in a minimum of time—that attempt ended in failure: the British troops left Arkhangelsk, and the French troops that had landed in the South were all taken back home. And we know now—despite the blockade, despite the ring encircling us, news does reach us from West Europe, we

do get British and French newspapers, even if sporadically, from which we learn that letters sent by British soldiers from the Arkhangelsk Region got to Britain and were published there—we know that the name of the Frenchwoman, Comrade Jean Labourbe, who engaged in communist activity among French soldiers and workers and was shot in Odessa, became known to the entire French proletariat and became a battle-cry, a name around which all French workers, irrespective of the apparently insurmountable factional trends of syndicalism, united for action against international imperialism. The words once written by Comrade Radek, who fortunately, as today's reports state, has been liberated by Germany and whom we shall maybe see soon, that the soil of Russia, aflame with the fire of revolution, would prove inaccessible to the Entente troops—these words, that seemed to be just a writer's flight of fancy, turned out to be an exactly realized fact. Indeed, despite all our backwardness, despite all the burden of our struggle, the workers and peasants of Britain and of France proved incapable on our soil of fighting against us. The result was in our favour. The first time they tried to move masses of military forces against us—and without them victory is impossible—the only result was that, thanks to their proper class instinct, the French and British soldiers brought home from Russia the very ulcer of Bolshevism that the German imperialists combated when they expelled our envoys from Berlin. They thought they would barricade themselves by that means against the ulcer of Bolshevism, which now covered the whole of Germany in the shape of a strengthened labour movement. The victory we won in compelling the evacuation of the British and French troops was the greatest victory we had over the Entente. We deprived them of their soldiers. We answered their boundless military and technical superiority by depriving the Entente of it, due to the solidarity of the working people against the imperialist governments.

And here was disclosed how superficial and unclear it is to judge these so-called democratic countries according to the criteria usually employed in judging them. In their parliaments they have stable bourgeois majorities. They call that "democracy." Capital dominates and weighs down on everything, continues to resort to the military censorship. They call that "democracy." Among the millions of copies of their newspapers and magazines you will hardly find more than very few that contain even a hint of anything favourable about the Bolsheviks. That is why they say: "We are protected against the Bolsheviks, order prevails in our countries," and they call it "democracy." How did it happen that a small section of the British troops and French sailors were able to compel the withdrawal of the Entente troops from Russia? There is something behind that. It means that the masses of the people are for us even in Britain, France, and America; it means that all these surface features, as those Socialists who have refused to betray socialism have always asserted, are a deception; it means that bourgeois parliamentarism, bourgeois democracy, bourgeois freedom of the press are merely freedom for the capitalists, freedom to bribe public opinion, to exert pressure on it by all the power of money. That is what Socialists always said, until the imperialist war scattered them to their national camps and turned each national group of Socialists into lackeys of their bourgeoisie. That was said by Socialists until the war, that was always said by the internationalists and Bolsheviks during the war—all that proved to be totally true. All the surface features, all the window-dressing, are a deception that is becoming increasingly obvious to the masses. They all shout about democracy, but in not a single one of the world's parliaments did they dare to say that they were declaring war on Soviet Russia. That is why we read in the numerous French, British, and American publications we have received, the proposal to "place the heads of states in the dock for having violated the

Constitution, for waging war on Russia without declaring war." When, where was it allowed, what article of the Constitution, what Parliament allowed it? Where did they gather their parliamentary representatives together, even after taking the precaution to imprison all Bolsheviks and near-Bolsheviks, to use the expression of the French press? Even under those conditions they could not make the statement in their parliaments that they were fighting Russia. That was why the splendidly armed, previously undefeated troops of Britain and France were unable to defeat us and left the Arkhangelsk area in the North, and the South.

That was our first and basic victory, because it is not only a military victory, and not even a military victory at all, but actually a victory of that international solidarity of the working people on behalf of which we began the whole revolution, and which we pointed to and said that however numerous the trials we would have to undergo, all these sacrifices would be repaid a hundredfold by the development of the international revolution, which is inevitable. It was manifested in the fact that in the sphere where the grossest and material factors play the greatest part, namely, in the military sphere, we defeated the Entente by depriving them of the workers and peasants in soldier's uniform.

The first victory was followed by the second period of Entente intervention in our affairs. Each nation is headed by a group of politicians possessed of splendid experience, and that is why, after losing this stake, they staked their chances on something else, making use of their domination over the whole world. There is not a single country, not a single bit of the earth's surface, which is not in fact totally dominated by British, French, and American finance capital. That was the basis for the new attempt they made, namely, to compel the small countries that surround Russia, many of which were liberated and were enabled to declare themselves independent only during

the war—Poland, Estland, Finland, Georgia, the Ukraine, etc.,—to compel these small states to go to war against Russia on British, French and American money.

You may remember, comrades, the report in our newspapers of a speech by the renowned British Minister Churchill, in which he said that 14 states would attack Russia and that September would see the fall of Petrograd, and December that of Moscow. I heard that Churchill then disclaimed this report, but it was taken from the Swedish *Fölkets Dagblad Politiken* of August 25. Even, however, if this was an unreliable source, we are perfectly well aware that the deeds of Churchill and the British imperialists have been just of that kind. We are perfectly well aware that everything was done to exert pressure on Finland, Estland, and other small countries, with a view to getting them to wage war on Soviet Russia. I happened to read a leading article in *The Times*, the most influential bourgeois newspaper in Britain, a leader written when Yudenich's troops, obviously supplied, equipped and convoyed aboard Entente ships, were a few versts away from Petrograd, and Detskoye Syelo had been taken. The article was a veritable onslaught, in which the maximum pressure was exerted—pressure of a military, diplomatic, and historical kind. British capital flung itself on Finland and faced it with an ultimatum: "The eyes of the whole world are on Finland," said the British capitalists, "the entire fate of Finland depends on whether it understands its vocation, whether it will help to crush the filthy, dirty, bloody wave of Bolshevism, and liberate Russia." And in return for this "great and moral" work, for this "noble, civilized" work, Finland was promised so many million pounds, such and such a piece of territory, and such and such benefits. And what was the result? Time was when Yudenich's troops were a few versts away from Petrograd, while Denikin stood to the north of Orel, when the slightest assistance to them would have quickly settled the fate

of Petrograd to the advantage of our enemies, in a minimum of time and at negligible cost.

The entire pressure of the Entente was brought to bear on Finland, which is head over ears in debt to them. And not only in debt: Finland cannot carry on for a month without the aid of these countries. How did the "miracle" happen that we won the contest against such an enemy? And we did win it. Finland did not enter the war, Yudenich was defeated, so was Denikin, and that at a time when joint action by them would most surely, most swiftly have led to the settling of the whole struggle to the advantage of international capital. We won the contest with international imperialism in this most serious and desperate trial. But how did we do so? How could such a "miracle" take place? It did so because the Entente banked on what all capitalist states do, operating wholly and solely by deception, by pressure; that was why everything they did roused such resistance that the result was to our advantage. We were very poorly armed, worn out, and we said to the Finnish workers, whom the Finnish bourgeoisie had crushed: "You must not fight against us." The Entente stood in the full strength of their armaments, of their external might, of all their food supplies with which they were in a position to provide these countries, and demanded that they fight against us. We won this contest. We won because the Entente now had no troops of their own to fling against us, they had to resort to the small nations, but these, not only the workers and peasants, but even the decent section of the bourgeoisie that had crushed the working class, in the end did not go against us.!

When the Entente imperialists spoke of democracy and independence, the nations had the impudence, from the Entente viewpoint, and from our viewpoint the foolishness, to take these promises seriously and to understand independence as being really independence, and not a means of enriching the British and French capitalists. They thought that democracy meant to live as free men, and not

that all American multimillionaires should be able to plunder their country, or that every tin-pot aristocrat of an officer should be able to behave like a cad, and turn into a brazen black-marketeer who is ready for a few hundred per cent profit to do the dirtiest of jobs. That was how we won victory! The Entente encountered opposition to the pressure they exerted on these small countries, on each of these 14 countries. The Finnish bourgeoisie, which employed White terror to crush tens of thousands of Finnish workers, and knows that this will not be forgotten, that the German bayonets that enabled it to do that no longer exist—this Finnish bourgeoisie hates the Bolsheviks with all the energy of a plunderer of the workers who have thrown him off. Nevertheless this Finnish bourgeoisie said to itself: "If we follow the instructions of the Entente, that means we shall undoubtedly lose all hope of independence." And this independence was given to them by the Bolsheviks in November 1917, when there was a bourgeois government in Finland. Thus, the attitude of wide sections of the Finnish bourgeoisie proved to be one of vacillation. We won the contest with the Entente because they counted on the small nations and at the same time repelled them.

This experience confirms on an enormous, global scale what we have always said. There are two forces on earth that can decide the destiny of mankind. One force is international capitalism, and should it be victorious it will display this force by countless atrocities—this may be seen from the history of the development of every small nation. The other force is the international proletariat, which fights for the socialist revolution by way of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which it calls workers' democracy. Neither the vacillating elements here in Russia, nor the bourgeoisie of the small countries believed us; they called us Utopians or bandits or even worse, for there is no stupid and monstrous accusation that they will not fling against us. But when the issue squarely faced them of either going with the Entente and helping them to crush the Bol-

sheviks, or of helping the Bolsheviks by neutrality, it turned out that we won the contest and got that neutrality. Although we had no treaties, whereas Britain, France and America had all sorts of promissory notes, all sorts of treaties, yet the small nations did as we wanted them to; they did so not because the Polish, Finnish, Lithuanian or Latvian bourgeoisie derived satisfaction from conducting their policy in a way that suited the Bolsheviks—that, of course, is nonsense—but because we were right in our assessment of the historical forces involved; the issue was: either the brute capital would be victorious, and then, be it in the most democratic republic, it would crush all the small nations of the world—or the dictatorship of the proletariat would be victorious, the sole hope of all working people and of all the small, downtrodden and weak nations. It turned out that we were right not only in theory, but also in world political practice. When this contest for the troops of Finland and Estland took place we won it, although they could have crushed us with insignificant forces. Despite the fact that the Entente threw the whole weight of their financial pressure, their military might, and their food supplies into the scales, with a view to compelling Finland to take action, yet we won the contest.

That, comrades, was the second stage of international intervention, our second historic victory. Firstly, we won away from Britain, France and America their workers and peasants. These troops could not fight against us. Secondly, we won away from them these small countries, all of which are against us, and in which not Soviet, but bourgeois rule prevails. They displayed friendly neutrality towards us and went against the wishes of that mighty world force, the Entente, for it was a beast that wanted to crush them.

The same thing happened in this connection on a world scale as did to the Siberian peasantry, who believed in the Constituent Assembly and helped the Socialist-Rev-

olutionaries and Mensheviks to join forces with Kolchak and to strike at us. When experience taught these peasants that Kolchak represented the dictatorship of the very worst exploiters, a plunderous dictatorship of landlords and capitalists which was worse than that of the tsar, they then organized the tremendous number of revolts in Siberia which comrades have given us exact reports about, and which now guarantee the complete return to us of Siberia, this time consciously. What happened to the Siberian muzhik, with all his backwardness and political ignorance, has now happened on a broader scale, on a global scale, with all the small nations. They hate the Bolsheviks, some of them have suppressed the Bolsheviks with a bloody hand, with furious White terror, but when they saw their "liberators," British officers, they understood the meaning of British and American "democracy." When the representatives of the British and American bourgeoisie made their appearance in Finland and in Estland, they began to tyrannize with a brazenness greater than that displayed by the Russian imperialists, greater because the Russian imperialists were representatives of old times and did not know how to tyrannize properly, whereas these people do know, and tyrannize without limit.

That is why this victory at the second stage is a far more lasting one than now appears. I am not exaggerating at all, and consider exaggerations to be extremely dangerous. I have not the slightest doubt that further attempts will be made by the Entente to set now one, now another of our little neighbouring states against us. Such attempts will take place, because the small states are wholly dependent on the Entente, because all these speeches about freedom, independence and democracy are just hypocrisy, and the Entente may compel them once again to raise their hands against us. But if this attempt has been foiled at such a convenient moment as when it was so easy to wage a struggle against us, we may, I

think, say definitely that in this regard the main difficulty is undoubtedly behind us. We are entitled to say this, and do so without the slightest exaggeration, fully conscious that the Entente possess a tremendous preponderance of strength. We have won a lasting victory. Attempts will be made against us, but we shall defeat them with greater ease, because the small states, despite their bourgeois system, have become convinced by experience, not theory—these gentlemen are unsuited for theory—that the Entente is a more brazen and predatory brute than the one they have in their minds when they think of the Bolsheviks, the bogey used for scaring children and cultured philistines all over Europe.

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REPORT TO THE FIRST
ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF LABOURING COSSACKS

March 1, 1920

(Excerpt)

Well then, when Britain landed troops in the North and France in the South, came the decisive test and final show-down. Now the question of who was right was clarified. Were the Bolsheviks right when they said that to emerge from this struggle one must count on the workers, or the Mensheviks when they said that an attempt to bring about a revolution in one country would be folly and adventure, because other countries would crush it. You could hear such speeches not only from Party people but from all who had just begun to reason politically. Well then, the decisive test came. For a long time we did not know what the result would be. For a long time we were unable to establish that result, but now, retrospectively, we know it. Even in the British press, despite the frenzied spate of lies flung at the Bolsheviks in all bourgeois papers, letters began to appear from British soldiers near Arkhangelsk, which said that they had found leaflets in English on Russian territory explaining that they had been fooled, that they were being taken to fight against workers and peasants who had set up a government of their own.¹³³ These soldiers wrote that they would not agree to fight. We know with regard to France that sailors mutinied there, for which dozens, hundreds, and perhaps thousands

Why have you come to Mourmansk?

Comrade!

Why have you come to Mourmansk? You have been told in England that the demand for iron on the Western Front is desperate. You know that in England men of 45 and over are being called to the colours because of the urgent need of iron. In France the potatoes brought here, right to the Arctic Sea a thousand miles from the Baltic front.

For what purpose? Your government tells us that it has an heroic intention towards us. That it does not desire to recover our territory. That it will not interfere with our internal affairs. That you have been sent here only for the purpose of controlling our Moscow railway against the Black and the German Command. It is not so.

When England offers to get behind to supply the Russian and Russian on our front, instead, you get a false proposition for advice. We have not asked your government to help us to do this or that. We know that their interests are quite other than those they suggest to us.

The Mourmansk railway is no danger either from the Germans or from the English. If you look at a map you will see that the railways and roads from the West of England and hundreds of miles west of the Mourmansk railway. If the "Poles" want to smash your frontier they must traverse hundreds of miles of marshy forest land and pass over difficult hills for an army to do that.

Neither can the Germans threaten the railway.

If the Germans want to attack the Mourmansk railway they need first take Petrograd, and march through our country hundreds of miles from Petrograd to Pskovskaya. We are no longer at war with Germany. The German cabinet advance on Petrograd without first declaring war on us again. There is no likelihood of this happening except in the first if you come south, the Germans may use this as a pretext to advance further into our country.

Therefore you are not required to defend us on the railway your government has been brought here. We will tell you.

You have been brought here to occupy our country in the interest of Allied capitalism.

You have been brought here to overthrow our revolution, and bring back the reign of the Whites!

You cannot believe that you say that the Polish government would never do such a thing, but do not speak for us.

The English capitalist newspapers "Times" "Morning Post" "Daily Telegraph" are writing every day about steering a virtual resolute government in Russia. In these papers represent the views of the financiers, capitalists, and professors of England. These papers also constantly refer to the wishes of the British government in our country, which they say would be satisfied to pay for the leave which the financiers, capitalists, and professors wish to a corrupt and tyrannical English, capitalist, and French are not the friends of English workers, nor Russian workers, nor the workers of any country. Who holds the government of England today? The workers of the financial oligarchy? The financial oligarchy? They are not the workers of England today. They are being used in the interest of the financiers, who are pouring out of the fees and salaries of the working people.

Your government is interfering in our internal affairs. It has established its own control to the control you occupy. It has cut off our telegraphic communication with outside. It is attempting to isolate our forces for fighting against us. All these your government and our members of our local forces.

Your government declares that it did so, but we have positive proof that it did.

The Czecho-Slovaks!

You know that in the Volga, right to the heart of our country, the Czecho-Slovaks are again seeking to break our Revolution. They say they wish to fight the Germans but they have remained here and are fighting us. They say they are fighting for liberty, but they are fighting to bring back the tsarist regime. They are pretending to be workers, whenever they go they support the Whites. Hundreds of workers have been sent to the front, and put in the place of the Czecho-Slovaks are gathering around themselves the groups and hundreds of thousands of the "White" regime. It is the same crowd that betrayed Kakhovka that sold the guns and positions made in British territory to the Germans, that deserted our army, and who were just about to set Russia in the Germans when we made our Revolution.

The one object of the Czecho-Slovaks, and the crowd, is to crush our Revolution and bring back the Whites!

N. Lenin, Pres. Council Peoples Government.
G. Tchitcherine, Peoples Commissary for Foreign Affairs

back Russia. They have officially declared that to be their object. And so far has the army entered, and is operating in support of the Allied governments.

The Allied governments and the Allied press are spreading the deeds of the Czecho-Slovaks. The French consulate made a report which has been published in the "Lain" they had undertaken. They are financed by the Allied Military Mission. Their operations are directed by French officers.

Your landing in Mourmansk is part of the scheme to cooperate with the Czecho-Slovaks.

You will be fighting not against enemies but against deceiving people like yourself.

For the first time in history the working people have got control of their country. The workers of all countries are striving to accomplish this object. We in Russia have succeeded. We have thrown the rule of the King, of landlords, and of capitalists. But we have still tremendous difficulties to overcome. We cannot build a new society in a day. We desire to be left alone.

We ask you are you going to help to crush us? To help to give Russia back to the landlords, the capitalists, and the Whites?

You in your Trade Unions have been fighting, capitalists, you know what it is.

Comrade!
Empiremen!
You who order yourselves on your own Revolution!

Comrades! Beware of the agents of the great capitalist! You who have always succeeded in unity with the Russian Revolution, are you going to help to overthrow the first effort of working people to free themselves from their masters and exploiters?

Remember that the Russian Revolution is a struggle, then the power of the capitalists will be everywhere strengthened in every country, and the fight for economic freedom will be set back for a hundred years!

of Frenchmen are still serving terms of hard labour. These sailors declared that they would not fight the Soviet Republic.¹³⁴ Now we can see why neither French nor British troops are marching against us at present, why the British soldiers have been withdrawn from Arkhangelsk, and the British Government does not dare to move them into our territory.

Comrade Radek, one of our political publicists, wrote that Russian soil would be such that every foreign soldier setting foot on it would prove incapable of fighting. This seemed an exaggerated promise, too good to be true. But that is just what happened. The soil on which the Soviet Revolution took place proved very dangerous for all countries. It turned out that the Russian Bolsheviks, who in the days of tsarism succeeded in establishing unity among the workers, were right, while the workers succeeded in establishing small cells, which met all people who believed in them—French workers and British soldiers—with propaganda in their native tongue. True, we only had an insignificant number of leaflets, whereas the British and French press carried on propaganda through thousands of newspapers; furthermore, each phrase of theirs was repeated in tens of thousands of columns, but we issued only two or three quarto-sized leaflets a month, so that at best there was only one leaflet for every 10,000 French soldiers. And I am not sure that even that few reached their destination. Why, after all, did the French and British soldiers believe these leaflets? Because we told the truth and because on their arrival in Russia they saw they had been deceived. They had been told that they were to defend their country, but on their arrival in Russia it turned out that they were to defend the rule of the landlords and capitalists, were to throttle the revolution. If in two years we succeeded in winning these people over, the reason is that, despite the fact that they had already forgotten how they had beheaded their kings, no sooner did they set foot on Russian soil than the Russian Revolution and the vic-

tories of the Russian workers and peasants reminded the British and French soldiers about the revolutions that had once taken place at home, and revived memories in their minds of the events that had occurred in those distant days in their own countries.

Here was confirmation that the Bolsheviks were right, that our hopes had a more solid basis than those of the capitalists, though we had neither money nor armaments, whereas the Entente possessed both arms and invincible armies. Well, we have won over these invincible armies to our side. We have achieved a situation where they do not dare to bring in either British or French troops against us, because experience has taught them that such attempts would act as boomerangs against them. Now that is one of the miracles that has happened in Soviet Russia.

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ABOUT COMPROMISES¹³⁵

In a talk with me, Comrade Lansbury laid particular stress on the following argument of the British opportunist leaders in the labour movement:

The Bolsheviks are compromising with the capitalists, agreeing, in the Peace Treaty with Estonia, for instance, to timber concessions. That being so, compromises with capitalists are no less legitimate when concluded by the moderate leaders of the British labour movement.

Comrade Lansbury considers this argument very widespread in Britain, of importance to the workers and urgently requiring examination.

I shall try to meet this desire.

I

May an advocate of proletarian revolution conclude compromises with capitalists or with the capitalist class?

This question apparently lies at the bottom of the argument I am citing. But to pose the question in this general way is evidence either of extreme political inexperience and a low level of political consciousness on the part of the questioner, or of his knavish intention to use a sophism in order to veil his justification of brigandage, plunder and every other sort of capitalist violence.

Indeed, it would obviously be silly to give a negative reply to this general question. Of course, an advocate of

proletarian revolution may conclude compromises or agreements with capitalists. It all depends on *what kind of agreement is concluded and under what circumstances*. Here and here alone can and must one look for the difference between an agreement that is legitimate from the angle of the proletarian revolution and one that is traitorous, treacherous (from the same angle).

To elucidate this I shall first recall the argument of the founders of Marxism and then adduce some very simple and obvious examples.

It is not for nothing that Marx and Engels are considered the founders of scientific socialism. They were ruthless enemies of all phrase-mongering. They taught that problems of socialism (including problems of socialist tactics) must be posed scientifically. In the seventies of last century, when Engels analysed the revolutionary manifesto of the French Blanquists, Commune fugitives,¹³⁶ he told them in plain terms that their boastful declaration of "no compromise" was an empty phrase. The idea of compromises must not be renounced. The point is through all the compromises which are sometimes necessarily imposed by force of circumstance upon even the most revolutionary party of even the most revolutionary class, to be able to preserve, strengthen, steel and develop the revolutionary tactics and organization, the revolutionary consciousness, determination and preparedness of the working class and its organized vanguard, the Communist Party.

To anybody acquainted with the fundamentals of Marx's teachings, this view inevitably follows from the whole of these teachings. But since in Britain, due to a number of historical causes, Marxism has ever since Chartism (which in many respects was something preparatory to Marxism, the "last word but one" before Marxism) been pushed into the background by the opportunist, semi-bourgeois leaders of the trade unions and co-operatives, I shall try to explain the truth of the view expounded by means of typical

examples drawn from among the universally-known facts of ordinary, political and economic life.

I shall begin with an illustration I have already given once in one of my speeches. Let us suppose the car you are travelling in is attacked by armed bandits. Let us suppose that when a pistol is put to your temple you surrender your car, money and revolver to the bandits, who proceed to use this car, etc., to commit other robberies.

Here is undoubtedly a case of your compromising with highwaymen, your agreement with them. The agreement, though unsigned and tacitly concluded, is nevertheless quite a definite and precise one: "I give you, Mr. Robber, my car, weapon and money; you rid me of your pleasant company."

The question arises: do you call the man who concluded *such* an agreement with highwaymen an *accomplice* in banditry, an *accomplice* in a robbers' assault upon third persons despoiled by the bandits with the aid of the car, money and weapon received by them from the person who concluded this agreement?

No, you do not.

The matter is absolutely plain and simple to the point of triviality.

And it is likewise clear that under different circumstances the tacit surrender to the highwaymen of the car, money and weapon will be considered by every common-sense person as complicity in banditry.

The conclusion is clear: it is just as silly to renounce the idea of any agreements or compromises whatsoever with robbers as it is to acquit anybody of complicity in banditry on the basis of the abstract proposition that, generally speaking, agreements with robbers are sometimes permissible and necessary.

Let us now take a political illustration....

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SPEECH AT THE THIRD ALL-RUSSIAN TRADE-UNION CONGRESS

April 7, 1920

(Excerpt)

Trade unions originated out of capitalism, as a means of developing a new class. A class is a concept which takes shape in struggle and development. No Chinese wall separates one class from another. No such wall divides the workers and peasants. Which way did men learn to unite? First by craft, then by trades. When our proletariat turned into a class, it grew so strong that it took possession of the entire machinery of state, declared war upon the whole world and achieved victory. Then craft and trade organizations became obsolete. There was a time when under capitalism the proletarians united along craft and trade lines. At that time that was a progressive thing. The proletariat could not unite in any other way. It would be absurd to say that the proletariat could unite at once into a class. Such a process of unification may take decades. No one struggled so hard against such sectarian, short-sighted views as Marx did. The class grows where capitalism prevails, and when the opportune moment for revolution arrives, seizes political power. And then all craft and trade organizations become obsolete, lag behind the times, pull backwards, not because bad people are installed there but because bad people and enemies of communism find fertile soil here for their propaganda. We are

surrounded by the petty bourgeoisie, which revives free trade and capitalism. Karl Marx fought the old utopian socialism most of all, and demanded the scientific approach, which shows that the class struggle is the basis for the growth of the class, which must be helped to mature. Marx also fought against working-class leaders who fell into error. In 1872 a vote of censure was passed on Marx in the Federal Council for having said that the British leaders had been bought by the bourgeoisie. Marx, of course, understood this not in the sense that such and such people were traitors. That is nonsense. He spoke of a bloc with the bourgeoisie by a certain section of the workers. The bourgeoisie supports this section of the workers directly and indirectly. That is where the bribing comes in.

As for getting representatives elected to parliaments—that is a field in which the British bourgeoisie has done wonders. It has gone ahead of the others. For a period of forty years—from 1852 to 1892—Marx and Engels exposed the bourgeoisie, but, then, that is how the bourgeoisie acts in all countries. Everywhere in the world, the transition of the trade unions from playing the role of slaves to that of builders marks a turning point.

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“LEFT-WING” COMMUNISM, AN INFANTILE DISORDER¹³⁷

(Excerpts)

Today, when I hear our tactics at the signing of the Brest Peace assailed by the “Socialist-Revolutionaries,” for instance, or when I hear the remark made by Comrade Lansbury in conversation with me—“Our British trade-union leaders say that if it was permissible for the Bolsheviks to compromise, it is permissible for them to compromise, too,” I usually reply by first of all making a simple and “popular” comparison:

Imagine that your car is held up by armed bandits. You hand them over your money, passport, revolver and car. You are relieved of the pleasant company of the bandits. That is unquestionably a compromise. “*Do ut des*” (“I give” you money, fire-arms, a car, “so that you may give” me the opportunity of departing in peace). But it would be difficult to find a sane man who would declare such a compromise to be “inadmissible on principle,” or who would proclaim the compromiser an accomplice of the bandits (even though the bandits might use the car and the fire-arms for further robberies). Our compromise with the bandits of German imperialism was a compromise of that kind.

But when the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in Russia, the Scheidemannites (and to a large extent the Kautskyites) in Germany, Otto Bauer and Friedrich Adler

(not to speak of Messrs. the Renners & Co.) in Austria, the Renaudels and Longuets & Co. in France, the Fabians, the "Independents"* and the "Labourites" in Britain, in 1914-18 and in 1918-20 entered into compromises with the bandits of their own, and sometimes of the "Allied," bourgeoisie *against* the revolutionary proletariat of their own country, all these gentlemen then acted as *accomplices in banditry*.

The conclusion is clear: to reject compromises "on principle," to reject the admissibility of compromises in general, no matter of what kind, is childishness, which it is difficult even to take seriously. A political leader who desires to be useful to the revolutionary proletariat must know how to single out *concrete* cases when such compromises are inadmissible, when they are an expression of opportunism and *treachery*, and to direct the full force of criticism, the entire edge of merciless exposure and relentless war, against *those concrete* compromises, and not allow the well-experienced "practical" Socialists and parliamentary Jesuits to dodge and wriggle out of responsibility by disquisitions on "compromises in general." It is precisely in this way that those gentlemen, the "leaders" of the British trade unions, and also of the Fabian Society and the "Independent" Labour Party, dodge responsibility *for the treachery they perpetrated*, for having made *such* a compromise as is really tantamount to the worst kind of opportunism, betrayal and treachery.

There are compromises and compromises. One must be able to analyse the situation and the concrete conditions of each compromise or of each variety of compromise. One must learn to distinguish between the man who gave the bandits money and fire-arms in order to lessen the damage they could do and facilitate their capture and execution, and the man who gives bandits money and fire-arms in order to share in the loot. In politics this is by no means al-

* Reference is to members of the Independent Labour Party.—Ed.

ways as easy as in this childishly simple example. But anyone who set out to invent a recipe for the workers that would provide in advance ready-made solutions for all possible cases or who promised that the policy of the revolutionary proletariat would never encounter difficulties or intricate situations would simply be a charlatan.

So as to leave no room for misinterpretation, I shall attempt to outline, if only very briefly, a few fundamental rules for analysing concrete compromises.

The party which concluded a compromise with the German imperialists by signing the Brest Peace had been working out its internationalism in action ever since the end of 1914. It was not afraid to call for the defeat of the tsarist monarchy and to condemn "defence of the fatherland" in the war between two imperialist robbers. The parliamentary representatives of this party went to Siberia¹⁹⁸ rather than follow the road leading to ministerial portfolios in a bourgeois government. The revolution that overthrew tsarism and established a democratic republic put this party to a new and tremendous test: the party entered into no agreements with "its own" imperialists, but prepared and carried out their overthrow. Having taken over political power, this party did not leave a vestige of either landlord or capitalist property. Having made public and rescinded the secret treaties of the imperialists, this party proposed peace to *all* nations, and yielded to the violence of the Brest robbers only after the Anglo-French imperialists had frustrated the conclusion of peace, and after the Bolsheviki had done everything humanly possible to hasten the revolution in Germany and other countries. That such a compromise, entered into by such a party in such a situation, was absolutely correct is becoming clearer and more evident to everyone with every passing day.

The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in Russia (like all the leaders of the Second International all over

the world in 1914-20) began with treachery by directly or indirectly justifying "defence of the fatherland," i.e., defence of *their own* predatory bourgeoisie. They continued their treachery by entering into a coalition with the bourgeoisie of *their own* country and fighting together with *their own* bourgeoisie against the revolutionary proletariat of their own country. Their bloc, first with Kerensky and the Cadets, and then with Kolchak and Denikin in Russia, like the bloc of their ilk abroad with the bourgeoisie of *their* respective countries, was desertion to the bourgeoisie against the proletariat. *Their* compromise with the bandits of imperialism lay, from beginning to end, in the fact of making themselves *accomplices* in imperialist banditry.

The divergence between "leaders" and "masses" stood out with particular clarity and sharpness in all countries at the end of and after the imperialist war. The principal reason for this phenomenon was explained many times by Marx and Engels between the years 1852 and 1892, Britain being taken as an example. That country's monopoly position generated from among the "masses" a semi-petty-bourgeois, opportunist "labour aristocracy." The leaders of this labour aristocracy constantly deserted to the bourgeoisie, and were directly or indirectly in its pay. Marx earned the honour of incurring the hatred of these scoundrels for openly branding them as traitors. Modern (twentieth century) imperialism has created a privileged, monopoly position for several advanced countries, and this has given rise everywhere in the Second International to a type of traitorous, opportunist, social-chauvinist leaders who champion the interests of their own craft, their own section of the labour aristocracy. This has divorced the opportunist parties from the "masses," i.e., from the broadest strata of the working people, from their majority, from the lowest-paid workers. The victory of the revolutionary

proletariat is impossible unless this evil is combated, unless the opportunist, social-traitorous leaders are exposed, discredited and expelled. And that is the policy which the Third International has pursued.

It is precisely this absurd "theory" that Communists must not work in reactionary trade unions that brings out with the greatest clarity how frivolous is the attitude of the "Left" Communists towards the question of influencing the "masses," and to what abuses they go in their clamour about the "masses." To be able to help the "masses" and win the sympathy and support of the "masses," you must not fear difficulties, you must not fear pinpricks, dirty tricks, insults and persecution by the "leaders" (who, being opportunists and social-chauvinists, are in most cases directly or indirectly connected with the bourgeoisie and the police), but must without fail *be active where the masses are found*. You must be capable of every sacrifice, of overcoming the greatest obstacles in order to carry on agitation and propaganda systematically, steadfastly, persistently and patiently precisely in those institutions, societies and associations—even the most ultra-reactionary—where the proletarian or semi-proletarian masses are at all found. And the trade unions and workers' co-operatives (the latter sometimes, at least) are just the organizations where the masses are found. According to figures quoted in the Swedish paper *Folkets Dagblad Politiken* (of March 10, 1920) trade-union membership in Britain increased from 5,500,000 at the end of 1917 to 6,600,000 at the end of 1918, i.e., an increase of 19 per cent. Towards the close of 1919 the membership was estimated at 7,500,000. I have not at hand the corresponding figures for France and Germany, but absolutely incontestable and generally known facts testify to a considerable growth of trade-union membership in these countries, too.

These facts make crystal clear what is confirmed by thousands of other symptoms, namely, that class consciousness and the desire for organization are growing precisely among the proletarian masses, among the rank and file, among the backward elements. Millions of workers in Britain, France and Germany are *for the first time* passing from a complete lack of organization to the elementary, lowest, simplest, and (for those still thoroughly imbued with bourgeois-democratic prejudices) most understandable form of organization, namely, the trade unions; yet the revolutionary, but unwise, Left Communists stand by, shouting the "masses," the "masses"!--and *refuse to work within the trade unions!*, refuse on the plea that they are "reactionary"!! and invent a brand-new, immaculate little "Workers' Union," guiltless of bourgeois-democratic prejudices and innocent of craft or narrow trade-union sins, which, they claim, will be (will be!) a broad organization, and the only (only!) condition of membership of which will be "recognition of the Soviet system and the dictatorship"!! (See passage quoted above.)¹³⁹

Greater unwisdom and greater damage to the revolution than that caused by the "Left" revolutionaries cannot be imagined! Why, if we in Russia today, after two and a half years of unprecedented victories over the bourgeoisie of Russia and the Entente, were to make "recognition of the dictatorship" a condition of trade-union membership, we should be committing a folly, we should be damaging our influence over the masses, we should be helping the Mensheviks. For the whole task of the Communists is to be able *to convince* the backward elements, to be able to work *among* them, and not *to fence themselves off* from them by artificial and childish "Left" slogans.

There can be no doubt that Messrs. the Gompers, Hendersons, Jouhaux, and Legiens are very grateful to "Left"

revolutionaries who, like the German opposition "on principle" (heaven preserve us from such "adherence to principle"!), or like some of the revolutionaries in the American Industrial Workers of the World,¹⁴⁰ advocate leaving the reactionary trade unions and refusal to work in them.

IX

"LEFT-WING" COMMUNISM IN BRITAIN

There is no Communist Party in Britain yet, but there is a fresh, broad, powerful and rapidly growing communist movement among the workers which justifies the brightest hopes. There are several political parties and organizations (the British Socialist Party, the Socialist Labour Party, the South Wales Socialist Society, the Workers' Socialist Federation)¹⁴¹ which desire to form a Communist Party and are already negotiating among themselves to this end. The *Workers' Dreadnought*, the weekly organ of the last of the organizations mentioned, in its issue of February 21, 1920, Vol. VI, No. 48, contains an article by the editor, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst, entitled "Towards a Communist Party." The article outlines the progress of the negotiations between the four organizations mentioned for the formation of a united Communist Party, on the basis of affiliation to the Third International, recognition of the Soviet system instead of parliamentarism, and the dictatorship of the proletariat. It appears that one of the greatest obstacles to the immediate formation of a united Communist Party is disagreement over the question of participation in Parliament and over the question of whether the new Communist Party should affiliate to the old, narrow trade-unionist, opportunist and social-chauvinist Labour Party, which consists mostly of trade unions. The Workers' Socialist Federation and the Socialist Labour

Party* are opposed to taking part in parliamentary elections and in Parliament, and they are opposed to affiliation to the Labour Party; and in this they disagree with all, or with the majority of, the members of the British Socialist Party, which they regard as the "Right wing of the Communist Parties" in Britain (page 5, Sylvia Pankhurst's article).

Thus, the main division is the same as in Germany, notwithstanding the enormous difference in the form in which the disagreements manifest themselves (in Germany the form is much closer to the "Russian" than it is in Britain) and in a number of other things. Let us examine the arguments of the "Lefts."

On the question of participation in Parliament, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst refers to an article in the same issue by Comrade W. Gallacher, who writes in the name of the Scottish Workers' Council in Glasgow.

"The above council," he writes, "is definitely anti-parliamentarian, and has behind it the Left wing of the various political bodies. We represent the revolutionary movement in Scotland, striving continually to build up a revolutionary organization within the industries, and a Communist Party, based on social committees, throughout the country. For a considerable time we have been sparring with the official parliamentarians. We have not considered it necessary to declare open warfare on them, and they are *afraid* to open an attack on us.

"But this state of affairs cannot long continue. We are winning all along the line.

