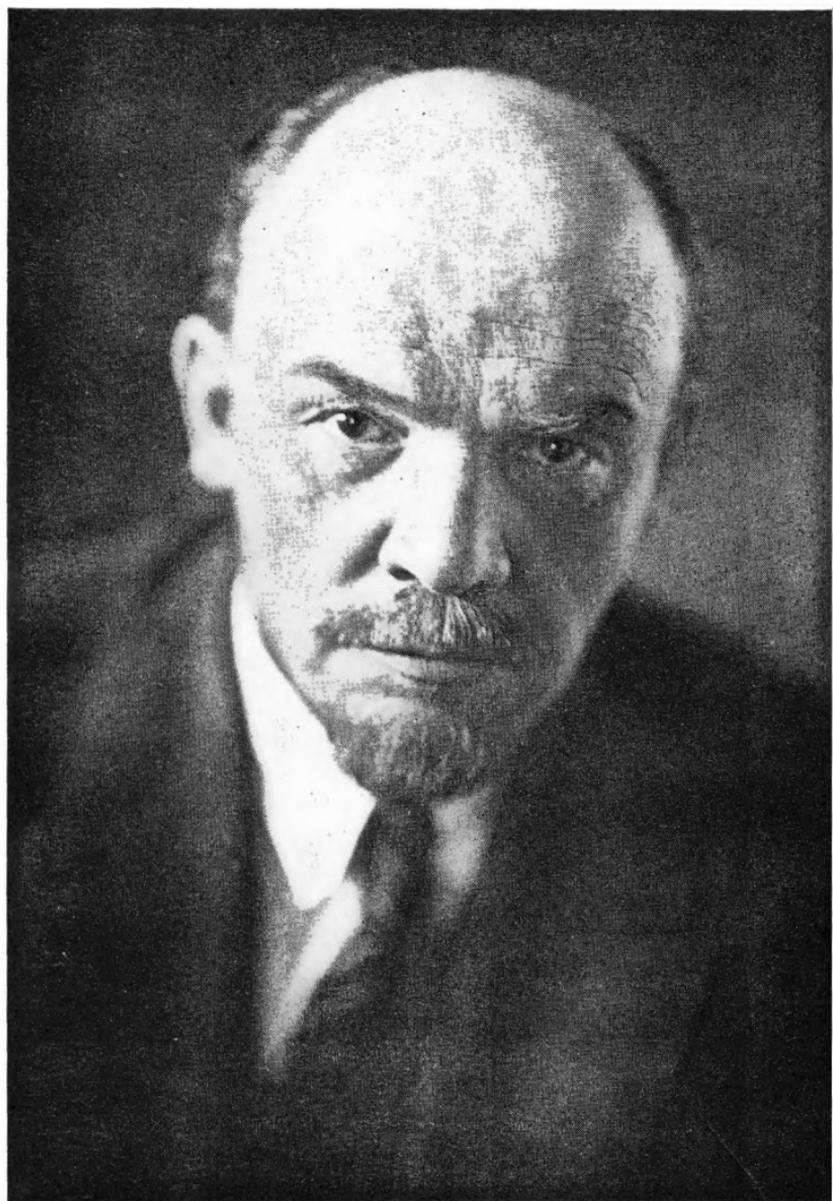


LENIN

On the Soviet State Apparatus



PROGRESS Publishers



W. J. Wood (Kenny)

Workers of All Countries, Unite!

Lenin

On the Soviet State Apparatus

Articles and Speeches



Progress Publishers • Moscow

Compiled by L. A. KASHNITSKAYA and N. N. SUROVTSEVA

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В. И. ЛЕНИН

**О СОВЕТСКОМ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОМ
АППАРАТЕ**

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На английском языке

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From The Victory of the Cadets and the Tasks of the Workers' Party*

...What is it that mainly distinguished the period of the "revolutionary whirlwind" from the present "Cadet"*** period, as regards the various forms of political activity and the various methods by which the people make history? First and mainly, it is that during the period of the "whirlwind" certain special methods of making history were employed which are foreign to other periods of political life. The following were the most important of these methods: 1) *the "seizure" by the people of political liberty*—its exercise without any rights and laws, and without any limitations (freedom of assembly, even if only in the universities, freedom of the press, freedom of association, the holding of congresses, etc.); 2) the creation of new organs of *revolutionary authority*—Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Railwaymen's and Peasants' Deputies, new rural and urban authorities, and so on, and so forth. These bodies were set up exclusively by the *revolutionary* sections of the people; they were formed irrespective

* Lenin wrote this pamphlet during the first Russian revolution in connection with the elections to the First Duma held in February-March 1906. The elections resulted in a Cadet majority in the Duma.—*Ed.*

** *Cadets*—members of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, the leading party of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie in Russia. It was formed in October 1905 and united representatives of the bourgeoisie, liberal landowners and bourgeois intellectuals. During the First World War the Cadets acted as the ideologists of the imperialist bourgeoisie and fully supported the predatory policy of the tsarist government.

After the victory of the October Socialist Revolution the Cadets took part in all counter-revolutionary actions and the armed struggle against Soviet Russia.—*Ed.*

of all laws and regulations, entirely in a revolutionary way, as a product of the native genius of the people, as a manifestation of the independent activity of the people which had rid itself, or was ridding itself, of its old police fetters. Lastly, they were indeed organs of *authority*, for all their rudimentary, spontaneous, amorphous and diffuse character, in composition and in activity. They acted as a government when, for example, they seized printing plants (in St. Petersburg) and arrested police officials who were preventing the revolutionary people from exercising their rights (such cases also occurred in St. Petersburg, where the new organ of authority concerned was weakest, and where the old government was strongest). They acted as a government when they appealed to the whole people to withhold money from the old government. They confiscated the old government's funds (the railway strike committees in the South) and used them for the needs of the new, people's government. Yes, these were undoubtedly the embryos of a new, people's, or, if you will, revolutionary government. In their social and political character, they were the rudiments of the dictatorship of the revolutionary elements of the people. This surprises you, Mr. Blank and Mr. Kiesewetter! You do not see here the "reinforced security", which for the bourgeois is tantamount to dictatorship? We have already told you that you have not the faintest notion of the scientific concept "dictatorship". We will explain it to you in a moment; but first we will deal with the *third* "method" of activity in the period of the "revolutionary whirlwind"; *the use by the people of force against those who used force against the people.*

The organs of authority that we have described represented a dictatorship in embryo, for they recognised *no* other authority, *no* law and *no* standards, no matter by whom established. Authority—unlimited, outside the law, and based on force in the most direct sense of the word—is dictatorship. But the force on which this new authority was based, and sought to base itself was not the force of bayonets usurped by a handful of militarists, not the power of the "police force", not the power of money nor the power of any previously established institutions. It was nothing of the kind. The new organs of authority possessed neither arms, nor money,

nor old institutions. Their power—can you imagine it, Mr. Blank and Mr. Kiesewetter?—had nothing in common with the old instruments of power, nothing in common with “reinforced security”, if we do not have in mind the reinforced security established to protect the people from the tyranny of the police and of the other organs of the old regime.

What was this power based on, then? It was based on the mass of the people. This is the *main* feature that distinguished this new authority from all the preceding organs of the old regime. The latter were the instruments of the rule of the minority over the people, over the masses of workers and peasants. The former was an instrument of the rule of the people, of the workers and peasants, over the minority, over a handful of police bullies, over a handful of privileged nobles and government officials. Such is the difference between dictatorship *over* the people and dictatorship *of* the revolutionary people; mark this well, Mr. Blank and Mr. Kiesewetter! As the dictatorship of a minority, the old regime was able to maintain itself solely with the aid of police devices, solely by preventing the masses of the people from taking part in the government and from supervising the government. The old authority persistently distrusted the masses, feared the light, maintained itself by deception. As the dictatorship of the overwhelming majority, the new authority maintained itself and could maintain itself solely because it enjoyed the confidence of the vast masses, solely because it, in the freest, widest and most resolute manner, enlisted all the masses in the task of government. It concealed nothing, it had no secrets, no regulations, no formalities. It said, in effect: Are you a working man? Do you want to fight to rid Russia of the gang of police bullies? You are our comrade. Elect your deputy. Elect him at once, immediately, whichever way you think best. We will willingly and gladly accept him as a full member of our Soviet of Workers' Deputies, Peasant Committee, Soviet of Soldiers' Deputies, and so forth. It was an authority open to all, it carried out all its functions before the eyes of the masses, was accessible to the masses, sprang directly from the masses, and was a direct and immediate instrument of the popular masses, of their will. Such

was the new authority, or, to be exact, its embryo, for the victory of the old authority trampled down the shoots of this young plant very soon.