"The rank and file of the I.L.P. in Scotland is becoming more and more disgusted with the thought of Parliament, and Soviets (the Russian word transliterated into English is used) or workers' councils are being supported by almost every branch. This is very serious, of course, for the gentlemen who look to politics for a profession, and they are using any and every means to persuade their members to come back into the parliamentary fold. Revolutionary comrades *must not*" (all italics are the author's) "give any support to this

* I believe this party is opposed to affiliation to the Labour Party but not all its members are opposed to participation in Parliament.

gang. Our fight here is going to be a difficult one. One of the worst features of it will be the treachery of those whose personal ambition is a more impelling force than their regard for the revolution. Any support given to parliamentarism is simply assisting to put power into the hands of our British Scheidemanns and Noskes. Henderson, Clynes & Co. are hopelessly reactionary. The official I.L.P. is more and more coming under the control of middle-class Liberals, who have found their 'spiritual home' in the camp of Messrs. MacDonald, Snowden & Co. The official I.L.P. is bitterly hostile to the Third International, the rank and file is for it. Any support to the parliamentary opportunists is simply playing into the hands of the former. The B.S.P. doesn't count at all here. . . . What is wanted here is a sound revolutionary industrial organization, and a Communist Party working along clear, well-defined, scientific lines. If our comrades can assist us in building these, we will take their help gladly; if they cannot, for God's sake let them keep out altogether, lest they betray the revolution by lending their support to the reactionaries, who are so eagerly clamouring for parliamentary 'honours' (?) (the query mark is the author's) "and who are so anxious to prove that they *can rule* as effectively as the 'boss' class politicians themselves."

This letter to the Editorial Board, in my opinion, excellently expresses the temper and point of view of the young Communists or worker propagandists who are only just coming to communism. This temper is supremely gratifying and valuable; one should be able to value and support it, for without it to expect the victory of the proletarian revolution in Britain or in any other country, for that matter, would be hopeless. People who can give expression to this temper of the masses, who can rouse such a temper (which is very often dormant, unrealized and unaroused) among the masses, should be taken care of, treated solicitously and given every assistance. And at the same time we must openly and frankly tell them that temper *alone* is not enough to lead the masses in a great revolutionary struggle, and that such and such mistakes that thoroughly loyal adherents of the cause of the revolution are about to commit, or are committing, may damage the cause of the revolution. Comrade Gallacher's letter undoubtedly betrays the germs of *all* the mistakes that are being made by the German "Left" Communists and that

were made by the Russian "Left" Bolsheviks in 1908 and 1918.

The writer of the letter is imbued with the noblest proletarian hatred for the bourgeois "class politicians" (a hatred understood and shared, however, not only by proletarians but by all working people, by all "small folk," to use a German expression). This hatred of a representative of the oppressed and exploited masses is verily "the beginning of all wisdom," the basis of every socialist and communist movement and of its successes. But the writer apparently does not appreciate that politics is a science and an art that does not drop from the skies, that it is not obtained gratis, and that the proletariat, if it wants to conquer the bourgeoisie, must produce *its own*, proletarian, "class politicians," and such as will be no worse than the bourgeois politicians.

The writer of the letter is perfectly clear on the point that only workers' Soviets, and not a Parliament, can be the instrument whereby the aims of the proletariat will be achieved. And, of course, to this day those who are not clear on this are utter reactionaries, even if they are most learned people, most experienced politicians, most sincere Socialists, most erudite Marxists, and most honest citizens and family men. But the writer of the letter does not even ask, does not deem it necessary to ask, whether it is possible to bring about the victory of the Soviets over Parliament without getting politicians who stand for Soviets *into* Parliament, without disintegrating parliamentarism *from within*, without working within Parliament for the success of the Soviets in their forthcoming task of dispersing Parliament. And yet the writer of the letter expresses the absolutely correct idea that the Communist Party in Britain must work along *scientific* lines. Science demands, firstly, that account be taken of the experience of other countries, especially if these other, also capitalist, countries are undergoing, or have recently undergone, a

very similar experience; secondly, it demands that account be taken of *all* the forces, groups, parties, classes and masses operating in the given country, and not that policy be determined by just the desires and views, by the degree of class consciousness and readiness for battle of just one group or party.

That the Hendersons, Clynes, MacDonalds, and Snowdens are hopelessly reactionary is true. It is equally true that they want to take power in their hands (although they prefer a coalition with the bourgeoisie), that they want to "rule" on the old bourgeois lines, and that when they do get into power they will unfailingly behave like the Scheidemanns and Noskes. All that is true. It by no means follows, however, that to support them is treachery to the revolution, but that in the interests of the revolution the working-class revolutionaries should give these gentlemen a certain amount of parliamentary support. To explain this idea I shall take two contemporary British political documents: 1) the speech delivered by the Prime Minister, Lloyd George, on March 18, 1920 (as reported in *The Manchester Guardian* of March 19, 1920) and 2) the arguments of the "Left" Communist, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst, in the article mentioned above.

Lloyd George was arguing against Asquith (who had been specially invited to this meeting but declined to attend) and against those Liberals who want not coalition with the Conservatives, but closer relations with the Labour Party. (Comrade Gallacher, in his letter, also points to the fact that Liberals are joining the Independent Labour Party.) Lloyd George was trying to show that the coalition, and a *close* coalition at that, between Liberals and Conservatives is *essential*, otherwise there may be a victory for the Labour Party, which Lloyd George "prefers to call" Socialist and which is striving for the "collective ownership" of the means of production. "In France this was called communism," the leader of the British bourgeoisie said, putting it popularly for his listeners, the

Liberal M.P.s, who probably were not aware of it before; "in Germany it was called socialism, and in Russia it is called Bolshevism." To Liberals this is unacceptable in principle, explained Lloyd George, because they stand in principle for private property. "Civilization is in danger," declared the speaker, and therefore the Liberals and the Conservatives must unite. . . .

"... If you go to the agricultural areas," continued Lloyd George, "I agree that you have the old party divisions as strong as ever. They are removed from the danger. It does not walk their lanes. But when they see it they will be as strong as some of those industrial constituencies are now. Four-fifths of this country is industrial and commercial; hardly one-fifth is agricultural. It is one of the things I have constantly in my mind when I think of the dangers of the future here. In France the population is agricultural, and you have a solid body of opinion which does not move very rapidly, and which is not very easily excited by revolutionary movements. That is not the case here. This country is more top-heavy than any country in the world, and if it begins to rock, the crash here, for that reason, will be greater than in any land."

From this the reader will see that Mr. Lloyd George is not only a very clever man, but that he has also learned a great deal from the Marxists. It would be no sin for us to learn something from Lloyd George.

It is interesting to note the following episode in the discussion that followed Lloyd George's speech:

Mr. Wallace: "I should like to ask what the Prime Minister considers the effect might be in the industrial constituencies upon the industrial workers, so many of whom are Liberals at the present time and from whom we get so much support. Would not a possible result be to cause an immediate overwhelming accession of strength to the Labour Party from men who at present are our cordial supporters?"

The Prime Minister: "I take a totally different view. The fact that Liberals are fighting among themselves undoubtedly drives a very considerable number of Liberals in despair to the Labour Party, where you get a considerable body of Liberals, very able men, whose business it is to discredit the Government. The result is undoubtedly to

bring a good accession of public sentiment to the Labour Party. It does not go to the Liberals who are outside, it goes to the Labour Party; the by-elections show that."

It may be said in passing that this argument shows in particular how muddled even the cleverest members of the bourgeoisie have become and how they cannot help committing irreparable stupidities. That in fact will cause the downfall of the bourgeoisie. But our people may even commit stupidities (provided that they are not very serious ones and are rectified in time) and yet in the long run emerge the victors.

The second political document is the following argument advanced by the "Left" Communist, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst:

"... Comrade Inkpin (the Secretary of the British Socialist Party) refers to the Labour Party as 'the main body of the working-class movement.' Another comrade of the B.S.P., at the conference of the Third International, just held, put the B.S.P. position more strongly. He said: 'We regard the Labour Party as the organized working class.'

"We do not take this view of the Labour Party. The Labour Party is very large numerically, though its membership is to a great extent quiescent and apathetic, consisting of men and women who have joined the trade unions because their workmates are trade-unionists, and to share the friendly benefits.

"But we recognize that the great size of the Labour Party is also due to the fact that it is the creation of a school of thought beyond which the majority of the British working class has not yet emerged, though great changes are at work in the mind of the people which will presently alter this state of affairs. . . .

"The British Labour Party, like the social-patriotic organizations of other countries, will, in the natural development of society, inevitably come into power. It is for the Communists to build up the forces that will overthrow the social-patriots, and in this country we must not delay or falter in that work.

"We must not dissipate our energy in adding to the strength of the Labour Party; its rise to power is inevitable. We must concentrate on making a communist movement that will vanquish it. The Labour Party will soon be forming a government; the revolutionary opposition must make ready to attack it. . . ."

Thus, the Liberal bourgeoisie are abandoning the system of "two parties" (of exploiters) which has been hallowed

by age-long experience—and has been extremely advantageous to the exploiters—and consider it necessary to unite their forces to combat the Labour Party. A number of Liberals are deserting to the Labour Party like rats from a sinking ship. The Left Communists believe that the transfer of power to the Labour Party is inevitable and admit that at present it has the support of the majority of the workers. From this they draw the strange conclusion which Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst formulates as follows:

“The Communist Party must not compromise... The Communist Party must keep its doctrine pure, and its independence of Reformism inviolate; its mission is to lead the way, without stopping or turning, by the direct road to the Communist Revolution.”

On the contrary, from the fact that the majority of the workers in Britain still follow the lead of the British Kerenskys or Scheidemanns and have not yet had the experience of a government composed of these people, which experience was required in Russia and Germany to secure the mass-scale passage of the workers to communism, it undoubtedly follows that the British Communists *must* participate in parliamentary action, that they must, *from within* Parliament, help the masses of the workers to see the results of a Henderson and Snowden government in practice, that they must help the Hendersons and Snowdens to defeat the united forces of Lloyd George and Churchill. To act otherwise would mean placing difficulties in the way of the revolution; for revolution is impossible without a change in the views of the majority of the working class, and this change is brought about by the political experience of the masses, and never by propaganda alone. “To go forward without compromises, without turning”—if this is said by an obviously impotent minority of the workers which knows (or at all events should know) that if Henderson and Snowden gain the victory over Lloyd George and Churchill, the majority will in a brief space of time become disappointed in their leaders and proceed to support communism (or at all events will adopt an at-

titude of neutrality, and for the most part of benevolent neutrality, towards the Communists), then this slogan is obviously mistaken. It is just as if 10,000 soldiers were to fling themselves into battle against 50,000 enemy soldiers, when the thing to do is to “stop,” to “turn,” or even to effect a “compromise” so as to gain time until the arrival of the 100,000 reinforcements which are on their way and cannot go into action immediately. That is the childishness of the intellectual and not the serious tactics of a revolutionary class.

The fundamental law of revolution, which has been confirmed by all revolutions, and particularly by all three Russian revolutions in the twentieth century, is as follows: for revolution it is not enough that the exploited and oppressed masses should realize the impossibility of living in the old way and demand changes; for revolution it is essential that the exploiters should not be able to live and rule in the old way. Only when the “*lower classes*” *do not want* the old way, and when the “*upper classes*” *cannot carry on in the old way*—only then can revolution triumph. This truth may be expressed in other words: revolution is impossible without a nation-wide crisis (affecting both the exploited and the exploiters). It follows that for revolution it is essential to secure, first, that a majority of the workers (or at least a majority of the class-conscious, thinking, politically active workers) fully understand that revolution is necessary and are ready to sacrifice their lives for it; secondly, that the ruling classes should be passing through a government crisis, which draws even the most backward masses into politics (a symptom of every real revolution is the rapid, tenfold and even hundredfold increase in the number of members of the toiling and oppressed masses—hitherto apathetic—who are capable of waging the political struggle), saps the strength of the government and makes it possible for the revolutionaries to overthrow it rapidly.

In Britain, as can be seen incidentally from Lloyd

George's speech, both conditions for a successful proletarian revolution are clearly maturing. And the mistakes of the Left Communists are particularly dangerous at the present time precisely because certain revolutionaries are displaying an insufficiently thoughtful, insufficiently attentive, insufficiently appreciative, and insufficiently deliberative attitude to each of these conditions. If we are the party of the revolutionary *class*, and not a revolutionary group, if we want the *masses* to follow us (and unless we do, we stand the risk of being mere windbags), we must, firstly, help Henderson or Snowden to beat Lloyd George and Churchill (or, rather, compel the former to beat the latter, because the former are *afraid of their victory!*); secondly, we must help the majority of the working class to convince themselves by their own experience that we are right, i.e., that the Hendersons and Snowdens are absolutely unsuitable, that they are petty-bourgeois and treacherous by nature, and that their bankruptcy is inevitable; thirdly, we must bring nearer the moment when, *on the basis* of the disappointment of the majority of the workers in the Hendersons, it will be possible with serious chances of success to overthrow at once the government of the Hendersons, a government that will be frantic in its consternation, if even that most astute and solid big bourgeois, not petty bourgeois, Lloyd George, is betraying utter consternation and is more and more weakening himself (and the bourgeoisie as a whole) by his "friction" with Churchill one day and his "friction" with Asquith the next.

I will put it more concretely. In my opinion, the British Communists should unite their four (all very weak, and some very, very weak) parties and groups into a single Communist Party on the basis of the principles of the Third International and of *obligatory* participation in Parliament. The Communist Party should propose a "compromise" to the Hendersons and Snowdens, an election agreement: let us jointly fight the alliance of Lloyd George

and the Conservatives, let us divide the parliamentary seats in proportion to the number of votes cast by the workers for the Labour Party and for the Communists (not at the elections, but in a special vote), and let us retain *complete liberty* of agitation, propaganda and political activity. Without this latter condition, of course, no bloc must be entered, for it would be treachery; the British Communists must absolutely insist on and secure complete liberty to expose the Hendersons and the Snowdens in the same way as (*for fifteen years, 1903-17*) the Russian Bolsheviks insisted on and secured it in relation to the Russian Hendersons and Snowdens, i.e., the Mensheviks.

If the Hendersons and the Snowdens consent to a bloc on these terms, we shall be the gainers, because the number of parliamentary seats is of no importance to us; we are not out for seats, we shall yield on this point (the Hendersons, on the other hand, and particularly their new friends—or new masters—the Liberals who have joined the Independent Labour Party, are most anxious to get seats). We shall be the gainers, because we shall carry *our* agitation among the *masses* at a time when Lloyd George *himself* has "incensed" them, and we shall not only help the Labour Party to establish its government more quickly, but also help the masses to understand more quickly the communist propaganda that we shall carry on against the Hendersons without any curtailment or omission.

If the Hendersons and the Snowdens reject a bloc with us on these terms we shall gain still more, for we shall have shown at once to the *masses* (note that even in the purely Menshevik and utterly opportunist Independent Labour Party the *masses* are for Soviets) that the Hendersons prefer *their* close relations with the capitalists to the unity of all the workers. We shall immediately gain in the eyes of the *masses*, who, particularly after the brilliant, highly correct and highly useful (for communism)

explanations given by Lloyd George, will sympathize with the idea of uniting all the workers against the Lloyd George-Conservative alliance. We shall gain immediately because we shall have demonstrated to the masses that the Hendersons and the Snowdens are afraid to beat Lloyd George, are afraid to take power alone, and are striving *secretly* to secure the support of Lloyd George, who is *openly* extending his hand to the Conservatives against the Labour Party. It should be noted that in Russia, after the revolution of February 27, 1917 (old style), the propaganda of the Bolsheviks against the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries (i.e., the Russian Hendersons and Snowdens) benefited precisely because of a circumstance of this kind. We said to the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries: take over entire power without the bourgeoisie, because you have a majority in the Soviets (at the First All-Russian Congress of Soviets, in June 1917, the Bolsheviks had only 13 per cent of the votes). But the Russian Hendersons and Snowdens feared to take power without the bourgeoisie, and when the bourgeoisie delayed the elections to the Constituent Assembly, knowing perfectly well that the elections would give a majority to the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks* (the two formed a close political bloc and actually constituted a *single* petty-bourgeois democracy), the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks were unable energetically and consistently to oppose these delays.

If the Hendersons and the Snowdens reject a bloc with the Communists, the Communists will gain immediately

* The result of the elections to the Constituent Assembly in Russia in November 1917, based on returns embracing over 36,000,000 voters, were as follows: the Bolsheviks obtained 25 per cent of the votes; the various parties of the landlords and bourgeoisie obtained 13 per cent, and the petty-bourgeois democratic parties, i.e., the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and a number of small kindred groups, obtained 62 per cent.

as regards winning the sympathy of the masses and discrediting the Hendersons and Snowdens; and if as a result we lose a few parliamentary seats, it is of no importance whatever to us. We would only put up our candidates in a very few but absolutely safe constituencies, namely, constituencies where putting up our candidate would not give the seat to the Liberal and lose it for the Labour candidate. We would take part in the election campaign, distribute leaflets in favour of communism, and in *all* constituencies where we have no candidates we would urge the electors *to vote for the Labour candidate and against the bourgeois candidate*. Comrades Sylvia Pankhurst and Gallacher are mistaken in thinking that this is a betrayal of communism, or a renunciation of the struggle against the social traitors. On the contrary, the cause of communist revolution would undoubtedly gain by it.

At present the British Communists very often find it hard to approach the masses and even to get a hearing from them. If I come out as a Communist and call upon the workers to vote for Henderson against Lloyd George, they will certainly give me a hearing. And I will be able to explain in a popular manner not only why Soviets are better than Parliament and why the dictatorship of the proletariat is better than the dictatorship of Churchill (disguised by the signboard of bourgeois "democracy"), but also that I want with my vote to support Henderson in the same way as the rope supports a hanged man; that by drawing nearer the day when the Hendersons form a government of their own, I shall prove that I am right, bring the masses over to my side and hasten the political death of the Hendersons and the Snowdens just as was the case with their kindred spirits in Russia and Germany.

And if the objection is raised that these tactics are too "subtle" or too complicated, that the masses will not understand them, that these tactics will split and scatter our forces, will hamper our concentrating them on Soviet revolution, etc., I will reply to the "Lefts" who raise this

objection: don't ascribe your doctrinairism to the masses! The masses in Russia are probably no better educated than the masses in Britain; if anything, they are less so. Yet the masses understood the Bolsheviks; and the fact that *on the eve* of the Soviet revolution, in September 1917, the Bolsheviks put up their candidates for a bourgeois parliament (the Constituent Assembly) and *on the morrow* of the Soviet revolution, in November 1917, took part in the elections to this Constituent Assembly, which they dispersed on January 5, 1918—this did not hamper the Bolsheviks, but on the contrary helped them.

I cannot deal here with the second point of disagreement among the British Communists—the question of affiliating or not affiliating to the Labour Party. I have too little material at my disposal on this question, which is a particularly complex one in view of the quite unique character of the British “Labour Party,” the very structure of which is so unlike that of the political parties common to the Continent. It is beyond doubt, however, first, that on this question, too, those will inevitably fall into error who have a mind to deduce the tactics of the revolutionary proletariat from principles like: “The Communist Party must keep its doctrine pure, and its independence of Reformism inviolate; its mission is to lead the way, without stopping or turning, by the direct road to the Communist Revolution.” For such principles are merely a repetition of the mistake committed by the French Blanquist Communards, who, in 1874, “repudiated” all compromises and all intermediate stages. Secondly, it is beyond doubt that in this question, too, as always, the thing is to be able to apply the general and basic principles of communism to the *specific* relations between classes and parties, to the *specific features* of the objective development towards communism which are characteristic of each country and which one must be able to study, discover, divine.

But this must be discussed in connection not with Brit-

ish communism alone, but with the general conclusions concerning the development of communism in all capitalist countries. We shall now proceed to deal with this theme.

X

SOME CONCLUSIONS

The Russian bourgeois revolution of 1905 revealed a very peculiar turn in world history: in one of the most backward capitalist countries the strike movement attained a breadth and power without precedent anywhere in the world. In the *first month alone* of 1905 the number of strikers was ten times the *annual* average for the previous ten years (1895-1904), and from January to October 1905 strikes grew continuously and reached enormous dimensions. Under the influence of a number of entirely specific historical conditions, backward Russia was the first to show the world not only the spasmodic growth of the activity of the oppressed masses in time of revolution (this had occurred in all great revolutions), but also the significance of the proletariat, which infinitely exceeds the ratio of the latter to the total population; the combination of the economic strike and the political strike, and the transformation of the latter into armed uprising; and the birth of a new form of mass struggle and mass organization of the classes oppressed by capitalism, viz., the Soviets.

The revolutions of February and October 1917 led to the all-round development of the Soviets on a national scale, and to their victory in the proletarian, socialist revolution. And in less than two years there became revealed the international character of the Soviets, the spread of this form of struggle and organization to the world working-class movement, and the historical mission of the Soviets to be the grave-digger, heir and successor of bourgeois parliamentarism, and of bourgeois democracy in general.

More. The history of the working-class movement now shows that in all countries it is about to experience (and has already begun to experience) a struggle of communism, which is rising, gaining strength and marching towards victory, against, first and foremost, *its own* (in each country) "Menshevism," i.e., opportunism and social-chauvinism; and, secondly—as a supplement, so to say—against "Left-wing" communism. The former struggle has developed in all countries, apparently without a single exception, as a struggle between the Second International (already virtually killed) and the Third International. The latter struggle can be observed in Germany, Britain, Italy, and America (at any rate, a certain *section* of the Industrial Workers of the World and of the anarcho-syndicalist trends uphold the errors of Left-wing communism, side by side with an almost universal and almost undivided acceptance of the Soviet system), and in France (the attitude of a section of the former Syndicalists towards the political party and parliamentarism, again side by side with the acceptance of the Soviet system), in other words, the struggle is undoubtedly being waged on not only an international but even world-wide scale.

But while the working-class movement is everywhere passing through what is essentially the same kind of preparatory school for victory over the bourgeoisie, in each country it is effecting this development *in its own way*. The big, advanced capitalist countries are proceeding along this road *much more rapidly* than did Bolshevism, which history granted fifteen years to prepare itself, as an organized political trend, for victory. In the short space of one year, the Third International has already scored a decisive victory; it has defeated the Second, yellow, social-chauvinist International, which only a few months ago was incomparably stronger than the Third International, seemed to be stable and powerful and enjoyed the all-round support—direct and indirect, material (min-

isterial jobs, passports, the press) and ideological—of the world bourgeoisie.

The whole point now is that the Communists of every country should quite consciously take account both of the main fundamental tasks of the struggle against opportunism and "Left" doctrinairism, and of the *specific features* which this struggle assumes and inevitably must assume in each separate country in conformity with the peculiar features of its economics, politics, culture, national composition (Ireland, etc.), its colonies, religious divisions, and so on and so forth. Everywhere dissatisfaction with the Second International is palpable, spreading and growing, both because of its opportunism and because of its inability or incapacity to create a really centralized, a really leading centre capable of directing the international tactics of the revolutionary proletariat in its struggle for a world Soviet republic. We must clearly realize that such a leading centre cannot under any circumstances be built up on stereotyped, mechanically levelled and identical tactical rules of struggle. So long as national and state differences exist among peoples and countries—and these differences will continue to exist for a very long time even after the dictatorship of the proletariat has been established on a world scale—unity of international tactics of the communist working-class movement of all countries demands, not the elimination of variety, not the abolition of national differences (that is a foolish dream at the present moment), but such an application of the *fundamental* principles of communism (Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat) as will *correctly modify* these principles *in particulars*, correctly adapt and apply them to national and national-state differences. To investigate, study, seek, divine, grasp that which is nationally peculiar, nationally specific in the *concrete* manner in which each country approaches the fulfilment of the *single* international task, in which it approaches the victory over opportunism and Left doctrinairism within the working-

class movement, the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, and the establishment of a Soviet republic and a proletarian dictatorship—such is the main task of the historical period through which all the advanced countries (and not only the advanced ones) are now passing. The main thing—not everything by a very long way, of course, but the main thing—has already been achieved in that the vanguard of the working class has been won over, has ranged itself on the side of Soviet government against parliamentarism, on the side of the dictatorship of the proletariat against bourgeois democracy. Now all efforts, all attention, must be concentrated on the *next* step, which seems—and from a certain standpoint really is—less fundamental, but which, on the other hand, is actually closer to the practical carrying out of the task, namely: on finding a form of *transition* or *approach* to the proletarian revolution.

The proletarian vanguard has been won over ideologically. That is the main thing. Without that not even the first step towards victory can be made. But it is still a fairly long way from victory. Victory cannot be won with the vanguard alone. To throw the vanguard alone into the decisive battle, before the whole class, before the broad masses, have taken up a position either of direct support of the vanguard, or at least of benevolent neutrality towards it and of total inability to support its enemy, would be not merely folly but a crime. And in order that really the whole class, that really the broad masses of the working people and those oppressed by capital may reach such a position, propaganda and agitation alone are not enough. For this the masses must have their own political experience. Such is the fundamental law of all great revolutions, now confirmed with astonishing force and vividness not only in Russia but also in Germany. Not only the uncultured, often illiterate, masses of Russia, but also the highly cultured, entirely literate masses of Germany had to realize by their own painful experience the utter impotence and spinelessness, utter helplessness, utter servil-

ity to the bourgeoisie, utter vileness of the government of the knights of the Second International, utter inevitability of a dictatorship of the extreme reactionaries (Kornilov in Russia, Kapp & Co. in Germany) as the only alternative to a dictatorship of the proletariat, before they turned resolutely towards communism.

The immediate task that confronts the class-conscious vanguard of the international labour movement, i.e., the Communist Parties, groups, trends, is to be able to *bring* the broad masses (now, for the most part, still slumbering, apathetic, bound by routine, inert, not aroused) to their new position, or rather, to be able to lead *not only* the parties, but also these masses during their approach, their transition, to the new position. While the first historical task (that of winning over the class-conscious vanguard of the proletariat to Soviet power and the dictatorship of the working class) could not be accomplished without the complete ideological and political victory over opportunism and social-chauvinism, the second task, which now becomes the immediate one, and which consists in being able to bring the *masses* to the new position, the position that can ensure the victory of the vanguard in the revolution—this immediate task cannot be accomplished without eliminating Left doctrinairism, without completely overcoming its mistakes, without getting rid of them.

So long as it was (and to the extent that it still is) a question of winning the vanguard of the proletariat to communism, propaganda was and is in the forefront; even propaganda circles, with all the weaknesses of circle organization, are useful under these conditions and yield fruitful results. But when it is a question of practical action by the masses, of the disposition, if one may so express it, of armies of millions, of the alignment of *all* the class forces of the given society *for the final and decisive battle*, then propaganda habits alone, the mere repetition of the truths of “pure” communism, are of no avail.

In this case one must count not in thousands, as the propagandist, the member of a small group that has not yet led the masses, fundamentally does; in this case one must count in millions and tens of millions. In this case one must ask oneself not only whether we have convinced the vanguard of the revolutionary class, but also whether the historically effective forces of *all* classes—of positively all the classes of the given society without exception—are disposed in such a way that everything is fully ripe for the decisive battle; in such a way that 1) all the class forces hostile to us have become sufficiently entangled, are sufficiently at loggerheads with each other, have sufficiently enfeebled themselves in a struggle which is beyond their strength; that 2) all the vacillating, wavering, unstable, intermediate elements—the petty bourgeoisie, the petty-bourgeois democrats as distinct from the bourgeoisie—have sufficiently exposed themselves in the eyes of the people, have sufficiently disgraced themselves by their practical bankruptcy; and that 3) among the proletariat a mass sentiment in favour of supporting the most determined, supremely bold, revolutionary actions against the bourgeoisie has arisen and begun to grow vigorously. Then revolution is indeed ripe; then, indeed, if we have correctly gauged all the conditions indicated and briefly outlined above, and if we have chosen the moment rightly, our victory is assured.

The divergences between the Churchills and the Lloyd Georges—with insignificant national differences these political types exist in *all* countries—on the one hand; and between the Hendersons and the Lloyd Georges on the other, are quite minor and unimportant from the standpoint of pure, i.e., abstract communism, i.e., communism that has not yet matured to the stage of practical, mass, political action. But from the standpoint of this practical action by the masses, these differences are very, very important. To take account of them, to determine the moment when the conflicts inevitable between these “friends,”

which weaken and enfeeble *all the “friends” taken together*, will have completely matured—that is the whole job, the whole task of the Communist who wants to be not merely a class-conscious, convinced, well-grounded propagandist, but a practical leader of the *masses* in the revolution. The strictest devotion to the ideas of communism must be combined with the ability to effect all the necessary practical compromises, manoeuvres, agreements, zigzags, retreats and so on, in order to accelerate the coming to, and loss of, political power by the Hendersons (the heroes of the Second International, if we are not to name individuals, representatives of petty-bourgeois democracy, who call themselves Socialists); to accelerate their inevitable bankruptcy in practice, which will enlighten the masses in precisely the spirit of our ideas, in precisely the direction of communism; to accelerate the inevitable friction, quarrels, conflicts and utter discord between the Hendersons, the Lloyd Georges and the Churchills (the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Cadets, and the monarchists; the Scheidemanns, the bourgeoisie, and the Kappists, etc.); and to select the proper moment when the discord among these “pillars of sacred private property” is at its height, in order, by a determined offensive of the proletariat, to defeat them all and capture political power.

History generally, and the history of revolutions in particular, is always richer in content, more varied, more many-sided, more lively and “subtle” than even the best parties and the most class-conscious vanguards of the most advanced classes imagine. This is understandable, because the very best vanguards express the class consciousness, will, passion and fantasies of tens of thousands; whereas revolutions are made, at moments of particular upsurge and exertion of all human capacities, by the class consciousness, will, passion and fantasies of tens of millions, spurred on by a most acute struggle of classes. From this follow two very important practical conclusions: first, that in order to fulfil its task the revolutionary class

must be able to master *all* forms or aspects of social activity without any exception (completing, after the capture of political power, sometimes at great risk and enormous danger, what it did not complete before the capture of power); second, that the revolutionary class must be ready to change from one form to another with the greatest speed and suddenness.

Everyone will agree that an army which does not train itself to wield all arms, all the means and methods of warfare that the enemy possesses or may possess, behaves in an unwise or even in a criminal manner. But this applies to politics even more than it does to warfare. In politics it is even harder to forecast what methods of struggle will be applicable and advantageous to us under specific future conditions. Unless we master all means of struggle, we may suffer grave, at times even decisive, defeat if changes beyond our control in the position of the other classes call for a form of activity in which we are particularly weak. If, however, we master all means of struggle, victory will be certain, because we represent the interests of the really advanced and really revolutionary class, even if circumstances do not permit us to bring into play the weapons that are most dangerous to the enemy, weapons that deal him the swiftest mortal blows. Inexperienced revolutionaries often think that legal methods of struggle are opportunist because in this field the bourgeoisie has especially frequently (particularly in "peaceful," non-revolutionary times) deceived and fooled the workers; and that illegal methods of struggle are revolutionary. But that is not true. What is true is that those parties and leaders are opportunists and traitors to the working class who are unable or unwilling (don't say you cannot, say you will not!) to apply illegal methods of struggle in conditions such as those which prevailed, for example, during the imperialist war of 1914-18, when the bourgeoisie of the freest democratic countries deceived the workers in the most insolent and brutal manner, forbid-

ding the truth to be told about the predatory character of the war. But revolutionaries who are unable to combine illegal forms with *every* legal form of struggle are poor revolutionaries indeed. It is not difficult to be a revolutionary when revolution has already broken out and is at its height, when all and sundry are joining the revolution just because they are carried away, because it is the fashion, and sometimes even from careerist motives. After its victory, it costs the proletariat tremendous effort, one might say terrible trouble, to "liberate" itself from such half-baked revolutionaries. It is far more difficult—and of far greater value—to be a revolutionary when the conditions for direct, open, really mass and really revolutionary struggle *do not yet exist*, to be able to champion the interests of the revolution (by propaganda, agitation and organization) in non-revolutionary bodies and often enough in downright reactionary bodies, in a non-revolutionary situation, among masses who are incapable of immediately appreciating the need for revolutionary methods of action. To be able to find, to hit upon, to correctly determine the specific path or the particular turn of events that will *bring* the masses to the real, decisive, last, and great revolutionary struggle—such is the main task of communism today in Western Europe and America.

Britain offers an example. We cannot tell, and no one can tell, beforehand how soon a real proletarian revolution will flare up there, and *what immediate cause* will serve most to rouse, kindle, and impel very wide, still dormant masses into the struggle. Hence, it is our duty to carry on all our preparatory work in such a way as to be well shod on all four feet (as the late Plekhanov, when he was a Marxist and revolutionary, was fond of saying). It is possible that the "breach" will be made, "the ice broken" by a parliamentary crisis, or by a crisis arising out of the hopelessly entangled and increasingly painful and acute colonial and imperialist contradictions, or perhaps by some third cause, etc. We are not discussing the

kind of struggle that will *determine* the fate of the proletarian revolution in Britain (not a single Communist has any doubt on that score; for all of us this question is settled, and settled definitely); what we are discussing is the *immediate cause* that will set into motion the still dormant proletarian masses and bring them face to face with revolution. Let us not forget that in the French bourgeois republic, for example, in a situation which from both the international and the national aspect was a hundred times less revolutionary than the present, such an "unexpected" and "petty" immediate cause as one of the many thousands of fraudulent tricks of the reactionary military (the Dreyfus case) was enough to bring the people to the verge of civil war!

The Communists in Britain should constantly, unremittingly and undeviatingly utilize parliamentary elections and all the vicissitudes of the Irish, colonial and world-imperialist policy of the British Government, and all other fields, spheres and aspects of public life, and should work in all of them in a new way, in a communist way, in the spirit of the Third, and not of the Second, International. I have neither the time nor the space here to describe the "Russian," "Bolshevik" methods of participation in parliamentary elections and in the parliamentary struggle; but I can assure the foreign Communists that it was totally unlike the usual West-European parliamentary campaigns. From this the conclusion is often drawn: "Well, that was in Russia; in our country parliamentarism is different." The conclusion is a wrong one. What Communists, adherents of the Third International in all countries, exist for is to *change* the old socialist, narrow trade-unionist, syndicalist, parliamentary work all along the line, in all spheres of life, into *new* work, communist work. In our elections, too, there was always a great deal of what was opportunism and purely bourgeois, of what was plain business and capitalist swindling. The Communists in West Europe and America must learn to create a new, unusua',

non-opportunist, non-careerist parliamentarism; the Communist Parties must issue slogans of their own; real proletarians, with the help of the unorganized and utterly downtrodden poor, should scatter and distribute leaflets, canvass the homes of the workers and the huts of the rural proletarians and out-of-the-way peasants (fortunately there are many times less out-of-the-way villages in Europe than in Russia, and in Britain the number is quite small); they should make their way into the humblest taverns, penetrate into the unions, societies and casual meetings of the common people, and talk to the people, not in learned (and not in very parliamentary) language; they should not at all be out for "seats" in parliament, but should everywhere set people thinking, draw the masses into activity, hold the bourgeoisie to their word and utilize the apparatus they have set up, the elections they have appointed, the appeals they have made to the whole people, and tell the people what Bolshevism is in a way that has never been possible (under bourgeois rule) outside of election times (not counting, of course, times of big strikes, when, in Russia, a *similar* apparatus for widespread popular agitation worked even more intensively). It is very difficult to do this in West Europe and America, very, very difficult; but it can and must be done, for the task of communism cannot be fulfilled at all without effort; and our efforts must be devoted to fulfilling *practical* tasks, ever more varied, ever more closely connected with all branches of social life, and so *winning* branch after branch and sphere after sphere *from the bourgeoisie*.

In Britain, further, the work of propaganda, agitation and organization among the armed forces and among the oppressed and rightless nationalities of "*one's own*" state (Ireland, the colonies) must also be arranged in a new way (not in a socialist, but a communist way, not in a reformist, but a revolutionary way). Because in the era of imperialism generally, and especially now, after the war, which wore out the peoples and is quickly opening

their eyes to the truth (viz., that tens of millions were killed and maimed only for the purpose of deciding whether the British or the German pirates should plunder the largest number of countries), all these spheres of social life are being particularly charged with inflammable material and are creating numerous grounds for conflicts, crises and the accentuation of the class struggle. We do not and cannot know which spark—of the innumerable sparks that are flying around in all countries as a result of the economic and political world crisis—will prove able to kindle the conflagration, in the sense of especially rousing the masses, and we must, therefore, with the aid of our new, communist principles, set to work in all and sundry, even the oldest, mustiest and seemingly hopeless spheres, for otherwise we shall not be up to the mark, we shall not be ready in every way, we shall not master all arms and we shall not be prepared to achieve either victory over the bourgeoisie (who arranged all sides of social life—and have now disarranged them—in bourgeois fashion), or the impending communist reorganization of life as a whole after that victory.

After the proletarian revolution in Russia and its victories on an international scale, which were unexpected for the bourgeoisie and the philistines, the whole world has changed, and the bourgeoisie have changed everywhere too. They are terrified by "Bolshevism," incensed with it almost to the point of frenzy, and that is why they are, on the one hand, accelerating the progress of events and, on the other, concentrating attention on the suppression of Bolshevism by force, and thereby weakening their position in a number of other spheres. The Communists in all advanced countries must take into account both these circumstances in their tactics.