Perhaps, Mr. Blank or Mr. Kiesewetter, you will ask: Why "dictatorship", why "force"? Is it necessary for a vast mass to use force against a handful? Can tens and hundreds of millions be dictators over a thousand or ten thousand?

This question is usually put by people who for the first time hear the term dictatorship used in what to them is a new connotation. People are accustomed to see only a police authority and only a police dictatorship. The idea that there can be government without any police, or that dictatorship need not be a police dictatorship, seems strange to them. You say that millions need not resort to force against thousands? You are mistaken; and your mistake arises from the fact that you do not regard a phenomenon in its process of development. You forget that the new authority does not drop from the skies, but grows up, arises parallel with, and in opposition to, the old authority, in struggle against it. Unless force is used against tyrants armed with the weapons and instruments of power, the people cannot be liberated from tyrants.

Here is a very simple analogy, Mr. Blank and Mr. Kiesewetter, which will help you to grasp this idea, which seems so remote and "fantastic" to the Cadet mind. Let us suppose that Avramov is injuring and torturing Spiridonova. On Spiridonova's side, let us say, are tens and hundreds of unarmed people. On Avramov's side there is a handful of Cossacks. What would the people do if Spiridonova were being tortured, not in a dungeon, but in public? They would resort to force against Avramov and his bodyguard. Perhaps they would sacrifice a few of their comrades, shot down by Avramov; but in the long run, they would forcibly disarm Avramov and his Cossacks, and in all probability would kill on the spot some of these brutes in human form; and they would clap the rest into some gaol to prevent them from committing any more outrages and to bring them to judgement before the people.

So you see, Mr. Blank and Mr. Kiesewetter, when Avramov and his Cossacks torture Spiridonova, that is military and police dictatorship over the people. When a revolutionary

people (that is to say, a people capable of fighting the tyrants, and not only of exhorting, admonishing, regretting, condemning, whinnying and whimpering; not a philistine narrow-minded, but a revolutionary people) resorts to force against Avramov and the Avramovs, that is a dictatorship of the revolutionary people. It is a *dictatorship*, because it is the authority of the people over Avramov, an authority unrestricted by any laws (the philistine, perhaps, would be opposed to rescuing Spiridonova from Avramov by force, thinking it to be against the "law". They would no doubt ask: Is there a "law" that permits the killing of Avramov? Have not some philistine ideologists built up a theory of non-resistance to evil?)* The scientific term "dictatorship" means nothing more nor less than authority untrammelled by any laws, absolutely unrestricted by any rules whatever, and based directly on force. The term "dictatorship" *has no other meaning but this*—mark this well, Cadet gentlemen. Again, in the analogy we have drawn, we see the dictatorship *of the people*, because the people, the mass of the population, unorganised, "casually" assembled at the given spot, itself appears on the scene, exercises justice and metes out punishment, exercises power and creates a new, revolutionary law. Lastly, it is the dictatorship of the *revolutionary* people. Why only of the revolutionary, and not of the whole people? Because among the whole people, constantly suffering, and most cruelly, from the brutalities of the Avramovs, there are some who are physically cowed and terrified; there are some who are morally degraded by the "resist not evil" theory, for example, or simply degraded not by theory, but by prejudice, habit, routine; and there are indifferent people, whom we call philistines, petty-bourgeois people who are more inclined to hold aloof from intense struggle, to pass by or even to hide themselves (for fear of getting mixed up in the fight and getting hurt). That is why the dictatorship is exercised, not by the whole people, but by the revolutionary people who, however, do not shun the whole people,

* Mr. Berdyaev! Messrs. editors of *Polyarnaya Zvezda* or *Svoboda i Kultural*! Here is another subject for your lengthy lamentations—I mean, for lengthy articles against the "hooliganism" of revolutionaries. Fancy, they dare to call Tolstoi a philistine!! "Quelle horreur!"—as the lady with many good points used to say.

who explain to all the people the motives of their actions in all their details, and who willingly enlist the *whole* people not only in "administering" the state, but in governing it too, and indeed in organising the state.

Thus our simple analogy contains *all the elements* of the scientific concept "dictatorship of the revolutionary people", and also of the concept "military and police dictatorship". We can now pass from this simple analogy, which even a learned Cadet professor can grasp, to the more complex developments of social life.

Revolution, in the strict and direct sense of the word, is a period in the life of a people when the anger accumulated during centuries of Avramov brutalities breaks forth into *actions*, not merely into words; and into the actions of *millions of the people*, not merely of individuals. The people awaken and rise up to rid themselves of the Avramovs. The people rescue the countless numbers of Spiridonovas in Russian life from the Avramovs, use force against the Avramovs, and establish their authority over the Avramovs. Of course, this does not take place so easily, and not "all at once", as it did in our analogy, simplified for the benefit of Professor Kiesewetter. This struggle of the people against the Avramovs, a struggle in the strict and direct sense of the word, this act of the people in throwing the Avramovs off their backs, stretches over months and years of "revolutionary whirlwind". This act of the people in throwing the Avramovs off their backs is the real content of what is called the great Russian revolution. This act, regarded from the standpoint of the methods of making history, takes place in the forms we have just described in discussing the revolutionary whirlwind, namely: the people seize political freedom, that is, the freedom which the Avramovs had prevented them from exercising; the people create a new, revolutionary authority, authority over the Avramovs, over the tyrants of the old police regime; the people use force against the Avramovs in order to remove, disarm and make harmless these wild dogs, all the Avramovs, Durnovos, Dubasovs, Mins, etc., etc.

Is it good that the people should apply such unlawful, irregular, unmethodical and unsystematic methods of struggle as seizing their liberty and creating a new, formally unrecog-

nised and revolutionary authority, that it should use force against the oppressors of the people? Yes, it is very good. It is the supreme manifestation of the people's struggle for liberty. It marks that great period when the dreams of liberty cherished by the best men and women of Russia *come true*, when liberty becomes the cause of the vast masses of the people, and not merely of individual heroes. It is as good as the rescue by the crowd (in our analogy) of Spiridonova from Avramov, and the forcible disarming of Avramov and making him harmless.

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From The State and Revolution

Chapter III

The State and Revolution.

Experience of the Paris Commune of 1871.

Marx's Analysis

2. What Is to Replace the Smashed State Machine?

In 1847, in the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx's answer to this question was as yet a purely abstract one; to be exact, it was an answer that indicated the tasks, but not the ways of accomplishing them. The answer given in the *Communist Manifesto* was that this machine was to be replaced by "the proletariat organised as the ruling class", by the "winning of the battle of democracy".

Marx did not indulge in utopias; he expected the *experience* of the mass movement to provide the reply to the question as to the specific forms this organisation of the proletariat as the ruling class would assume and as to the exact manner in which this organisation would be combined with the most complete, most consistent "winning of the battle of democracy".

Marx subjected the experience of the Commune*, meagre as it was, to the most careful analysis in *The Civil War in France*. Let us quote the most important passages of this work.