When the Russian Cadets and Kerensky launched a furious drive against the Bolsheviks—especially from April 1917 onwards, and still more so in June and July 1917—they "overdid" it. Millions of copies of bourgeois papers,

shrieking in every key against the Bolsheviks, helped to draw the masses into appraising Bolshevism; furthermore, apart from the newspapers, all public life was permeated with discussions about Bolshevism just because of the "zeal" of the bourgeoisie. Now on an international scale the millionaires of all countries are behaving in a way that deserves our heartiest thanks. They are hounding Bolshevism with the same zeal as Kerensky & Co. did; they, too, are "overdoing" it and *helping* us just as Kerensky did. When the French bourgeoisie make Bolshevism the central issue at the elections, and accuse the comparatively moderate or vacillating Socialists of being Bolsheviks when the American bourgeoisie, having completely lost their heads, seize thousands upon thousands of people on suspicion of Bolshevism and create an atmosphere of panic, broadcasting stories of Bolshevik plots; when the British bourgeoisie—the most "solid" in the world—despite all their cleverness and experience, commit incredible stupidities, found richly endowed "anti-Bolshevik societies," create a special literature on Bolshevism, and hire an extra number of scientists, agitators and parsons to combat it—we must bow and thank the capitalist gentry. They are working for us. They are helping us to get the masses interested in the nature and significance of Bolshevism. And they cannot do otherwise; for they have *already* failed to "keep" Bolshevism "dark," and to stifle it.

But at the same time the bourgeoisie see practically only one side of Bolshevism, viz., insurrection, violence, terror; they therefore strive to prepare themselves for resistance and opposition particularly in *this* field. It is possible that in certain instances, in certain countries, and for certain brief periods, they will succeed in this. We must reckon with such a possibility, and there will be absolutely nothing terrible for us if they do. Communism "springs" from positively every aspect of public life; its shoots are to be seen positively everywhere. The "contagion" (to use the favourite metaphor of the bourgeoisie and the

bourgeois police, the one most "pleasant" to them) has very thoroughly permeated the organism, has completely impregnated it. If special efforts are made to "stop up" one outlet, the "contagion" will find another, sometimes a very unexpected one. Life will assert itself. Let the bourgeoisie work themselves up, vent their fury to the point of derangement, overdo things, commit stupidities, take vengeance on the Bolsheviks in advance, and endeavour to kill off (in India, Hungary, Germany, etc.) more hundreds, thousands, and hundreds of thousands of yesterday's and tomorrow's Bolsheviks. In acting thus, the bourgeoisie are acting as all classes doomed by history have done. Communists should know that the future in any case belongs to them; therefore, we can (and must) combine the most intense passion in the great revolutionary struggle with the coolest and most sober estimation of the frenzied convulsions of the bourgeoisie. The Russian revolution was cruelly defeated in 1905; the Russian Bolsheviks were defeated in July 1917; over 15,000 German Communists were killed as a result of the wily provocation and cunning manoeuvres of Scheidemann and Noske working hand in glove with the bourgeoisie and the monarchist generals; White terror is raging in Finland and Hungary. But in all cases and in all countries communism is becoming steeled and is growing; its roots are so deep that persecution does not weaken it, does not enfeeble it, but strengthens it. Only one thing is lacking to enable us to march forward more confidently and firmly to victory, namely, the universal and thoroughly thought-out appreciation by all Communists in all countries of the need to display the utmost *flexibility* in their tactics. The communist movement, which is developing magnificently, especially in the advanced countries, now lacks this appreciation and the ability to apply it in practice.

What happened to such highly erudite Marxists and leaders of the Second International devoted to socialism as Kautsky, Otto Bauer and others, could (and should) serve

as a useful lesson. They fully appreciated the need for flexible tactics; they learned themselves and taught others Marxist dialectics (and much of what they have done in this respect will for ever remain a valuable contribution to socialist literature); but *in the application* of these dialectics they committed such a mistake, or proved in practice to be so *undialectical*, so incapable of taking into account the rapid change of forms and the rapid filling of the old forms with new content, that their fate is not much more enviable than that of Hyndman, Guesde and Plekhanov. The principal reason for their bankruptcy was that they were "enchanted" by one definite form of growth of the working-class movement and socialism, forgot about the one-sidedness of this form, were afraid of seeing the sharp break-up which objective conditions had made inevitable, and continued to repeat simple truths, learned by rote, and at a first glance incontestable, such as that "three is more than two." But politics is more like algebra than arithmetic and still more like higher than elementary mathematics. In reality, all the old forms of the socialist movement were filled with a new content, and, consequently, a new sign, the "minus" sign, appeared in front of the figures; but our wiseacres stubbornly continued (and still continue) to persuade themselves and others that "minus three" is more than "minus two."

We must see to it that Communists do not make the same mistake, only the other way round; or, rather, that the *same mistake*, only the other way round, made by the "Left" Communists, is corrected as soon as possible and overcome as quickly and painlessly to the organism as possible. Not only Right doctrinairism is a mistake; so also is Left doctrinairism. Of course, the mistake of Left doctrinairism in communism is at present a thousand times less dangerous and less significant than the mistake of Right doctrinairism (i.e., of social-chauvinism and Kautskyism); but, after all, that is only because Left communism is quite a young trend, is only just coming into

being. It is only for this reason that, under certain conditions, the disease can be easily cured; and we must set to work to cure it with the utmost energy.

The old forms burst asunder, for it turned out that their new content—an anti-proletarian and reactionary content—had attained inordinate development. Today, from the standpoint of the development of international communism, we have such a durable, strong and powerful content in our work (for Soviet power, for the dictatorship of the proletariat) that it can *and must* manifest itself in any form, both new and old, it can and must regenerate, conquer and subjugate all forms, not only the new but also the old—not for the purpose of reconciling itself with the old, but for the purpose of making all and sundry forms—new and old—a weapon for the complete and final, decisive and irrevocable victory of communism.

The Communists must exert every effort to direct the working-class movement and social development in general along the straightest and quickest road to the universal victory of Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat. That is an incontestable truth. But it is enough to take one little step further—a step that might seem in the same direction—and the truth becomes an error. We have only to say, as the German and British Left Communists do, that we recognize only one road, only the direct road, that we will not permit manoeuvring, agreement-making, compromising—and it will be a mistake which may cause, and in part has already caused and is causing, very serious harm to communism. Right doctrinairism persisted in recognizing only the old forms, and became utterly bankrupt, failing to perceive the new content. Left doctrinairism persists in the unconditional repudiation of certain old forms, failing to see that the new content is forcing its way through all and sundry forms, that it is our duty as Communists to master all forms, to learn how with the maximum rapidity to supplement one form with another, to replace one by another, and to adapt our tac-

tics to every such change called forth not by our class or not by our efforts.

World revolution has received such a powerful impetus and acceleration from the horrors, infamies and abominations of the world imperialist war and from the hopelessness of the situation it created—this revolution is developing in breadth and depth with such magnificent rapidity, with such a splendid variety of changing forms, with such an instructive, practical refutation of all doctrinairism, that there is every ground for hoping for a rapid and complete recovery of the international communist movement from the infantile disorder of “Left-wing” communism.

27.IV.1920

Published in June 1920 as a
separate book

Vol. 31, pp. 19-22, 25, 35-36.
58-84

LETTER TO THE BRITISH WORKERS¹⁴²

Comrades,

First of all permit me to thank you for sending your delegation here to acquaint themselves with Soviet Russia.¹⁴³ When your delegation suggested to me that I send a letter through it to the British workers and perhaps also proposals to the British Government, I replied that I gratefully accept the first suggestion but that I must address myself to the government not through the Labour delegation but directly on behalf of our government, through Comrade Chicherin. We have on very many occasions addressed ourselves this way to the British Government making the most formal and solemn proposals to commence peace negotiations. All our representatives, Comrade Litvinov, Comrade Krasin and all the others, unceasingly continue to make these proposals. The British Government stubbornly refuses to accept them. It is not surprising, therefore, that I desired to speak with the delegates of the British workers exclusively as with delegates of the workers, not as the representative of the government of Soviet Russia, but as a plain Communist.

I was not surprised to find that several of the members of your delegation adhere to the viewpoint not of the working class, but of the bourgeoisie, of the exploiting class; because in all capitalist countries the imperialist war has fully revealed a long-standing ulcer, namely, the desertion of the majority of the workers' parliamentary and trade-union leaders to the bourgeoisie. On the false pre-

Lenin's Letter to British Workers

When I received the letter from the British workers' delegation, I was very glad to hear that they had decided to visit Soviet Russia.

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London, May 24th, 1918.

text of "defending the country" they, in fact, defended the predatory interests of one of the two groups of world pirates—the Anglo-American-French group, or the German group; they entered into an alliance with the bourgeoisie against the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat; they covered up this treachery with sentimental petty-bourgeois reformist and pacifist phrases about peaceful evolution, constitutional methods, democracy, etc. This is what happened in all countries; it is not surprising that this state of affairs in Britain was also reflected by the composition of your delegation.

Members of your delegation, Shaw and Guest, obviously surprised and hurt by my statement that Britain, notwithstanding our peace proposals and notwithstanding the declarations of her government, is continuing intervention, waging war against us, is helping Wrangel in the Crimea and Whiteguard Poland,¹⁴⁴ asked me whether I had proof of this, whether I could show how many trainloads of military supplies Britain had provided Poland with, etc. I replied that in order to get the secret treaties of the British Government it was necessary to overthrow it in a revolutionary manner and to seize all the documents on its foreign policy, in the same way as we did in 1917. Every educated man, everyone who is sincerely interested in politics, knew even before our revolution that the tsar had secret treaties with the predatory governments of Britain, France, America, Italy and Japan, concerning the division of the spoils, concerning Constantinople, Galicia, Armenia, Syria, Mesopotamia, etc. Only liars and hypocrites (not counting, of course, absolutely ignorant, backward and illiterate people) could deny this or pretend that they did not know this. But without revolution we could never have got the secret documents of the predatory governments of the capitalist class. Those leaders or representatives of the British proletariat, whether they are members of Parliament, trade-union leaders, journalists, or others, who pretend that they do not know of the existence of secret

treaties between Britain, France, America, Italy, Japan and Poland concerning the plunder of other countries, concerning the division of the spoils, and who do not wage a revolutionary struggle in order to expose these treaties, only show once again that they are faithful servants of the capitalists. We have known this for a long time; we are exposing this in our own country and in all other countries of the world. The visit to Russia of a delegation of the British workers will hasten the exposure of such leaders in Britain, too.

I had a conversation with your delegation on Wednesday, May 26. Next day I received telegrams stating that Bonar Law had admitted in the British Parliament that military aid had been given to Poland in October "to defend herself against Russia" (of course only for defence, only in October! There are still "influential labour leaders" in Britain who help the capitalists to fool the workers!), but the *New Statesman*, the most moderate of moderate petty-bourgeois newspapers or journals, wrote about tanks being supplied to Poland which were more powerful than those used against the Germans during the war. After this, can one refrain from ridiculing such "leaders" of the British workers as ask with an air of injured innocence whether there is any "proof" that Britain is fighting against Russia and is helping Poland and the Whiteguards in the Crimea.

Members of the delegation asked me what I thought was more important: the formation in England of a consistent revolutionary Communist Party, or getting the immediate assistance of the masses of the workers in Britain for the cause of peace with Russia. I answered that this was a matter of one's convictions. Sincere supporters of the emancipation of the workers from the yoke of capital cannot possibly be opposed to the formation of a Communist Party, which alone is capable of training the workers in a non-bourgeois and non-petty-bourgeois manner, which alone is capable of really exposing, ridiculing and

disgracing "leaders" who can doubt whether Britain is helping Poland, etc. There is no need to fear that there will be too many Communists in Britain, because not even a small Communist Party exists there. But if anyone continues to remain in intellectual slavery to the bourgeoisie, continues to share petty-bourgeois prejudices about "democracy" (*bourgeois* democracy), pacifism, etc., then of course such people would only do more harm to the proletariat if they took it into their heads to call themselves Communists and to affiliate to the Third International. All that these people are capable of is to pass sentimental "resolutions" against intervention couched exclusively in philistine phrases. In a certain sense these resolutions are also useful, namely, in the sense that the old "leaders" (adherents of bourgeois democracy, of peaceful methods, etc., etc.) will make themselves ridiculous in the eyes of the masses, and the more they pass empty, non-committal resolutions unaccompanied by revolutionary action, the quicker will they expose themselves. Each to his own job: let the Communists work directly through their Party, awakening the revolutionary consciousness of the workers. Let those who supported "defence of the fatherland" during the imperialist war for the division of the world, "defence" of the secret treaty between the British capitalists and the tsar to plunder Turkey, let those who "do not see" that Britain is helping Poland and the Whiteguards in Russia—let them hasten to increase the number of their "peace resolutions" to the point of becoming ridiculous; the more they do that the quicker will they meet with the fate of Kerensky, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries in Russia.

Several members of your delegation questioned me with surprise about the Red terror, about the absence of freedom of the press in Russia, of freedom of assembly, about our persecution of Mensheviks and Menshevik workers, etc. I replied that the real culprits of the terror are the British imperialists and their "allies," who exercised and now

exercise White terror in Finland and in Hungary, in India and in Ireland, who supported and now support Yudenich, Kolchak, Denikin, Pilsudski and Wrangel. Our Red terror is defence of the working class against the exploiters, is suppression of the resistance of the exploiters, whose side is taken by the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Mensheviks, and an insignificant number of Menshevik workers. Freedom of the press and assembly under bourgeois democracy is freedom for the wealthy to conspire against the working people, freedom for the capitalists to bribe and buy up the press. I have explained this in newspaper articles so often that I derived no great pleasure from repeating myself.

And two days after my conversation with your delegation, the newspapers reported that in addition to the arrests of Monatte and Loriot in France, Sylvia Pankhurst had been arrested in England. This is the best possible answer the British Government could give to the question which the non-Communist British labour "leaders," who are captives to bourgeois prejudices, are even afraid to put, namely, against which class is the terror directed—against the oppressed and exploited or against the oppressors and exploiters? When they speak of "freedom," do they speak of freedom for the capitalists to rob, to deceive, to befool the toilers, or of the "freedom" of the toilers from the yoke of the capitalists, the speculators and the property owners? Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst represents the interests of hundreds upon hundreds of millions of people who are oppressed by the British and other capitalists. That is why she is subjected to White terror, is deprived of liberty, etc. The labour "leaders" who pursue a non-Communist policy are 99 per cent representatives of the bourgeoisie, of its deceit, of its prejudices.

In conclusion, I want to thank you once again, comrades, for sending your delegation here. The acquaintance it has made with Soviet Russia, notwithstanding the hostility of many of the delegates towards the Soviet system and the

dictatorship of the proletariat, and notwithstanding the fact that many of them are captives to bourgeois prejudices, will inevitably accelerate the collapse of capitalism throughout the world.

30. IV. 1920

N. Lenin

Pravda, No. 130,
June 17, 1920

Vol. 31, pp. 117-21

**THESES ON THE MAIN TASKS
OF THE SECOND CONGRESS OF
THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL**

(Excerpt)

III

**THE AMENDMENT OF THE LINE—PARTLY ALSO
OF THE COMPOSITION—OF THE PARTIES AFFILIATED
OR DESIRING TO AFFILIATE TO THE COMMUNIST
INTERNATIONAL**

14. The degree to which the proletariat in the countries most important from the viewpoint of world economy and world politics are prepared to establish their dictatorship can be characterized with the greatest objectivity and precision by the fact that the most influential parties of the Second International, viz., the Socialist Party of France, the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, the Independent Labour Party of Britain, and the Socialist Party of America, have withdrawn from this yellow International, and have decided—the first three conditionally, and the latter even unconditionally—to affiliate to the Third International. This proves that not only the vanguard but the majority of the revolutionary proletariat, convinced by the whole course of events, have begun to pass over to our side. The main thing now is to be able to consummate this passage and firmly, organizationally to consolidate what has been achieved, so as to

be able to advance along the whole line without the slightest wavering.

15. The entire activity of the parties mentioned (to which should be added the Socialist Party of Switzerland, if the telegraphic report of its decision to affiliate to the Third International is true) shows—and any of the periodicals of these parties clearly confirms this—that it is not yet communist, and not infrequently runs directly counter to the fundamental principles of the Third International, viz., the recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat and Soviet power instead of bourgeois democracy.

For that reason the Second Congress of the Communist International must resolve that it does not consider it possible immediately to accept the affiliation of these parties; that it endorses the reply given by the Executive Committee of the Third International to the German "Independents"; that it confirms its readiness to conduct negotiations with any party that withdraws from the Second International and desires to draw closer to the Third International; that it grants the delegates of such parties a consultative vote at all its congresses and conferences; that it puts forward the following conditions for the complete affiliation of these (and similar) parties to the Communist International:

1. The publication of all decisions of all congresses of the Communist International and of its Executive Committee in all periodicals of the party.

2. The discussion of all such decisions at special meetings of all sections or local organizations of the party.

3. The convocation, after such discussion, of a special congress of the party for the purpose of summing up, and of.

4. Purging the party of elements which continue to act in the spirit of the Second International.

5. The transfer of all the periodicals of the party to exclusively communist editorial boards.

The Second Congress of the Third International should instruct its Executive Committee formally to accept the affiliation of these and similar parties to the Third International after ascertaining that all these conditions have been actually met and that the character of the activities of the parties has become communist.

16. On the question of what should be the conduct of the Communists who now hold a minority of the responsible posts in the mentioned and similar parties, the Second Congress of the Communist International should resolve that in view of the obvious growth of the sincerest sympathy towards communism among the workers belonging to these parties, it is not desirable for the Communists to leave them, so long as they can carry on work in these parties in the spirit of recognition of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of Soviet power, and so long as it is possible to criticize the opportunists and Centrists who still remain in these parties.

At the same time, the Second Congress of the Third International should express itself in favour of groups and organizations in Britain that are communist, or sympathize with communism, affiliating to the Labour Party, notwithstanding the fact that the latter is affiliated to the Second International. For, so long as this Party permits its affiliated organizations to enjoy their present freedom of criticism and freedom to carry on propagandist, agitational and organizational activity in favour of the dictatorship of the proletariat and Soviet government, so long as that Party preserves its character of an association of all trade-union organizations of the working class, the Communists must without fail take all measures and agree to certain compromises in order to have the opportunity of influencing the broadest masses of the workers, of exposing their opportunist leaders from a platform that is higher and more visible to the masses, and of accelerating the transition of political power from the direct representatives of the bourgeoisie to the "labour lieutenants of the

capitalist class," so that the masses may be cured with the utmost speed of their last illusions on this score.

17. In regard to the Socialist Party of Italy, the Second Congress of the Third International considers as basically correct the criticism of that Party and the practical proposals which were published, as proposals to the National Council of the Socialist Party of Italy, in the name of the Turin section of that Party in the journal *New Order (L'Ordine Nuovo)* of May 8, 1920, and which fully correspond to all the fundamental principles of the Third International.

For that reason the Second Congress of the Third International requests the Socialist Party of Italy to convene a special congress of the Party to discuss these proposals and all the decisions of both congresses of the Communist International, for the purpose of rectifying the line of the Party and of purging it, and particularly its parliamentary group, of non-Communist elements.

18. The Second Congress of the Third International regards as incorrect those views about the party's relations to the class and to the masses, and about it not being obligatory for Communist Parties to participate in bourgeois parliaments and in the most reactionary trade unions, which have been refuted in detail in the special decisions of the present Congress after being most fully defended by the Communist Workers' Party of Germany, partly by the Communist Party of Switzerland, by *Kommunismus*, the organ of the East-European Secretariat of the Communist International in Vienna, by the now dissolved secretariat in Amsterdam, by several Dutch comrades, by several communist organizations in Britain, for example, the Workers' Socialist Federation, etc., and also by the Industrial Workers of the World in America, the Shop Stewards' Committee movement in Britain, and others.

Nevertheless, the Second Congress of the Third International considers possible and desirable the immediate affiliation to the Communist International of those of the

above-mentioned organizations which are not yet affiliated officially, because, in the present case, particularly in regard to the I.W.W. in America and Australia, as well as in regard to the Shop Stewards' Committees in Britain, we are dealing with a profoundly proletarian and mass movement, which, in the main, is based in fact on the fundamental principles of the Communist International. The mistaken views held in such organizations regarding participation in bourgeois parliaments are to be explained not so much by the part played by people of bourgeois origin, who introduce their essentially petty-bourgeois views—such as the views of the anarchists often are—as by the political inexperience of proletarians who are quite revolutionary and connected with the masses.

The Second Congress of the Third International therefore requests all communist organizations and groups in the Anglo-Saxon countries, even in the event of the immediate affiliation of the I.W.W. and the Shop Stewards' Committee movement to the Third International not taking place, to pursue the friendliest possible policy towards these organizations, one of close relations with them and the masses who sympathize with them, and of explaining to them in a friendly manner, from the point of view of the experience of all revolutions, and particularly of the three Russian revolutions in the twentieth century, the fallacy of the above-mentioned views of theirs, and not to refrain from making repeated attempts to amalgamate with these organizations in a single Communist Party.

19. The Congress draws the attention, in this connection, of all comrades, particularly in the Latin and Anglo-Saxon countries, to the fact that since the war an ideological division has been taking place among the anarchists all over the world on the question of the attitude to be adopted towards the dictatorship of the proletariat and Soviet power. Moreover, it is precisely among the proletarian elements, who are often impelled towards anarchism by an absolutely legitimate hatred of the opportunism and reformism

of the parties of the Second International, that a proper understanding of these principles is particularly observed, and it is the more widespread among them the more they are familiar with the experience of Russia, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Poland and Germany.

The Congress therefore considers it the duty of all comrades to assist in every way all the proletarian masses to go over from anarchism to the Third International. The Congress points out that success in the work of the genuinely Communist Parties should be measured, among other things, by the extent to which they succeed in winning over all the proletarian elements—not intellectuals, not petty bourgeois, but rank-and-file.

July 4, 1920

Published in July 1920

Vol. 31, pp. 173-77

**REPLY TO THE LETTER
OF THE JOINT PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE
OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF BRITAIN¹⁴⁵**

Having received the letter of the Joint Provisional Committee of the Communist Party of Britain, dated June 20th, I hasten to reply, in accordance with their request, that I am in complete sympathy with their plans for the immediate organization of a united Communist Party of Britain. I consider the tactics of Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst and of the Workers' Socialist Federation, who are refusing to collaborate in the amalgamation of the B.S.P., the S.L.P., and others into one Communist Party, to be wrong. I personally am in favour of participation in Parliament and of affiliation to the Labour Party on condition of wholly free and independent communist activity. These tactics I am going to defend at the Second Congress of the Third International on July 15 at Moscow. I consider it most desirable that a united Communist Party be speedily organized on the basis of the decisions of the Third International, and that that party be brought into close touch with the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) and the Shop Stewards' Committees, in order to bring about a complete merger with them in the near future.

8. VII. 1920

N. Lenin

An English translation appeared in *The Call*, July 22, 1920

Vol. 31, p. 178

**THE INTERNATIONAL SITUATION
AND THE FUNDAMENTAL TASKS
OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL***

(Stormy applause. All present rise to their feet and applaud. The speaker tries to begin, but the applause and cries in all languages continue. The ovation goes on for long.) Comrades, the theses on the questions of the fundamental tasks of the Communist International have been published in all languages and (particularly for the Russian comrades) represent nothing materially new; for, to a large extent, they apply several of the main features of our revolutionary experience and the lessons of our revolutionary movement to a number of Western countries, to Western Europe. Therefore, in my report I shall deal at greater length, although in brief outline, with the first part of the subject allocated to me, namely, the international situation.

The core of the entire international situation as it now exists lies in the economic relations of imperialism. Throughout the twentieth century, this new, highest and last stage of capitalism has become fully defined. Of course, you know that the most characteristic, the most essential feature of imperialism has been the fact that capital has reached enormous dimensions. Free competition has given way to monopoly of gigantic dimensions. An insignificant number of capitalists have been able in some cases to concentrate in their hands whole branches of

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industry; these have passed into the hands of combines, cartels, syndicates and trusts, not infrequently of an international character. Thus, entire branches of industry, not only in single countries, but all over the world, have proved to be captured by monopolists in the field of finance, property rights, and partly, production. This has been the basis for the unprecedented domination of an insignificant number of very big banks, of kings of finance, of financial magnates who have, in fact, transformed even the freest republics into financial monarchies. Before the war this was openly admitted by such far from revolutionary writers, as, for example, Lysis, in France.

This domination of a handful of capitalists reached its full development when the whole world was found to have been divided up, not only in the sense that the various sources of raw materials and means of production had been captured by the biggest capitalists, but also in the sense that the preliminary division of the colonies had been completed. Some forty years ago the population of the colonies was calculated at a little over a quarter of a milliard, and this population was subjected to six capitalist powers. Before the war of 1914 the population of the colonies was already calculated at about 600,000,000 and if we add countries like Persia, Turkey, and China, whose position already at that time was that of semi-colonies, we shall get in round figures a population of a milliard oppressed by the richest, most civilized and freest countries through colonial dependence. And you know that, apart from direct state, juridical dependence, colonial dependence presumes a number of relations of financial and economic dependence, presumes a number of wars, which were not regarded as wars because very often they amounted to sheer massacres, when European and American imperialist troops, armed with the most up-to-date weapons of destruction, slaughtered the unarmed and defenceless inhabitants of colonial countries.

Out of this partition of the whole world, out of this

domination of capitalist monopoly, out of this omnipotence of an insignificant number of very big banks—two, three, four or five in a country, not more—inevitably arose the first imperialist war of 1914-18. This war was waged in order to repartition the whole world. The war was waged in order to decide which of the tiny groups of biggest states—the British or the German—was to secure the opportunity and the right to rob, strangle and exploit the whole world. You know that the war settled this question in favour of the British group. And as a result of this war all capitalist contradictions have become immeasurably more acute. The war at one stroke threw back about a quarter of a milliard of the world's inhabitants to what is equivalent to a colonial position. It threw back Russia—whose population must be considered as about 130,000,000, and Austro-Hungary, Germany and Bulgaria—with a population of not less than 120,000,000. That means a quarter of a milliard people living in countries of which some, like Germany, are among the most advanced, most enlightened, most cultured, and on the level of modern technical development. By means of the Versailles Treaty, the war imposed such terms upon these countries that advanced peoples have fallen into a position of colonial dependence, poverty, starvation, ruin, and loss of rights; for they have been bound by this treaty for many generations, and placed in conditions that no civilized nation has ever lived in. You have the following picture of the world: after the war, at one stroke not less than *one and a quarter milliard* people are subjected to colonial oppression, to exploitation by brutal capitalism, which boasted of its love for peace, and which had some right to do so some fifty years ago, when the world was not yet divided up, when monopoly did not yet rule, when capitalism could still develop comparatively peacefully, without colossal military conflicts.

Now, following this "peaceful" epoch we see a monstrous intensification of oppression, we see the reversion to a

colonial and military oppression that is far worse than before. The Versailles Treaty has placed Germany and a number of other defeated countries in a position where their economic existence is materially impossible, where they have no rights whatever and are humiliated.

How many nations have benefited by this? To answer this question we must recall that the population of the United States—which alone fully profited by the war, and which has been entirely transformed from a country heavily in debt into a country that is everybody's creditor—is not more than 100,000,000. The population of Japan—which profited a very great deal by remaining outside of the European-American conflict and by seizing the enormous Asiatic Continent—is equal to 50,000,000. The population of Britain, which next to the above-mentioned countries profited most, is in the region of 50,000,000. And if we add the neutral countries with very small populations, countries which became enriched during the war, we shall get in round figures a quarter of a milliard.

Thus you get the main outlines of the picture of the world as it appeared after the imperialist war. One and a quarter milliard in the oppressed colonies—countries which are being cut up alive, like Persia, Turkey and China; countries defeated and flung into the position of colonies. Not more than a quarter of a milliard inhabit countries which have retained their old positions, but have become economically dependent upon America, and all of them, during the war, were dependent militarily, for the war affected the whole world and did not permit a single state to remain really neutral. And, finally, we have not more than a quarter of a milliard inhabitants of countries in which, of course, only the upper stratum, only the capitalists benefited by the partition of the world. We thus get a total of about one and three-quarter milliards comprising the whole population of the world. I would like to remind you of this picture of the world, for all the basic contradictions of capitalism, of imperialism,

which are leading to revolution, all the basic contradictions in the working-class movement which have led to the furious struggle against the Second International, to which our chairman referred, are all connected with this division of the population of the world.

Of course, these figures illustrate the economic picture of the world only roughly, in main outline. And, naturally, comrades, with the population of the whole world divided in this way, exploitation by finance capital, capitalist monopoly, has increased many times more.

Not only have the colonial and the defeated countries fallen into a state of dependence, but within each victor country contradictions have become more acute, all capitalist contradictions have become aggravated. I shall briefly illustrate this with a few examples.

Take the national debts. We know that the debts of the principal European states have increased not less than *seven* times over in the period from 1914 to 1920. I shall quote another economic source, which assumes particularly great significance, viz., the British diplomat Keynes, author of *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, who, on the instructions of his government, took part in the Versailles peace negotiations, watched them directly from the purely bourgeois point of view, studied the subject in detail, step by step, and took part in the conferences as an economist. He has arrived at conclusions which are stronger, more striking and more instructive than any Communist revolutionary could draw, because they are the conclusions of an acknowledged bourgeois, a ruthless opponent of Bolshevism, which he, like the English philistine he is, pictures to himself as something monstrous, ferocious, and brutal. Keynes has reached the conclusion that, following the Versailles Peace, Europe and the whole world are heading for bankruptcy. He resigned, threw his book in the government's face and said: what you are doing is madness. I shall quote his figures, which in the main amount to the following.

What shape has been assumed by debtor-creditor relations between the principal powers? I shall give pounds sterling in terms of gold rubles, counting ten gold rubles to the pound. Here is what we get: the United States has assets amounting to 19,000 millions, liabilities—nil. Before the war it was in Britain's debt. At the last congress of the Communist Party of Germany, Comrade Levi, in his report on April 14, 1920, quite rightly pointed out that only two powers are left in the world which now act independently, viz., Britain and America. America alone turns out to be absolutely independent financially. Before the war it was a debtor; now it is the only creditor. All the other powers in the world are in debt. Britain has fallen into a position where her assets amount to 17,000 millions, and her liabilities to 8,000 millions. She is already a debtor nation by half. Moreover, her assets include about 6,000 millions owed to her by Russia. Military supplies received by Russia during the war are included in the debt. Recently, when Krasin, as the representative of the Russian Soviet Government, had occasion to discuss with Lloyd George the subject of debt agreements, he made it plain to the scientists and politicians, to the British Government leaders, that if they were counting on getting these debts repaid they were labouring under a strange delusion. And the British diplomat Keynes has already revealed this delusion.

Of course, it is not only, or even not at all, a question of the Russian revolutionary government refusing to pay the debts. No government could pay, because these debts are a usurious charge that has been paid twenty times over; and this same bourgeois Keynes, who does not in the least sympathize with the Russian revolutionary movement, says: "Of course, these debts cannot be taken into account."

In regard to France, Keynes quotes figures of the following order: her assets amount to 3,500 millions, and her liabilities to 10,500 millions! And this is the country which

the French themselves said was the usurer of the whole world, because her "savings" were enormous, the proceeds of colonial and financial robbery—a gigantic capital—enabling her to grant thousands upon thousands of millions in loans, particularly to Russia. These loans brought in a gigantic revenue. In spite of that, in spite of victory, France has been reduced to the position of a debtor.

A bourgeois American source quoted by Comrade Braun, a Communist, in his book *Who Must Pay the War Debts?* (Leipzig 1920), estimates the ratio of debts to national wealth as follows: in the victor countries, Britain and France, the ratio of debts to total national wealth is more than 50 per cent. In Italy the percentage is 60 to 70, and in Russia 90. As you know, however, these debts do not disturb us, because we followed Keynes's excellent advice just a little before his book appeared—we annulled all our debts. (*Loud applause.*)

Keynes, however, betrays the queerness of an ordinary philistine: while advising that all debts be annulled, he says that, of course, France only stands to gain by it, that, of course, Britain will not lose very much, as nothing can be got out of Russia in any case; America will lose a fair amount, but Keynes counts on American "generosity"! On this point our views differ from those of Keynes and of other philistine pacifists. We think that to get the debts annulled they will have to wait for something else to happen, and will have to try working in another direction than that of counting on the generosity of the capitalist gentry.

From these few figures it is evident that the imperialist war has created an impossible situation for the victor countries, too. This is further shown by the enormous disparity between the wage level and the rise in prices. On March 8 of this year, the Supreme Economic Council, an institution engaged in protecting the bourgeois system all over the world from the growing revolution, adopted a resolution which ended with an appeal for order, industry

and thrift, on the condition, of course, that the workers remain the slaves of capital. This Supreme Economic Council, the organ of the Entente and of the capitalists of the whole world, presented the following summary.

In the United States of America the prices of food products have risen, on the average, 120 per cent, whereas wages have increased only 100 per cent. In Britain we get: food products 170 per cent, and wages 130 per cent; in France, food products 300 per cent, and wages 200 per cent; in Japan, food products 130 per cent, wages 60 per cent. (I have compared Comrade Braun's figures in the above-mentioned pamphlet of his with the figures of the Supreme Economic Council in *The Times* of March 10, 1920).

Clearly, under such circumstances, the growth of indignation among the workers, the growth of revolutionary temper and ideas, and the growth of spontaneous mass strikes are inevitable, for the position of the workers is becoming intolerable. The workers are being convinced by their own experience that the capitalists have enriched themselves enormously by the war and are throwing the burden of the war costs and debts upon their shoulders. Recently, we have been informed by cable that America wants to deport another 500 Communists to Russia in order to get rid of "pernicious agitators."

Even if America deports to our country not 500 but all of 500,000 Russian, American, Japanese and French "agitators" it will make no difference, because there will remain the disparity between prices and wages, which they can do nothing about. And they can do nothing about it because private property is most strictly safeguarded, is "sacred" there. That should not be forgotten, because it is only in Russia that the private property of the exploiters has been abolished. The capitalists cannot do anything about the disparity between prices and wages, and the workers cannot live on their old wages. You can do nothing against this misfortune by the old methods. Nothing can be done

by separate strikes, parliamentary struggle, or voting, for "private property is sacred," and the capitalists have accumulated such debts that the whole world is in bondage to a handful of people. Meanwhile the workers' living conditions are becoming more and more unbearable. There is no way out except to abolish the "private property" of the exploiters.

Comrade Lapinsky in his pamphlet, *Britain and the World Revolution*, valuable extracts from which were published by our *Bulletin of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs* of February 1920, points out that in Britain coal export prices have proved to be double those anticipated by official industrial circles.

In Lancashire things have gone so far that share prices have increased 400 per cent. Bank profits amount to at least 40-50 per cent. Moreover, it should be noted in determining bank profits, that all bank officials manage to conceal the lion's share of profits secured by not calling them such, but bonus, commissions, etc. So that here, too, economic facts prove indisputably that the wealth of a tiny handful of people has grown incredibly, that their luxury is unparalleled, exceeds all bounds, while at the same time the poverty of the working class is steadily increasing. We must particularly note the further circumstance brought out very clearly by Comrade Levi in the report I have just referred to, namely, the change in the worth of money. Everywhere money has depreciated as a result of the debts, the issuing of paper currency, etc. The same bourgeois source which I have already mentioned, namely, the statement of the Supreme Economic Council of March 8, 1920, calculates that in Britain the depreciation in the worth of currency compared with dollars is approximately one-third, in France and Italy two-thirds, and in Germany as much as 96 per cent.

This fact shows that the "mechanism" of world capitalist economy is falling to pieces altogether. The commercial relations on which the acquisition of raw materials

and the sale of goods rest under capitalism cannot continue; and they cannot continue precisely on the basis of subordinating a whole number of countries to one country—owing to the change in the worth of money. Not a single wealthy country is able to exist or trade, because it cannot sell its goods and cannot obtain raw materials.

And thus we get the situation that America, a wealthy country, to which all countries are subordinate, can neither buy nor sell. And the very Keynes who has gone through the whole gamut of the Versailles negotiations is compelled to admit this inability in spite of his indomitable determination to defend capitalism, in spite of all his hatred for Bolshevism. Incidentally, I do not think a single manifesto, communist or revolutionary in general, could be compared in forcefulness to those pages in Keynes's book in which he depicts Wilson and "Wilsonism" in practice. Wilson was the idol of philistines and pacifists like Keynes and a number of heroes of the Second International (and even of the "Two-and-a-Half" International),¹⁴⁶ who worshipped the "Fourteen Points"¹⁴⁷ and even wrote "learned" books about the "roots" of Wilson's policy; they hoped that Wilson would save "social peace," reconcile the exploiters with the exploited and bring about social reforms. Keynes vividly exposed how Wilson proved to be a fool, and all these illusions were shattered at the first impact with the business, jobbing, huckster's policy of capital personified by Messrs. Clemenceau and Lloyd George. The masses of the workers now see more clearly than ever from the experience of their own lives—and the erudite pedants could see it even from Keynes's book—that the "roots" of Wilson's policy amounted just to parson's piffle, petty-bourgeois phrase-mongering, to an utter failure to understand the class struggle.

As a consequence of all this, two conditions, two fundamental situations, have inevitably and naturally emerged. On the one hand, the poverty and ruin of the masses have grown incredibly, primarily among one and

a quarter milliard of people, i.e., 70 per cent of the world's population. These are the colonial and dependent countries with juridically rightless populations, countries "mandated" to financial pirates. And besides, the slavery of the defeated countries has been sealed by the Versailles Treaty, and by those secret treaties which exist regarding Russia whose validity, it is true, is sometimes about as real as that of the scraps of paper which record that we owe so many milliards. For the first time in world history we have robbery, slavery, dependence, poverty and starvation imposed by a juridical act upon one and a quarter milliard people.

On the other hand, in each of the countries that have become creditors, the position of the workers has become intolerable. The war has caused an unprecedented intensification of all capitalist contradictions, and this is the source of the profound revolutionary ferment that is growing, for during the war the people were put under military discipline, were flung into the jaws of death, or were under the threat of immediate military punishment. War conditions did not give people an opportunity to look economic reality in the face. Writers, poets, parsons, the whole press did nothing but glorify the war. Now that the war has come to an end, exposure has begun: there has been the exposure of German imperialism and its Brest-Litovsk Peace; the exposure of the Versailles Peace, which was to have been the victory of imperialism, but turned out to be its defeat. The case of Keynes shows, incidentally, that in Europe and America scores and hundreds of thousands of petty-bourgeois people, intellectuals, and simply more or less enlightened and educated people, have had to follow the road taken by Keynes, who resigned and threw in the face of the government a book that exposes it. Keynes has shown what is taking place and will take place in the minds of thousands and hundreds of thousands of people when they realize that all the speeches about "war for liberty," etc., were utterly false, that as a result

only an insignificant number of people got rich, while the remainder were ruined and fell into bondage. Is it not a fact that the bourgeois Keynes says that in order to save their lives, in order to save the British economy, the British must secure the resumption of free commercial intercourse between Germany and Russia? How can this be done? By cancelling all debts, as Keynes proposes. This idea is not merely that of Keynes, the learned economist. Millions are approaching and will grasp it. And millions of people are hearing that bourgeois economists say: there is no way out except to annul the debts, therefore "damn the Bolsheviks" (who have annulled the debts), let us appeal to America's "generosity"! I think that, on behalf of the Congress of the Communist International, we should send a message of gratitude to these economist agitators for Bolshevism.

If, on the one hand, the economic position of the masses has become unbearable, and if, on the other hand, the disintegration described by Keynes has set in, and is growing among the tiny minority of all-powerful victor countries, then what we have before us is precisely the ripening of the two conditions for world revolution.

We now have before us a somewhat fuller picture of the whole world. We know what it means for one and a quarter milliard people who have been placed under impossible living conditions to be dependent upon a handful of moneybags. On the other hand, when the peoples were presented with the League of Nations Covenant, in which the League of Nations declares that it has put an end to war and henceforth will not permit anyone to disturb the peace, and when this Covenant, the last hope of the masses of the working people all over the world, came into force, it proved to be a great victory for us. Before it came into force people said: you cannot avoid subjecting a country like Germany to special conditions; when the Covenant is drawn up, you will see that everything will come out all right. But when the Covenant was published, bitter op-

ponents of Bolshevism were obliged to repudiate it! When the Covenant began to be operated, it turned out that a tiny group of the richest countries, the "fat four"—in the persons of Clemenceau, Lloyd George, Orlando and Wilson—had been put on the job of creating new relations! When the machinery of the Covenant was started it resulted in utter disintegration!

We saw this in the case of the wars against Russia. Weak, ruined, crushed Russia, a most backward country, fought all the nations, a league of the rich, powerful states that rule the whole world, and emerged victorious. We could not put up a force at all equal to theirs, yet we proved to be the victors. Why? Because there was not a trace of unity among them, because one power worked against the other. France wanted Russia to pay its debts to her, and to be a menace to Germany; Britain wanted to partition Russia, tried to seize the Baku oilfields and to conclude a treaty with the border states of Russia. Among official British documents there is a book which most religiously enumerates all the states (there were 14 of them) which six months ago, in December 1919, pledged themselves to take Moscow and Petrograd. Britain based her policy on these states, and granted them loans running into millions. But now all these calculations have come to nothing, and all the loans have gone to waste.

This is the situation created by the League of Nations. Every day of the existence of this Covenant is the best propaganda for Bolshevism, since the most powerful adherents of capitalist "order" are showing that on every question they put spokes in each other's wheels. Furious wrangling over the partitioning of Turkey, Persia, Mesopotamia and China is going on between Japan, Britain, America and France. The bourgeois press in these countries is full of the bitterest attacks, the angriest statements against their "colleagues" for snatching the booty from under their noses. We see complete disintegration at the top, among this handful, this tiny number of very rich countries. One

and a quarter milliard people cannot live under the slave conditions which "advanced" civilized capitalism wishes to force on them; after all, they represent 70 per cent of the world's population. But this tiny handful of the richest states, Britain, America, Japan (Japan had the opportunity of plundering the Eastern, Asiatic, countries, but cannot constitute an independent, financial and military force without the support of another country)—these two or three countries cannot get economic intercourse going and are directing their policy toward disrupting the policy of their colleagues and partners in the League of Nations. This is the source of the world crisis. And these economic roots of the crisis are the chief cause of the brilliant successes being won by the Communist International.

Comrades, we have now come to the question of the revolutionary crisis as the basis of our revolutionary action. And here we must first of all note two widespread errors. On the one hand, the bourgeois economists depict this crisis simply as "unrest," to use the elegant expression of the British. On the other hand, revolutionaries sometimes try to prove that there is absolutely no way out of the crisis.

That is a mistake. There is no such thing as situations with absolutely no way out. The bourgeoisie are behaving like arrogant marauders who have lost their heads; they are committing one stupidity after another, thus aggravating the situation and hastening their doom. All that is true. But it cannot be "proved" that it is absolutely impossible for them to lull some minority of the exploited with some concessions, to suppress some movement or uprising of some section of the oppressed and exploited. To try to "prove" in advance that there is "absolutely" no way out of the situation would be sheer pedantry, or playing with concepts and catchwords. Practice alone can serve as real "proof" in this and similar questions. All over the world the bourgeois system is experiencing a tremendous revolu-

tionary crisis. The revolutionary parties must now "prove" in practice that they possess sufficient understanding and organization, contact with the exploited masses, determination and skill to utilize this crisis for a successful, victorious revolution.

It is mainly to prepare this "proof" that we have gathered at this Congress of the Communist International.

To illustrate how far opportunism still prevails among the parties desirous of affiliating to the Third International, and how far removed the work of some parties is from preparing the revolutionary class to utilize the revolutionary crisis, I shall quote the leader of the British Independent Labour Party, Ramsay MacDonald. In his book, *Parliament and Revolution*, which deals with the very fundamental questions that are now engaging our attention, MacDonald describes the state of affairs approximately in the bourgeois pacifist spirit. He admits that there is a revolutionary crisis and that revolutionary sentiments are growing, that the sympathies of the workers are with the Soviets and the dictatorship of the proletariat (note that Britain is being spoken of), that the dictatorship of the proletariat is better than the present dictatorship of the British bourgeoisie.

But MacDonald remains a thorough bourgeois pacifist and compromiser, a petty bourgeois who dreams of an above-class government. Like all the liars, sophists and pedants of the bourgeoisie, MacDonald recognizes the class struggle merely as a "descriptive fact." He ignores the experience of Kerensky, and of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in Russia, the analogous experience of Hungary, Germany, etc., in regard to creating a "democratic" and allegedly above-class government. MacDonald lulls his party and those workers who have the misfortune to regard this bourgeois as a Socialist, this philistine as a leader, with the words: "We know that this (i.e., the revolutionary crisis, the revolutionary ferment) will pass, will die down." The war, he says, inevitably

caused the crisis, but after the war it will all "die down," although not at once!

And this is written by a man who is the leader of a party desirous of affiliating to the Third International. This is an exposure—rare in its frankness and therefore the more valuable—of what is observed no less frequently in the top ranks of the French Socialist Party and the German Independent Social-Democratic Party, namely, not only inability, but also unwillingness to take advantage in a revolutionary sense of the revolutionary crisis, or, in other words, inability and unwillingness really to prepare the party and the class in revolutionary fashion for the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This is the main evil in very many parties which are now leaving the Second International. And this is precisely why in the theses I have submitted to the present Congress I dwell most of all on the tasks connected with *preparation* for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and give as concrete and exact a definition of them as possible.

Here is another example. Recently a new book was published directed against Bolshevism. An unusually large number of books of this kind are now being published in Europe and America, and the larger the number of anti-Bolshevik books published, the stronger and more rapidly does the mass sympathy for Bolshevism grow. I have in mind Otto Bauer's *Bolshevism or Social-Democracy?* This book clearly explains to Germans what the Mensheviks are, whose shameful role in the Russian Revolution is sufficiently understood by the workers of all countries. Otto Bauer has produced a thoroughly Menshevik pamphlet, although he has concealed his own sympathy for Menshevism. In Europe and America, however, it is now necessary to spread more precise information about what Menshevism is, for it is a kindred concept for all allegedly Socialist, Social-Democratic, etc., trends which are hostile to Bolshevism. It would be tedious for us Russians to write explaining to Europeans what Menshevism is. Otto

Bauer has given practical proof of this in his book; and in advance we thank the bourgeois and opportunist publishers who will publish it and translate it into various languages. Bauer's book will be a useful, although peculiar, supplement to the textbooks on communism. Take any paragraph, any argument in Otto Bauer's book and point to the Menshevism in it, to the root of the views which lead to the practical work of the traitors to socialism, of the friends of Kerensky, Scheidemann, etc.—that is a problem that could very usefully be set in "examinations" for testing whether communism has been assimilated. If you cannot solve this problem, you are not a Communist yet, and had better not join the Communist Party. (*Applause.*)

Otto Bauer excellently expressed the essence of the views of world opportunism in a single phrase for which—if we could do as we liked in Vienna—we ought to raise a monument to him while he is still alive. The application of violence in the class struggle in modern democracies—quoth Otto Bauer—would be "violence against the social factors of force."

Probably you will think that this sounds queer and unintelligible. But it is an example of what Marxism has been reduced to, of the sort of banality and defence of the exploiters which the most revolutionary theory *can* be reduced to. A German variety of philistinism is required, and you get the "theory" that the "social factors of force" are number, state of organization, place in the process of production and distribution, activity, education. If a rural agricultural labourer, or an urban working man commits revolutionary violence against the landlord or capitalist, it is not the dictatorship of the proletariat, it is not violence against the exploiters and the oppressors of the people. Oh, no! It is "violence against the social factors of force."

Perhaps my example sounds somewhat of a joke. But the nature of contemporary opportunism is such that its struggle against Bolshevism turns into a joke. The task of drawing the working class, all its thinking elements, into

the struggle between international Menshevism (the MacDonalds, Otto Bauers and Co.) and Bolshevism is, for Europe and America, a very useful and very urgent one.

Here we must ask: how is the firmness of such trends in Europe to be explained? And why is this opportunism stronger in Western Europe than in our country? Because the advanced countries have created and still create their culture by being able to live at the expense of a thousand million oppressed people. Because the capitalists of these countries obtain a great deal more than they could obtain as profits from robbing the workers in their own countries.

Before the war it was calculated that the three richest countries—Britain, France and Germany—obtained from the export of capital alone, apart from other incomes, from eight to ten thousand million francs per annum.

It goes without saying that out of this tidy sum it is possible to throw at least five hundred million as a sop to the labour leaders, to the labour aristocracy, spending it on all sorts of bribes. The whole thing boils down precisely to bribery. It is done in a thousand different ways: by increasing cultural facilities in the largest centres, by creating educational institutions, by creating thousands of soft jobs for co-operative leaders, trade-union leaders and parliamentary leaders. It is done wherever modern, civilized, capitalist relations exist. And these milliards of super-profits are the economic basis underlying opportunism in the working-class movement. In America, Britain and France we witness the immeasurably stronger persistence of the opportunist leaders, of the upper stratum of the working class, of the aristocracy of labour; they put up stronger resistance to the communist movement. And that is why we must be prepared to find that it will be harder for the American and European workers' parties to get rid of this disease than was the case in our country. We know that great successes have been achieved in curing this disease since the Third International was formed; but we have not yet achieved a complete cure: the purging

of the workers' parties, the revolutionary parties of the proletariat all over the world, of bourgeois influences, of the opportunists in their ranks, is very far from complete.

I shall not dwell on the concrete manner in which we must do this: that is dealt with in my theses, which have been published. My task is to indicate the deep economic roots of this phenomenon. The disease is a protracted one; the cure is more protracted than optimists hoped it would be. Opportunism is our principal enemy. Opportunism in the upper ranks of the working-class movement is not proletarian socialism, but bourgeois socialism. Practice has shown that the active people in the working-class movement who adhere to the opportunist trend are better defenders of the bourgeoisie than the bourgeoisie itself. Without their leadership of the workers, the bourgeoisie could not remain in power. This is proved not only by the history of the Kerensky regime in Russia; it is also proved by the democratic republic in Germany, headed by its Social-Democratic government; it is proved by Albert Thomas's attitude toward his bourgeois government. It is proved by the analogous experience in Britain and the United States. This is where our principal enemy is; and we must conquer this enemy. We must leave this Congress firmly resolved to carry this struggle on to the very end in all parties. This is our main task.

Compared with this task, the correction of the errors of the "Left" trend in communism will be an easy one. In a number of countries we observe anti-parliamentarism, which is not so much brought in by people of petty-bourgeois origin as fostered by certain advanced detachments of the proletariat out of hatred for the old parliamentarism, out of a legitimate, proper and necessary hatred for the conduct of the members of parliament in Britain, France, Italy and in all countries. The Communist International must issue instructions, the comrades must be made more closely familiar with the experience of Russia, with the significance of a real proletarian political party. Our work

will consist in fulfilling this task. And the fight against these errors of the proletarian movement, against these shortcomings, will be a thousand times easier than fighting against those bourgeois who in the guise of reformists belong to the old parties of the Second International and conduct the whole of their work in a bourgeois, and not a proletarian, spirit.

Comrades, in conclusion I shall deal with one other aspect of the subject. Our comrade, the chairman, has said that our Congress deserves the title of World Congress. I think he is right, particularly because we have here quite a number of representatives of the revolutionary movement in colonial, backward countries. This is only a small beginning; but the important thing is that a beginning has been made. The uniting of the revolutionary proletarians of the capitalist, advanced countries with the revolutionary masses of those countries where there is no proletariat, or hardly any, with the oppressed masses of colonial, Eastern countries, is taking place at this Congress. The riveting of the bonds of unity depends upon us, and I am sure we shall achieve it. World imperialism must fall when the revolutionary onslaught of the exploited and oppressed workers in each country, overcoming the resistance of the petty-bourgeois elements and the influence of the small upper stratum of the labour aristocracy, merges with the revolutionary onslaught of hundreds of millions of people who have hitherto stood outside of history and have been regarded merely as the object of history.

The imperialist war has helped the revolution; the bourgeoisie tore soldiers out of the colonies, out of backward countries, out of isolation, with a view to their taking part in this imperialist war. The British bourgeoisie urged on the soldiers from India that it was the business of the Indian peasants to defend Great Britain against Germany; the French bourgeoisie urged on the soldiers from the French colonies that it was the business of the coloured

people to defend France. They taught them the use of arms. This is very useful knowledge, and we could express our deep gratitude to the bourgeoisie for imparting this knowledge—we could express our gratitude on behalf of all the Russian workers and peasants, and on behalf of the entire Russian Red Army, in particular. The imperialist war has drawn the dependent peoples into world history. And one of the most important tasks confronting us now is to ponder over how the foundation-stone of the organization of the Soviet movement can be laid in the *non-capitalist* countries. Soviets are possible there; they will not be Workers' Soviets, but Peasants' Soviets, or Soviets of Toilers.

Much work will have to be done; mistakes will be inevitable; many difficulties will be encountered on this path. The fundamental task of the Second Congress is to work out, or indicate, the practical principles that will enable the work carried on until now among hundreds of millions of people in an unorganized way, to be carried on in an organized, compact and systematic way.

Now, a year, or a little more, after the First Congress of the Communist International, we come out as the victors over the Second International; the ideas of the Soviets have now spread not only among the workers of the civilized countries, they are not only intelligible and known to them; the workers of all countries laugh at the wiseacres, not a few of whom call themselves Socialists and argue in a learned, or quasi-learned manner, about the Soviet "system," as the German system-makers are fond of calling it, or the Soviet "idea," as the British "Guild" Socialists call it. Not infrequently, these arguments about the Soviet "system" or "idea" clouded the eyes and the minds of the workers. But the workers are brushing aside this pedantic rubbish and are taking up the weapon which the Soviets have provided. An appreciation of the role and significance of Soviets has now also spread to the lands of the East.

A basis for the Soviet movement has been laid all over the East, all over Asia, among all the colonial peoples.

The proposition that the exploited must rise against the exploiters and set up their Soviets is not a very complicated one. After our experience, after two and a half years of the existence of the Soviet Republic in Russia, after the First Congress of the Third International, it is becoming intelligible all over the world to hundreds of millions of people oppressed by the exploiters; and if we in Russia are often obliged to conclude compromises, to bide our time, for we are weaker than the international imperialists, we know that we are the defenders of the interests of masses numbering one and a quarter milliards. For the time being we are hampered by obstacles, prejudices and ignorance which hour by hour are becoming things of the past; but we are increasingly representing and really defending this 70 per cent of the world's population, this mass of toilers and exploited. We can proudly say: at the First Congress we were actually only propagandists, we only spread the main ideas among the proletariat of the whole world, we only issued a call for struggle, we only asked—where are the people who are capable of taking this path? Now, however, we have the advanced proletariat everywhere. Everywhere we have a proletarian army, although sometimes badly organized, needing reorganization; and if our international comrades now help us to organize a united army, no shortcomings will prevent us from performing our task. And this task is the task of world proletarian revolution, the task of creating a world-wide Soviet Republic. (*Prolonged applause.*)

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THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY*

Comrades, I would like to make a few remarks on the speeches delivered by Comrades Tanner and McLaine. Tanner says that he stands for the dictatorship of the proletariat, but that his conception of the dictatorship of the proletariat is not quite the same as ours is. He says that by the dictatorship of the proletariat we mean, in essence, the dictatorship of its organized and class-conscious minority.

And indeed, in the epoch of capitalism, when the masses of the workers are constantly subjected to exploitation and cannot develop their human faculties, the most characteristic feature of working-class political parties is that they can embrace only a minority of their class. A political party can comprise only a minority of the class, just as the really class-conscious workers in any capitalist society constitute only a minority of all the workers. That is why we have to admit that only this class-conscious minority can guide and take the lead of the broad masses of the workers. And if Comrade Tanner says that he is opposed to parties but at the same time is in favour of a minority, composed of the best organized and the most revolutionary workers, showing the way to the whole of the proletariat, then I say that there is really no difference between us. What is an organized minority? If this minority is truly class-conscious, if it is able to lead the masses, if it is

* Speech at the Second Congress of the Communist International, July 23, 1920.—*Ed.*

capable of answering every question that comes up on the order of the day, then essentially it is a party. And if comrades like Tanner, whom we particularly reckon with as being representatives of a mass movement—a thing which cannot, without stretching a point, be said of the British Socialist Party representatives—if these comrades are in favour of a minority existing that will fight resolutely for the dictatorship of the proletariat and that will train the masses of the workers in this direction, then essentially, such a minority is nothing but a party. Comrade Tanner says that this minority should organize and lead the whole mass of the workers. If Comrade Tanner and the other comrades of the Shop Stewards' group and of the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) admit this—and in the conversations we have with them every day we see that they do—if they approve the proposition that the class-conscious communist minority of the working class must lead the proletariat, then they also have to agree that this is the sense of all our resolutions. And then the only difference that exists between us is their avoidance of the word "party" because of a sort of prejudice held by British comrades towards political parties. They cannot conceive of a political party being anything else than a replica of the parties of Gompers and Henderson, of parliamentary bosses and traitors to the working class. And if they imagine parliamentarism to be what it actually is in Britain and America today, then we too are opposed to such parliamentarism and such political parties. What we need is new parties, different parties. We need parties that will be in constant and real contact with the masses and that will be able to lead these masses.

I come to the third question that I would like to touch upon here in connection with Comrade McLaine's speech. He is in favour of the British Communist Party affiliating to the Labour Party. I have already expressed my opinion on this in my theses on affiliation to the Third Interna-

tional.* I left that question open in my pamphlet, but having discussed it with many comrades I have become convinced that the decision to remain in the Labour Party is the only correct tactics. And when Comrade Tanner comes out with the statement: "Don't be too dogmatic," his remark is wholly out of place. Comrade Ramsay says: "Let us British Communists decide this question ourselves." What would the International be like if every little faction came and said: "Some of us are in favour of one thing and some of us are opposed; permit us to decide the question ourselves"? What would be the use, then, of having an International, a congress and all this discussion? Comrade McLaine only spoke about the role of a political party. But the same thing applies to trade unions and to parliamentarism. It is quite true that a large section of the best revolutionaries are opposed to affiliation to the Labour Party because they are opposed to parliamentarism as a means of struggle. Maybe it would be better to refer this question to a commission where it should be studied, discussed and unflinchingly settled at this Congress of the Third International. We cannot agree that it only concerns the British Communists. We must say in general what are the right tactics to pursue.

Now I shall deal with some of the arguments advanced by Comrade McLaine in connection with the question of the British Labour Party. We must say frankly that the party of the Communists can join the Labour Party only on condition that it retains complete freedom of criticism and can pursue its own policy. That is the most important thing. When Comrade Serrati speaks of class collaboration in this connection I declare that there will be no class collaboration here. If the Italian comrades allow opportunists like Turati and Co., i.e., bourgeois elements, to remain in their party, that indeed is class collaboration. But in this case,

* See page 497-502 of this volume.—Ed.

in regard to the British Labour Party, it is only a matter of the advanced minority of the British workers collaborating with the overwhelming majority. The members of the Labour Party are all members of trade unions. The structure of this party is very peculiar, unlike that in any other country. This organization embraces 4 million of the 6 to 7 million workers belonging to the trade unions. They are not asked what their political convictions are. Let Comrade Serrati prove to me that somebody will prevent us from exercising the right of criticism. Only when you prove that will you prove Comrade McLaine to be wrong. The British Socialist Party can freely say that Henderson is a traitor and yet remain within the ranks of the Labour Party. What we get here is collaboration between the vanguard of the working class and the backward workers—the rearguard. This collaboration is so important for the whole movement that we categorically insist that the British Communists should serve as a connecting link between the Party, i.e., the minority of the working class, and all the rest of the workers. If the minority is unable to lead the masses, to link up closely with them, then it is not a party and is of no value whatever, no matter whether it calls itself a party or the Shop Stewards' National Council—so far as I know the Shop Stewards' Committees in Britain have their National Council, their central leadership, and that is already a step in the direction of a party. Hence if it is not disproved that the British Labour Party consists of proletarians, then we get collaboration between the vanguard of the working class and the backward workers; and if this collaboration is not undertaken systematically, the Communist Party will be worthless and then there can be no question of the dictatorship of the proletariat. And if our Italian comrades cannot advance more convincing arguments, then we shall have later on to finally settle the question here on the basis of what we know, and we shall come to the conclusion that affiliation is the correct tactics.

Comrades Tanner and Ramsay tell us that the majority of the British Communists do not agree to affiliation; but must we unfailingly agree with the majority? Not at all. If the majority do not yet understand which tactics are right, perhaps it would be better to wait. Even the parallel existence of two parties for a time would be better than refusal to reply to the question of which tactics are right. Of course, on the basis of the experience of all the members of the Congress, on the basis of the arguments presented here, you will not insist that we now pass a resolution calling for the immediate formation of a single Communist Party in each and every country. That is impossible. But what we can do is to frankly express our opinion and issue directives. We must study the question raised by the British delegation in a special commission and after that say: the correct tactics are affiliation to the Labour Party. If the majority are opposed to that, we must organize the minority separately. This will be of educational value. If the masses of the British workers still believe in the former tactics we will check our conclusions at the next congress. But we cannot say that this question only concerns Britain—that would be copying the worst habits of the Second International. We must openly express our opinion. If the British Communists do not reach agreement and a mass party is not formed, then a split is inevitable in any case.

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REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE NATIONAL AND COLONIAL QUESTIONS*

Comrades, I shall confine myself to a brief introduction, after which Comrade Maring, who was secretary of our commission, will give you a detailed account of the changes we have made in the theses. He will be followed by Comrade Roy, who formulated supplementary theses. Our commission unanimously adopted both the preliminary theses, as amended, and the supplementary ones. We have thus reached complete unanimity on all major issues. I shall now make a few brief remarks.

First, what is the cardinal, underlying idea of our theses? The distinction between oppressed and oppressing nations. And unlike the Second International and bourgeois democracy, we emphasize this distinction. In this age of imperialism, it is particularly important for the proletariat and the Communist International to establish concrete economic facts and to proceed from concrete realities, not from abstract postulates, in solving all colonial and national questions.

The characteristic feature of imperialism is that the whole world, as we see, is now divided into a large number of oppressed nations and an insignificant number of oppressing nations, which command colossal wealth and powerful armed forces. The overwhelming majority of the world's population, more than a milliard people, and very probably one and a quarter milliards, or, if we take the

* Speech at the Second Congress of the Communist International, July 26, 1920.—*Ed.*

population of the globe as one and three-quarter milliards, about 70 per cent of the total, is accounted for by oppressed nations, which are either in a state of direct colonial dependence or represent semi-colonies like, for example, Persia, Turkey and China, or else, having suffered defeat at the hands of a big imperialist power, have been made greatly dependent on that power by virtue of the peace treaties. This idea of distinguishing between nations, of dividing them into oppressing and oppressed, runs through all the theses, not only the first theses published earlier over my signature, but also the theses presented by Comrade Roy. The latter were framed chiefly from the standpoint of the position of India and other big Asian nations oppressed by Britain. That is what makes them so valuable.

The second underlying idea of our theses is that in the present world situation, after the imperialist war, international relations, the whole world system of states, are determined by the struggle of a small group of imperialist nations against the Soviet movement and the Soviet states headed by Soviet Russia. Unless we bear that in mind, we shall not be able correctly to pose a single national or colonial question, even if it concerns a very remote part of the world. Only if they make that their starting-point, can the Communist Parties, in both the civilized and the backward countries, correctly pose and solve political questions.

Third, I should like especially to emphasize the question of the bourgeois-democratic movement in backward countries. For it was this question that gave rise to some differences. We discussed whether or not it would be correct, in principle and in theory, to state that the Communist International and the Communist Parties must support the bourgeois-democratic movement in backward countries. As a result of our discussion, we arrived at the unanimous decision to speak of the national-revolutionary movement rather than the "bourgeois-democratic" movement. There

need not be the slightest doubt that every national movement can only be a bourgeois-democratic movement, for the overwhelming mass of the population in backward countries consists of peasants, who represent bourgeois-capitalist relationships. It would be utopian to believe that proletarian parties, if indeed they can arise in these backward countries, could pursue communist tactics and a communist policy without establishing definite relations with the peasant movement and without giving it effective support. It was, however, objected that if we speak of the bourgeois-democratic movement, we shall be obliterating all distinction between the reformist and the revolutionary movement. Yet that distinction has been very clearly revealed of late in backward and colonial countries, for the imperialist bourgeoisie is doing everything within its power to implant a reformist movement among the oppressed nations, too. There has been a certain rapprochement between the bourgeoisie of the exploiting and the colonial countries, so that very often—perhaps even in most cases—where the bourgeoisie of the oppressed countries does support the national movement, it at the same time works hand in glove with the imperialist bourgeoisie, that is, joins forces with it against all revolutionary movements and revolutionary classes. This was irrefutably demonstrated in the commission, and we decided that the only correct thing was to take this distinction into account and in nearly all cases substitute the term "national-revolutionary" for the term "bourgeois-democratic." The significance of this change is that we, as Communists, should and will support bourgeois liberation movements in the colonies only when they are genuinely revolutionary, and when their exponents do not hinder our work of educating and organizing the peasantry and the broad mass of the exploited in a revolutionary spirit. If these conditions do not exist, the Communists in these countries must combat the reformist bourgeoisie, who include the heroes of the Second International as well. Reformist parties already exist in

the colonial countries, and in some cases their spokesmen call themselves Social-Democrats and Socialists. The distinction I referred to is now made in all the theses, with the result, I think, that our view is now formulated much more precisely.

Next, I would like to make a few remarks on peasants' Soviets. The practical activities of the Russian Communists in the former tsarist colonies, in such backward countries as Turkestan, etc., confronted us with the question of how to apply the communist tactics and policy in pre-capitalist conditions. For the chief feature characteristic of these countries is that pre-capitalist relationships still prevail in them, and hence there can be no question of a purely proletarian movement there. Practically no industrial proletariat exists in these countries. Despite this, even there we have assumed, as we had to assume, the role of leaders. Our work has shown us that in these countries we have to overcome colossal difficulties, but the practical results of our work have also shown that, despite these difficulties we are in a position, even where there is practically no proletariat, to inspire in the masses the urge for independent political thought and independent political action. For us this work was more difficult than it will be for comrades in the West-European countries, because in Russia the proletariat is overwhelmed with the work of running the state. And it is quite understandable that peasants living in semi-feudal dependence can fully appreciate the idea of Soviet organization and translate it into practice. It is also clear that the oppressed masses, those who are exploited not only by merchant capital but also by the feudals, and by a state based on feudalism, can apply this weapon, this type of organization, in their own conditions, too. The idea of Soviet organization is a simple one, and is applicable not only to proletarian, but also to peasant feudal and semi-feudal relations. As yet, our experience in this respect is not very considerable, but the debate in the commission, in which several representatives from colo-

rial countries participated, convincingly demonstrated that the Communist International theses should indicate that peasants' Soviets, Soviets of the exploited, are an instrument suitable not only for capitalist countries, but also for countries where pre-capitalist relations exist, and that it is the bounden duty of Communist Parties, and of the elements who are prepared to found Communist Parties, to conduct propaganda in favour of peasants' Soviets, or working people's Soviets, everywhere, in backward countries and colonies included. And wherever conditions permit, they must make immediate attempts to set up Soviets of the working people.

This opens up a very interesting and very important field for practical activity. So far our common experience in this respect is not very great, but gradually more and more data will accumulate. There can be no question but that the proletariat of the advanced countries can and should assist the backward toiling masses, and that the backward countries can advance from their present level of development when the victorious proletariat of the Soviet republics extends a helping hand to these masses and is in a position to render them support.

There was a rather lively debate on this question in the commission, and not only in connection with my theses, but still more so in connection with Comrade Roy's theses, which he will defend here, and to which certain amendments were adopted unanimously.

This is how the question was posed: is it correct to assert that the capitalist stage of economic development is inevitable for those backward nations which are now winning liberation and in which progressive trends are to be observed since the war? We replied in the negative. If the victorious revolutionary proletariat conducts systematic propaganda among them, while the Soviet governments come to their assistance with all the means at their command—in that event, it would be wrong to assume that the capitalist stage of development is inevitable for the

backward nationalities. In all the colonies and backward countries, we should not only build an independent cadre of fighters, and party organizations; not only launch immediate propaganda for the organization of peasants' Soviets and strive to adapt them to pre-capitalist conditions, but the Communist International should advance and theoretically substantiate the proposition that these backward countries can, with the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries, pass over to the Soviet system and, through definite stages of development, to communism, without having to go through the capitalist stage.

The necessary means for this cannot be indicated beforehand. Practical experience will suggest this. But it has been definitely established that the idea of Soviets meets the aspirations of the mass of working people even in the most remote nations, that the Soviets should be adapted to the conditions of the pre-capitalist social system, and that the Communist Parties should immediately, and in all parts of the world, begin work in this direction.

I wish also to mention the importance of revolutionary work by the Communist Parties not only in their own countries, but also in colonial countries, and particularly among the troops which the exploiting nations employ to keep the colonial peoples in subjection.

Comrade Quelch* of the British Socialist Party spoke of this in our commission. He said that the rank-and-file British worker would consider it treachery to help the enslaved nations in their revolts against British rule. It is true that the jingo- and chauvinist-minded labour aristocracy of Britain and America represents a very great danger for socialism, and a very strong pillar of the Second International, and that in this respect we are dealing with the greatest treachery by the leaders and workers belonging to this bourgeois International. The colonial question was discussed in the Second International too. It was also dealt

* Tom Quelch, son of Harry Quelch.—*Ed.*

with, quite clearly, in the Basle Manifesto. The parties of the Second International pledged revolutionary action, but they have given no sign of genuine revolutionary work or of assistance to the exploited and dependent nations in their revolt against the oppressing nations. And this, I think, applies also to most of the parties that have withdrawn from the Second International and wish to join the Third International. This we must declare publicly, for all to hear, and this cannot be refuted. We shall see if any attempt is made to refute it.

All these considerations were made the basis of our resolutions, which are undoubtedly too long, but which, I feel sure, will nevertheless prove of value and will assist in the development and organization of genuine revolutionary work in connection with the colonial and national questions. And that is our principal task.

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AFFILIATION TO THE BRITISH LABOUR PARTY*148

Comrades, Comrade Gallacher began his speech by expressing regret that we have been compelled here to listen for the hundredth and thousandth time to phrases that Comrade McLaine and other British comrades have repeated a thousand times in speeches and newspaper and magazine articles. I do not think we need regret this. The method of the old International was to refer such questions to be decided by the separate parties in the countries concerned. That was fundamentally wrong. It is quite possible that we are not fully aware of the conditions prevailing in this or that party, but what we are dealing with here is the principles underlying the tactics of the Communist Party. That is very important, and we, in the name of the Third International, must clearly state here the communist point of view.

First of all I should like to observe that Comrade McLaine was guilty of a slight inaccuracy which it is impossible to agree with. He calls the Labour Party the political organization of the trade-union movement. Later on he repeated this when he said: the Labour Party "is the political expression of the trade-union movement." I have read the same view several times in the paper of the British Socialist Party. It is wrong, and partly is the cause of the opposition, to some degree quite justified, of the British revolutionary workers. Indeed, the concepts: "political organization of the trade-union movement" or "polit-

* Speech at the Second Congress of the Communist International, August 6, 1920.—Ed.

ical expression" of this movement, are wrong ones. Of course, the bulk of the members of the Labour Party are workers; however, whether a party is really a political party of the workers or not, depends not only upon whether it consists of workers but also upon who leads it, upon the content of its activities and of its political tactics. Only the latter determines whether we have before us really a political party of the proletariat. From this point of view, the only correct one, the Labour Party is a thoroughly bourgeois party, because, although it consists of workers, it is led by reactionaries, and the worst reactionaries at that, who act fully in the spirit of the bourgeoisie. It is an organization of the bourgeoisie which exists in order with the aid of the British Noskes and Scheidemanns to systematically deceive the workers.

But we have also heard another point of view, the one upheld on this question by Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst and Comrade Gallacher. What was the substance of the speeches delivered by Gallacher and many of his friends? They said to us: we are not sufficiently connected with the masses. But take the British Socialist Party; it is still worse connected with the masses, is very weak. Comrade Gallacher told us here how he and his comrades have organized, and really splendidly organized, the revolutionary movement in Glasgow, in Scotland, and how in their tactics during the war they manoeuvred very well, how they skilfully supported the petty-bourgeois pacifists Ramsay MacDonald and Snowden when they came to Glasgow, and used this support to organize a mass movement against the war.

Our aim is precisely to bring this superb new revolutionary movement, represented here by Comrade Gallacher and his friends, into a Communist Party with real communist, i.e., Marxist tactics. That is our task now. On the one hand, the British Socialist Party is too weak and incapable of properly carrying on agitation among the masses; on the other hand, we have the younger revolu-

tionary elements so well represented here by Comrade Gallacher, who, although in contact with the masses, are not a political party, and in this sense are even weaker than the British Socialist Party and are totally unable to organize their political work. Under these circumstances we must quite frankly voice our opinion as to which are the correct tactics. When, in speaking of the British Socialist Party, Comrade Gallacher said that it is "hopelessly reformist," he undoubtedly exaggerated. But the general sense and content of all the resolutions we have adopted here show absolutely definitely that we demand a change in the tactics of the British Socialist Party in this spirit, and the only correct tactics of Gallacher's friends will be to join the Communist Party without delay for the purpose of rearranging its tactics in the spirit of the resolutions adopted here. If you have so many supporters that you are able to organize mass meetings in Glasgow, it will not be difficult for you to bring more than ten thousand new members into the Party. The last Conference of the British Socialist Party, which took place in London three or four days ago, decided to rename the Party a Communist Party, and adopted a point in its programme providing for participation in parliamentary elections and affiliation to the Labour Party. At the Conference ten thousand organized members were represented. Therefore, it would not be difficult at all for the Scottish comrades to bring into this "Communist Party of Great Britain" more than ten thousand revolutionary workers better versed in art of working among the masses, and thus to change the old tactics of the British Socialist Party, in the sense of conducting more successful agitation and engaging in more revolutionary action. Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst pointed out several times in the commission that Britain needed "Lefts." I replied that of course this was absolutely true, but that one must not go too far with this "Leftism." Furthermore she said that "we are better pioneers, but for the moment are rather noisy." I do not take this in a bad sense,

but in a good one, namely, that they are better able to carry on revolutionary agitation. We value this and should value it. We expressed this in all our resolutions, for we emphasize at all times that we can recognize a party to be a workers' party only when it is really connected with the masses and fights the old, thoroughly rotten leaders, the Right-wing chauvinists, and those who take up an intermediate position like the Right Independents in Germany. We have asserted and repeated this ten times and more in all our resolutions, and this means that what we demand is that the old party be transformed in the sense of bringing it into closer contact with the masses.