Originating from the Middle Ages, there developed in the nineteenth century "the centralised state power, with its ubiquitous organs of standing army, police, bureaucracy, clergy, and judicature". With the development of class antagonisms between capital and labour, "state power assumed more and more the character

* This is a reference to the Paris Commune of 1871.—*Ed.*

of a public force for the suppression of the working class, of a machine of class rule. After every revolution, which marks an advance in the class struggle, the purely coercive character of the state power stands out in bolder and bolder relief". After the revolution of 1848-49, state power became "the national war instrument of capital against labour". The Second Empire consolidated this.

"The direct antithesis to the empire was the Commune." It was the "specific form" of "a republic that was not only to remove the monarchical form of class rule, but class rule itself...."

What was this "specific" form of the proletarian, socialist republic? What was the state it began to create?

"...The first decree of the Commune ... was the suppression of the standing army, and its replacement by the armed people...."

This demand now figures in the programme of every party calling itself socialist. The real worth of their programmes, however, is best shown by the behaviour of our Socialist-Revolutionaries* and Mensheviks,** who, right after the revolution of February 27,*** actually refused to carry out this demand!

* *Socialist-Revolutionaries*—members of the petty-bourgeois party formed in Russia at the end of 1901-beginning of 1902 as a result of the merging of various Narodnik circles and groups. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia the Socialist-Revolutionaries supported the bourgeois Provisional Government and their leaders were members of the government.

After the October Socialist Revolution the Socialist-Revolutionaries took part in counter-revolutionary actions against the Soviet people.—*Ed.*

** *Mensheviks*—members of a petty-bourgeois party in Russia. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution they entered the bourgeois Provisional Government and supported its imperialist policy. After the October Revolution their party took part in the counter-revolutionary struggle against the Soviet people.—*Ed.*

*** Reference is to the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia that took place in February 1917.—*Ed.*

The Commune was formed of the municipal councillors, chosen by universal suffrage in the various wards of Paris, responsible and revocable at any time. The majority of its members were naturally working men, or acknowledged representatives of the working class.... The police, which until then had been the instrument of the Government, was at once stripped of its political attributes, and turned into the responsible and at all times revocable instrument of the Commune. So were the officials of all other branches of the administration. From the members of the Commune downwards, public service had to be done at *workmen's wages*. The privileges and the representation allowances of the high dignitaries of state disappeared along with the dignitaries themselves.... Having once got rid of the standing army and the police, the instruments of the physical force of the old Government, the Commune proceeded at once to break the instrument of spiritual suppression, the power of the priests.... The judicial functionaries lost that sham independence ... they were thenceforward to be elective, responsible, and revocable...."*

The Commune, therefore, appears to have replaced the smashed state machine "only" by fuller democracy: abolition of the standing army; all officials to be elected and subject to recall. But as a matter of fact this "only" signifies a gigantic replacement of certain institutions by other institutions of a fundamentally different type. This is exactly a case of "quantity being transformed into quality": democracy, introduced as fully and consistently as is at all conceivable, is transformed from bourgeois into proletarian democracy; from the state (=a special force for the suppression of a particular class) into something which is no longer the state proper.

It is still necessary to suppress the bourgeoisie and crush their resistance. This was particularly necessary for the Commune; and one of the reasons for its defeat was that

* Here and below Engels' Introduction to Karl Marx's *Civil War in France* is quoted.—Ed.

it did not do this with sufficient determination. The organ of suppression, however, is here the majority of the population, and not a minority, as was always the case under slavery, serfdom and wage slavery. And since the majority of the people *itself* suppresses its oppressors, a "special force" for suppression *is no longer necessary!* In this sense, the state *begins to wither away*. Instead of the special institutions of a privileged minority (privileged officialdom, the chiefs of the standing army), the majority itself can directly fulfil all these functions, and the more the functions of state power are performed by the people as a whole, the less need there is for the existence of this power.

In this connection, the following measures of the Commune, emphasised by Marx, are particularly noteworthy: the abolition of all representation allowances, and of all monetary privileges to officials, the reduction of the remuneration of *all* servants of the state to the level of "*workmen's wages*". This shows more clearly than anything else the *turn* from bourgeois to proletarian democracy, from the democracy of the oppressors to that of the oppressed classes, from the state as a "*special force*" for the suppression of a particular class to the suppression of the oppressors by the *general force* of the majority of the people—the workers and the peasants. And it is on this particularly striking point, perhaps the most important as far as the problem of the state is concerned, that the ideas of Marx have been most completely ignored! In popular commentaries, the number of which is legion, this is not mentioned. The thing done is to keep silent about it as if it were a piece of old-fashioned "naïveté", just as Christians, after their religion had been given the status of a state religion, "forgot" the "naïveté" of primitive Christianity with its democratic revolutionary spirit.

The reduction of the remuneration of high state officials seems to be "simply" a demand of naïve, primitive democracy. One of the "founders" of modern opportunism, the ex-Social-Democrat Eduard Bernstein, has more than once repeated the vulgar bourgeois jeers at "primitive" democracy. Like all opportunists, and like the present Kautskyites, he did not understand at all that, first of all, the transition from capitalism to socialism is *impossible* without a certain

"reversion" to "primitive" democracy (for how else can the majority, and then the whole population without exception, proceed to discharge state functions?); and that, secondly, "primitive democracy" based on capitalism and capitalist culture is not the same as primitive democracy in prehistoric or pre-capitalist times. Capitalist culture has *created* large-scale production, factories, railways, the postal service, telephones, etc., and *on this basis* the great majority of the functions of the old "state power" have become so simplified and can be reduced to such exceedingly simple operations of registration, filing and checking that they can be easily performed by every literate person, can quite easily be performed for ordinary "workmen's wages", and that these functions can (and must) be stripped of every shadow of privilege, of every semblance of "official grandeur".

All officials, without exception, elected and subject to recall *at any time*, their salaries reduced to the level of ordinary "workmen's wages"—these simple and "self-evident" democratic measures, while completely uniting the interests of the workers and the majority of the peasants, at the same time serve as a bridge leading from capitalism to socialism. These measures concern the reorganisation of the state, the purely political reorganisation of society; but, of course, they acquire their full meaning and significance only in connection with the "expropriation of the expropriators" either being accomplished or in preparation, i.e., with the transformation of capitalist private ownership of the means of production into social ownership.

"The Commune," Marx wrote, "made that catch-word of all bourgeois revolutions, cheap government, a reality, by abolishing the two greatest sources of expenditure—the army and the officialdom."

From the peasants, as from other sections of the petty bourgeoisie, only an insignificant few "rise to the top", "get on in the world" in the bourgeois sense, i.e., become either well-to-do, bourgeois, or officials in secure and privileged positions. In every capitalist country where there are peasants (as there are in most capitalist countries), the vast

majority of them are oppressed by the government and long for its overthrow, long for "cheap" government. This can be achieved *only* by the proletariat; and by achieving it, the proletariat at the same time takes a step towards the socialist reorganisation of the state.

3. Abolition of Parliamentarism

"The Commune," Marx wrote, "was to be a working, not a parliamentary, body, executive and legislative at the same time...."

"Instead of deciding once in three or six years which member of the ruling class was to represent and repress [ver- und zertreten] the people in parliament, universal suffrage was to serve the people constituted in communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for workers, foremen and accountants for his business."

Owing to the prevalence of social-chauvinism and opportunism, this remarkable criticism of parliamentarism, made in 1871, also belongs now to the "forgotten words" of Marxism. The professional Cabinet Ministers and parliamentarians, the traitors to the proletariat and the "practical" socialists of our day, have left all criticism of parliamentarism to the anarchists, and, on this wonderfully reasonable ground, they denounce *all* criticism of parliamentarism as "anarchism"! It is not surprising that the proletariat of the "advanced" parliamentary countries, disgusted with such "socialists" as the Scheidemanns, Davids, Legiens, Sembats, Renaudels, Hendersons, Vanderveldes, Staunings, Brantings, Bissolatis and Co., has been with increasing frequency giving its sympathies to anarcho-syndicalism, in spite of the fact that the latter is merely the twin brother of opportunism.

For Marx, however, revolutionary dialectics was never the empty fashionable phrase, the toy rattle, which Plekhanov, Kautsky and others have made of it. Marx knew how to break with anarchism ruthlessly for its inability to make use even of the "pigsty" of bourgeois parliamenta-

rism, especially when the situation was obviously not revolutionary; but at the same time he knew how to subject parliamentarism to genuinely revolutionary proletarian criticism.

To decide once every few years which member of the ruling class is to repress and crush the people through parliament—this is the real essence of bourgeois parliamentarism, not only in parliamentary-constitutional monarchies, but also in the most democratic republics.

But if we deal with the question of the state, and if we consider parliamentarism as one of the institutions of the state, from the point of view of the tasks of the proletariat in *this* field, what is the way out of parliamentarism? How can it be dispensed with?

Once again we must say: the lessons of Marx, based on the study of the Commune, have been so completely forgotten that the present-day "Social-Democrat" (i.e., present-day traitor to socialism) really cannot understand any criticism of parliamentarism other than anarchist or reactionary criticism.

The way out of parliamentarism is not, of course, the abolition of representative institutions and the elective principle, but the conversion of the representative institutions from talking shops into "working" bodies. "The Commune was to be a working, not a parliamentary, body, executive and legislative at the same time."

"A working, not a parliamentary, body"—this is a blow straight from the shoulder at the present-day parliamentarians and parliamentary "lap dogs" of Social-Democracy! Take any parliamentary country, from America to Switzerland, from France to Britain, Norway and so forth—in these countries the real business of "state" is performed behind the scenes and is carried on by the departments, chancelleries and General Staffs. Parliament is given up to talk for the special purpose of fooling the "common people". This is so true that even in the Russian republic, a bourgeois-democratic republic, all these sins of parliamentarism came out at once, even before it managed to set up a real parliament. The heroes of rotten philistinism, such as the Skobelevs and Tseretelis, the Chernovs and Avksentyevs, have even succeeded in polluting the Soviets after the fashion of the

most disgusting bourgeois parliamentarism, in converting them into mere talking shops. In the Soviets, the "socialist" Ministers are fooling the credulous rustics with phrasemongering and resolutions. In the government itself a sort of permanent shuffle is going on in order that, on the one hand, as many Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks as possible may in turn get near the "pie", the lucrative and honourable posts, and that, on the other hand, the "attention" of the people may be "engaged". Meanwhile the chancelleries and army staffs "do" the business of "state".

Dyelo Naroda, the organ of the ruling Socialist-Revolutionary Party, recently admitted in a leading article—with the matchless frankness of people of "good society", in which "all" are engaged in political prostitution—that even in the ministries headed by the "socialists" (save the mark!), the whole bureaucratic apparatus is in fact unchanged, is working in the old way and quite "freely" sabotaging revolutionary measures! Even without this admission, does not the actual history of the participation of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks in the government prove this? It is noteworthy, however, that in the ministerial company of the Cadets, the Chernovs, Rusanovs, Zenzinovs and the other editors of *Dyelo Naroda* have so completely lost all sense of shame as to brazenly assert, as if it were a mere bagatelle, that in "their" ministries everything is unchanged!! Revolutionary-democratic phrases to gull the rural Simple Simons, and bureaucracy and red tape to "gladden the hearts" of the capitalists—that is the *essence* of the "honest" coalition.

The Commune substitutes for the venal and rotten parliamentarism of bourgeois society institutions in which freedom of opinion and discussion does not degenerate into deception, for the parliamentarians themselves have to work, have to execute their own laws, have themselves to test the results achieved in reality, and to account directly to their constituents. Representative institutions remain, but there is *no* parliamentarism here as a special system, as the division of labour between the legislative and the executive, as a privileged position for the deputies. We cannot imagine democracy, even proletarian democracy,

without representative institutions, but we can and *must* imagine democracy without parliamentarism, if criticism of bourgeois society is not mere words for us, if the desire to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie is our earnest and sincere desire, and not a mere "election" cry for catching workers' votes, as it is with the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, and also the Scheidemanns and Legiens, the Sembats and Vanderveldes.

It is extremely instructive to note that, in speaking of the functions of *those* officials who are necessary for the Commune and for proletarian democracy, Marx compares them to the workers of "every other employer", that is, of the ordinary capitalist enterprise, with its "workers, foremen and accountants".

There is no trace of utopianism in Marx, in the sense that he made up or invented a "new" society. No, he studied the *birth* of the new society *out of* the old, and the forms of transition from the latter to the former, as a natural-historical process. He examined the actual experience of a mass proletarian movement and tried to draw practical lessons from it. He "learned" from the Commune, just as all the great revolutionary thinkers learned unhesitatingly from the experience of great movements of the oppressed classes, and never addressed them with pedantic "homilies" (such as Plekhanov's: "They should not have taken up arms" or Tsereteli's: "A class must limit itself").

Abolishing the bureaucracy at once, everywhere and completely, is out of the question. It is a utopia. But to *smash* the old bureaucratic machine at once and to begin immediately to construct a new one that will make possible the gradual abolition of all bureaucracy—this is *not* a utopia, it is the experience of the Commune, the direct and immediate task of the revolutionary proletariat.

Capitalism simplifies the functions of "state" administration; it makes it possible to cast "bossing" aside and to confine the whole matter to the organisation of the proletarians (as the ruling class), which will hire "workers, foremen and accountants" in the name of the whole of society.

We are not utopians, we do not "dream" of dispensing *at once* with all administration, with all subordination. These anarchist dreams, based upon incomprehension of

the tasks of the proletarian dictatorship, are totally alien to Marxism, and, as a matter of fact, serve only to postpone the socialist revolution until people are different. No, we want the socialist revolution with people as they are now, with people who cannot dispense with subordination, control and "foremen and accountants".

The subordination, however, must be to the armed vanguard of all the exploited and working people, i.e., to the proletariat. A beginning can and must be made at once, overnight, to replace the specific "bossing" of state officials by the simple functions of "foremen and accountants", functions which are already fully within the ability of the average town dweller and can well be performed for "workmen's wages".

We, the workers, shall organise large-scale production on the basis of what capitalism has already created, relying on our own experience as workers, establishing strict, iron discipline backed up by the state power of the armed workers. We shall reduce the role of state officials to that of simply carrying out our instructions as responsible, revocable, modestly paid "foremen and accountants" (of course, with the aid of technicians of all sorts, types and degrees). This is *our* proletarian task, this is what we can and must *start* with in accomplishing the proletarian revolution. Such a beginning, on the basis of large-scale production, will of itself lead to the gradual "withering away" of all bureaucracy, to the gradual creation of an order—an order without inverted commas, an order bearing no similarity to wage slavery—an order under which the functions of control and accounting, becoming more and more simple, will be performed by each in turn, will then become a habit and will finally die out as the *special* functions of a special section of the population.

A witty German Social-Democrat of the seventies of the last century called the *postal service* an example of the socialist economic system. This is very true. At present the postal service is a business organised on the lines of a state-capitalist monopoly. Imperialism is gradually transforming all trusts into organisations of a similar type, in which, standing over the "common" people, who are overworked and starved, one has the same bourgeois bureau-

cracy. But the mechanism of social management is here already to hand. Once we have overthrown the capitalists, crushed the resistance of these exploiters with the iron hand of the armed workers, and smashed the bureaucratic machine of the modern state, we shall have a splendidly-equipped mechanism, freed from the "parasite", a mechanism which can very well be set going by the united workers themselves, who will hire technicians, foremen and accountants, and pay them *all*, as indeed *all* "state" officials in general, workmen's wages. Here is a concrete, practical task which can immediately be fulfilled in relation to all trusts, a task whose fulfilment will rid the working people of exploitation, a task which takes account of what the Commune had already begun to practise (particularly in building up the state).