Sylvia Pankhurst also asked: "Is it permissible for a Communist Party to join a political party that is affiliated to the Second International?" She replied that it was not. But it must be borne in mind that the British Labour Party is in a particularly peculiar position: it is a very original sort of party, or more correctly, it is not a party at all in the ordinary sense of the word. It is made up of the members of trade unions with a membership of about four million, and allows sufficient liberty to all the affiliated political parties. Thus its members include a huge mass of British workers who follow the lead of the worst bourgeois elements, of social-traitors who are even worse than Scheidemann, Noske and others of that ilk. But at the same time the Labour Party allows the British Socialist Party to be in its ranks, allows it to have its own press organs in which the members of this very Labour Party can freely and openly declare that the party leaders are social-traitors. Comrade McLaine gave exact quotations from such statements of the British Socialist Party. I too can certify that in *The Call*, the organ of the British Socialist Party, I have read statements that the Labour Party leaders are social-patriots and social-traitors. This shows that a party affiliated to the Labour Party is not only able to criticize sharply, but is able openly and specifically to mention the old leaders by name and call them social-trai-

tors. It is a very original situation when a party which unites enormous masses of workers, as though it is a political party, is nevertheless obliged to grant its members complete liberty. Comrade McLaine has stated here that at the Labour Party Conference the British Scheidemanns were obliged to raise the question openly of affiliation to the Third International and that all the party branches and sections were obliged to discuss this question. Under such circumstances it would be a mistake not to join this party.

In private conversation with me, Comrade Pankhurst said: "If we are real revolutionaries and join the Labour Party these gentlemen will expel us." But that would not be bad at all. Our resolution says that we favour affiliation in so far as the Labour Party allows sufficient freedom of criticism. On that point we are absolutely consistent. Comrade McLaine has already emphasized that such peculiar conditions now prevail in Britain that if a political party wishes, it may remain a revolutionary workers' party, notwithstanding the fact that it is connected with a peculiar labour organization of four million members which is half trade-union and half political and is headed by bourgeois leaders. Under such circumstances it would be a great mistake if the best revolutionary elements did not do everything possible to remain in such a party. Let Messrs. the Thomases and other social-traitors, whom you call such, expel you. That will have an excellent effect upon the mass of the British workers.

Comrades emphasize the point that the aristocracy of labour is stronger in Britain than in any other country. That is really the case. After all, it has existed in Britain not for decades but for a century. In Britain, the bourgeoisie, which has had more experience, democratic experience, managed to bribe the workers and to create among them a big stratum, bigger there than in any other country, but which is not so big when compared with the broad masses of the workers. This stratum is thoroughly imbued with bourgeois prejudices and pursues a definitely

bourgeois, reformist policy. Thus, in Ireland, we see two hundred thousand British soldiers who are using frightful terror in suppressing the Irish. British Socialists are carrying on no revolutionary propaganda among them. But in our resolutions we clearly state that we permit only those British parties to affiliate to the Communist International which conduct real revolutionary propaganda among the British workers and soldiers. I emphasize that neither here nor in the commissions have we heard any objection to this.

Comrades Gallacher and Sylvia Pankhurst cannot deny that. They cannot refute the fact that while remaining in the ranks of the Labour Party the British Socialist Party enjoys sufficient liberty to write that such and such leaders of the Labour Party are traitors, that these old leaders represent the interests of the bourgeoisie; that they are agents of the bourgeoisie in the labour movement; that is absolutely true. When Communists enjoy such liberty, then, if they would reckon with the experience of revolutionaries in all countries, and not only with that of the Russian revolution (for we here are not at a Russian, but at an international congress), it is their duty to join the Labour Party. Comrade Gallacher ironically said that in the present case we are under the influence of the British Socialist Party. That is not true; we have become convinced of this by the experience of all revolutions in all countries. We think that we must tell this to the masses. The British Communist Party must retain the liberty necessary to expose and criticize the betrayers of the working class, who are much more powerful in Britain than in any other country. That is not difficult to understand. Comrade Gallacher is wrong when he claims that by advocating affiliation to the Labour Party we will repel the best elements among the British workers. We must test this by experience. We are convinced that all our resolutions and decisions that will be adopted by the Congress will be published in all the British revolutionary socialist newspapers and that

all the branches and sections will be given the opportunity to discuss them. The whole content of our resolutions shows with crystal clarity that we represent the revolutionary tactics of the working class in all countries and that our aim is to fight against the old reformism and opportunism. Events are showing that our tactics are indeed defeating the old reformism. And then all the best revolutionary elements in the working class, who are dissatisfied with the slow progress being made—and progress in Britain will perhaps be slower than in other countries—will come over to us. Progress is slow because the British bourgeoisie are in a position to create better conditions for the labour aristocracy and thereby to retard the revolutionary movement in Britain. That is why the British comrades should strive not only to revolutionize the masses—they are doing that splendidly (as Comrade Gallacher has shown), but must at the same time strive to create a real working-class political party. Neither Comrade Gallacher nor Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst, who have both spoken here, belong to a revolutionary Communist Party yet. That excellent proletarian organization, the Shop Stewards' movement, has still not joined a political party. If you organize politically you will find that our tactics are based on the properly understood political development of the past decades, and that a real revolutionary party can only be created when it absorbs the best elements of the revolutionary class and uses every opportunity to fight the reactionary leaders wherever they show themselves.

If the British Communist Party starts out by acting in a revolutionary manner in the Labour Party, and if Messrs. the Hendersons are obliged to expel this Party, it will be a great victory for the communist and revolutionary labour movement in Britain.

Published in *The Second Congress of the Communist International. Verbatim Report*, 1921

Vol. 31, pp. 232-38

SPEECH AT THE NINTH ALL-RUSSIAN CONFERENCE OF THE R.C.P.(B.)

September 22, 1920

NEWSPAPER REPORT

(Excerpt)

Another consequence of our presence near Warsaw was its powerful effect on the revolutionary movement in Europe, particularly Britain. While we failed to get to the industrial proletariat of Poland (and this was one of the main causes of our defeat) who are located beyond the Vistula and in Warsaw, we got to the British proletariat and raised the level of their movement to unprecedented heights, to an absolutely new revolutionary level. When the British Government presented us with an ultimatum it turned out that the British workers had first to be consulted about that. And these workers, nine-tenths of whose leaders are out-and-out Mensheviks, replied by forming a Council of Action.¹⁴⁹

The British press took fright and screamed that this was "dual power." And it was right. Britain proved to be in the stage of political relations that existed in Russia after February 1917, when the Soviets were obliged to control every step of the bourgeois government. The Council of Action is an association of all workers without distinction of party, like our All-Russian Central Executive Committee at the time when Gots, Dan, and others ruled the roost

there—an association which rivals the government and in which the Mensheviks are compelled to act half like Bolsheviks. And just as our Mensheviks in the long run got tangled up and assisted in bringing the masses over to our side, so the Mensheviks in the Council of Action have been driven by the irresistible course of events to clear the way for the masses of the British workers to Bolshevik revolution. The British Mensheviks, according to the testimony of competent people, already feel themselves the government and are getting ready to take the place of the bourgeois government in the near future. That will be a step further in the general process of the proletarian revolution in Britain.

These tremendous developments in the British working-class movement are exerting a powerful influence on the world labour movement, primarily on the labour movement in France.

Pravda, No. 216, September 29,
1920

Vol. 31, pp. 251-52

SPEECH AT A CONGRESS OF TANNING INDUSTRY EMPLOYEES

October 2, 1920

(Excerpt)

You know that we entertained no plans of conquest. I stressed the point at the beginning of my speech¹⁵⁰ that in April our troops were located east of Minsk and we proposed peace on those conditions, so long as we rid the Russian workers and peasants of a new war. But war having been forced upon us we must finish it victoriously. The Versailles Peace oppresses hundreds of millions of people. It deprives Germany of coal and milch cows, and places her in unparalleled, unprecedented conditions of slavery. The most backward sections of Germany's peasant population have declared that they are for the Bolsheviks, that they are their allies. That is understandable, because the Soviet Republic in its struggle for existence is the only force in the world fighting imperialism, and imperialism now means the alliance between France, Britain and America. We are approaching the heart of the contemporary international system. When our troops got near the Polish frontier the Red Army's victorious offensive gave rise to a political crisis without precedent. The gist of this crisis was that the British Government threatened war against us. It declared: "If you move any further we shall fight you, we shall send our navy against you." But then the British workers declared that they

would not allow such a war. It should be said here that Bolshevism is gaining ground among the British workers. But the Communists are as weak over there now as they were in our country in March, April, and May 1917, when at the Conference and congresses we received only one-tenth of the votes. At the First All-Russian Congress of Soviets held in June 1917 we had no more than 13 per cent of the votes. The same situation now obtains in Britain. There the Bolsheviks are only a tiny minority. The point is that the British Mensheviks have always been against Bolshevism and direct revolution and favoured alliance with the bourgeoisie. Now the old leaders of the British workers began to waver and changed their point of view. They were opposed to the dictatorship of the working class but now came over to our side. They set up a Council of Action in Britain. This marks a great turning point in the whole of British politics. Alongside of Parliament, which is nowadays elected in Britain by almost universal suffrage (this has been the case only since 1918), there arose the self-authorized Council of Action, which is backed by the trade unions, which have a membership of over six millions. In reply to the government's desire to wage war on Soviet Russia the workers declared they would not allow it, and said: "We won't permit the French to fight, either; the French live on British coal and if its industry is brought to a halt it will be a big blow to France."

I repeat: this was a great turning point in the whole of British politics. To Britain it is of the same significance as the February 1917 Revolution was to us. The February 1917 Revolution overthrew tsarism and set up a bourgeois republic in Russia. There is no republic in Britain, but the monarchy there is bourgeois through and through and has been in existence for many centuries. The British workers are able to take part in elections to Parliament, but foreign policy in its entirety is conducted over the head of Parliament by the Cabinet. It has long been known that the British Government is waging unofficial war against

Russia and is helping Yudenich, Kolchak, and Denikin. The British press has repeatedly carried statements to the effect that Britain has no right to send a single soldier to Russia. And who voted for doing that sort of thing? What parliamentary decisions are there permitting war against Russia in aid of Yudenich and Kolchak? There have been no such decisions, and by such action Britain has only violated its own constitution. What is the Council of Action? The Council of Action goes over the head of Parliament and on behalf of the workers presents an ultimatum to the government. This is a transition to dictatorship, and there is no other way out of the situation. And yet Britain is an imperialist country which enslaves a colonial population of 400-500 million people. It is the leading country in the world, and dominates the greater part of the earth's population. The offensive against Poland produced such a change in the situation that the British Mensheviks entered into an alliance with the Russian Bolsheviks. That's what that offensive did.

The whole bourgeois press in Britain wrote that the Councils of Action were Soviets. And it was right. They were not called Soviets, but in fact they were the same thing. They are the same dual power as we had under Kerensky in March 1917, when the Provisional Government was considered the sole government but in actual fact could do nothing of importance without the Soviet of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies, and when we said to the Soviets: "Assume all power." Now the same situation has arisen in Britain, and the Mensheviks are compelled to proceed unconstitutionally in this Council of Action. From this you can get some slight idea of what our war with Poland has signified. And although the international bourgeoisie are now infinitely stronger than we are, and despite the fact that the British Government said that Kamev was to blame for everything in this business and drove him out of Britain with the intention of never letting him back again, this is an empty and ridiculous threat be-

cause the stoutest defenders of the American and British capitalists, the British workers' moderate leaders, Right-wing Mensheviks and Right-wing Socialist-Revolutionaries have joined the Council of Action. Moreover, Britain is now confronted with a new crisis. She is threatened now with a general coal strike, in which the men are demanding not only higher wages but also lower coal prices. In Britain one strike wave follows another. The strikers demand wage increases. But if today the workers force a rise in wages of 10 per cent, tomorrow prices will go up 20 per cent. Prices keep rising, and the workers see that their struggle is of no benefit, that in spite of the increase in wages they are the losers, because prices are rising. And so they demand not only higher wages for miners but also lower prices for coal. And so the British bourgeois press is howling in still greater terror than when the Red Army entered Poland.

Pravda, Nos. 225 and 226,
October 9 and 10, 1920

Vol. 31, pp. 281-84

**SPEECH AT A CONFERENCE OF CHAIRMEN
OF UYEZD, VOLOST, AND VILLAGE EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEES OF MOSCOW GUBERNIA**

October 15, 1920

(Excerpt)

For several years the British War Minister, Churchill, has been employing every means, legal and still more illegal, from the viewpoint of British law, to support all the Whiteguards against Russia, to supply them with military equipment. He bitterly hates Soviet Russia; yet immediately after our statement Britain disagreed with France, because France needs the forces of a Whiteguard Russia to protect her from Germany, while Britain is in no need of such protection. Britain is a naval power, she fears no action against her because she has a very strong navy. Thus at the very start it turns out that the League of Nations, which has dispatched such incredible threats to Russia, is impotent. At every step it is apparent that the interests of the constituent members of the League are conflicting. France wants Britain's defeat, and vice versa. And when Comrade Kamenev was negotiating with the British Government in London and said to the British Prime Minister, "Suppose you really do what you say, but what about France?" the British Prime Minister had to reply that France would go her own way. "We cannot take the same road as France," he said. It turns out that the League of Nations is non-existent, that the league of the capitalist powers is a sheer deception, and that actually it

is a league of robbers each one of whom tries to snatch away something from the others. Now that we have got to know, at the conclusion of peace in Riga,¹⁵¹ what divided Poland, Britain, France and Wrangel, why they could not act in unison, we have learned that their interests differ: Britain wants to exert influence over the new small states—Finland, Estland, Latvia and Lithuania—and has no interest in, and even stands to lose from, the restoration of tsarist, or Whiteguard, or even bourgeois, Russia. That is why Britain acts in defiance of France and cannot unite with Poland and Wrangel. France's concern is to fight to the last Polish soldier for her interests, for her debts. She expects us to pay her the 20 milliards borrowed by the ex-tsar and recognized by the Kerensky government. It is now clear to every common-sense person that the French capitalists will no more see that money again than they will ever see their ears. They realize that the workers and peasants of France cannot be sent to war, whereas those of Poland, they, think, can be sent in any numbers. Let Polish soldiers—they reason—lose their lives so that the French capitalists may get their milliards back. But the Polish workers too can see that French, British and other officers behave in Poland as if they were in a conquered country. That is why, during the Riga negotiations we noticed that the party of the Polish workers and peasants—undoubtedly patriotic, undoubtedly hostile to Bolshevism, like our parties of Right-wing Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries—stood for peace and was opposed to the government of the Polish landlords and capitalists, who up to the last moment strove to frustrate the peace, aim at doing so even now, and will long continue to do so. I shall have to speak on this point when I broach the question of whether the preliminary peace we have just concluded will be enduring.

Published in 1920

Vol. 31, pp. 298-99

REPORT ON CONCESSIONS*

(Excerpts)

In Britain the struggle has been going on for a long time. We have scored by the mere fact that among those who represent the worst capitalist exploitation we have got people who back the policy of restoring trade relations with Russia. The treaty with Britain, the trade agreement with her, has not yet been signed. Krasin is now actively negotiating it in London. The British Government has submitted its draft to us and we have presented our counter-draft, but all the same we see that the British Government is dragging out the negotiations, that a reactionary military group which has so far been victorious and is hindering the conclusion of trade agreements, is hard at work there. It is in our direct interest and our direct duty to back everything capable of strengthening the parties and groups that are working for the conclusion of this agreement with us. In Vanderlip we have secured such a supporter, and this is not only chance, it is not to be explained merely by the fact that Vanderlip is particularly enterprising or that he knows Siberia very well. The causes here are much deeper-going, and are connected with the development of the interests of British imperialism, which possesses an incredibly large number of colonies. The conflict here between American and British imperialism is deep, and it is our imperative duty to base ourselves on it.

* Delivered at a meeting of the R.C.P. (B.) group at the Eighth All-Russian Congress of Soviets, December 21, 1920.—Ed.

The comrade who asks about the re-establishment of commercial relations with Britain wants to know what is holding up the signing of the agreement with her. My answer is that it is being delayed because the British Government is wavering. Most of the bourgeoisie of commercial and industrial Britain are in favour of the resumption of relations and see clearly that to take steps in support of war means to take enormous risks and accelerate revolution. You will remember how during our drive on Warsaw the British Government presented us with an ultimatum, threatening to order its navy to move on Petrograd. And then, as you may recall, Councils of Action cropped up all over Britain, and the Menshevik leaders there declared that they were opposed to the war, that they would not allow it. On the other hand, the reactionary section of the British bourgeoisie and the military clique at court favour continuation of the war. It is undoubtedly to their influence that the delay in signing the trade agreement must be ascribed. I shall not relate the ins and outs of these commercial relations with Britain, because it would take me too far afield. This delicate problem had to be thrashed out very thoroughly not long ago in the Party Central Committee. We have returned to it quite frequently, and our policy on this point has been clearly aimed at the maximum degree of concession. Our aim now is to obtain a trade agreement with Britain so as to get a better start in trade and the opportunity of buying as soon as possible the machinery necessary for our extensive plan of restoring the national economy. The sooner we do this the greater basis shall we have for being economically independent of the capitalist countries. Just now when they have burnt their fingers in the military onslaught on Russia they cannot think of an immediate renewal of war. We must grasp this opportunity and exert every effort to secure commercial relations, even if we have to grant the maximum of concessions, for we do not believe for a single

moment that trade relations with the imperialist countries will be lasting. It will be a temporary interval. The experience of the history of revolutions, of major conflicts, teaches that wars, a series of wars, are inevitable. The existence of a Soviet republic alongside capitalist countries—a Soviet republic surrounded by capitalist countries—is so impermissible a thing for capitalism that they will seize any opportunity to begin war again. Now the peoples are weary of the imperialist war, they threaten to make their indignation felt if the war is prolonged, but the possibility of the capitalists being able to renew it after the lapse of a few years is not precluded. That is why we must exert every effort to utilize the opportunity presented and conclude trade agreements.

In July, when Poland was threatened with utter defeat, with being crushed by the Red Army, Britain submitted the complete text of an agreement which said: you must declare as a matter of principle that you will not carry on official propaganda and do nothing opposed to British interests in the East. That will be elaborated at a subsequent political conference, but at present we conclude such and such a trade agreement. Would you like to sign it? We replied that we would. And we say now, too, that we will sign such an agreement. The political conference will more exactly specify Britain's interests in the East. We also have some interests in the East, and when the need arises we shall state them in detail. Britain cannot say outright that she is receding from her July proposal. She is therefore dragging things out and concealing the truth about the negotiations from her own people. The negotiations are in an indefinite state, and we cannot vouch that the agreement will be signed. The influence of the court and military clique in Britain, a very powerful one in that country, is working against the agreement. But we are now making the maximum concessions and believe it to be in our interests to get a commercial treaty and to purchase with all possible speed some of the essentials needed for the restoration of

the transport system, i.e., locomotives, for the rehabilitation of industry, and for electrification. That is more important for us than anything else. If we receive this material we shall become so strong in a few years that even if the worst comes to the worst, if after a few years military intervention takes place, it will fall through because we shall be stronger than we are now. The line we follow in the Central Committee is one of maximum concessions to Britain. And if these gentlemen think they are going to catch us breaking some promise we declare that our government will carry on no official propaganda and that we have no intention of infringing on any of Britain's interests in the East. If they hope to gain some advantage out of this point, let them try, we won't be the losers.

I have come to the question of the relations between Britain and France. They are confused. On the one hand, Britain and France belong to the League of Nations and are obliged to act jointly; on the other hand, whenever the situation becomes tense they do not do so. When Comrade Kamenev was in London and negotiated together with Krasin, this became quite obvious. France was in favour of supporting Poland and Wrangel, but the British Government declared it would not go along with France. Concessions are more acceptable to Britain than to France, which is still dreaming of getting her debts back, while in Britain capitalists who have any sense of business have stopped thinking about it. From that angle, too, it is to our advantage to use the dissension between Britain and France, and therefore we must insist on the political proposal of concessions to Britain. We now have a draft agreement on timber concessions in the Far North. The position we are in is such that thanks to the absence of political unity between Britain and France it is our duty not to refuse even to take some risk, so long as it results in hampering a military alliance between Britain and France against us. A new war supported by Britain and France against us will be a colossal burden to us (even if it ends

in our complete victory, as the war with Wrangel has done), will hamper our economic development, will worsen the condition of the workers and peasants. We must therefore be ready to do anything that involves fewer losses for us. Obviously, the losses from concessions are nothing as compared with the delay in our economic development and the death of thousands of workers and peasants that would ensue, if we are unable to withstand the alliance of the imperialists. And one of these means of withstanding their alliance is negotiations with Britain on concessions. That is the political aspect of the problem.

First published in 1930

Vol. 31, pp. 438-39 and 441-44

REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL
OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARS*

(Excerpt)

I must also state that negotiations for the conclusion of a trade agreement with Britain are now in progress. Unfortunately, these negotiations are dragging on much longer than we would wish, but we are absolutely not to blame for this. As early as July, when the British Government, at the time of the greatest success of the Soviet troops, officially submitted to us the text of an agreement that would ensure the possibility of establishing trade relations, we signified our full consent. But since that time the matter has been delayed owing to the conflict of trends within the British Government and the British state. We have seen the vacillations in the British Government, its threats to sever relations with us altogether and to dispatch warships to Petrograd at once. We have seen this, but at the same time we have seen how in reply to this threat, Councils of Action have sprung up all over Britain. We have seen how under the pressure of the workers the most extreme adherents of the opportunist trend and their leaders have been compelled to adopt this absolutely "unconstitutional" policy, a policy which they recently themselves condemned. It turns out that despite the Menshevik prejudices hitherto prevailing in the British trade-

* Delivered to the Eighth All-Russian Congress of Soviets, December 22, 1920.—*Ed.*

union movement, the pressure of the toiling masses and their class consciousness have reached such a level as to blunt the edge of the bellicose policy of the imperialists. Now, too, in continuance of our peace policy, we stand by the July draft proposed by the British Government. We are prepared to sign a trade agreement immediately; and if it is still unsigned the blame lies exclusively with those currents and trends in British ruling circles which want to frustrate the trade agreement, and, against the will not only of the majority of the workers but even of the majority of the British bourgeoisie, want once more to have a free hand in attacking Soviet Russia. That is their business.

The longer this policy continues in certain influential British circles, among finance capitalists and imperialists, the more does it aggravate the financial situation, the longer does it delay the semi-agreement which has now become essential between bourgeois Britain and the Soviet Republic, and the nearer does it bring the imperialists to a position where they will later have to accept not a semi-agreement but a full one.

First published in 1921

Vol. 31, pp. 461-62

THE PROLETARIAT AND THE PEASANTRY IN RUSSIA*

This being the internal situation in Russia, the main task now confronting her proletariat, as the ruling class, is correctly to determine and carry out the measures that are necessary for exercising leadership over the peasantry, for establishing a firm alliance with them, for achieving the transition, by a long series of gradual stages, to large-scale socialized, mechanized agriculture. This is a particularly difficult task in Russia, both due to the backwardness of our country, and because of its condition of utter ruin resulting from seven years of imperialist and civil war. But apart from these specific circumstances, it is one of the most difficult tasks of socialist construction that will confront all capitalist countries, with the sole exception, perhaps, of Britain. But even in regard to Britain it must not be forgotten that, while the small tenant farmers there constitute only a very small class, the percentage of workers and other employees who enjoy a petty-bourgeois standard of living is exceptionally high, thanks to the actual enslavement of hundreds of millions of people in Britain's colonial "possessions."

Hence, from the point of view of the development of the

* This item is § 4 of the *Theses (Original Draft) for the Report on the Tactics of the Russian Communist Party to the Third Congress of the Communist International.*—Ed.

world proletarian revolution as a single process, the significance of the epoch Russia is passing through lies in testing and verifying in practice the policy of the proletariat, possessing political power, towards the masses of the petty bourgeoisie.

Dated June 13, 1921
Published as a pamphlet in 1921

Vol. 32, pp. 431-32

TO COMRADE THOMAS BELL

Dear comrade,

I thank you very much for your letter, d. 7/8. I have read nothing concerning the English movement last months because of my illness and overwork.

It is extremely interesting what you communicate. Perhaps it is *the beginning* of the real proletarian mass movement in Great Britain *in the communist sense*. I am afraid we have till now in England few very feeble propagandist societies for communism (inclusive the British Communist Party) but no really *mass* communist movement.

If the South Wales Miners' Federation has decided on 24/VII to affiliate to the Third International by a majority of 120 to 63,—perhaps it is the beginning of a new era. (How many miners there are in England? More than 500,000? How much in South Wales? 25,000? How many miners were *really* represented in Cardiff 24/VII 1921?)

If these miners are not too small minority, if they fraternize with soldiers and begin a *real* "class war,"—we must do all our possible to *develop* this movement and strengthen it.

Economic measures (like communal kitchens) are good but they are not much important *now*, *before* the victory of the proletarian revolution in England. *Now* the *political* struggle is the most important.

English capitalists are shrewd, clever, astute. They *will*

support (directly or indirectly) communal kitchens *in order* to divert the attention *from political aims*.

What is important is (if I am not mistaken):

(1) To create a very good, really proletarian, really mass *Communist Party* in this part of England, that is, such party which will *really* be the *LEADING* force in *all* labour movement in this part of the country. (Apply the resolution on organization and work of the Party adopted by the Third Congress¹⁵² to this part of your country.)

(2) To start a daily paper of the working class, for the working class in this part of the country.

To start it not as a business (as usually newspapers are started in capitalist countries), not with big sum of money, not in ordinary and usual manner,—but as an *economic and political* tool of the *masses* in their struggle.

Either the miners of this district are capable to pay *halfpenny* daily (for the beginning *weekly*, if you like) for their *own* daily (or weekly) newspaper (be it very small, it is not important)—or *THERE IS NO BEGINNING* of the *really communist mass movement* in this part of your country.

If the Communist Party of this district cannot collect few pounds in order to publish *small leaflets daily* as a beginning of the *really proletarian* communist newspaper,—if it so, if *every* miner will not pay a penny for it, then there is *not serious*, not genuine affiliation to the Third International.

English Government will apply the shrewdest means in order to suppress every beginning of this kind. Therefore we must be (in the beginning) very prudent. The paper must be *not too revolutionary* in the beginning. If you will have three editors, at least one must be *non-communist*. (At least two genuine workers.) If nine-tenths of the workers do not buy this paper, if two-thirds $(\frac{120}{120+63})$ do

not pay special contributions (f. 1 penny *weekly*) for *their* paper,—it will be no workers' newspaper.

I should be very glad to have few lines from you concerning this theme and beg to apologize for my bad English.

With Communist greetings,
Lenin

Written on August 13, 1921

First published on January 21, 1927, in the *Workers' Weekly*, No. 205. A Russian translation appeared in *Pravda*, No. 21, January 27, 1927

Russian translation in Vol. 32,
pp. 484-86

BRITISH LABOUR PARTY POLICY

A LETTER TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIKS)

The telegram about the British Labour Party shows Krasin's extraordinary naïveté. As I see it, measures of two kinds should now be taken: 1) a series of articles signed by various people and ridiculing the views of so-called European democracy on the Georgian problem should be published in the press; 2) some caustic journalist should be immediately commissioned to draft a super-polite note in reply to the British Labour Party. In this note he should make it perfectly plain that the proposal that we withdraw our troops from Georgia and hold a referendum there would be quite reasonable and might be recognized as coming from people who have not gone out of their minds, and have not been bribed by the Entente, if it extended to all nations of the globe; specifically, in order to set the British Labour Party leaders thinking about the meaning of present-day imperialist relations in international politics, we suggest, in particular, that it give favourable consideration to the following: first, that British troops be withdrawn from Ireland and that a referendum be held there; secondly, the same with regard to India; thirdly, the same with regard to the withdrawal of Japanese troops from Korea; fourthly, the same with regard to all countries in which there are troops of any of the big imperialist states. The note is to express, in superbly polite form, the idea that people desirous of pondering these proposals of ours and

over the system of imperialist relations in international politics may prove capable of understanding the "interesting" character of the proposals made by us to the British Labour Party. On the whole, the draft note should be a mockery of the idiotic leaders of the British Labour Party, couched in super-polite and extremely popular terms (to fit the intelligence of ten-year-olds).

I propose that the Political Bureau consider whether it ought not to send a copy of this letter to Krasin. I personally am in favour of doing so.

27.XII.1921

Lenin

First published in *Pravda*,
No. 21, January 21, 1930

Vol. 33, pp. 157-58

**INTERVIEW GIVEN TO MICHAEL FARBMAN,
OBSERVER AND MANCHESTER GUARDIAN
CORRESPONDENT**

(Excerpts)

1. *Question.* The anti-Russian press describes Herriot's reception in Moscow and the Franco-Russian negotiations¹⁵³ as a definite change in Soviet Russia's foreign policy.

Is that true? Is it true that Russia regards British Near East policy as a challenge and is ready to conclude an agreement with France directed against Britain?

ANSWER. I consider it absolutely incorrect to describe Herriot's reception in Moscow and the Franco-Russian negotiations as a change, even a slight one, in Soviet Russia's policy in general, or as being anti-British in particular. We undoubtedly esteem very highly both Herriot's reception in Moscow and the step taken toward rapprochement with France or toward negotiations with her, which have now become possible, probable and, I should like to believe, necessary. Any rapprochement with France is something we very much desire, especially in view of the fact that Russia's commercial interests imperatively demand closer relations with this strong Continental power. But we are convinced that this rapprochement does not in the least imply that some change must necessarily take place in our policy toward Britain. We believe wholly friendly relations with both powers to be quite possible, and that is our aim. We believe that it is the development of commercial relations that will inevitably press with extraor-

dinary force in the direction of achieving this aim. We believe that the interests of Britain and France, rightly understood, will likewise operate in that direction. We believe that the mutual interests of both Britain and France, inasmuch as they touch on those of Russia, do not under any circumstances contain elements of inevitable hostility between Britain and France. On the contrary, we even think that peaceful and friendly relations between these powers and Russia contain the guarantee (I am almost ready to say the strongest guarantee) that peace and friendship between Britain and France will continue longest, and that all possible and under present circumstances probable differences between France and Britain will most speedily and truly find a happy solution.

2. *Question.* Is not the virtual termination of the Greco-Turkish War, a war supported by Britain, an opportune moment for the conclusion of an Anglo-Russian agreement?

ANSWER. Of course, the termination of the Greco-Turkish War, which had Britain's support, is a factor that, in a certain respect, improves the chances of an Anglo-Russian agreement being concluded. We strove for such an agreement even before that war ended and shall continue to strive for it now with the utmost energy. True, some of the problems connected with the termination of that war give rise to our disagreement with Britain. But, firstly, the peace which has followed the Greco-Turkish War is in our view such a boon to international politics in general that we hope the general conditions under which they are conducted will improve thanks to the Greco-Turkish Peace. Secondly, we do not consider the differences between Britain and ourselves as insurmountable at all. Quite the contrary. We hope that, with the Near East problem passing through various stages, the near future will show us how far we are right in hoping that the termination of that war will likewise spell the end of the conflicts and differences which have placed that concluded war in the forefront of

international politics. We are doing everything in our power to make the end of that war the end also of all friction and disagreement with Britain, and we hope that the interests of the British Government will rise on this occasion, too, above any insinuations and the frequently insincere utterances of the anti-Russian press.

6. *Question.* Does the refusal to ratify the agreement with Urquhart mean a victory of the "Left-wing Communists?" What are the objective conditions which would make possible a resumption of negotiations and the ratification of the agreement with Urquhart?¹⁵⁴

ANSWER. The question of concluding an agreement with Urquhart was raised by our government when I was sick and was not in a position to take part in affairs of state. Therefore I am not yet fully informed about all the details of this matter. Nevertheless I can assert quite definitely that there is not, nor can there now be, any question of a victory for the Left-wing Communists. I know this from my direct observation of the course of government affairs.

The point is that Britain's act of injustice, expressed in her reluctance to admit us to the Conference¹⁵⁵ was so unexpected, aroused such indignation in Russia and so firmly united not only the Right-wing with the Left-wing Communists but also the huge mass of the non-Party population of Russia, the workers and peasants, that things did not and could not reach the point of disagreement between the Left-wing and Right-wing Communists.

The reason given for our rejection of the Urquhart agreement was a direct expression, one may say, not only of the general Party sentiment but of that of the entire people, i.e., the sentiment of the entire mass of the workers and peasants.

A resumption of negotiations and the subsequent ratification of an agreement with Urquhart depend primarily on Britain's eliminating the flagrant injustices committed against Russia in curtailing her rights of participation in the Near East Conference. As for the concrete terms submitted to us by Urquhart I have not yet had time to look

into this matter in sufficient detail, and can only say that the government has decided to let the supporters and opponents of this agreement have their say in our press as soon as possible, in order from the ensuing objective and motivated discussion to obtain material for carefully verifying all the "pros" and "cons" and to decide the issue in a manner that best satisfies Russia's interests.

7. *Question.* How justified are the accusations of the anti-Russian press in Britain that the recent arrests of industrialists in Moscow signify the end of the New Economic Policy and a reversion to the policy of nationalization and confiscation?

ANSWER. As to your question concerning the accusations made against us in the British anti-Russian press that "Moscow industrialists" were being arrested, I must state that just today I have read in our newspaper (*Izvestia*) an item headed "Arrests of Black Marketeers." None other than Comrade Z. B. Katsnelson, chief of the Economic Board of the State Political Administration, tells us in this article that there was no question of arrests of industrialists, that "rumours circulated by enemies of the Soviets, both within the R.S.F.S.R. and abroad, to the effect that the arrests are infringements on free trade are actually *nothing but figments* of the imagination uttered with the definite counter-revolutionary intent of disrupting the economic relations that are being established with Western Europe."

Indeed, the arrested men were exclusively speculators in the so-called black market. Our authorities are in possession of evidence establishing connection between these black-market currency speculators and certain members of foreign missions in Moscow. The data in question disclose not only the sale of platinum and of gold bars but also the *organization of contraband shipments of these valuables abroad.*

From this you can see how absolutely unfounded are the rumours that we are putting an end to the New Economic Policy and how utterly false are the accusations in the anti-

Russian press in Britain, which is trying by the most unheard-of distortion and deception to present our policy in a false light. Actually, there has been absolutely no question in any government circles whatsoever of winding up the New Economic Policy and returning to the old. Incidentally, the whole work of the government during the session of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee now in progress is aimed at obtaining the widest possible legislative sanction for what is known as the New Economic Policy, so as to eliminate all possibility of any deviation from it.

27.X.1922

Pravda, No. 254,
November 10, 1922

Vol. 33, pp. 346-47, 350-52

NOTES

¹ *A Characterization of Economic Romanticism* is one of V. I. Lenin's early works, written in 1897. Here he analyses in detail the teachings of the Swiss economist Sismondi, and shows that the latter's views express the ideology of the petty bourgeois who dreams of a return to the mediaeval way of life and who criticizes capitalism from a reactionary and not a progressive standpoint. Not forward, from capitalism to large-scale, collective socialist production, but backward, to the small-scale production of isolated individual proprietors—such is the reactionary essence of Sismondi's "economic Romanticism." Lenin shows that the views of the Russian Narodniks coincide with those of Sismondi and represent "only a Russian variety of European Romanticism."

p. 9

² The term "scientific theory" or "latest theory" is used here in place of Marxism.

p. 9

³ *The Corn Laws*—the high tariffs on corn imports passed by the British Parliament in 1815 in the interests of the landlords. The Laws prohibited the import of corn when the price on the British market was below 80s. per quarter. A heavy burden on the poorer strata of the population, the Corn Laws were also unprofitable to the industrial bourgeoisie, since they raised the cost of labour power, reduced the capacity of the home market and hindered the development of foreign trade. At the close of the 1830's the British bourgeoisie formed the Anti-Corn-Law League, headed by Cobden and Bright. For several years the League fought for the repeal of the Corn Laws, which was effected in 1846.

p. 9

⁴ The English translation of Marx's speech on free trade is given as an appendix in *The Poverty of Philosophy* by Karl Marx, Moscow, pp. 234-53.

p. 15

⁵ These are the opening words of Marx's speech on free trade.

p. 16

⁶ Frederick Engels is the author of this work, *The Condition of the Working-Class in England*. See K. Marx and F. Engels, *On Britain*, Moscow 1953, pp. 1-336. The sentence given is on page 303.

p. 16

⁷ Reference is to *The German Ideology* by K. Marx and F. Engels, written in 1845-46, and first published in full in 1932 by the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the C.C. of the C.P.S.U. Part of this work was published in 1847 in the shape of articles by Marx in the monthly *Westphälisches Dampfboot*; in 1899 they were reprinted in *Die Neue Zeit*, organ of German Social-Democracy.

p. 17

⁸ Lenin is quoting K. Marx's *Capital*, Vol. I. See K. Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Moscow 1958, pp. 677-78.

p. 18

⁹ Because of the censorship V. I. Lenin either substituted or omitted words from this quotation. Thus, for example, he translated "hastens social revolution" as "hastens this break-up," and "in this revolutionary sense alone" as "in this sense alone."

p. 23

¹⁰ Reference is to Kautsky's *Agrarian Problem*, published in Stuttgart in 1899, and to the article by the Russian "legal Marxist" Bulgakov entitled "A Contribution to the Problem of the Capitalist Evolution of Agriculture" that appeared in issue No. 1-2 of the magazine *Nachalo (Beginning)*, published in St. Petersburg in 1899.

p. 30

¹¹ In his article *On Co-operation* (1923) Lenin wrote of Robert Owen's co-operative plans as follows:

"What makes the plans of the old co-operators, from Robert Owen onward, fantastic? The fact that they dreamt of peacefully transforming present-day society into socialism without taking account of such fundamental problems as the class struggle, the winning of political power by the working class, the overthrow of the rule of the exploiting class. That is why we are right in regarding this 'co-operative' socialism as entirely fantastic, and the dream of simply enrolling the population in co-operatives, and thus being able to transform class enemies into class collaborators and the class struggle into class peace (so-called civil peace), as something romantic and even banal.