To organise the *whole* economy on the lines of the postal service so that the technicians, foremen and accountants, as well as *all* officials, shall receive salaries no higher than "a workman's wage", all under the control and leadership of the armed proletariat—this is our immediate aim. This is the state and this is the economic foundation we need. This is what will bring about the abolition of parliamentarism and the preservation of representative institutions. This is what will rid the labouring classes of the bourgeoisie's prostitution of these institutions.

4. Organisation of National Unity

"In a brief sketch of national organisation which the Commune had no time to develop, it states explicitly that the Commune was to be the political form of even the smallest village..." The communes were to elect the "National Delegation" in Paris.

"...The few but important functions which would still remain for a central government were not to be suppressed, as has been deliberately mis-stated, but were to be transferred to communal, i.e., strictly responsible, officials.

"...National unity was not to be broken, but, on the contrary, organised by the communal constitution;

it was to become a reality by the destruction of state power which posed as the embodiment of that unity yet wanted to be independent of, and superior to, the nation, on whose body it was but a parasitic excrescence. While the merely repressive organs of the old governmental power were to be amputated, its legitimate functions were to be wrested from an authority claiming the right to stand above society, and restored to the responsible servants of society."

The extent to which the opportunists of present-day Social-Democracy have failed—perhaps it would be more true to say, have refused—to understand these observations of Marx is best shown by that book of Herostratian fame of the renegade Bernstein, *The Premises of Socialism and the Tasks of the Social-Democrats*. It is in connection with the above passage from Marx that Bernstein wrote that "as far as its political content is concerned", this programme "displays, in all its essential features, the greatest similarity to the federalism of Proudhon.... In spite of all the other points of difference between Marx and the 'petty-bourgeois' Proudhon [Bernstein places the word "petty-bourgeois" in inverted commas to make it sound ironical] on these points, their lines of reasoning run as close as could be". Of course, Bernstein continues, the importance of the municipalities is growing, but "it seems doubtful to me whether the first job of democracy would be such a dissolution [Auflösung] of the modern states and such a complete transformation [Umwandlung] of their organisation as is visualised by Marx and Proudhon (the formation of a National Assembly from delegates of the provincial or district assemblies, which, in their turn, would consist of delegates from the communes), so that consequently the previous mode of national representation would disappear". (Bernstein, *Premises*, German edition, 1899, pp. 134 and 136.)

To confuse Marx's views on the "destruction of state power, a parasitic excrescence", with Proudhon's federalism is positively monstrous! But it is no accident, for it never occurs to the opportunist that Marx does not speak here at all about federalism as opposed to centralism, but about

smashing the old, bourgeois state machine which exists in all bourgeois countries.

The only thing that does occur to the opportunist is what he sees around him, in an environment of petty-bourgeois philistinism and "reformist" stagnation, namely, only "municipalities"! The opportunist has even grown out of the habit of thinking about proletarian revolution.

It is ridiculous. But the remarkable thing is that nobody argued with Bernstein on this point. Bernstein has been refuted by many, especially by Plekhanov in Russian literature and by Kautsky in European literature, but neither of them has said *anything* about *this* distortion of Marx by Bernstein.

The opportunist has so much forgotten how to think in a revolutionary way and to dwell on revolution that he attributes "federalism" to Marx, whom he confuses with the founder of anarchism, Proudhon. As for Kautsky and Plekhanov, who claim to be orthodox Marxists and defenders of the theory of revolutionary Marxism, they are silent on this point! Here is one of the roots of the extreme vulgarisation of the views on the difference between Marxism and anarchism, which is characteristic of both the Kautskyites and the opportunists, and which we shall discuss again later.

There is not a trace of federalism in Marx's above-quoted observations on the experience of the Commune. Marx agreed with Proudhon on the very point that the opportunist Bernstein did not see. Marx disagreed with Proudhon on the very point on which Bernstein found a similarity between them.

Marx agreed with Proudhon in that they both stood for the "smashing" of the modern state machine. Neither the opportunists nor the Kautskyites wish to see the similarity of views on this point between Marxism and anarchism (both Proudhon and Bakunin) because this is where they have departed from Marxism.

Marx disagreed both with Proudhon and Bakunin precisely on the question of federalism (not to mention the dictatorship of the proletariat). Federalism as a principle follows logically from the petty-bourgeois views of anarchism. Marx

was a centralist. There is no departure whatever from centralism in his observations just quoted. Only those who are imbued with the philistine "superstitious belief" in the state can mistake the destruction of the bourgeois state machine for the destruction of centralism!

Now if the proletariat and the poor peasants take state power into their own hands, organise themselves quite freely in communes, and *unite* the action of all the communes in striking at capital, in crushing the resistance of the capitalists, and in transferring the privately-owned railways, factories, land and so on to the *entire* nation, to the whole of society, won't that be centralism? Won't that be the most consistent democratic centralism and, moreover, proletarian centralism?

Bernstein simply cannot conceive of the possibility of voluntary centralism, of the voluntary amalgamation of the communes into a nation, of the voluntary fusion of the proletarian communes, for the purpose of destroying bourgeois rule and the bourgeois state machine. Like all philistines, Bernstein pictures centralism as something which can be imposed and maintained solely from above, and solely by the bureaucracy and the military clique.

As though foreseeing that his views might be distorted, Marx expressly emphasised that the charge that the Commune had wanted to destroy national unity, to abolish the central authority, was a deliberate fraud. Marx purposely used the words: "National unity was ... to be organised", so as to oppose conscious, democratic, proletarian centralism to bourgeois, military, bureaucratic centralism.

But there are none so deaf as those who will not hear. And the very thing the opportunists of present-day Social-Democracy do not want to hear about is the destruction of state power, the amputation of the parasitic excrescence.

5. Abolition of the Parasite State

We have already quoted Marx's words on this subject, and we must now supplement them.

"...It is generally the fate of new historical creations," he wrote, "to be mistaken for the counterpart of older

and even defunct forms of social life, to which they may bear a certain likeness. Thus, this new Commune, which breaks [*bricht*, smashes] the modern state power, has been regarded as a revival of the medieval communes... as a federation of small states (as Montesquieu and the Girondins visualised it)... as an exaggerated form of the old struggle against over-centralisation....

"...The Communal Constitution would have restored to the social body all the forces hitherto absorbed by that parasitic excrescence, the 'state', feeding upon and hampering the free movement of society. By this one act it would have initiated the regeneration of France....

"...The Communal Constitution would have brought the rural producers under the intellectual lead of the central towns of their districts, and there secured to them, in the town working men, the natural trustees of their interests. The very existence of the Commune involved, as a matter of course, local self-government, but no longer as a counterpoise to state power, now become superfluous."

"Breaking state power", which was a "parasitic excrescence"; its "amputation", its "smashing"; "state power, now become superfluous"—these are the expressions Marx used in regard to the state when appraising and analysing the experience of the Commune.

All this was written a little less than half a century ago; and now one has to engage in excavations, as it were, in order to bring undistorted Marxism to the knowledge of the mass of the people. The conclusions drawn from the observation of the last great revolution which Marx lived through were forgotten just when the time for the next great proletarian revolutions had arrived.

"...The multiplicity of interpretations to which the Commune has been subjected, and the multiplicity of interests which expressed themselves in it show that it was a thoroughly flexible political form, while all previous forms of government had been essentially repressive. Its true secret was this: it was essentially a *working-class government*, the result of the struggle

of the producing against the appropriating class, the political form at last discovered under which the economic emancipation of labour could be accomplished....

"Except on this last condition, the Communal Constitution would have been an impossibility and a delusion...."

The utopians busied themselves with "discovering" political forms under which the socialist transformation of society was to take place. The anarchists dismissed the question of political forms altogether. The opportunists of present-day Social-Democracy accepted the bourgeois political forms of the parliamentary democratic state as the limit which should not be overstepped; they battered their foreheads praying before this "model", and denounced as anarchism every desire to *break* these forms.