"Undoubtedly we have been right from the angle of the fundamental task of the present day, since socialism cannot be

established without the class struggle for political power in the state.”

p. 31

¹² A. N. Engelhardt and Gleb Uspensky—Russian writers who described the life of the peasantry in Russia following the abolition of serfdom in 1861.

p. 31

¹³ See V. I. Lenin, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, Moscow 1956, pp. 168-69, 255, 289-90.

p. 33

¹⁴ *Proudhonism*—the teachings of the French petty-bourgeois Socialist and anarchist, Proudhon (1809-1865). In 1840 Proudhon published his book *What Is Property?* (*Qu'est-ce que la Propriété?*), in which he criticized modern society and answered the title's question with the statement that “property is theft.” At the same time, he stood for maintaining capitalism and its basis, commodity production, imagining that it is possible to “improve” capitalism and purge it of its shortcomings by means of reforms. His ideal was a society of small commodity producers where anarchy prevails.

Karl Marx in his *Poverty of Philosophy* sharply criticized Proudhon's theory and demonstrated the reactionary nature of his plans for “improving” capitalism. Marx showed that Proudhon's main mistake lay in his failure to understand that poverty, inequality, the exploitation of man by man, crises and unemployment are the products of the capitalist mode of production itself and that, consequently, these evils can only be removed by abolishing capitalist relations of production, by turning the means of production into public property, and passing to socialism.

Proudhon and his followers also adopted a wrong attitude towards the national question. They opposed the national-liberation movements of oppressed nations, asserting that “nationality” and “nation” are “out-moded prejudices.”

p. 35

¹⁵ See Frederick Engels, Preface to *The Peasant War in Germany*, Moscow 1956, pp. 32-34.

p. 36

¹⁶ *The Anti-Socialist Law* was introduced in Germany by the Bismarck government in 1878. It banned the Social-Democratic Party, all mass labour organizations and the labour press. The best elements in the German Social-Democratic Party, led by August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht, conducted extensive illegal activity, with the result that the Party's influence, far from declining, actually grew. In the Reichstag elections of 1890 the Social-Demo-

crats polled nearly 1,500,000 votes. The government was forced to repeal the law that same year.

p. 36

¹⁷ *Martynov*—an adherent of “economism,” an opportunist trend in the Russian Social-Democratic movement at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries. The Economists held that the political struggle against tsarism should be conducted mainly by the liberal bourgeoisie, the workers confining themselves to the struggle for such economic demands as better working conditions, higher wages, etc. They denied the leading role that the Party has to play, and the importance of revolutionary theory in the working-class movement, maintaining that this movement must develop in an exclusively spontaneous manner. That the views of the Economists were totally unfounded and harmful was shown by Lenin in *What Is To Be Done?*, published in 1902, and in other of his works.

p. 37

¹⁸ *Iskra* (*The Spark*)—the first all-Russian illegal Marxist newspaper, founded by Lenin abroad in December 1900 and secretly transported into Russia. It played a tremendous part in uniting the Russian Social-Democrats ideologically and in preparing the ground for uniting the scattered local organizations into a revolutionary Marxist party.

p. 38

¹⁹ V. I. Lenin is referring to the following passage from his work, *What Is To Be Done?*:

“Anybody who is at all acquainted with the actual state of our movement cannot but see that the wide spread of Marxism has been accompanied by a certain lowering of the theoretical level. Quite a number of people with very little, and even a total lack of, theoretical training have joined the movement because of its practical significance and its practical successes. We can judge from that how tactless is *Rabocheye Dyelo* when, with an air of triumph, it quotes Marx's statement: ‘Every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programmes.’ To repeat these words in a period of theoretical dissension is like wishing mourners at a funeral ‘many happy returns of the day.’ Moreover, those words of Marx are taken from his letter on the Gotha Programme, in which he *severely condemns* the eclecticism displayed in the formulation of principles: If you must unite, Marx wrote to the Party leaders, then enter into agreements to satisfy the practical aims of the movement, but allow no bargaining over principles, make no ‘concessions’ in questions of theory. Such was Marx's

idea, and yet there are people among us who strive—in his name—to belittle the significance of theory!

“Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. This thought cannot be insisted upon too strongly at a time when the fashionable preaching of opportunism goes hand in hand with an infatuation for the narrowest forms of practical activity.”

p. 38

²⁰ This letter, and the one following, addressed by V. Oulianoff (V. I. Lenin) to the Secretary of the Labour Representation Committee in England were sent under the following circumstances. In 1904, in connection with the strikes taking place in Russia, the Russian Social-Democrats in London formed a Russian Strikers' Aid Committee which circularized to British trade unions an appeal for assistance to the strikers. An appeal of this kind was sent to the Labour Representation Committee, of which J. Ramsay MacDonald was the secretary. Negotiations with the L.R.C. were conducted by K. M. Takhtarev and N. A. Alexeyev, who were members of the Russian Social-Democratic organization in London. The L.R.C. responded to the appeal for assistance, and requested that of the funds collected part should be distributed among the wives and children of workers who perished as a result of “Bloody Sunday,” January 9 (22), 1905.

p. 43

²¹ On October 31 (18), 1905, the Bolsheviks newspaper *Proletary*, No. 23, published an unsigned article “The British Labour Movement and the Trades Union Congress.” Lenin edited the manuscript, a translation, and added two notes: one concerning the Taff Vale decision, and the other about the concluding part of the article.

p. 46

²² *The Social-Democratic Federation* was founded in 1884 by a group of British Socialists. It was headed by Hyndman, Harry Quelch, and Tom Mann. An organization with an extremely small membership, it was not always consistent, though it conducted propaganda among the workers in the Marxist spirit. In 1908 it was renamed the Social-Democratic Party, which in 1911 merged with other socialist organizations to form the British Socialist Party.

p. 49

²³ Lenin is quoting Engels's letter to Sorge dated November 29, 1886. An English translation of this letter, as of most of the others of Marx and Engels quoted further in the text, may be found in K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow 1955;

On Britain, Moscow 1953; and *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow 1958.

p. 49

²⁴ The idea of a “labour congress” and a “broad labour party” was put forward by the Liquidators—an opportunist trend that spread among the Mensheviks after the defeat of the 1905-07 revolution. Larin was a leader of the Liquidators.

The Liquidators were so called because they demanded the liquidation of the revolutionary illegal party of the working class. They appealed to the workers to abandon the struggle against tsardom, and suggested the establishment of an opportunist “broad,” petty-bourgeois, programmeless labour party, on the lines of the British Labour Party, with a supreme body in the shape of a “labour congress” in which Social-Democrats, Socialist-Revolutionaries, and anarchists would participate. This party, as the Liquidators viewed it, was to abandon revolutionary slogans and only engage in legal activity permitted by the tsarist government. Lenin exposed this very harmful attempt of the Mensheviks to liquidate the Social-Democratic Labour Party and to dissolve the vanguard of the working class in the petty-bourgeois mass. The Liquidators' policy met with no support among the workers. The Prague Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. which took place in January 1912, expelled the Liquidators from the Party.

p. 49

²⁵ *The Order of the Knights of Labor*—an American working-class organization founded in Philadelphia in 1869. Existing illegally until 1878 it observed a semi-mystic ritual. That year the organization emerged from underground, but retained some of its methods of secrecy. The Knights of Labor aimed at the liberation of the workers by means of co-operatives. Membership was open to both skilled and unskilled workers, without discrimination as to sex, race, nationality or religion. The organization's activity reached its apex during the 1880's, when, under the pressure of the masses, the leaders of the Order were compelled to agree to participate in an extensive strike movement. Its membership at that time was over 700,000 including 60,000 Negroes. However, on account of the opportunist line of the leaders, who were opposed to revolutionary class struggle, the Order gradually lost its prestige among the masses, and its activity came to a halt towards the close of the 1890's.

p. 50

²⁶ *Lassalleans*—members of the General Association of German Workers, founded in 1863 by the well-known German Socialist,

Ferdinand Lassalle. The formation of a mass workers' political party was undoubtedly a step forward in developing the working-class movement in Germany. Lassalle and his followers, however, pursued an opportunist line on major theoretical and political questions. They considered it possible to use the Prussian state with a view to solving the social problem, and they hoped to do so by setting up production co-operatives with the aid of that state. They tried to engage in negotiations with Bismarck, head of the Prussian Government. Marx and Engels severely and rightly criticized the Lassalleans, pointing out that "over the course of several years they were a hindrance to the organization of the proletariat and ended up by becoming no more than tools of the police."

The advance of the labour movement and increased government persecution led to the General Association of German Workers uniting with the Marxist Social-Democratic Labour Party of Germany founded by Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Bebel. Unity took place at the Gotha Congress in 1875, when the Socialist Labour Party of Germany was formed. The Lassalleans constituted the opportunist trend in the new party.

p. 52

²⁷ Reference is to *The History of German Social-Democracy* by F. Mehring.

p. 53

²⁸ Here is quoted Marx's letter to Sorge dated September 19, 1879.

p. 54

²⁹ *Bernsteiniad*—an anti-Marxist trend in international Social-Democracy that arose in Germany at the close of the 19th century, it derived its name from the German opportunist Social-Democrat, Eduard Bernstein. After the death of Engels, Bernstein openly professed views that constituted a revision of Marx's revolutionary teaching in the spirit of bourgeois liberalism (see his articles "Problems of Socialism," and his book *Preconditions of Socialism and the Tasks of Social-Democracy*), and tried to turn the Social-Democratic Party into a petty-bourgeois party of social reform.

p. 55

³⁰ This refers to disagreements in the Social-Democratic group of the German Reichstag on the question of a steamship subsidy. At the close of 1884 Reichschancellor Bismarck, in the interests of Germany's predatory colonial policy, demanded that the Reichstag approve a subsidy to private firms for establishing steamship lines to East Asia, Australia, and Africa. When the question was discussed in the Reichstag, the Right wing of the Social-Democratic

group voted for establishing the East-Asian and Australian lines, and made their agreement to the establishment of the African and other lines conditional on the new vessels being built at German shipyards. The Reichstag rejected this proposal, and only then did the whole group vote against the subsidies altogether.

In his letter to Sorge, dated December 31, 1884, Engels condemned the opportunist position of the Right wing of the Social-Democratic group.

p. 55

³¹ *Possibilists*—adherents of the opportunist trend which originated in the French working-class movement in the 1880's. Their leading figures were B. Malon and P. Brousse. The Possibilists were opposed to the revolutionary party of the proletariat; they called on the workers not to wage a revolutionary struggle, and considered that only with the aid of the Municipal Councils was the transition, a gradual one, to socialism possible. It was because of their opportunism in practice, the operation of the so-called "possibilité" policy, that Guesde ironically called them "Possibilists." At the end of the 1880's they tried, with the help of opportunist elements in other countries, in particular with the help of Hyndman (of the British S.D.F.), to gain the leadership of the international working-class movement. Most of the socialist organizations in the different countries, however, refused to follow the lead of the Possibilists, but participated in the Marxists' Congress that took place in Paris from July 14 to 20, 1889. This Congress marked the beginning of the existence of the Second International.

p. 56

³² *Bakuninists*—supporters of the anarchist Bakunin. When the International Working Men's Association (the First International) was founded in 1864 by Marx, Bakunin joined it. He tried, however, to disorganize the international working-class movement by carrying on a bitter struggle against Marxism and by setting up his own anarchist Alliance within the First International. By decision of the Hague Congress (1872) Bakunin and his followers were expelled from the First International.

p. 57

³³ *Revolutionary syndicalism*—a petty-bourgeois, semi-anarchist trend that made its appearance in the working-class movement of a number of West-European countries at the close of the 19th century. The syndicalists denied that the working class needs to engage in political struggle, that the Party has to play the part of leader in the working-class movement, and that the dictatorship of the proletariat has to be established; they considered that by

organizing a general strike the trade unions (in French—syndicats) can, without a revolution, overthrow capitalism and take control of the management of production. "Syndicalism," wrote Lenin in 1917, "either repudiates the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat, or else relegates it, as it does political power in general, to a back seat. We, however, put it in front." At the same time Lenin pointed out that "in many countries revolutionary syndicalism was the direct and inevitable result of opportunism, reformism, and parliamentary cretinism."

p. 60

³⁴ See K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, Moscow 1958, p. 33.

p. 61

³⁵ *Cadets*—members of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, the principal party of the imperialist bourgeoisie in Russia, founded in October 1905. The Cadets called themselves the party of "Popular Freedom." In fact, however, they tried to do a deal with the autocracy, their aim being to retain tsardom in the shape of a constitutional monarchy.

During the imperialist war of 1914-18 they demanded "war to a victorious finish." After the February 1917 revolution, they entered into a deal with the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders of the Petrograd Soviet, and as a result came to occupy a leading position in the bourgeois Provisional Government, where they pursued a counter-revolutionary policy directed against the people. Following the Great October Socialist Revolution they played the part of agents and hirelings of foreign imperialism, and were the organizers of Russia's counter-revolutionary forces. Lenin called the Cadet Party the all-Russian headquarters' staff of the counter-revolution.

p. 62

³⁶ *Decazeville strike*—a strike of the French miners in Decazeville in January 1886, suppressed by government troops. In the Chamber of Deputies, the bourgeois representatives, Radicals included, came out in support of the government and its repressive measures against the strikers. As a result the workers' Deputies left the Radicals and formed an independent, workers' group.

p. 62

³⁷ *Duma, The State Duma*—the representative assembly that existed in tsarist Russia. Formally it was a legislative body, but actually it had no effective power. The elections to the State Duma were neither direct, equal, nor general. The electoral rights of the labouring classes, and also of the non-Russian nationalities that

inhabited Russia, were considerably restricted. Enormous numbers of workers and peasants were not entitled to vote at all. The bulk of the State Duma deputies were landlords or capitalists.

p. 64

³⁸ The Stuttgart Congress resolutions are not given in this volume.

p. 68

³⁹ *The Stockholm Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.*—the Fourth (Unity) Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., which took place in April-May 1906 in Stockholm. The Congress discussed a review of the agrarian programme, the current situation, the trade unions, etc. As a result of the fact that following the armed uprising in Moscow (December 1905) the Bolsheviks were subjected to severe persecution and many Bolshevik Party units could not be represented at the Congress, the Mensheviks proved to be in a majority (true, a small one). This explains why the Congress adopted Menshevik resolutions on several items, including those relating to the trade unions, and to the agrarian problem.

p. 73

⁴⁰ *Socialist-Revolutionaries (S.-R.s)*—members of a petty-bourgeois party that arose in Russia in 1902 as a result of a fusion of various Narodnik circles and groups. The programme adopted at the First Congress of this Party held in 1905, constituted a mixture of the ideas of the old Narodism and of Marxism falsified in revisionist fashion. The S.-R.s refused to see any class differences between the proletarian and the small proprietor; they glossed over the class contradictions within the peasantry, rejected the view that the leading role in the revolution must be played by the proletariat, and the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat. A watchword for the peasant movement advanced by the S.-R.s was the utopian demand for the "socialization of the land" under capitalism. The S.-R.s preached the subjectivist idea of active "heroes" and the passive "mob," and saw terror as their main method of struggle. They thereby did serious damage to the mass revolutionary movement. During the revolution of 1905-07, the position of the S.-R.s was that of bourgeois democrats. In 1906, the Right-wing S.-R.s set up a semi-Cadet "Labour Popular-Socialist Party" and established a bloc with the Cadets. During the First World War the S.-R.s pursued a social-chauvinist policy. After the victory of the February revolution, 1917, three groups emerged in their Party, namely, the Right-wing, headed by Y. Breshko-Breshkovskaya and Kerensky, the Centrists, headed by V. Chernov, and the Left-wing, headed by M. Spiridonova. The Right-wing and Centrist leaders became members of the bourgeois

Provisional Government, in which capacity they operated the Cadet policy and took part in engineering the Kornilov conspiracy aimed at establishing a military-monarchist dictatorship in Russia. The Spiridonova group formed a Left wing, which at a congress held in December 1917 became the independent party of "Left" S.-R.s. Following the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution the S.-R.s engaged in counter-revolutionary disruptive work, collaborating with the armies of intervention and with the Whiteguard governments, which were the agents of the foreign imperialists. When the intervention was defeated the S.-R.s continued their hostile work against the Soviet state both within the country and among the Whiteguard émigrés. In an attempt to retain influence over the peasant masses the "left" S.-R.s entered the first Soviet Government in November 1917, but following the ratification of the Brest Peace, withdrew from the Council of People's Commissars. In the summer of 1918 they organized a rebellion aimed at provoking war with Germany and overthrowing the Soviet Government. With the defeat of the rebellion the Party of "Left" Socialist-Revolutionaries began to disintegrate.

p. 73

⁴¹ *The London Congress*—the Fifth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., which was held in London in May 1907. The Congress discussed the following items: the attitude to the bourgeois parties; a Labour Congress and the workers' non-Party organizations; the trade unions and the Party, and other points. The Bolsheviks were in a majority at the Congress, which adopted Bolshevik resolutions on all the most important items of principle. The resolution on the trade unions contained the following passage: "The Congress reminds the Party units and Social-Democrats active in the trade unions, of one of the prime tasks of Social-Democratic activity in them, namely, that of promoting the acceptance by the trade unions of the Social-Democratic Party's ideological leadership, and also of establishing organizational ties with it; and of the need, where local conditions permit, to put this into effect."

p. 73

⁴² Reference is to the Fourth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. held in April-May 1906 in Stockholm.

p. 77

⁴³ See the letter from Engels to Sorge dated January 18, 1893.

p. 78

⁴⁴ See F. Engels, *The Housing Question*, Moscow 1955, pp. 63-64.

p. 79

⁴⁵ The resolution of the C.C. of the R.S.D.L.P. on trade unions appeared in the *Proletary*, No. 21, of February 13 (26), 1908.

Party members were instructed to set up Party groups within trade-union organizations and to work in them under the direction of the local Party leading committees. Where police persecution rendered it impossible to organize trade unions or to re-establish those that had been disbanded, the C.C. proposed that trade unions and Party groups within them be organized illegally.

p. 83

⁴⁶ Reference is to the Seventh Congress of the Second International held in August 18-24, 1907, in Stuttgart. For details regarding the Congress see pages 68-76 of this volume.

p. 84

⁴⁷ *Justice*—a weekly, was founded in London in 1884 as the central organ of the Social-Democratic Federation. In 1911 it became the organ of the B.S.P. When the social-jingoist minority left the B.S.P. in 1916, *Justice* became their organ. *The Call* became the official organ of the B.S.P. *Justice* continued to be published until 1925.

p. 92

⁴⁸ *The Labour Leader*—a weekly paper founded in 1890. In 1893 it became the organ of the Independent Labour Party. In 1922 its name was changed to *The New Leader* which in 1946 became *The Socialist Leader*.

p. 93

⁴⁹ *The Independent Labour Party* (I.L.P.) was founded in 1893, its leaders including James Keir Hardie and Ramsay MacDonald. While claiming that the I.L.P. was politically independent of the capitalist parties, the I.L.P. leaders actually pursued a policy of Liberalism in the labour movement. On the outbreak of the world imperialist war of 1914-18 the I.L.P. issued an anti-war manifesto (August 13, 1914). In February 1915 the I.L.P. delegates to the Conference of Socialists from the "Entente" countries held in London supported the social-chauvinist resolution adopted at the Conference. From then on the I.L.P. leaders used pacifist phrases to cover up what was in fact a social-chauvinist position. When the Comintern was founded in 1919, the I.L.P. yielded to the pressure of the leftward-moving masses and withdrew from the Second International. In 1921 the I.L.P. joined the so-called Two-and-a-Half International, but when the latter fell to pieces, returned to the Second International. In March 1921 the Left wing of the I.L.P. broke away from the Party and joined the newly formed Communist Party of Great Britain. In 1931 the I.L.P.

leaders MacDonald and Snowden left the Party on entering the "National" (Conservative) Government.

p. 93

⁵⁰ Reference is to *The Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, 1905-1907* by V. I. Lenin (English edition, Moscow 1954, pp. 96-103).

p. 95

⁵¹ At the close of 1905 a revolution broke out in Persia. The urban poor, the workers, the progressive section of the bourgeoisie and other strata of the population came out against the Shah's despotic government, which had reduced the people to utter destitution and was subordinating the country to foreign imperialists. As a result of the ever-growing revolutionary movement the Shah was compelled in 1906 to grant a constitution and to convene a Mejlis (Parliament).

In August 1907, the Russian tsarist government concluded an agreement with the British Government for the division of Persia into Russian and British zones of influence. In June 1908 a counter-revolutionary coup was perpetrated by the Russian Cossack brigade stationed in Teheran, under the command of Col. Lyakhov, who operated in collusion with the Shah. The Mejlis building was subjected to artillery bombardment, some of the Deputies were brutally done to death, and Lyakhov was appointed military governor of Teheran.

But the popular struggle continued. Revolutionary detachments captured Tabriz and Resht, and in July 1909, entered Teheran, defeated Lyakhov's Cossacks, and deposed Shah Mohammed Ali. Power, however, passed into the hands of the Persian big bourgeoisie and landlords, who were concerned to crush the revolution.

Towards the end of 1911, Russian troops occupied Azerbaijan, Gilan and Khorosan, and British troops landed in Southern Persia. The revolutionary masses were savagely suppressed, the gains of the revolution wiped out and the rule of the Shah and the feudal lords re-established.

p. 98

⁵² *The Black Hundreds* were monarchist gangs organized by the tsarist police to fight the Russian revolutionary movement. They assassinated revolutionaries, attacked progressive intellectuals and perpetrated anti-Jewish pogroms.

p. 98

⁵³ Reference is to the revolution, headed by the Young Turks, members of the "Unity and Progress" Party, that broke out in July 1908. The "Unity and Progress" Party which represented the interests

of the rising Turkish bourgeoisie, fought the despotic rule of Sultan Abdul Hamid II, and worked to transform Turkey into a centralized bourgeois-democratic state.

p. 99

⁵⁴ Scared by the revolution that had broken out, Abdul Hamid II announced the restoration of the 1876 Constitution, which was in fact revoked in 1878, when at the Sultan's orders the Turkish Parliament was disbanded.

p. 99

⁵⁵ *L'Humanité*—a daily paper founded by Jean Jaurès in 1904 as the organ of the French Socialist Party. During the world imperialist war of 1914-18 the paper was controlled by the extreme Right wing of the Socialist Party, and its line was that of social-chauvinism. Soon after the split in the Socialist Party at the Tours Congress (December 1920) and the formation of the Communist Party of France, the paper became the organ of the latter. It appears in Paris and now is the central organ of the French Communist Party.

p. 102

⁵⁶ *The butchers of June 1848*—reference is to Cavaignac and other French bourgeois leaders who suppressed the revolt of the Paris workers in June 1848 with monstrous ferocity.

Gallifet—the French general who directed the brutal suppression of the workers of Paris, the defenders of the Paris Commune in May 1871.

p. 102

⁵⁷ *The International Socialist Bureau (I.S.B.)*—the executive body of the Second International established by decision of the Paris Congress held in 1900. In 1905-12 V. I. Lenin was a member of the I.S.B., as representative of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. During the imperialist war of 1914-18 the I.S.B. took a social-chauvinist stand and became a rallying centre for the opportunist elements of the Socialist parties.

p. 110

⁵⁸ Engels wrote about the sectarian character of British Social-Democracy in his letters to F. A. Sorge dated June 10, 1891, May 12 and November 10, 1894.

p. 120

⁵⁹ The trade-union (workers') delegates to the Second All-Russian Congress of Factory Doctors and Representatives of Factory Industry were arrested by order of the tsarist government on April 13 (26), 1911, the eve of the Congress.

p. 124

⁶⁰ "Younger brother," i.e., the people. An expression used in liberal literature under tsarist rule.

p. 125

⁶¹ *Brentano-ism*, so called after the German bourgeois economist, Brentano, an advocate of so-called "state socialism"; he tried to show that social equality could be achieved under capitalism by means of reforms and the alleged "reconciliation" of the interests of the workers and capitalists.

p. 129

⁶² *The British Socialist Party (B.S.P.)* was founded in Manchester in 1911 as a result of the fusion of the Social-Democratic Federation and other socialist groups. Its leading figures included Hyndman, Harry Quelch and Tom Mann. The B.S.P. carried on its propaganda in the Marxist spirit. Its small membership and isolation from the workers lent it a somewhat sectarian character.

During the world imperialist war of 1914-18 there were three trends in the Party, viz.:—the Social-Chauvinist, the Centrist and the Internationalist. The Social-Chauvinist wing, headed by Hyndman, being in a minority at the B.S.P. Conference held in April 1916, split away from the Party. Many of the B.S.P. members, however, supported the Internationalist trend, representative of which were John McLean, William Gallacher and others.

In March 1918 the B.S.P. Conference welcomed the Great October Socialist Revolution. B.S.P. members played a considerable part in rallying the British workers in defence of Soviet Russia against the foreign intervention. After the 8th B.S.P. Conference held in April 1919, the branches almost unanimously (by 98 votes to 4) declared for affiliation to the Third International. About the same time the B.S.P. began negotiations with other socialist organizations regarding the foundation of a single Communist Party in Britain. At the first Unity Congress held at the end of July and the beginning of August 1920, the overwhelming majority of the B.S.P. branches merged in the newly founded Communist Party of Great Britain.

p. 142

⁶³ See Note 24.

p. 144

⁶⁴ These words are from a workers' song written by the German poet Georg Herwegh in 1864.

p. 151

⁶⁵ *Daily Citizen*—organ of the opportunist bloc of the Labour Party, the Fabian Society, and the Independent Labour Party. Published in London between 1912 and 1915.

Daily Herald began publication in London in 1912. On a number of issues its policy was close to that of the B.S.P. After the First World War, it became for a time the organ of the Labour Party and the T.U.C. Controlled now by a capitalist firm, its policy is supposed to be "favourable" to the labour movement.

p. 154

⁶⁶ Lenin has in mind the statement that: "The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." (See K. Marx and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Moscow 1957, p. 51.)

p. 171

⁶⁷ *State Councillors*—members of the State Council, a consultative body in tsarist Russia whose members were appointed by the tsar. The State Council consisted mainly of big landlords and tsarist dignitaries.

p. 171

⁶⁸ *Rech (Speech)* and *Sovremenka (Sovremennoye Slovo—Contemporary Word)* were Cadet newspapers.

p. 175

⁶⁹ Reference is to the Second International Diplomatic Conference held in 1907 in The Hague. This Conference, like the first Hague Conference (1899), was attended by representatives of the imperialist governments of Britain, tsarist Russia, the U.S.A., Germany, France, etc. The Conference approved a number of international conventions—on the laws and customs of land warfare, on the rights and duties of neutral powers, etc.

p. 184

⁷⁰ *Kit Kitych* ("kit" is the Russian for "whale")—the nickname of Tit Titych, a rich merchant in A. N. Ostrovsky's play *Shouldering Another's Troubles*. Lenin gives this name to capitalist money-bags. *Guchkov*—a big capitalist, leader of the Octobrist Party.

p. 189

⁷¹ *Rodichev*—a Russian liberal, member of the Cadet Party.

p. 190

⁷² This refers to the land reform carried through in Ireland in conformity with the 1903 law. The essence of the reform was that the Irish small tenants bought the land they rented, with money loaned

by the state, from the British landlords. The reform resulted in the Irish tenants paying huge sums of money to the landlords.

p. 195

⁷³ Reference is to the article "The British Liberals and Ireland." See pp. 193-96 of this volume.

p. 197

⁷⁴ *The Monthly* is the *Sozialistische Monatshefte* (*The Socialist Monthly*), journal of the opportunists of German Social-Democracy; appeared in Berlin from 1897 to 1933.

p. 216

⁷⁵ *Nashe Dyelo* (*Our Cause*) (appeared also as *Nasha Zarya* and as *Dyelo*)—a monthly legally published magazine of the Menshevik Liquidators; published in Petrograd from 1910 to 1917. The Liquidator leadership in Russia was built up around *Nashe Dyelo*.

p. 216

⁷⁶ "Obshchedyeloists," also known as the "Shirokiye" Socialists, were the opportunist, social-chauvinist wing of the Bulgarian Social-Democratic Party. They published the magazine *Obshcheye Dyelo* (*Common Cause*).

"*Tesnyaki*"—the revolutionary Social-Democratic Labour Party of Bulgaria founded in 1903 after the split in the Social-Democratic Party. The founder and leader of the "Tesnyaki" was D. Blagoyev. In 1914-18 the "Tesnyaki" opposed the imperialist war, and in 1919 they joined the Communist International, assuming the name of the Communist Party of Bulgaria.

p. 216

⁷⁷ In *The Collapse of the Second International* written in May-June 1915, Lenin says on the same point:

"In Britain about three-seventh in the British Socialist Party are internationalists (66 votes for an internationalist resolution against 84, according to the latest calculations), whereas in the opportunist bloc (the Labour Party+the Fabians+the Independent Labour Party) less than one-seventh are internationalists." The figures 66 and 84 given by Lenin apparently refer to the total delegates' votes cast at Divisional Conferences held in February 1915 for and against the internationalist resolution of the Central Hackney branch of the B.S.P.

p. 216

⁷⁸ *The London Conference*—a conference of Socialists from the Entente countries, took place on February 14, 1915. It was attended by representatives of the social-chauvinists and of pacifist groups in the Socialist parties of Britain, France, and Belgium, and of

the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries from Russia. The delegates from Britain included the pro-war Labourites Henderson, Clynes, Hodge, and Roberts; the I.L.P. leaders Keir Hardie, Ramsay MacDonald, and Bruce Glasier; and the B.S.P. leaders (Hyndmanites), Dan Irving and Victor Fisher. Keir Hardie was in the chair.

The Bolsheviks were not invited, but on Lenin's instructions M. M. Litvinov (Maximovich) came to the Conference to read out a declaration of the C.C. of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. The declaration demanded that Socialists withdraw from bourgeois governments, make a complete break with the imperialists, wage a resolute struggle against their imperialist governments and condemn the voting for war credits. While Litvinov was reading the declaration the chairman interrupted him, and prevented him from reading it to the end. Whereupon Litvinov handed the declaration up to the platform and left the Conference.

The Conference adopted resolutions which, to use Lenin's expression, were merely a screen for social-chauvinism.

p. 218

⁷⁹ Maximovich's declaration is not given in this volume.

p. 218

⁸⁰ *The Bund*—the General Jewish Workers' Union in Lithuania, Poland and Russia—was founded in 1897, its members in the main being Jewish handicraftsmen of Russia's western provinces. At the First Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. held in March 1898, the Bund joined the new Party. At the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. that took place from July 17 (30) to August 10 (23), 1903, the Bundists advanced the demand that the Bund be recognized as the sole representative of the Jewish proletariat. When this example, of Bundist organizational nationalism was rejected by the Congress, the Bundists left the Party.

In 1906, following the Fourth (Unity) Congress, the Bund again joined the R.S.D.L.P. The Bundists constantly supported the Mensheviks and fought the Bolsheviks. Though formally part of the R.S.D.L.P. the Bund was a bourgeois-nationalist type of organization.

Organization Committee (O.C.)—the executive body of the Mensheviks formed in August 1912 at a conference of Menshevik Liquidators and other anti-Party groups and trends.

p. 219

⁸¹ *Nashe Slovo* (*Our Word*)—a Menshevik-Trotskyite newspaper.

p. 219

⁸² *Struve-ism*—bourgeois liberalism. Struve was a Russian bourgeois liberal.

p. 233

⁸³ *Lichtstrahlen*—a monthly journal, organ of a group of Left German Social-Democrats (International Socialists of Germany), published under J. Borhardt's editorship. Appeared intermittently in Berlin from 1913 to 1921.

Die Internationale, a journal of Left German Social-Democrats founded by Rosa Luxemburg and Fr. Mehring. Only one issue appeared, in Berlin in April 1915. Was republished in Munich in 1922 by the Futurus Publishers.

p. 239

⁸⁴ *The International Conference of Socialist Women* to discuss the attitude to the war was held in Berne, March 26-28, 1915. Twenty-five delegates were present—from Britain (four representatives, of whom two were from the I.L.P.), Germany, France, Holland, Switzerland, Italy, Russia, and Poland. Among the Russian delegates were N. K. Krupskaya and Inessa Armand.

p. 241

⁸⁵ See note 78.

p. 242

⁸⁶ *The Tribunists*—Left group of the Dutch Social-Democratic Labour Party, who began the publication of the newspaper *De Tribune* in 1907. In 1909 the Tribunists were expelled from this Party and organized an independent party (the Social-Democratic Party of Holland), which, while constituting the Left wing of the Dutch labour movement, was not consistently revolutionary. In 1918 the Tribunists took part in forming the Communist Party of Holland.

p. 242

⁸⁷ A conference of Socialist-Internationalists took place at Zimmerwald (Switzerland) in September 1915. Lenin regarded this Conference as the "first step" in developing an international movement against the imperialist war. The Conference was attended by Socialists from eleven European countries, including Russia, Germany, France, Italy, etc. There were no delegates from Britain. The B.S.P. and the I.L.P. appointed delegates to the Conference, but they were refused passports by the British Government.

The Conference adopted a manifesto which denounced the imperialist governments responsible for the outbreak of the world war, and condemned the social-chauvinists, though not forcefully enough. The Manifesto was the basis for the so-called Zimmerwald Association.

The B.S.P. Conference in 1916 declared overwhelmingly in support of the Zimmerwald decisions.

A Zimmerwald Left group, headed by Lenin, formed at the Conference, sharply criticized the Conference majority for its

Kautskyite position and urged that the Conference decisions refer to the need for a complete break with social-chauvinism and call for mass revolutionary struggle against the imperialist governments.

The Zimmerwald Left elected a bureau, which, after the conclusion of the Conference, continued working to consolidate the forces of the revolutionary internationalist groups.

p. 244

⁸⁸ Lenin quotes and refers to the letters of Marx to Engels dated June 7, 1866, June 20, 1866, November 2, 1867, and November 30, 1867.

p. 248

⁸⁹ This is a letter in reply to a leaflet from the Socialist Propaganda League, U.S.A., received by Lenin in November 1915.

p. 253

⁹⁰ See the letters from Engels to Sorge dated April 29, 1886, and December 7, 1889, and also the letter of Engels to Wischnewetzky dated December 28, 1886, and to Schluter dated January 11, 1890.

p. 256

⁹¹ *The Quadruple Entente*—the imperialist alliance between Britain, France, Russia, and Italy. It arose in 1915 after Italy left the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy) and joined the other imperialist alliance—the Triple Entente, which had been formed in 1907.

p. 259

⁹² *The Chkheidze group*—the Menshevik group in the Fourth State Duma (1912-1917).

p. 260

⁹³ Lenin is referring to F. Engels's article *Criticism of the Draft Social-Democratic Programme of 1891*.

p. 262

⁹⁴ An International Socialist Congress (an emergency congress of the Second International) was held in Basle in November 1912 to protest against the Balkan war that had broken out and the world imperialist war that was being prepared. The Congress adopted a resolution, or manifesto, calling on Socialists in all countries to "prevent the outbreak of war" and declaring that "the proletariat considers it a crime to shoot at its brothers for the sake of the profits of the capitalists, the ambitions of the dynasties, or the secret treaties of the diplomats." Should war break out in spite of all, "Socialists must intervene to achieve its speedy termination and exploit the economic and political crisis created by the war

to rouse the people and thereby hasten the collapse of capitalist domination."