Marx deduced from the whole history of socialism and the political struggle that the state was bound to disappear, and that the transitional form of its disappearance (the transition from state to non-state) would be the "proletariat organised as the ruling class". Marx, however, did not set out to *discover* the political forms of this future stage. He limited himself to carefully observing French history, to analysing it, and to drawing the conclusion to which the year 1851 had led, namely, that matters were moving towards the *destruction* of the bourgeois state machine.

And when the mass revolutionary movement of the proletariat burst forth, Marx, in spite of its failure, in spite of its short life and patent weakness, began to study the forms it had *discovered*.

The Commune is the form "at last discovered" by the proletarian revolution, under which the economic emancipation of labour can take place.

The Commune is the first attempt by a proletarian revolution to *smash* the bourgeois state machine; and it is the political form "at last discovered", by which the smashed state machine can and must be *replaced*.

We shall see further on that the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917, in different circumstances and under different conditions, continue the work of the Commune and confirm Marx's brilliant historical analysis.

Chapter IV

Continuation.

Supplementary Explanations by Engels

5. The 1891 Preface to Marx's
The Civil War in France

...But let us see how, twenty years after the Commune, Engels summed up its lessons for the fighting proletariat. Here are the lessons to which Engels attached prime importance:

“...It was precisely the oppressing power of the former centralised government, army, political police, bureaucracy, which Napoleon had created in 1798 and which every new government had since then taken over as a welcome instrument and used against its opponents—it was this power which was to fall everywhere, just as it had fallen in Paris.

“From the very outset the Commune had to recognise that the working class, once in power, could not go on managing with the old state machine; that in order not to lose again its only just gained supremacy, this working class must, on the one hand, do away with all the old machinery of oppression previously used against it itself, and, on the other, safeguard itself against its own deputies and officials, by declaring them all, without exception, subject to recall at any time...”

Engels emphasised once again that not only under a monarchy, but *also in a democratic republic* the state remains a state, i.e., it retains its fundamental distinguishing feature of transforming the officials, the “servants of society”, its organs, into the *masters* of society.

“Against this transformation of the state and the organs of the state from servants of society into masters of society—an inevitable transformation in all previous states—the Commune used two infallible means. In the first place, it filled all posts—administrative, judicial and educational—by election on the basis of

universal suffrage of all concerned, subject to recall at any time by the electors. And, in the second place, it paid all officials, high or low, only the wages received by other workers. The highest salary paid by the Commune to anyone was 6,000 francs.* In this way a dependable barrier to place-hunting and careerism was set up, even apart from the binding mandates to delegates to representative bodies, which were added besides...."

Engels here approached the interesting boundary line at which consistent democracy, on the one hand, is *transformed* into socialism and, on the other, *demand*s socialism. For, in order to abolish the state, it is necessary to convert the functions of the civil service into the simple operations of control and accounting that are within the scope and ability of the vast majority of the population, and, subsequently, of every single individual. And if careerism is to be abolished completely, it must be made *impossible* for "honourable" though profitless posts in the Civil Service to be used as a springboard to highly lucrative posts in banks or joint-stock companies, as *constantly* happens in all the freest capitalist countries.

Engels, however, did not make the mistake some Marxists make in dealing, for example, with the question of the right of nations to self-determination, when they argue that it is impossible under capitalism and will be superfluous under socialism. This seemingly clever but actually incorrect statement might be made in regard to *any* democratic institution, including moderate salaries for officials, because fully consistent democracy is impossible under capitalism, and under socialism all democracy *will wither away*.

This is a sophism like the old joke about a man becoming bald by losing one more hair.

To develop democracy *to the utmost*, to find the *forms* for this development, to test them *by practice*, and so forth—all this is one of the component tasks of the struggle for

* Nominally about 2,400 rubles or, according to the present rate of exchange, about 6,000 rubles. The action of those Bolsheviks who propose that a salary of 9,000 rubles be paid to members of municipal councils, for instance, instead of a maximum salary of 6,000 rubles—quite an adequate sum—*throughout the state*, is inexcusable.

the social revolution. Taken separately, no kind of democracy will bring socialism. But in actual life democracy will never be "taken separately"; it will be "taken together" with other things, it will exert its influence on economic life as well, will stimulate *its* transformation; and in its turn it will be influenced by economic development, and so on. This is the dialectics of living history.

Engels continued:

"This shattering [Sprengung] of the former state power and its replacement by a new and truly democratic one is described in detail in the third section of *The Civil War*. But it was necessary to touch briefly here once more on some of its features, because in Germany particularly the superstitious belief in the state has passed from philosophy into the general consciousness of the bourgeoisie and even of many workers. According to the philosophical conception, the state is the 'realisation of the idea', or the Kingdom of God on earth, translated into philosophical terms, the sphere in which eternal truth and justice are, or should be, realised. And from this follows a superstitious reverence for the state and everything connected with it, which takes root the more readily since people are accustomed from childhood to imagine that the affairs and interests common to the whole of society could not be looked after other than as they have been looked after in the past, that is, through the state and its lucratively positioned officials. And people think they have taken quite an extraordinarily bold step forward when they have rid themselves of belief in hereditary monarchy and swear by the democratic republic. In reality, however, the state is nothing but a machine for the oppression of one class by another, and indeed in the democratic republic no less than in the monarchy. And at best it is an evil inherited by the proletariat after its victorious struggle for class supremacy, whose worst sides the victorious proletariat will have to lop off as speedily as possible, just as the Commune had to, until a generation reared in new, free social conditions is able to discard the entire lumber of the state."

Engels warned the Germans not to forget the principles of socialism with regard to the state in general in connection with the substitution of a republic for the monarchy. His warnings now read like a veritable lesson to the Tseretelis and Chernovs, who in their "coalition" practice have revealed a superstitious belief in, and a superstitious reverence for, the state!*

Chapter VI

The Vulgarisation of Marxism by the Opportunists

2. Kautsky's Controversy with the Opportunists

Kautsky treats the matter as follows: the victorious proletariat "will carry out the democratic programme", and he goes on to formulate its clauses. But he does not say a word about the new material provided by 1871 on the subject of the replacement of bourgeois democracy by proletarian democracy. Kautsky disposes of the question by using such "impressive-sounding" banalities as:

"Still, it goes without saying that we shall not achieve supremacy under the present conditions. Revolution itself presupposes long and deep-going struggles, which, in themselves, will change our present political and social structure."

Undoubtedly, this "goes without saying", just as the fact that horses eat oats or the Volga flows into the Caspian. Only it is a pity that an empty and bombastic phrase about "deep-going" struggles is used to *avoid* a question of vital importance to the revolutionary proletariat, namely, *what* makes *its* revolution "deep-going" in relation to the state, to democracy, as distinct from previous, non-proletarian revolutions.

By avoiding this question, Kautsky *in practice* makes a concession to opportunism on this most essential point,

* Reference is to the participation of the Mensheviks Tsereteli and Skobelev and the Socialist-Revolutionaries Chernov and Avksentyev together with the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie in the coalition Government headed by Kerensky in the summer of 1917,—*Ed.*

although *in words* he declares stern war against it and stresses the importance of the "idea of revolution" (how much is this "idea" worth when one is afraid to teach the workers the concrete lessons of revolution?), or says, "revolutionary idealism before everything else", or announces that the English workers are now "hardly more than petty bourgeois".

"The most varied forms of enterprises—bureaucratic [??], trade unionist, co-operative, private... can exist side by side in socialist society," Kautsky writes. "...There are, for example, enterprises which cannot do without a bureaucratic [??] organisation, such as the railways. Here the democratic organisation may take the following shape: the workers elect delegates who form a sort of parliament, which establishes the working regulations and supervises the management of the bureaucratic apparatus. The management of other enterprises may be transferred to the trade unions, and still others may become co-operative enterprises."

This argument is erroneous; it is a step backward compared with the explanations Marx and Engels gave in the seventies, using the lessons of the Commune as an example.