When war did break out in July 1914, most of the leaders of the Socialist parties affiliated to the Second International betrayed socialism, renounced the Basle resolution and sided with their respective imperialist governments. The Russian Bolsheviks headed by Lenin, the Liebknecht and Luxemburg group in Germany, John McLean and other internationalists in Britain, and groups in other Socialist parties, remained true to the principles of internationalism and in conformity with the Basle Manifesto called on the workers to combat their imperialist governments and the imperialist war.

p. 264

⁹⁵ See Note 87.

p. 267

⁹⁶ By the "founder of Russian Marxism" is meant G. V. Plekhanov.

p. 279

⁹⁷ *Liquidationism*. See Note 24.

p. 298

⁹⁸ Reference is to V.I. Lenin's theses entitled *The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination* written at the beginning of 1916.

p. 299

⁹⁹ This refers to *The Theses on Imperialism and National Oppression* published by the Polish Social-Democrats.

p. 302

¹⁰⁰ Reference is to V. I. Lenin's theses entitled *The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination*.

p. 305

¹⁰¹ *V. Ilyin*—a pseudonym of V. I. Lenin.

p. 305

¹⁰² See "Author's Preface to the Second Edition" of *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* by K. Marx. (K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow 1958, p. 244.)

p. 312

¹⁰³ *Manilovism*—sugary, inane tittle-tattle, empty phrase-mongering. Manilov is a character in *Dead Souls*, the work of the great Russian writer, N. V. Gogol.

p. 329

¹⁰⁴ *Workers' or labour group (Arbeitsgemeinschaft)*—a German Centrist organization formed in March 1916 by Reichstag Deputies who split away from the official Social-Democratic Reichstag group. It was the core of the Centrist Independent Social-Demo-

cratic Party of Germany formed in 1917, which justified the outright social-chauvinists and stood for maintaining unity with them.

p. 331

¹⁰⁵ The "minoritaires" or "Longuetists," the minority group in the French Socialist Party formed in 1915. The Longuetists (supporters of the social-reformist Jean Longuet) were Centrist in their views, and pursued a policy of agreement with the social-chauvinists. During the First World War they took a social-pacifist stand. At the French Socialist Party Congress held in Tours in December 1920, at which the Left wing was victorious, the Longuetists were in a minority, whereupon they combined with the open reformists in splitting away from the Party, and joining the so-called Two-and-a-Half International. When the latter fell to pieces they returned to the Second International.

p. 331

¹⁰⁶ The manifesto is not given in this volume.

p. 332

¹⁰⁷ The "International Group," which later called itself the Spartacus League, was founded by the German Left Social-Democrats Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Franz Mehring, Clara Zetkin, and others at the outset of the First World War. The "International" Group played a positive and important part in the history of the German working-class movement. At a national conference of Left Social-Democrats held in January 1916, the Group adopted theses on the tasks facing international Social-Democracy, drawn up by Rosa Luxemburg. The "International" Group conducted revolutionary propaganda among the masses against the imperialist war, exposed the predatory policy of German imperialism, and the treachery of the Social-Democratic leaders. But it failed to rid itself of serious errors on cardinal issues of theory and policy; for example, it rejected the principle of self-determination of nations as understood by Marxists (i.e., to the point of separation and the formation of independent states); it denied the possibility of wars of national liberation in the imperialist era; it underestimated the role of the revolutionary party, etc. In 1917 the "International" Group joined the Centrist Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, though retaining organizational independence in that Party. After the November revolution in Germany in 1918, the Group broke away from the "Independents" and in December of the same year founded the Communist Party of Germany.

p. 332

¹⁰⁸ *Arbeiterpolitik*—a weekly journal that appeared legally, published from 1916 to 1919 by the Bremen group of Left-wing Social-Democrats.

p. 333

¹⁰⁹ *Trade Unionist*—a monthly paper, internationalist in trend, that appeared in London in 1915 and 1916.

p. 333

¹¹⁰ *The Socialist Labour Party of America* was formed in 1876 as a result of a merger of the American sections of the First International, the Social-Democratic Labour Party, and several socialist groups in the U.S.A. Most of the Party members were immigrants. The S.L.P. of America was sectarian in character and never had extensive ties with the proletarian masses. During the First World War the S.L.P. inclined towards internationalism.

The Socialist Party of America was a reformist, opportunist party, founded in 1901. During the First World War the Right wing of the Party justified the imperialist war and supported the policy of American imperialism. The Left, revolutionary wing, that took organizational shape under the influence of the October Socialist Revolution in Russia, adopted an internationalist position, and opposed the war. In 1919 it split away from the S.P. and became the initiator in founding the Communist Party of the U.S.A., of which it constituted the core. Following the split, the S.P. of America turned into a small sectarian organization. At the beginning of 1957 the S.P. merged with the Social-Democratic Federation to form a new organization with no more than 5,000 members, called the Socialist Party-Social-Democratic Federation.

The Internationalist—a paper of the Socialist Party of America, published by the Socialist Propaganda League in Boston in 1917.

p. 233

¹¹¹ See F. Engels, *Criticism of the Draft Social-Democratic Programme of 1891*.

p. 336

¹¹² See K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow 1958, p. 22.

p. 350

¹¹³ *Left Communists*—an opportunist group in the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), headed by Bukharin; existed in 1918. The Left Communists opposed the conclusion of the Brest Peace Treaty with Germany, the introduction of one-man management and labour discipline, and the employment of bourgeois specialists in Soviet industry. In his "*Left*" *Childishness and the Petty-Bourgeois Men-*

tality and in other works, V. I. Lenin sharply criticized the Left Communists, whose petty-bourgeois nature he revealed.

p. 355

¹¹⁴ *The Man Who Lived in a Shell* is the title of one of Chekhov's stories in which is personified the narrow-minded philistine who is scared of everything new, of every display of initiative.

p. 358

¹¹⁵ Reference is to the counter-revolutionary revolt of the Czechoslovak Corps organized by the British and French imperialists and actively supported by the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries.

The Czechoslovak Corps was formed by the Russian bourgeois Provisional Government in 1917 out of prisoners-of-war taken during the First World War, and was intended for use in the war against Germany. Following the Great October Socialist Revolution of 1917, the Russian counter-revolutionaries and British and French imperialists used the counter-revolutionary officers of the Corps to fight the Soviet Government. The revolt began in Chelyabinsk in May 1918. With the aid of the Czechoslovak Corps the counter-revolutionaries seized the Urals, the Volga area and, then, Siberia. The Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, acting under cover of the Czechoslovak forces, set up a Whiteguard-S.-R. government in Samara, and a Siberian Whiteguard government in Omsk.

In October 1918 the Red Army liberated the Volga area. The counter-revolutionary Czechoslovak revolt was finally suppressed towards the close of 1919, when Kolchak's armies were routed.

p. 361

¹¹⁶ Reference is to the counter-revolutionary revolt organized by the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in Moscow on July 6, 1918. It was suppressed within a day.

p. 366

¹¹⁷ *Dashnaktsutyun Party*—the party of the nationalist Armenian bourgeoisie. In 1918-20 it took part in the counter-revolutionary struggle against the Soviets.

p. 366

¹¹⁸ Reference is to the advancing Turkish troops.

p. 366

¹¹⁹ On October 26 (November 8), 1917, the day after the establishment of Soviet rule in Russia, the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, following a report by V. I. Lenin, adopted a Decree on Peace in which the proposal was made to the governments and peoples of all the belligerent countries that an armistice be concluded and negotiations begun immediately regarding a just

democratic peace without annexations or indemnities. The Soviet Government's proposal was rejected by the imperialist states participating in the war.

p. 374

¹²⁰ *The Brest Peace*—the peace treaty signed in Brest-Litovsk in March 1918 between Soviet Russia and Germany on terms exceedingly onerous for the former. The treaty gave Soviet Russia the respite it needed, enabled it for a time to engage in no military operations, and to accumulate the strength with which to defeat the combined forces of the Russian counter-revolution and the intervention of Britain, France, the U.S.A., and Japan.

After the revolution in Germany (November 1918), the Brest Peace was annulled.

p. 374

¹²¹ V. I. Lenin is quoting from N. G. Chernyshevsky's review of H. Ch. Carey's *Letters to the President on the Foreign and Domestic Policy of the Union*.

p. 382

¹²² This refers to the terms of the Versailles Peace Treaty.

p. 387

¹²³ See the letter from F. Engels to K. Marx dated October 7, 1858.

p. 395

¹²⁴ See the letter from K. Marx to F. Engels dated April 16, 1856.

p. 397

¹²⁵ *The Berne International* was the name given to the organization of social-chauvinist and Centrist parties formed at a conference in Berne in February 1919 with a view to re-establishing the Second International.

p. 408

¹²⁶ *Zubatov*—a colonel of the gendarmerie who at the beginning of the 20th century tried to spread so-called "police socialism" in Russia with the aim of diverting the workers from the revolutionary struggle. Zubatov set up police-promoted, bogus workers' organizations in Moscow and other cities, in which the workers were incited against revolutionaries, and told that the tsar would help them improve their severe economic conditions.

The upsurge of the revolutionary movement swept away these Zubatov organizations. Thus failed the attempt of the tsarist police to secure control of the revolutionary movement.

p. 411

¹²⁷ *Iskra-ists*—revolutionary Social-Democrats, supporters of the newspaper *Iskra* founded by Lenin.

p. 412

¹²⁸ What is meant here is the opportunist slogan of trade-union "neutrality" towards the political struggle of the working class. As the entire experience of the labour movement has shown, trade-union "neutrality" actually means subordinating the trade unions to bourgeois policy.

p. 414

¹²⁹ *Sylvia Pankhurst* took part in the communist movement in Britain after the First World War. In 1919 she wrote a letter to Lenin requesting him to give his opinion about the problem of participation in Parliament. In her letter she described the parties and political groups existing in Britain and gave them the following numeration: 1) Trade-unionists and labour politicians of the old type; 2) The Independent Labour Party; 3) The British Socialist Party; 4) The revolutionary industrialists; 5) The Socialist Labour Party; 6) The Socialist Workers' Federation; 7) The South Wales Socialist Society. Lenin, in his reply, adheres to this numeration.

p. 422

¹³⁰ Reference is to the Constituent Congress of the Communist Party of Germany that was held in Berlin from December 30, 1918, to January 1, 1919. Despite the fact that Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg advocated participation in the elections to the National Assembly, the Congress by a majority (62 against 23) adopted the wrong decision to take no part in the election campaign.

p. 424

¹³¹ *Workers' (Works') Committees, Shop Stewards' Committees*—elected bodies of workers set up at factories in Britain during the First World War. They led the famous Clyde strike of February 1915 (under the direction of the Clyde Workers' Committee), the strike in the engineering industry in May 1917, and others. During 1916 they linked up and formed the National Shop Stewards' and Works' Committee Movement, the objects of which included "the organization of the workers upon a class basis to prosecute the interests of the working class until the triumph of the workers is assured." After the Great October Socialist Revolution, the Shop Stewards' Movement came out in support of Soviet Russia and played an active part in combating the armed intervention against it organized by the imperialists.

Leading members of the Shop Stewards' Movement, such as Arthur McManus, William Gallacher, Harry Pollitt, and others took part in founding the Communist Party of Great Britain.

p. 424

¹³² *Independents*—members of the Independent Social-Democratic Party of Germany, founded by the Centrists (Kautsky, Haase, etc.) in April 1917. In October 1920, at their congress in Halle, a split took place among the Independents, the Left wing joining the Communist Party of Germany (in December), and the Right-wing elements forming a separate party, which assumed the old name of Independent Social-Democratic Party, and existed until 1922.

p. 430

¹³³ This refers to the leaflets and appeals of the Soviet Government issued in English and distributed among the British and American interventionist troops. From these leaflets the British and American soldiers learned the truth about Soviet Russia and the aims of the intervention. Here is the concluding part of a leaflet, an appeal to all British troops in the Allied Army, entitled "Why Have You Come to Murmansk?":

"You will be fighting not against enemies but against working people like yourself.

"For the first time in history the working people have got control of their country. The workers of all countries are striving to achieve this object. We in Russia have succeeded. We have thrown off the rule of the tsar, of landlords, and of capitalists. But we have still tremendous difficulties to overcome. We cannot build a new society in a day. We desire to be left alone.

"We ask you, are you going to help to crush us? To help to give Russia back to the landlords, the capitalists, and tsar?"

"You in your Trade Unions have been fighting capitalists, you know what it is.

"Comrades!

"Englishmen!

"You who pride yourselves on your love of liberty!

"Comrades! Descendants of the great Chartists! You who have always expressed sympathy with the Russian revolution, are you going to assist in crushing the first effort of working people to free themselves from their sweaters and exploiters?"

"Remember this! If the Russian revolution is crushed, then the power of the capitalists will be enormously strengthened in every country, and the fight for economic freedom will be put back for a hundred years.

"N. Lenin, Pres. Council People's Commissaries.

"G. Tchitcherine, People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs."

p. 444

¹³⁴ In November 1918 the French fleet entered the Black Sea and effected a landing at Odessa. In April 1919 a mutiny took place among the sailors of the fleet, who demanded that the war against

Soviet Russia be stopped. The mutiny was suppressed and its leaders were sentenced to penal servitude. The French command, however, had to withdraw the ships.

p. 445

¹³⁵ The document *About Compromises* is the beginning of an unfinished article by Lenin. The views expressed in this document are dealt with in greater detail in his "*Left-Wing*" *Communism, an Infantile Disorder*.

p. 448

¹³⁶ See F. Engels's article *Programme of the Blanquist Emigrés of the Commune*.

p. 449

¹³⁷ Lenin wrote "*Left-Wing*" *Communism, an Infantile Disorder* in April 1920 and the Appendix on May 12, 1920. The pamphlet appeared in Russian on June 8-10, 1920, and almost simultaneously, in July, German, French and English editions were published. It was circulated to all the delegates of the Second Communist International Congress held in Moscow from July 19 to August 7, 1920.

The manuscript of "*Left-Wing*" *Communism*, which is in the possession of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, bears the sub-title: "An Experiment in the Popular Discussion of Marxist Strategy and Tactics," and has the following dedication: "I dedicate this article to the most honourable Mr. Lloyd George in token of gratitude for his speech of March 18, 1920, which is almost Marxist and at any rate extremely useful for the Communists and Bolsheviks of the whole world."

Neither the sub-title nor the dedication appeared in the editions of this work published during Lenin's lifetime.

Lloyd George's speech referred to in the dedication was made at a meeting of the Liberal group in the House of Commons. In this speech Lloyd George showed the need for close contact between the Liberals and the Conservatives in face of the growing influence of socialist ideas among British workers.

p. 453

¹³⁸ Shortly after the outbreak of the imperialist world war of 1914-18 all the Bolshevik Deputies to the State Duma were arrested and sentenced to penal servitude for their opposition to the war and their exposure of the tsarist government's predatory aims in the war.

p. 455

¹³⁹ Lenin is referring here to the pamphlet of the German "Lefts" from which he quoted in Chapter V of his *"Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder*.

p. 458

¹⁴⁰ *Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.)*—an American workers' organization founded in 1905. An active part in founding this organization was played by such figures in the American labour movement as Daniel de Leon, Eugene Debs, and Bill Heywood. It played a big part in the American trade-union movement. During the world war of 1914-18 the I.W.W. led a number of mass actions of the American working class, exposed the policy of the reactionary leaders of the American Federation of Labour and Right-wing Socialists. Some of the I.W.W. leaders, including Bill Heywood, later joined the Communist Party of the U.S.A. At the same time, the activity of the I.W.W. bore marked anarcho-syndicalist features. It rejected political struggle by the proletariat, denied the leading role of the Party, and the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and refused to carry on activity among the members of the reactionary trade unions affiliated to the American Federation of Labour. Subsequently the I.W.W. degenerated into a sectarian group exerting no influence whatsoever on the workers.

p. 459

¹⁴¹ *The Socialist Labour Party (in Britain) (S.L.P.)* was founded in 1903 by a group of Left-wing Socialists who split away from the Social-Democratic Federation. On a number of issues their position was close to that of the anarcho-syndicalists. During the First World War, the S.L.P. pursued an internationalist policy. S.L.P.-ers took part in the Shop Stewards' Movement, and were members of the Clyde Workers' Committee, which directed the famous strike on the Clyde in 1915. The S.L.P. published and distributed Marxist literature. A group of leading S.L.P. members, Arthur McManus, Tom Bell and others, participated in the negotiations to form a Communist Party in Britain, and out of S.L.P. branches set up Communist Unity Groups, which merged in the Communist Party founded in August 1920.

The South Wales Socialist Society, was a small group, mainly of South Wales miners. In 1920 it was replaced by a broader organization, the South Wales Communist Council, which became part of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

The Workers' Socialist Federation, founded in May 1918, was a small organization that developed from the Women's Suffrage League. The members of the W.S.F. were mainly women. In June 1919 it adopted the name of Communist Party, British Section of the Third International (B.S.T.I.).

The B.S.T.I. merged in the C.P.G.B. at the Unity Conference in January 1921.

p. 459

¹⁴² *Letter to the British Workers* was published on June 22, 1920, in the B.S.P. weekly *The Call*, the Labour paper *The Daily Herald*, the Liberal *Manchester Guardian*, and in other papers.

p. 490

¹⁴³ The delegation referred to was one sent to Soviet Russia following a decision of a special meeting of the T.U.C. held in December 1919, and included representatives both of the T.U.C. Parliamentary Committee and of the Labour Party E.C.

p. 490

¹⁴⁴ The spring of 1920 saw the beginning of the so-called third campaign of the Entente against Soviet Russia. The Anglo-French imperialists succeeded in persuading the bourgeois government of Poland to start war on Soviet Russia. In April 1920 Polish troops invaded the Ukraine and in May captured Kiev. Simultaneously the tsarist general Wrangel launched an offensive from the Crimea. Though the British and French governments lavishly supplied Poland and Wrangel with arms, money and so forth, the Red Army was completely victorious by the autumn of 1920, liberated all the towns seized by the Whiteguard Poles, entered Polish territory and approached Warsaw. The Polish Command were compelled in October 1920 to sign a preliminary peace treaty. Wrangel's troops were driven out of the Crimea into the Black Sea.

p. 492

¹⁴⁵ *Reply to the Letter of the Joint Provisional Committee of the Communist Party of Britain* was broadcast and was published in the B.S.P. paper *The Call* on July 22, 1920. The Reply was read at the British Communist Unity Conference held July 31-August 1, 1920.

p. 503

¹⁴⁶ The so-called *Two-and-a-Half International* was founded in Vienna in February 1921 at a conference of Centrist parties and groups which, under pressure of the revolutionary-minded masses, temporarily seceded from the Second International. The parties concerned rejoined the Second International in 1923.

p. 513

¹⁴⁷ Reference is to the "Fourteen Points" of the programme published by the U.S. President Wilson in January 1918 as a basis for the conclusion of peace between the Entente and the Austro-German coalition.

Wilson's "Fourteen Points" were aimed at undermining the influence exerted on the popular masses of the belligerent countries by the Decree on Peace adopted on Lenin's report by the Second Congress of Soviets on October 26 (November 8), 1917, which proposed to the peoples and governments of these countries that peace without annexations and indemnities be immediately concluded.

Wilson's "Fourteen Points" suggested the restriction of armaments, freedom of the seas, formation of a League of Nations, etc. Most of them were not realized.

p. 513

¹⁴⁸ The question of C.P. affiliation to the Labour Party was settled following the discussion of Lenin's theses on the fundamental tasks of the Communist International at the last session of the Second Congress on August 6, 1920. After Lenin's speech, the Congress by a majority (of 58, with 24 against and 2 abstentions) declared in favour of affiliation. The C.P.G.B.'s subsequent application for affiliation was, however, rejected by the Labour Party leaders.

p. 538

¹⁴⁹ On May 10, 1920, soon after bourgeois Poland, on orders from the Entente, attacked Soviet Russia, London dockers refused to load the s.s. *Jolly George* with war materials for Poland. The strike was supported by the masses of British workers. In August 1920 the Labour Party and the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress convened an emergency national conference. A resolution was adopted by the Conference, warning the Government that "the whole industrial power of the organized workers will be used to defeat this war," i.e., the war on Russia.

The Conference set up a National Council of Action, and soon afterwards 350 local Councils of Action were organized.

Several days before the opening of the Conference the British Prime Minister Lloyd George demanded that the Red Army should stop its offensive on the Polish front, and threatened that the British navy would be brought into action. The powerful movement of the British workers, however, forced the British Government to reconsider its bellicose plans. Winston Churchill, one of the main organizers of the intervention against Soviet Russia, has written in his memoirs:

"The British Labour Party had developed a violent agitation against any British assistance being given to Poland. . . . Councils of Action were being formed in many parts of Britain. Nowhere among the public was there the slightest comprehension of the evils which would follow a Polish collapse. Under these pressures Mr. Lloyd George was constrained to advise the Polish Govern-

ment that the Russian terms 'do no violence to the ethnographical frontiers of Poland as an independent state,' and that if they were rejected, the British Government could not take any action against Russia."

p. 545

¹⁵⁰ Lenin is referring to the earlier part of his speech, where he says: "You remember, of course, that in April this year, when the Polish offensive had not yet begun, the front line ran East, and in many places, much to the East of where it is now, leaving Minsk in the hands of the Poles; the whole of Byelorussia was in their hands. And not only the Council of People's Commissars, but also the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee—the supreme body in the R.S.F.S.R.—solemnly declared, in a special appeal to the Polish people, that they proposed peace, and would not use arms to settle the fate of Byelorussia, a country which had never been Polish, and whose peasant population, who had long suffered from the Polish landlords, did not consider themselves Polish. We declared, nevertheless, in the most official and solemn manner that we were proposing peace on the basis of the line of that time, for we so highly valued the workers who would have to die in that war, that we considered no concessions to be of greater moment."

p. 547

¹⁵¹ In October 1920 a preliminary peace was concluded with Poland in Riga. A peace treaty between Poland and Soviet Russia was signed in March 1921.

p. 552

¹⁵² This refers to the Third Congress of the Communist International held in Moscow in June and July 1921.

p. 563

¹⁵³ In September 1922, the prominent French statesman, Edouard Herriot, leader of the Radical Socialist Party, visited Soviet Russia and had talks in Moscow with Soviet leaders. His mission played a big part in developing commercial and other ties between France and the Soviet Union.

p. 567

¹⁵⁴ The big British capitalist Leslie Urquhart, who possessed numerous undertakings in pre-revolutionary Russia, negotiated with the Soviet Government in 1922 about the possibility of working his former properties as a concession. A draft agreement was proposed but was turned down by the Council of People's Commissars.

p. 569

¹⁵⁵ Reference is to the conference on the Near East which was in preparation and was held later in Lausanne (November 1922-July 1923).

Convened on the initiative of Britain, France, and Italy, it was attended also by Japan, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey; the U.S.A. was represented by observers.

Soviet Russia was to take part in the conference, too, but on October 14, 1922, the British Government declared that Russia would not participate in the discussion of all the issues but only in that of the Straits (the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus).

The Soviet delegation proposed complete freedom for mercantile shipping in the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmora, and the Dardanelles, on the understanding that both in peace and war-time the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus would be closed to all naval craft and military aircraft, with the exception of those of Turkey. The proposal of the Soviet delegation was rejected, and the British plan providing for the free passage of naval craft was adopted.

p. 569

NAME INDEX

A

- Adler, Friedrich* (b. 1879)—112
Adler, Victor (1852-1918)—453
Alexander (the Great) of Macedonia (356-323 B.C.)—132
Alexeyev, Mikhail Vasilyevich (1857-1918)—366
Anderson, James (1739-1808)—96
Arch, Joseph (1826-1919)—140, 141
Aristophanes (c. 450-385 B.C.)—274
Aristotle (384-322 B.C.)—132
Armstrong—156, 166, 167, 274
Asquith, Herbert Henry (1852-1928)—198, 463, 468
Auer, Ignatz (1846-1907)—56
Avramov, Roman—111, 114
Axelrod, Pavel Borisovich (1850-1928)—213, 219, 259, 265, 298, 313
- ### B
- Babushkin, Ivan Vasilyevich* (1873-1906)—411
Bacon, Reginald (1863-1947)—167
Bakunin, Mikhail Alexandrovich (1814-1876)—35, 65
Banton, George (1856-1932)—174, 175
Barbusse, Henri (1873-1935)—418
Bauer, Otto (1882-1938)—453, 486, 519, 520
Bazaine, François Achille (1811-1888)—93
Bebel, August (1840-1913)—54, 56, 57, 62, 64, 75, 76, 91
Becker, Johann Philipp (1809-1886)—47, 66
Beer, Max (1864-1943)—278
Bell, Richard (1859-1930)—92, 93
Bell, Tom (1886-1944)—562
Bernstein, Eduard (1850-1932)—38, 39, 53, 54, 56, 57, 69
Bismarck, Otto (1815-1898)—65, 203
Bissolati, Leonida (1857-1920)—216, 260, 323
Blatchford, Robert (1851-1943)—236, 237, 238
Böhm-Bawerk, Eugene (1851-1914)—132
Bonar Law, Andrew (1858-1923)—178, 493
Borisov, M.—219
Bourderon, Albert—333
Boucher—235
Bowring, John (1792-1872)—15
Bracke, Wilhelm (1842-1880)—54
Branting, Karl Hjalmar (1860-

1925)—215, 260, 405, 411,
418, 429
Briand, Aristide (1862-1932)—
125, 265
Bright, John (1811-1889)—15
Brouckère, Louis de (1870-1951)
—73
Brousse, Paul (1864-1912)—57
Brown—166
Bukharin, Nikolai Ivanovich
(1888-1938)—355, 357, 358
Bulgakov, Sergei Nikolayevich
(1871-1927)—30, 32
Bulkin, Fyodor Afanasyevich
(*Semyonov*)—323
Burnett, John (b. 1847, deceased)
—92
Burns, John (1858-1943)—63,
114, 117, 125

C

Carnegie, Andrew (1835-1919)—
295
Carson, Edward Henry (1854-
1935)—178, 195, 196
Chamberlain, Joseph (1836-1914)
—279
Champion, Henry Hyde (1857-
1928)—63
*Chernyshevsky, Nikolai Gavri-
lovich* (1828-1889)—382
Chicherin, Georgi Vasilyevich
(1872-1946)—490
Chkheidze, Nikolai Semyonovich
(1865-1926)—260, 298, 323,
325
Chkhenkeli, A. I. (b. 1874)—317
Churchill, Winston (b. 1874)—
438, 466, 478, 479, 551
Clausewitz, Karl (1780-1831)—
339, 343
Clemenceau, Georges (1841-
1929)—102, 391, 411, 513,
516

Clynes, John Robert (1869-1949)
—461, 463
Cockerill—156
Conway, Michael (b. 1869)—143
Cromwell, Oliver (1599-1658)—
205
Cunow, Heinrich (1862-1936)—
248

D

Dan, Fyodor Ilyich (1871-1947)
—545
Däumig, Ernest (1866-1922)—
424
David, Eduard (1863-1930)—69,
261, 265, 268, 279, 317, 396
Denikin, Anton Ivanovich (1872-
1947)—438, 439, 456, 495,
549
Deschanel, Paul (1855-1922)—
275
Dietzgen, Joseph (1828-1888)—
47
Dioneo (b. 1866)—31, 130, 134
*Disraeli, Benjamin (Lord Bea-
consfield)* (1804-1881)—278
Dreyfus, Alfred (1859-1935)—
482
Driault, Edouard—288
Dühring, Eugen (1883-1921)—52

E

*Engelhardt, Alexander Nikolaye-
vich* (1832-1893)—31
Engels, Friedrich (1820-1895)—
34, 36, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51,
53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59,
60, 61, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 77,
79, 114, 120, 134, 135, 136,
194, 202, 203, 204, 205, 208,
212, 214, 233, 253, 256, 264,
297, 298, 317, 318, 319, 321,
326, 336, 350, 361, 395, 409,
410, 429, 452, 456
E. P.—See *Pimenova, E. P.*

F

Farbman, M. S. (b. 1880)—567
Fourier, Charles (1772-1837)—
35

G

Gallacher, William (b. 1881)—
460, 461, 463, 538, 539, 540,
543, 544
Galliffet, Gaston (1830-1909)—
103
Garibaldi, Giuseppe (1807-1882)
—203
Genghis Khan (c. 1155-1227)—
100
George, Henry (1839-1897)—50,
136
Giffen, Robert (1837-1910)—290
Gladstone, William Ewart (1809-
1898)—167, 194, 205
Glazier, Bruce (1859-1920)—111,
115, 116, 154
Gompers, Samuel (1850-1924)—
256, 429, 458, 527
Gorter, Herman (1864-1927)—
215
Gots, Abram Rafailovich (b.
1882)—545
Grayson, Victor—163
Greulich, Hermann (1842-1925)
—215, 260
Grey, Edward (1862-1933)—223
Grimm, Robert (b. 1881)—215
Guchkov, Alexander Ivanovich
(1862-1936)—189
Guesde, Jules (1845-1922)—75,
111, 174, 259, 487
Guest, L. Haden (b. 1877)—492
Guilbeaux, Henri (b. 1885)—333
Gvozdev, K. A.—323, 326

H

Haase, Hugo (1863-1919)—240,
424
Haenisch, Conrad (1876-1926)—
216

Hales—318
Hall, Leonard (d. 1916)—122,
123
Hardie, James Keir (1856-1915)
—100, 146, 147, 173, 218,
401
Harms, Bernhard (1876-1939)—
230
Hartley, Edward (deceased)—
174, 175
Hayes, Max—149
Hegel, Georg Wilhelm-Friedrich
(1770-1831)—34
Heine, Wolfgang (b. 1861)—240
Henderson, Arthur (1863-1935)
—324, 458, 461, 463, 466,
468, 469, 471, 478, 527, 529,
544
Herriot, Edouard (1872-1957)—
567
Hervé, Gustav (1871-1944)—74,
76
Hildebrand, Gerhardt—295
Hilferding, Rudolf (1877-1941)—
272, 286, 289, 313, 316, 399,
400
Hillquit, Morris (1869-1933)—
47
Hindenburg, Paul von (1847-
1934)—240
Hirsch, Karl (1841-1900)—53,
131, 132
Hobson, John Atkinson (1858-
1940)—26, 27, 28, 29, 271,
278, 289, 290, 292, 293, 294,
295, 297, 314, 315
Höchberg, A. (1833-1885)—52,
53, 54, 55
Höglund, Zet (b. 1884)—215, 242
Hübner, Otto—280
Huysmans, Camille (b. 1871)—
429
Hyndman, Henry Mayers (1842-
1921)—57, 111, 114, 117, 119,
120, 121, 130, 131, 133, 134,
135, 136, 163, 164, 216, 222,

226, 236, 249, 261, 266, 324,
326, 411, 487

I

Iekk, Gustav (1866-1907)—47
Inkpin, Albert (1884-1944)—465
Iordansky, Nikolai Ivanovich
(1876-1928)—92
Irving, Dan (1854-1924)—164
Izgojev, Alexander Samoilovich
(b. 1872)—192

J

Jaurès, Jean (1859-1914)—76,
107, 401
Jouhaux, Leon (1879-1954)—459
Jowett, Fred. W. (1864-1944)—
143, 144, 145, 147, 148
Junius—See *Luxemburg, Rosa*

K

Kablukov, Nikolai Alexeyevich
(1849-1919)—30
Kahan, Zelda (Zelda Coates)—
119, 120
Kamenev, Lev Borisovich (1883-
1936)—549, 551, 556
Kapp, Wolfgang (1858-1922)—
477
Kautsky, Karl (1854-1938)—30,
31, 33, 69, 73, 84, 111, 112,
113, 115, 116, 117, 216, 221,
222, 223, 224, 226, 228, 230,
233, 234, 235, 237, 238, 239,
240, 241, 246, 249, 250, 259,
262, 264, 268, 297, 312, 313,
318, 320, 321, 396, 398, 399,
400, 405, 406, 416, 417, 419,
420, 421, 424, 486
Kelley-Wischnewetzky, Florence
(1859-1932)—50

*Kerensky, Alexander Fyodoro-
vich* (b. 1881)—400, 403,
405, 456, 484, 494, 518, 520,
522, 549, 552

Keynes, John Maynard (1883-
1946)—508, 509, 510, 513,
515

*Kievsky (Pyatakov), Georgi Le-
onidovich* (1890-1937)—305,
307

Knight, Robert (1833-1911)—40
Kolb, W.—267

Kolchak, Alexander Vasilyevich
(1873-1920)—442, 456, 495,
549

Korganov, Grigory (d. 1918)—
366

Kornilov, Lavr Georgiyevich
(1870-1918)—477

Kosovskiy, V. (b. 1867)—213,
219, 220

*Kostrov (Jordanian, Noi Nikola-
yevich)* (b. 1870)—77, 78

Krasin, Leonid Borisovich (1870-
1926)—490, 509, 553, 555,
565, 566

Krichevsky, Boris Naumovich
(1866-1919)—41, 265

Krupp—156, 274
Kugelmann, Ludwig (1830-1902)
—48, 352

Kulisher, A.—300

L

Lafargue, Paul (1842-1911)—59,
203

Lansburgh, Alfred—292
Lansbury, George (1859-1940)—
122, 123, 147, 448, 453

Lapinski, P. L.—512

Larin, Y. (1882-1932)—49, 77,
78, 79

Larkin, James (1876-1947)—177,
178, 179, 180

Larkin, Michael (d. 1867)—177
Lassalle, Ferdinand (1825-1864)
—52, 134

Ledebour, Georg (1850-1947)—
69

Legien, Karl (1861-1920)—107,
256, 260, 261, 262, 265, 268,
317, 324, 396, 458

Lensch, Paul (1873-1926)—216,
320

Levi, Paul (1883-1930)—509, 512
*Levitsky, V. (Tsederbaum, Vla-
dimir Osipovich)* (b. 1883)
—127, 128, 129

Liebknecht, Karl (1871-1919)—
418, 423

Liebknecht, Wilhelm (1826-1900)
—40, 54, 56, 57, 62

Liebmann, F. (Hersch, P. L.) (b.
1882)—248

Litvinov, Maxim Maximovich
(1876-1951)—218, 220, 360,
490

Lloyd George, David (1863-
1945)—93, 139, 189, 191,
230, 262, 265, 272, 324, 326,
391, 402, 463, 464, 466, 468,
469, 478, 509, 513, 516

Londonderry, Charles Stewart
(1852-1915)—178

Longuet, Charles (1833-1903)—
203

Longuet, Jean (1876-1938)—454
Lopatin, Hermann Alexandrovich
(1845-1918)—201

Loriot, Fernand (1870-1930)—
333, 411

Lubersac, Jean de—380

Luxemburg, Rosa (pseudonym
Junius) (1871-1919)—75,
201, 299, 418, 423

Lyakhov, Vladimir Platonovich
(1869-1918)—99

Lysis—344, 505

M

MacDonald, James Ramsay
(1866-1937)—43, 115, 121,
123, 173, 174, 175, 198, 199,
401, 402, 404, 406, 407, 408,
409, 412, 416, 418, 419, 420,
421, 429, 461, 463, 518, 521,
539

Mackensen, August (1849-1945)
—240

McLachlan—145, 146
McLaine, W. (b. 1891)—526,
527, 528, 538, 541, 542

McLean, John (1879-1923)—333,
360, 386

Mann, Tom (1856-1941)—63, 318
Manning, Henry Edward (1808-
1892)—63

Maring, H.—531
*Martov, L. (Tsederbaum, Yuly
Osipovich)* (1873-1923)—
213, 298, 313, 316, 371, 411

*Martynov, A. (Piker, Alexander
Samoilovich)* (1865-1935)—
37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 265

Marx-Aveling, Eleanor (Tussy)
(1855-1898)—63

Marx, Karl (1818-1883)—15, 17,
27, 28, 29, 41, 47, 48, 49, 50,
52, 53, 54, 55, 57, 58, 59, 60,
61, 63, 64, 65, 66, 70, 90, 91,
95, 97, 130, 131, 132, 133,
134, 135, 136, 137, 145, 171,
194, 195, 201, 202, 203, 204,
205, 206, 207, 208, 213, 232,
233, 247, 251, 253, 256, 264,
297, 312, 317, 318, 319, 349,
352, 354, 355, 356, 357, 393,
397, 400, 409, 423, 429, 449,
451, 452, 456

Maslov, Pyotr Pavlovich (1867-
1946)—279, 298

Maximovich—See *Litvinov*

Mazzini, Giuseppe (1805-1872)—
131, 202

Mehring, Franz (1846-1919)—47, 52, 53, 55, 57
 Merrheim, A. (1881-1925)—333, 411
 Milyukov, Pavel Nikolayevich (1859-1943)—265, 343
 Monatte, Pierre—495
 Monitor—262, 263
 Morel, E. D. (1873-1924)—234, 235
 Morley, John (1838-1923)—100, 120, 131, 160, 198
 Morgan—162
 Morozov—162
 Most, Johann (1846-1906)—53
 Murphy, William Martin (1844-1921)—177, 178, 179
 Murray, Robert (1870-1950)—145

N

Napoleon III (Louis Bonaparte) (1808-1873)—132
 Nauman, Friedrich (1860-1919)—265
 Newbold, John Walton (1888-1943)—171
 Nicholas II (Romanov) (1868-1918)—98
 Nolan, James (b. 1913)—179
 Noske, Gustav (1868-1946)—396, 461, 463, 539, 541

O

Orlando, Vittorio Emanuele (1860-1952)—516
 Owen, Robert (1771-1858)—31, 35
 Owens, Michael Joseph (1859-1923)—289

P

Pankhurst, Sylvia (b. 1882)—412, 459, 460, 463, 465, 471, 495, 503, 539, 541, 542, 543, 544

Pannekoek, Anton (b. 1873)—215
 Parabellum—See Radek
 Parnell, Charles (1846-1891)—179
 Parvus (Gelfand, A. L.) (1869-1924)—248
 Pilsudski, Joseph (1867-1935)—495
 Pimenova, E. P. (pseudonym E. P.) (1854-1935)—92, 94
 Plehve Vyacheslav Konstantinovich (1846-1904)—100
 Plekhanov, Georgi Valentinovich (1856-1918)—42, 48, 65, 73, 84, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 94, 127, 222, 237, 238, 249, 250, 259, 261, 267, 317, 324, 349, 353, 481, 487
 Potresov, Alexander Nikolayevich (1869-1934)—127, 210, 212, 213, 279, 298, 317, 323, 326
 Proudhon, Pierre-Joseph (1809-1865)—203, 204, 247
 Purishkevich, Vladimir Mitrofanovich (1870-1920)—178, 195

Q

Quelch, Harry (1858-1913)—120, 121, 164, 184, 185, 186, 419
 Quelch, Tom (d. 1954)—536

R

Radek, Karl Bergardovich (pseudonym K.P.) (1883-1939)—244, 245, 248, 250, 251, 300, 435, 446
 Ramsay, Dave (deceased)—528, 530
 Ramsay, William (1852-1916)—161, 162
 Renaudel, Pierre (1871-1935)—262, 324, 326, 429, 454

Rennenkampf, Pavel Karlovich (1854-1919)—412
 Renner, Karl (1870-1950)—392, 454
 Repington, Charles A. (1858-1925)—235
 Rhodes, Cecil (1853-1902)—279, 280, 286
 Ricardo, David (1772-1823)—95, 97
 Rockefeller—162
 Rodbertus-Jagetzow, Carl (1805-1875)—97, 137
 Rodichev, Fyodor Izmailovich (b. 1856)—190
 Rothstein, Fyodor Aronovich (1871-1953)—159
 Roussel, Angèle—111, 114
 Roy, Manabendra Nat (b. 1890)—531, 532, 535
 Rubakin, Nikolai Alexandrovich (1862-1946)—171
 Rubanovich, I. A. (1860-1920)—111, 112, 114
 Russell—See Williams, T. Russell
 Ryabushinsky, Pavel Pavlovich (b. 1871)—162

S

Sadoul, Jacques (b. 1881)—380
 Saint-Simon, Henri (1760-1825)—35
 Saltychikha (Saltykova, Darya Ivanovna) (1730-1801)—193
 Sartorius von Waltershausen, August—287, 291
 Scheidemann, Philipp (1865-1939)—240, 241, 249, 324, 326, 392, 396, 399, 405, 418, 424, 429, 461, 463, 466, 479, 520, 539, 542
 Schilder, Siegmund—272, 274, 284, 287, 291

Schippel, Max (1859-1928)—56
 Schneider—274
 Schramm, Karl Auguste—53, 55
 Schulze-Gavernitz, Gerhart (b. 1864)—286, 291, 292, 295, 296
 Seely, John (1868-1947)—198
 Sembat, Marcel (1862-1922)—241, 262
 Semkovsky (Bronstein, Semyon Yulyevich) (b. 1882)—248
 Serrati, Giacinto Menotti (1872-1926)—528
 Shaumyan, Stepan Georgiyevich (1878-1918)—368
 Shaw, Tom (1872-1938)—492
 Sinclair, Upton (b. 1878)—236, 237, 238
 Sismondi, Jean Charles Léonard Simonde de (1773-1842)—10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 21, 70, 312
 Skobelev, M. I. (1885-1937)—298, 323
 Smillie, Robert (1857-1940)—139, 180
 Snowden, Philip (1864-1937)—147, 173, 461, 463, 466, 468, 469, 470, 539
 Sombart, Werner (1863-1941)—29
 Sorge, Friedrich Adolf (1828-1906)—47, 48, 50, 52, 55, 77, 114, 134, 135, 233, 256, 264, 318, 409
 Spektator (b. 1880)—313
 Spinoza, Baruch (1632-1677)—132
 Stalin, Joseph Vissartionovich (1879-1953)—367
 Stead, W. T. (1849-1912)—279
 Struve, Pyotr Bergardovich (1870-1941)—353
 Supan, Alexander (1847-1920)—276, 280

T

- Tanner, Jack* (b. 1889)—526, 527, 528, 530
Thiers, Adolphe (1797-1877)—132
Thomas, Albert (1878-1932)—522
Thomas, James H. (1874-1949)—542
Thorne, Will (1857-1946)—154
Tilak, Bal Gangadhar (1856-1920)—100
Tillet, Benjamin (1860-1943)—182
Troelstra, Pieter (1860-1930)—215, 260
Trotsky, Lev Davidovich (1879-1940)—211, 212, 213, 315
Turati, Filippo (1857-1932)—418, 528
Tussy—See *Marx, Eleanor*

U

- Urquhart, Leslie* (1874-1933)—569
Uspensky, Gleb Ivanovich (1843-1902)—31

V

- Vaillant, Edouard Marie* (1840-1915)—111, 242
Vanderlip, Frank Arthur (1864-1937)—553
Vandervelde, Emile (1866-1938)—216, 222, 241, 265, 405, 411, 418, 421, 429
Van Kol, Heinrich (1851-1925)—68, 69, 74
Vickers—166, 167
Viereck, Louis (1851-1921)—54, 55, 62
Vivère—103
Viviani, Rene (1863-1925)—218

- Vi. L. (Vladimirov, L.)* (1879-1925)—207
Voinov (Lunacharsky, Anatoly Vasilyevich) (1875-1933)—73, 88, 89
Vollmar, Georg Heinrich (1850-1922)—54, 59, 76, 91
V. V. (Vorontsov, Vasily Pavlovich) (1847-1918)—11

W

- Wallace, John* (1868-1949)—464
Waltershausen—See *Sartorius von Waltershausen*
Webb, Beatrice (1858-1943)—26, 38, 321
Webb, Sidney (1859-1947)—26, 38, 233, 261, 264, 321
Wilhelm II (1859-1941)—106, 109, 119, 264
Williams, T. Russell—333
Wilson, Woodrow (1856-1924)—391, 392, 513, 516
Wischnewetzky—See *Kelly-Wischnewetzky*
Wrangel, Pyotr Nikolayevich (1878-1928)—392, 495, 552, 556
Wurm—263

Y

- Yudenich, Nikolai Nikolayevich* (1862-1933)—438, 439, 495, 549

Z

- Zasulich, Vera Ivanovna* (1851-1919)—65
Zetkin, Clara (1857-1933)—72, 73, 241
Zubatov, Sergei Vasilyevich (1863-1917)—412
Züdekum, Albert (b. 1871)—240, 265, 279

SUBJECT INDEX

- Afghanistan and British imperialism*—370
Africa—244, 273, 276, 292-293, 303, 314-315, 347, 348, 376 (See also *Egypt and British imperialism*)
American Federation of Labour (A.F. of L.)—149-150
Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902)—279, 288, 292, 311, 409
Anglo-German contradictions—106, 118-120, 155-156, 343-348, 376-377, 379, 384-385
Anti-parliamentarism and syndicalism in the British labour movement—152, 422-427, 460-462, 464-469, 473, 501, 522-523, 528
Argentina—its dependence on Britain—275, 286
Armaments—See *Britain, Armaments race in*
Asia—104-105, 160, 244, 273, 276, 292-293, 303, 311, 314, 315, 347, 348, 376 (See also *Afghanistan and British imperialism; India; China; British imperialism, Colonial policy of; National-liberation movement of peoples of colonial and dependent countries*)
Australia—168-170, 273, 276
Australian Labour Party—168-169, 170
Basle Manifesto of Second International—406-407, 537
Berne International—See *Second International*
Boer War—See *Anglo-Boer War*
Bourgeois policy in the labour movement—46, 51-52, 56-57, 62-63, 91-94, 125, 142-148, 149-150, 152, 153-154, 157-158, 167, 168-170, 173-175, 184-186, 195, 214-215, 232-233, 254-256, 260-262, 292, 293, 295-297, 317-320, 323, 325-327, 361, 404-405, 407, 408-409, 410-411, 452, 456, 490-494, 495-496, 499, 538, 539
Britain
 —agrarian system of—95-97, 137-138, 139, 140, 189-190, 560
 —agricultural workers in—11-13, 140-141, 190-191, 390
 —armaments race in—118, 120, 155-156, 157-158, 163-164, 166-167, 347
 —Army and Navy in—119-120, 163-164, 166, 190, 192-197-200, 232, 293, 314, 366, 444-445, 445-447, 543, 551
 —bourgeois democracy in—24-25, 46, 125-126, 127-129, 155, 181, 182, 197-200, 232, 233-234, 268, 323-324, 337, 397-400, 420-421, 422, 425,

- 435-437, 442, 469-470, 494, 495, 548-549.
- bourgeois dictatorship in—46-48, 77-80, 81-82, 125-126, 166-167, 171-172, 232, 323-324, 337, 422, 435-437, 469, 517-518
 - bourgeois revolution (17th century) in—126, 127-128, 185, 205, 447
 - bureaucracy in—24-25, 120, 352-353, 355
 - capital exports from—229-230, 271-276, 289-291, 310-312
 - capitalism in agriculture in—11-14, 17-19, 31-32, 95-97, 137-141, 294-295 (See also *Clearing of estates*)
 - capitalist farming in—10-14, 17-19, 30-32, 95-97, 140, 190-191, 560
 - capitalist leasing of land in 10, 18, 95-96, 137-138, 140
 - chauvinism in—See *Jingoism, Jingo-socialism*
 - colonial monopoly of, in 19th century—318-319, 320-321, 376-377
 - constitutional crisis (1914) in—195-196, 197-200
 - courts in—43, 100-101, 159-160
 - development into a rentier state, data regarding—290-296
 - emigration from—191, 295-297
 - finance capital and finance oligarchy in—273-276, 277-280, 284-286, 287-288, 290, 291, 343-344
 - foreign policy of—118, 192, 286-288, 313-314, 342-344, 347-348, 370, 376-377, 378, 379, 386, 395, 492-493, 516-517, 556-557, 558-559 (See also *Anglo-Boer War; Anglo-German contradictions; Entente; Intervention against Soviet Russia, British imperialists; Soviet Russia and Britain, Commercial relations between, Diplomatic relations between*)
 - government as committee for managing affairs of capitalist class—125, 167, 171-172, 232
 - ground rent in—95-97, 189-191
 - industrial capitalism in—9-23, 26-29, 95-97, 102, 270-271
 - industrial monopoly of (19th century)—142, 184-185, 270-271, 321-322, 344-345
 - labour aristocracy in—60-61, 62-64, 70-72, 74, 125, 142, 149-150, 153, 157, 177, 185-186, 212, 213, 232, 254-256, 259, 294-295, 296, 297, 298, 311-312, 315-316, 317-320, 321-322, 326-327, 330, 361, 388-389, 394-395, 408-411, 424-425, 429-452, 456, 521, 523-524, 536-537, 542, 543, 544
 - monopoly capital in—273, 283, 298, 310, 320
 - near-socialist intellectuals in—77-78, 185-186
 - parliament in—121-123, 139, 143-148, 151, 153, 157-158, 167, 171-172, 173-175, 189-190, 193, 195-196, 198-199, 200, 318, 422, 424, 428, 452, 450, 468, 548-549
 - persecution of socialists in—268, 337, 360-361, 386-387, 428, 494-495, 550
 - “Personal Union” between monopolies and government in—167, 171-172, 422
 - political system of—24-25, 46, 77-80, 125-126, 157, 166-167, 171-172, 197-200, 232, 268, 337, 352-353
 - small (petty) bourgeoisie in—31, 81-82, 190, 200, 224, 560
 - social chauvinism in—119-122, 163-164, 178, 190, 213-217, 218-220, 221-222, 226, 232-234, 237-238, 247-249, 257-258, 259-267, 298, 310, 317-327, 328-331, 344, 347, 348, 376-377, 407-408, 409-410, 429, 490-492, 536-537
 - specific features of historical development of—28-29, 46, 50-52, 60, 70-72, 103-104, 127-128, 142, 153, 199-200, 232, 234, 282-283, 297-298, 317-322, 343-344, 345, 456
 - state monopoly capital in—338
 - strike movement in—46, 91-94, 139, 151-152, 191, 264-268, 428, 549-550, 562-564
 - tenant farmers in—See *Britain, Capitalist farming in*
 - trade-union movement in—28-29, 35-36, 37-38, 39-40, 46, 91-94, 110, 112, 114, 143-144, 151-152, 153, 169, 178, 179-180, 184, 232, 296, 298, 319, 320-321, 325-327, 356, 361, 390, 409, 450, 452, 453, 457-458, 460, 464, 521, 529, 541, 548, 558-559, 562, (See also *Trade Unions*)
 - two-party system in—464-465
 - unskilled workers in; movement in 1889—62-63
- British and American labour movements, specific features of*—49, 50-52, 59, 60-61, 63, 103-104, 150, 184-186, 424-425, 519, 529, 542, 544
- British and German workers' demonstration in Berlin* (1908)—106-107
- British bourgeoisie*—14, 15, 16, 25, 60, 63, 65, 70, 72, 78-80, 94, 98, 118, 125, 126, 155-156, 163-164, 166-167, 171, 192, 218, 223, 224, 232-234, 285, 290-291, 296-298, 310, 313-315, 317, 319, 320, 321, 323-324, 356-357, 363-364, 376-378, 395, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 417-418, 422, 442, 452, 453, 463, 483-484, 494-496, 523, 539, 542, 544, 559, 562
- colonial super-profits of—212-213, 270-273, 292-295, 298, 316, 317, 320-322, 342, 410
 - hypocrisy of—See *political methods of*
 - its colonial super-profits and the top strata of the British working class—28-29, 70-72, 169, 212-213, 297-298, 312, 318, 319-321, 388-389, 409, 429, 456
 - political methods of—98, 125-126, 166-167, 189-192, 198-200, 322-325, 365-366, 376-380, 409, 422, 483-484, 562-563, 564
- British colonies*—See *Colonies*
- British Constitution*—46, 181, 182, 197-200, 549
- British economy after First*

- World War*—See *First World War, British economy after*
- British imperialism*—106, 118, 120-121, 131, 157-158, 163-164, 166-167, 192, 193, 194-195, 207, 278-280, 285, 287, 288, 290, 317, 342-348, 366-371, 376-379, 384-385, 386, 406-407, 440, 482, 492-493, 494-495, 516, 549, 551-552, 554, 558, (See also *Anglo-German contradictions; Entente; Imperialist powers, Annexationist policy of; Imperialism; War, First World*)
- and Baku oil—365-370, 516—colonial policy of—70, 98-99, 100-101, 120-121, 131, 159-160, 164, 192, 193-196, 207, 212-213, 272-273, 275, 276-279, 280-281, 285-286, 277-278, 290-291, 299, 319-321, 337-342, 343-344, 346-348, 376-377, 384-385, 506, 548-549.
- crisis of, after First World War—See *First World War*
- exploitation of colonies and dependent countries by—70, 98, 101, 270-272, 289-290, 292-295, 296-297, 298, 320-321, 342, 343-344, 388-389, 560 (See also *British bourgeoisie, Colonial super-profits of*)
- intervention by, in Soviet Russia—360-361, 363-365, 366-371, 374, 433-443, 444-447, 492-495, 516, 545-546, 547-550, 551-552, 554, 558
- British Labour delegation to Soviet Union*—490-496
- British Labour movement*
- and India—70-72, 192, 388-389
- anti-parliamentarism and syndicalism in—152, 422-427, 460-462, 464-469, 473, 501, 522-523, 528
- opportunism in—See *Oppportunism*
- split in; its causes—142-143, 150, 152, 184-185, 297, 315-318, 404-406, 407-408, 413-414, 415-416
- British monopolies, the profits of—and armaments*—155-156, 166-167, 214-215, 229-231, 376-377
- British Socialist Party (B.S.P.)*
- 142, 152, 153, 157, 163-165, 174-175, 184-185, 216, 241, 242-243, 260, 331, 360, 424, 430, 454, 459, 460-461, 464-465, 503, 527, 528, 529, 536, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, (See also *Social-Democratic Party; Social-Democratic Federation*)
- British Socialists' fight against the war of 1914-1918*—333-334
- British workers*
- and Ireland—See *Ireland, Irish problem and the British working-class movement*
- anti-militarist actions of—106-107, 118, 153, 164, 221-222, 224, 374, 386-387, 444-447, 539, 545-546, 558
- fight against intervention in Soviet Russia—360-361, 374, 384, 386, 433-434, 443-447, 545-546, 547-548, 554, 558
- fight for peace—See *Anti-militarist actions of*
- Marx and Engels about upper crust of—See *Marx and Engels*—541
- Capitalist system, General crisis of*—299-300, 482-483, 508-510
- Centrism*—221-222, 224, 226-231, 233-234, 235-236, 239-241, 246, 248-250, 262-263, 264-268, 284-285, 312-314, 315-318, 319-320, 325-326, 330-331, 334-335, 399-400, 404-406, 416-418, 419-421, 429-430, 485-486, 518-521.
- Chartism*—200, 201-202, 394-395, 449-450
- Chauvinism in Britain*—See *Jingoism, Jingo-socialism*
- China*—101-102, 274, 280, 287, 292, 294, 313-315, 322, 505, 507, 532
- Churchill and 14 powers' campaign against Soviet Russia*—437-443, 516, 551-552
- Clearing of estates*—11-12, 95-97
- Coexistence*—See *Peaceful coexistence, Soviet policy of*
- Colonial and semi-colonial countries, National-liberation movement of the peoples of*
- See *National-liberation movement of the peoples of colonial and semi-colonial countries*
- Colonial peoples, Alliance of European workers with*—100-101 104-105, 245-246, 247, 299-300, 301-302, 303-304, 414, 482-483, 522-524
- Colonies*
- aggravation of struggle for, in imperialist epoch—106, 243-246, 278-289, 299-300, 384-385, 505-508, 516-517
- British colonies—70-72, 120-121, 131, 159-160, 164, 168-170, 176, 192, 193-196, 207-209, 271-276, 277-283, 285-286, 287-288, 317-320, 321-322, 343-344, 347-348, 369-370, 376-378, 384, 494-495, 549, 553, 555-556
- division of colonies among Great Powers—272-273, 276-277, 278, 280-282, 286-287, 505-508
- population and area of—278-279, 280-282, 384, 505-506, 516-517
- (See also *British Imperialism, Colonial policy of and Exploitation of colonial and dependent countries by*)
- Communist International* 243, 391-393, 401, 404-421, 422-423, 430, 457, 459, 460, 465, 473, 482, 486-495, 497-502, 504, 515, 517, 522, 524, 525, 526-537, 538-544, 560, 562
- Communist movement in Britain, "Lefts" in*—457-458, 459-472, 473, 475, 476, 485-489, 522, 540
- Communist Party and the working class*—422-427, 451, 464-468, 475-478, 481-483, 485, 487, 526-527, 528, 530
- Communist Party, tactics of*—48-50, 245-246, 267-268, 368, 412-415, 424-426, 466-468, 469, 470, 475-476, 477-478, 479, 480, 481, 484-489, 500, 501, 527, 528-530, 533, 539-541, 543-544, 562-564
- Communist Party of Great Britain, Joint Provisional Committee for the*—503
- Communist Party of Great Britain*—424, 426-427, 430, 459-461, 465, 466-476, 477-478, 480-481, 482, 483, 484, 486, 487-488, 493-494, 499, 503, 527, 529-530, 540-541, 542-544, 547-548, 562-563
- Compromises*—148, 151, 153, 164, 253, 356, 357, 379-382, 448-

450, 453-456, 464-466, 467-468, 478, 488, 490, 499, 525
Conservatives, British—122-123, 130, 144, 146, 154, 163-164, 166, 167, 175, 190, 192, 195-196, 197-200, 205, 324, 463-464, 468
Corn Laws—9, 10, 13-17, 19-23
Corn Laws, Repeal of—See *Marx about Free Trade and the repeal of the Corn Laws*
Councils of Action—545-546, 548, 549-550, 554, 558
Colonies and dependent countries, Exploitation of, by British imperialism—See *British Imperialism, Exploitation of colonies and dependent countries by; British imperialism, Colonial policy of; British bourgeoisie, Colonial super-profits of*
Daily Citizen—154, 215
Daily Herald—154, 215
Daily workers' newspaper, need for—563
Decay of capitalism—See *Parasitism and the decay of capitalism*
Dependence, political—See *Imperialist epoch, forms of political dependence in*
Dictatorship of the proletariat—306-307, 350-352, 392-400, 414-416, 419-421, 426-427, 440-441, 459, 474, 475, 486-489, 495-497, 502, 517-519, 526-527, 529-530, 548, 560
 —bourgeois state machinery and—350-353, 420
 (See also *State machinery [bourgeois] and the dictatorship of the proletariat*)
Division and re-division of the world—230, 276-277, 280-281, 287-289, 297-298, 310, 311-312, 320, 348, 384-385, 504-505
Dogmatism and sectarianism in the socialist movement—49-52, 59-60, 114, 120, 185-186, 254, 256, 300-301, 381-382, 425, 457, 458, 459-471, 473-475, 485-489
Dublin strike (1913)—176-183
Egypt and British imperialism—164, 244, 285-286, 292-293, 313-314
Engels about the Fabians—232-233, 264, 409-410
Entente—218-219, 342-348, 363-366, 369-371, 374, 376-381, 384-385, 387, 391, 407, 410-411, 433-443, 444, 447, 490, 495, 516-517, 547, 551-552, 553, 556
European federation of Great Powers, plans for—292-295, 314-315
Fabian Society—26, 28-29, 57, 72, 78-81, 216, 233, 260, 264, 329, 409, 454
Fenians—194, 204, 208, 308
First World War
 —British economy after—508-510, 511, 512-513
 —crisis of British imperialism after—See *British economy after, Revolutionary movement in Britain after, What the world was like after*
 —revolutionary movement in Britain after—444-447, 500-501, 503, 527, 528-530, 543-544, 545-546, 548, 549-550, 554, 558-559
 —what the world was like after—506, 517, 531-532
Free Trade, Free Traders—9-11, 14-19, 20-23, 228-230, 270-271, 284-285, 451

Free Trade, Marx about—See *Marx about Free Trade and the repeal of the Corn Laws*
Home Rule for Ireland—177, 178, 193-196, 197-200, 208-209
 (See also *Britain, Constitutional crisis [1941] in*)
Imperialism
 —its essence and main features—227-231, 244, 246, 270, 283-284, 289, 310-314, 320-322, 342-348, 409-410, 437-438, 439-441 504-506, 531-532
 —and wars—106-107, 118-121, 156, 234-235, 321-322, 340-342, 384-385, 505-506
 —as the eve of socialism—312-313, 336-337, 409, 484-485
 —forms of political dependence under—286-288, 505-508
 —science and technology under—See *Science and technology under imperialism*
 (See also *British imperialism; War, First World (1914-1918); Uneven economic and political development in imperialist epoch; Parasitism and the decay of capitalism; Colonies; Ultra-imperialism; Britain, Finance capital and financial oligarchy in*)
Imperialist epoch, forms of political dependence in—286-288, 505-508
Imperialist powers, annexationist policy of—246, 276, 311-312, 321, 342, 343-346, 365, 369, 370, 371, 376-377, 378, 384-385, 407-408, 492, 516-517
Impoverishment of the masses—18-21, 122, 142, 162, 166-167, 188, 270-273, 511-512, 513-514, 515, 516
Independent Labour Party (I.L.P.)—93, 100, 107, 110, 111, 115-117, 121-123, 152, 153, 157, 164, 169, 173-175, 216, 218, 234, 241, 260, 309, 331, 333, 454, 459-460, 461, 463, 469, 497, 518—See also *MacDonald, J. R.*)
India, British rule in
 —and British Labour movement—70-72,
 —and Indian people's fight for independence—98-101, 120-121, 131, 159-160, 164, 192, 244, 292, 293, 299, 313-314, 348, 370, 388-389, 494-495
Internationalism—215-216
Intervention against Soviet Russia
 —British imperialists'—See *Councils of Action*
 —British soldiers and—433-437, 444-447
 —British workers' fight against—360-361, 374, 386, 433-434, 446, 447, 545-546, 547-548, 554, 558
Ireland
 —agrarian problem in—176, 195, 209
 —British rule and the Irish people's fight for independence—176, 193-196, 197, 198-199, 201-202, 204-209, 247, 251, 494-495, 539, 542-543
 —Dublin strike (1916)—299-301, 302-303, 304, 309
 —struggle between proletariat

and bourgeoisie—176-180, 181-183, 300-301

Irish bourgeoisie—176-179, 180, 208 (See also *Marx and Engels about Ireland; Fenians; Home Rule for Ireland*)

Irish problem and the British working-class movement—179-180, 181-182, 194-195, 201-202, 204-205, 206-209, 247-248, 251-252, 543

Irish Rebellion (1916)—299-301, 302-303, 304, 309

I.W.W. (Industrial Workers of the World)—500, 501, 503

Jingoism—106, 155-156, 163-164, 257, 278-280, 285-287, 536-537
(See also *Britain, Chauvinism in*)

Jingo-socialism—68-69, 118-121, 163-164, 213-217, 254-256, 257, 536-537 (See also *Britain Social-chauvinism in*)

Justice—92, 100, 117, 119, 120

Kautskyism—See *Centrism*

Labour aristocracy—See *Britain, Labour aristocracy in*

Labour leader—116, 121, 157, 171, 221, 234, 268

Labour lieutenants of the capitalist class—232, 234, 407, 411, 414, 417, 499-500

Labour movement, bourgeois policy in—See *Bourgeois policy in the labour movement*

Labour Party (British)—110-117, 122-123, 143-148, 153-154, 157-158, 169, 215-216, 260, 453-454, 459-460, 464-465, 468, 470-471, 499, 503, 527, 528-530, 538-539, 541-542, 513-514, 565-566

Labour Representation Committee—grants to R.S.D.L.P. fund—43, 44

Landlords and landlordism—12, 14-15, 16, 18, 95-97, 137, 140, 176, 189-191, 198, 199

"Lefts" in British Communist movement—457-458, 459-472, 473, 475, 476, 485-489, 522

Legal and illegal forms of struggle—83, 268, 330, 413, 414-415, 478-480

Liberals and Liberalism in Britain—98, 100, 131, 132, 139-140, 143-148, 153, 159, 160, 163-164, 166, 167, 169, 173-175, 182, 185, 189-192, 193, 194-196, 197-200, 204-206, 207-209, 232, 233-234, 235, 248, 461, 463-465, 468

Liberal Labour policy—See *Bourgeois policy in the labour movement*

Liquidationism—49-50, 55-57, 143-145, 157, 173

Lloyd Georgeism—93, 139, 190-192, 324, 391, 463-465, 466-468

London Conference of Allied Nations' Socialist parties—218-220

Marx
—about Free Trade and the repeal of the Corn Laws—14-23
—about the possibility of a peace transition to socialism in Britain—352-353, 355-356
—about Ricardo's theory of rent—95-97

Marx and Engels
—about the bourgeois character of the top crust of the British working class—62-64, 296-298, 317-319, 395, 409, 429, 456

—about Ireland—131, 194, 201, 202, 204-209, 247, 251
—about opportunism—52-58, 59, 61-63
—about the specific features of the British and U.S.A. labour movements—34-35, 47-52, 59-61

Marxism
—as the theoretical weapon of the working class—34-36, 48-49, 114-115
—its method—16-18, 48-49, 51-52, 59-62, 81-82, 128, 155-156, 168, 242, 245-246, 259, 356, 381-382, 449-450, 462, 470-472, 477, 484-489

Masses
—and leaders in the working-class movement—40, 41, 63, 92, 140-141, 146-148, 177-179, 184-186, 238, 253-256, 318, 324, 360, 409, 410, 413-414, 415, 429, 452, 456, 468, 490-493, 494, 495-496, 499, 541, 543
—the Communist Party's work among—114-115, 265, 424-425, 426, 457-458, 460-461, 466-467, 475, 476, 479, 480, 481, 499, 500, 501, 527, 528-530, 539, 540
—historical creative work of—98-100, 103-104, 105, 127-129, 152, 154, 180, 239-240, 264-268, 301-303, 304, 318-319, 323, 340-341, 386-387, 430, 431, 477-479, 511

MacDonald, J. R.—his policy—115, 121, 123, 198, 401-402, 406, 407, 409, 412, 416, 419, 420, 429, 461, 463, 518, 539

Municipal socialism—58, 77-82

Nationalization of the land—80-82, 95, 137-138

National-liberation movement of the peoples of colonial and semi-colonial countries—98-102, 104-105, 131, 159-160, 194, 244, 299, 304, 305, 389, 482-483, 494-495, 522-524, 525

National problem—See *Separation, Right of nations to; Socialists of oppressing nations. Their task as regards the oppressed nations*

October Revolution—See *Socialist Revolution*

Opportunism—39, 51-61, 62, 68-72, 73-76, 77-82, 89-90, 93-94, 104-105, 113-115, 116, 119-123, 142, 143-144, 145-148, 150, 152, 157-158, 163-165, 169, 173-175, 180, 184-186, 192, 207, 211-220, 221-222, 233, 237-238, 243, 254-257, 258, 259-268, 284-285, 292-293, 294-295, 296-298, 307, 309, 310, 312-327, 350, 374, 392, 395-396, 399-400, 405, 408-412, 419, 423, 427, 429-430, 452, 456, 485-487, 518, 519-522, 536-537, 543-544
—historical conditions that created it in the British labour movement—46, 50-52, 70-72, 153, 157, 169, 184-185, 194-195, 212-213, 259-262, 296-297, 317, 456 (See also *British bourgeoisie, Colonial super-profits of*)
—Marx and Engels about—See *Marx and Engels about opportunism*

Pacifism, Bourgeois and petty-bourgeois—223-224, 233-235, 236-237, 241-243, 246, 249-250, 309, 320, 332, 494, 512-514, 517-519, 539

- Parasitism and the decay of capitalism*—70, 161-162, 187-188, 270-273, 289-298, 310-314, 322-324 (See also *Imperialism*)
- Parliamentarism, bourgeois—and the socialist movement*—330, 412, 419-421, 422-427, 459-463, 464, 465-466, 467-469, 472, 481, 482, 500-501, 523, 527, 528, 548-549
- Peace, British workers' fight for*—See *British workers' fight for peace*
- Peace policy of Soviet Government*—See *Soviet Government's peace policy*
- Peaceful coexistence, Soviet policy of*—554, 555, 556, 557, 567-569
- Peaceful transition to socialism*—See *Transition to socialism*
- Peaceful transition to socialism in Britain, Marx about the possibility of*—See *Marx about the possibility of a peaceful transition to socialism in Britain*
- Persian revolution (1905-1911) and British imperialism*—89-100
- Polish-Soviet War (1920) and British imperialism*—492-495, 545, 547-550, 552, 554, 555, 556-557
- Portugal, its dependence on Britain*—286-288, 384-385
- Proletarian internationalism*—43-45, 68-69, 74-75, 106-108, 181, 201-209, 216, 221-222, 246-248, 251-253, 256-257, 258, 260-261, 328-329, 332-335, 375, 378-379, 404-405, 547-550
- Redivision of the world*—See *Division and re-division of the world*
- Rentier state; data of Britain's development into*—290-296
- Revisionism*—See *Opportunism Revolution*
- and reform—39, 69, 77-81, 121, 151-152, 182, 192, 194, 196, 200, 253-254, 340, 412-413, 414-415, 416-418, 511-512, 562-563
- and revolutionary situation—465-467, 476-477
- people's—99-100, 352-354, 477-488
- socialist—See *Socialist revolution*
- Right of nations to self-determination (slogan)*—See *Self-determination of nations*
- Science and technology under imperialism*—161-162, 187-189, 289-290
- Scottish Workers' Council*—460-461
- Second International*—68-76, 83-84, 110-117, 133, 184-185, 219, 233, 239-240, 241-242, 253, 255-256, 259-269, 360, 392-393, 395, 398, 405-408, 409, 410, 411, 413, 414, 415, 419, 423, 430, 455, 473, 497, 502, 508, 513, 523, 524, 531, 536-537, 538, 541
- Second International, Berne Manifesto of*—See *Basle Manifesto of Second International*
- Sectarianism*—See *Dogmatism and sectarianism in the socialist movement*
- Self-determination of nations*—194-195, 201-209, 244-252, 299-304, 305-308, 347-348
- Separation, right of nations to*—See *Self-determination of nations*
- See *Self-determination of nations*
- Semi-colonies*—282-283, 286-288, 505-506
- Shop Stewards' Committees*—424, 430, 500-501, 503, 527, 529, 544
- Social-chauvinism*—See *Jingo-socialism*
- Social-chauvinism in Britain*—See *Britain, Social chauvinism in*
- Social-Democratic Federation (S.D.F.)*—49, 55-56, 57, 110, 111, 114, 115, 116, 117, 163, 184
- Social Democratic Party (S.D.P.)*—110, 114, 118-121, 122, 130, 184
- Socialism*—See *Utopian socialism*
- Socialism, transition to*
- and necessity of dictatorship of proletariat—306-308, 350-352
- inevitability of victory of socialism in all countries—305-306, 307-308, 356
- possibility of peaceful transition to socialism—307-308, 352-353, 355-357
- specific forms of transition to socialism in different countries—103, 105, 245-246, 307-308, 394-395, 470-472, 473-475
- Socialist Labour Party (S.L.P.)*—459, 460, 503
- Socialist revolution*
- in Russia and its influence on the socialist movement in other countries—360, 361, 371-372, 373-374, 376, 378-379, 380, 386-387, 395-398, 427-428, 434-435, 482-484, 504-505, 545-546
- and the national liberation movement—245-247, 259-304, 306-308, 414, 523-524
- the specific character of its development in various countries—103-104, 304, 307-308, 470-472, 473, 474-475, 480-482
- Socialists of oppressing nations. Their task as regards the oppressed nations*—68, 69, 70, 179-180, 201-202, 206-207, 208-209, 246-248, 249, 250-252, 257-258, 308, 414
- South Wales Miners' Federation*—562-564
- South Wales Socialist Society*—459
- Soviet Government's peace policy*—371-372, 374, 377-379, 454-455, 490, 547, 558-559
- Soviet Russia and Britain, —commercial relations between*—553-554, 558-559, 567-569, 570-571
- diplomatic relations between—490-492, 551-552, 554-557, 558-559, 567-569, 570
- Soviets, Soviet power*—377, 405-406, 422-424, 425-426, 427, 429, 461-463, 469-470, 471-472, 473, 474-475, 486-489, 498-499, 502, 517-518, 524, 525, 545, 549
- State machinery (bourgeois) and the dictatorship of the proletariat*—350-353, 420
- Super-profits, colonial*—See *British bourgeoisie, Colonial super-profits of*
- Theory*
- its significance in the working-class movement—See *Marxism*
- its underestimation by British Socialists—26-28, 34-35,

- 46, 111, 122-123, 143-144, 235-237
- Trade-union neutrality (The slogan of)*—72-74, 83-94, 149, 219, 414
- Trade Unions*—See *Britain, trade-union movement*
- Trade Unionist, The*—333
- Ulster Crisis*—See *Britain, Constitutional crisis in*
- Ultra-imperialism, criticism of Kautsky's theory of*—226-228, 312-313
- Uneven economic and political development in imperialist epoch*—103-105, 270-271, 281-283, 304, 307, 390-396
- U.S.A.*—17, 31, 48, 49, 60-61, 149-150, 168, 185, 193, 226-227, 257-258, 274-276, 278, 280-283, 287-288, 291-292, 307-308, 310-312, 320-321, 342, 345, 353, 376-377, 379-380, 381-382, 430, 440, 473, 483-484, 503, 508, 512-513, 514-515, 516, 517, 519-522, 527, 536
- War of Independence—381
- trade unions—See *American Federation of Labour; I.W.W.*; also *Marx and Engels about the specific features of the British and U.S.A. labour movements* (See also *Wilsonism*)
- Utopian socialism*—31, 34-35, 451-452
- Versailles Peace Treaty*—407, 507, 508-516, 547
- War*
- as the continuation of policy—106, 338-342, 343, 347, 344-345, 348, 383
- transformation of imperialist, into civil (the slogan of)—221-222, 224-225, 226-229, 241-243, 264-268, 332-335, 414-418
- War, First World (1914-1918) (World imperialist)*—106-107, 218, 234, 299-300, 327, 334, 336, 338, 342-348, 352, 374, 376-377, 378-379, 383-385, 388, 406-407, 429, 456, 482, 505, 508-509, 513-514, 523—(See also *Britain, Revolutionary movement in, after First World War; British socialists' fight against First World War*)
- Wars, Imperialism and*—See *Imperialism and wars*
- Wilsonism*—512-513
- Women's Conference, International Socialist (Berne 1915)*—267
- Workers' Dreadnought, The*—459
- Workers' Socialist Federation*—459-460, 466-467, 500, 503
- Workers, Alliance of European, with colonial peoples*—100-101, 104-105, 245-246, 247, 299-300, 301-302, 303-304, 414, 482-483, 522-524
- Working class*
- its political and economic struggle. Their interrelation—34, 37-39, 40-41, 91-93, 94, 139, 562-563
- its policy as a science and an art—461-463, 485-487, 488
- Working-class movement, combination of, with socialism*—36, 46, 49-51, 114-115, 180, 185-186, 244, 259, 325-327, 523-525, 534-536
- Zimmerwald Conference*—257-258, 267, 334
- Zimmerwald "Left"*—257-258, 267, 334

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Cover of *Everyone's Calendar for 1908* (Lenin's own copy) which contained his article *The International Socialist Congress in Stuttgart*. (Reduced.) p. 71

A page from Lenin's *Letter to the Secretary of the Socialist Propaganda League, U.S.A.* p. 255

The first page of the manuscript of Lenin's *The State and Revolution*. August-September 1917. (Reduced.). . . p. 351

Appeal to the British troops participating in the armed intervention against Soviet Russia (1918-19), signed by Lenin and Chicherin. (Reduced.) p. 445

A page of the issue of the B.S.P. weekly *The Call* which contained Lenin's *Letter to the British Workers*. (Reduced.) p. 491