As far as the supposedly necessary "bureaucratic" organisation is concerned, there is no difference whatever between a railway and any other enterprise in large-scale machine industry, any factory, large shop, or large-scale capitalist agricultural enterprise. The technique of all these enterprises makes absolutely imperative the strictest discipline, the utmost precision on the part of everyone in carrying out his allotted task, for otherwise the whole enterprise may come to a stop, or machinery or the finished product may be damaged. In all these enterprises the workers will, of course, "elect delegates who will form *a sort of parliament*".

The whole point, however, is that this "sort of parliament" will *not* be a parliament in the sense of a bourgeois parliamentary institution. The whole point is that this "sort of parliament" will *not* merely "establish the working regulations and supervise the management of the bureaucratic apparatus", as Kautsky, whose thinking does not go beyond the bounds of bourgeois parliamentarism, imagines. In socialist society, the "sort of parliament" consisting of workers' deputies will, of course, "establish the working regulations and supervise the management" of the "apparatus", *but* this apparatus will *not* be "bureaucratic". The

workers, after winning political power, will smash the old bureaucratic apparatus, shatter it to its very foundations, and raze it to the ground; they will replace it by a new one, consisting of the very same workers and other employees, *against* whose transformation into bureaucrats the measures will at once be taken which were specified in detail by Marx and Engels: 1) not only election, but also recall at any time; 2) pay not to exceed that of a workman; 3) immediate introduction of control and supervision by *all*, so that *all* may become "bureaucrats" for a time and that, therefore, *nobody* may be able to become a "bureaucrat".

Kautsky has not reflected at all on Marx's words: "The Commune was a working, not a parliamentary, body, executive and legislative at the same time."*

Kautsky has not understood at all the difference between bourgeois parliamentarism, which combines democracy (*not for the people*) with bureaucracy (*against the people*), and proletarian democracy, which will take immediate steps to cut bureaucracy down to the roots, and which will be able to carry these measures through to the end, to the complete abolition of bureaucracy, to the introduction of complete democracy for the people.

Kautsky here displays the same old "superstitious reverence" for the state, and "superstitious belief" in bureaucracy.

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1917

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* See K. Marx, *The Civil War in France* (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1962, p. 519).—Ed.

One of the Fundamental Questions of the Revolution

The key question of every revolution is undoubtedly the question of state power. Which class holds power decides everything. When *Dyelo Naroda**, the paper of the chief governing party in Russia, recently complained (No. 147) that, owing to the controversies over power, both the question of the Constituent Assembly** and that of bread are being forgotten, the Socialist-Revolutionaries should have been answered, "Blame yourselves. For it is the wavering and indecision of *your* party that are mostly to blame for 'ministerial leapfrog', the interminable postponements of the Constituent Assembly, and the undermining by the capitalists of the planned and agreed measures of a grain monopoly and of providing the country with bread."

The question of power cannot be evaded or brushed aside, because it is the key question determining *everything* in a revolution's development, and in its foreign and domestic policies. It is an undisputed fact that our revolution has "wasted" six months in wavering over the system of power; it is a fact resulting from the wavering policy of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. In the long run, these parties' wavering policy was determined by the class position of the petty bourgeoisie, by their economic instability in the struggle between capital and labour.

* *Dyelo Naroda*, a newspaper of the Socialist-Revolutionary party, was published in Petrograd from March 1917 till July 1918.—*Ed.*

** The date of the convocation of the Constituent Assembly was announced by the Provisional Government shortly after the February 1917 revolution but its convocation was postponed several times and it did not meet under the Provisional Government.—*Ed.*

The whole issue at present is whether the petty-bourgeois democrats* have learned anything during these great, exceptionally eventful six months. If not, then the revolution is lost, and only a victorious uprising of the proletariat can save it. If they have learned something, the establishment of a stable, unwavering power must be begun immediately. Only if power is based, obviously and unconditionally, on a majority of the population can it be stable during a popular revolution, i.e., a revolution which rouses the people, the majority of the workers and peasants, to action. Up to now state power in Russia has *virtually* remained in the hands of the *bourgeoisie*, who are compelled to make only particular concessions (only to begin withdrawing them the following day), to hand out promises (only to fail to carry them out), to search for all sorts of excuses to cover their domination (only to fool the people by a show of "honest coalition"), etc., etc. In words it claims to be a popular, democratic, revolutionary government, but in deeds it is an anti-popular, undemocratic, counter-revolutionary, bourgeois government. This is the contradiction which has existed so far and which has been a source of the complete instability and inconsistency of power, of that "ministerial leapfrog" in which the S.R.s and Mensheviks have been engaged with such unfortunate (for the people) enthusiasm.

In early June 1917 I told the All-Russia Congress of Soviets that either the Soviets would be dispersed and die an inglorious death, or all power must be transferred to them. The events of July** and August*** very convincingly bore out these words. No matter what lies the lackeys of the bourgeoisie—Potresov, Plekhanov and others, who designate

* The reference is to the parties of Socialist Revolutionaries, Popular Socialists and Mensheviks.—*Ed.*

** On July 3-4, 1917, mass demonstrations of workers and soldiers were held in Petrograd protesting against the offensive on the German front launched by the Provisional Government and demanding the transfer of power to the Soviets.—*Ed.*

*** On August 25, 1917, General Kornilov organised a counter-revolutionary revolt with the view of establishing a military dictatorship in Russia and destroying the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. The revolt was suppressed by the workers and soldiers led by the Bolsheviks.—*Ed.*

as "broadening the base" of power its virtual transfer to a tiny minority of the people, to the bourgeoisie, the exploiters—may resort to, only the power of the Soviets can be stable, obviously based on a majority of the people.

Only Soviet power could be stable and not be overthrown even in the stormiest moments of the stormiest revolution. Only this power could assure a continuous and broad development of the revolution, a peaceful struggle of parties within the Soviets. Until this power is created, there will inevitably be indecision, instability, vacillation, endless "crises of power", a constant farce of ministerial leapfrog, outbreaks on the Right and on the Left.

The slogan, "Power to the Soviets", however, is very often, if not in most cases, taken quite incorrectly to mean a "Cabinet of the parties of the Soviet majority". We would like to go into more detail on this very false notion.

A "Cabinet of the parties of the Soviet majority"* means a change of individual ministers, with the entire old government apparatus left intact—a thoroughly bureaucratic and thoroughly undemocratic apparatus incapable of carrying out serious reforms, such as are contained even in the S.R. and Menshevik programmes.

"Power to the Soviets" means radically reshaping the entire old state apparatus, that bureaucratic apparatus which hampers everything democratic. It means removing this apparatus and substituting for it a new, popular one, i.e., a truly democratic apparatus of Soviets, i.e., the organised and armed majority of the people—the workers, soldiers and peasants. It means allowing the majority of the people initiative and independence not only in the election of deputies, but also in state administration, in effecting reforms and various other changes.

To make this difference clearer and more comprehensible, it is worth recalling a valuable admission made some time ago by the paper of the governing party of the S.R.s, *Dyelo Naroda*. It wrote that *even* in those ministries which were

* In the summer of 1917 the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries who supported the policy of the bourgeois Provisional Government aimed against the people were in the majority in the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. By September 1917 the majority in the Soviets of Petrograd and Moscow was won by the Bolsheviks.

in the hands of socialist ministers (this was written during the notorious coalition with the Cadets, when some Mensheviks and S.R.s were ministers), the entire administrative apparatus had remained unchanged, and hampered work.

This is quite understandable. The entire history of the bourgeois-parliamentary, and also, to a considerable extent, of the bourgeois-constitutional, countries shows that a change of ministers means very little, for the real work of administration is in the hands of an enormous army of officials. This army, however, is undemocratic through and through, it is connected by thousands and millions of threads with the landowners and the bourgeoisie and is completely dependent on them. This army is surrounded by an atmosphere of bourgeois relations, and breathes nothing but this atmosphere. It is set in its ways, petrified, stagnant, and is powerless to break free of this atmosphere. It can only think, feel, or act in the old way. This army is bound by servility to rank, by certain privileges of "Civil" Service; the upper ranks of this army are, through the medium of shares and banks, entirely enslaved by finance capital, being to a certain extent its agent and a vehicle of its interests and influence.

It is the greatest delusion, the greatest self-deception, and a deception of the people, to attempt, by means of *this* state apparatus, to carry out such reforms as the abolition of landed estates without compensation, or the grain monopoly, etc. This apparatus *can* serve a republican bourgeoisie, creating a republic in the shape of a "monarchy without a monarch", like the French Third Republic, but it is absolutely incapable of carrying out reforms which would even seriously curtail or limit the rights of capital, the rights of "sacred private property", much less abolish those rights. That is why it always happens, under all sorts of "coalition" Cabinets that include "socialists", that these socialists, even when individuals among them are perfectly honest, in reality turn out to be either a useless ornament of or a screen for the bourgeois government, a sort of lightning conductor to divert the people's indignation from the government, a tool for the government to deceive the people. This was the case with Louis Blanc in 1848,

and dozens of times in Britain and France, when socialists participated in Cabinets. This is also the case with the Chernovs and Tseretelis in 1917. So it has been and so it will be as long as the bourgeois system exists and as long as the old bourgeois, bureaucratic state apparatus remains intact.

The Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies are particularly valuable because they represent a new *type* of state apparatus, which is immeasurably higher, incomparably more democratic. The S.R.s and Mensheviks have done everything, the possible and the impossible, to turn the Soviets (particularly the Petrograd Soviet and the All-Russia Soviet, i.e., the Central Executive Committee) into useless talking shops which, under the guise of "control", merely adopted useless resolutions and suggestions which the government shelved with the most polite and kindly smile. The "fresh breeze" of the Kornilov affair, however, which promised a real storm, was enough for all that was musty in the Soviet to blow away for a while, and for the initiative of the revolutionary people to begin expressing itself as something majestic, powerful and invincible.

Let all sceptics learn from this example from history. Let those who say: "We have no apparatus to replace the old one, which inevitably gravitates towards the defence of the bourgeoisie", be ashamed of themselves. For this apparatus *exists*. It is the Soviets. Don't be afraid of the people's initiative and independence. Put your faith in their revolutionary organisations, and you will see *in all* realms of state affairs the same strength, majesty and invincibility of the workers and peasants as were displayed in their unity and their fury against Kornilov.

Lack of faith in the people, fear of their initiative and independence, trepidation before their revolutionary energy instead of all-round and unqualified support for it—this is where the S.R. and Menshevik leaders have sinned most of all. This is where we find one of the deepest roots of their indecision, their vacillation, their infinite and infinitely fruitless attempts to pour new wine into the old bottles of the old, bureaucratic state apparatus.

Take the history of the democratisation of the army in the 1917 Russian revolution, the history of the Chernov Mini-

stry*, of Palchinsky's "reign",** and of Peshekhonov's*** resignation—you will find what we have said above strikingly borne out at every step. Because there was no full confidence in the elected soldiers' organisations and no absolute observance of the principle of soldiers electing their commanding officers, the Kornilovs, Kaledins and counter-revolutionary officers came to be at the head of the army. This is a fact. Without deliberately closing one's eyes, one cannot fail to see that *after* the Kornilov affair Kerensky's government is *leaving everything as before*, that *in fact it is bringing back the Kornilov affair*. The appointment of Alexeyev, the "peace" with the Klembovskys, Gagarins, Bagrations and other Kornilov men, and leniency in the treatment of Kornilov and Kaledin all very clearly prove that Kerensky is in fact bringing back the Kornilov affair.

There is no middle course. This has been shown by experience. Either all power goes to the Soviets and the army is made fully democratic, or another Kornilov affair occurs.

And what about the history of the Chernov Ministry? Didn't it prove that every more or less serious step towards actually satisfying the peasants' needs, every step showing confidence in the peasants and in their mass organisations and actions, evoked very great enthusiasm among them? Chernov, however, had to spend almost four months "haggling" with the Cadets and bureaucrats, who by endless delays and intrigues finally forced him to resign without having accomplished anything. For and during these four months the landowners and capitalists "won the game"—

* V. M. Chernov, a Socialist-Revolutionary leader and Minister of Agriculture in the coalition government headed by Kerensky, resigned at the end of August 1917 on the grounds that his agrarian bills had been rejected by the government.—*Ed.*

** P. I. Palchinsky, Deputy Minister of Trade and Industry in the Kerensky Government in the summer of 1917, was one of the organisers of subversive acts engineered by capitalists who aimed at throttling the revolution by "the bony hand of famine".—*Ed.*

*** A. V. Peshekhonov, leader of the Popular Socialists, was Minister of Food in the Kerensky Government. He resigned in September 1917 because the Government raised the fixed grain prices in the interests of big capitalist landowners.—*Ed.*

they saved the landed estates, delayed the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, and even started a number of repressions against the land committees.

There is no middle course. This has been shown by experience. Either all power goes to the Soviets both centrally and locally, and all land is given to the peasants *immediately*, pending the Constituent Assembly's decision, or the landowners and capitalists obstruct every step, restore the landowners' power, drive the peasants into a rage and carry things to an exceedingly violent peasant revolt.

The same thing happened when the capitalists (with the aid of Palchinsky) crushed every more or less serious attempt to supervise production, when the merchants thwarted the grain monopoly and broke up the regulated democratic distribution of grain and other foodstuffs just *begun* by Peshekhonov.

What is now necessary in Russia is not to invent "new reforms", not to make "plans" for "comprehensive" changes. Nothing of the kind. This is how the situation is depicted—deliberately depicted in a false light—by the capitalists, the Potresovs, the Plekhanovs, who shout against "introducing socialism" and against the "dictatorship of the proletariat". The situation in Russia in fact is such that the unprecedented burdens and hardships of the war, the unparalleled and very real danger of economic dislocation and famine have of themselves suggested the way out, have of themselves not only pointed out, but advanced reforms and other changes as absolutely necessary. These changes must be the grain monopoly, control over production and distribution, restriction of the issue of paper money, a fair exchange of grain for manufactured goods, etc.

Everyone recognises measures of this kind and in this direction as inevitable, and in many places they have already been launched from the most diverse sides. *They have already been launched*, but they have been and are being obstructed everywhere by the resistance of the landowners and the capitalists, which is being put up through the Kerensky government (an utterly bourgeois and Bonapartist government *in reality*), through the old bureaucratic state apparatus, and through the direct and indirect pressure of Russian and "Allied" finance capital.

Not so long ago I. Prilezhayev, lamenting the resignation of Peshekhonov and the collapse of the fixed prices and the grain monopoly, wrote in *Dyelo Naroda* (No. 147):

"Courage and resolve are what our governments of all compositions have lacked.... The revolutionary democrats must not wait; they must themselves show initiative, and intervene in the economic chaos in a planned way.... If anywhere, it is here that a firm course and a determined government are necessary."

That goes without saying. Words of gold. The only trouble is that the author forgot that the question of the firm course to take, of courage and resolve, is not a personal matter, but a question of which *class* is capable of manifesting courage and resolve. The only class capable of this is the proletariat. A courageous and resolute government steering a firm course is nothing but the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasants. I. Prilezhayev unwittingly longs for *this dictatorship*.

What would such a dictatorship mean in practice? It would mean nothing but the fact that the resistance of the Kornilov men would be broken and the democratisation of the army restored and completed. Two days after its creation ninety-nine per cent of the army would be enthusiastic supporters of this dictatorship. This dictatorship would give land to the peasants and full power to the local peasant committees. How can anyone in his right senses doubt that the peasants would support this dictatorship? What Peshekhonov only *promised* ("the resistance of the capitalists has been broken" was what Peshekhonov actually said in his famous speech before the Congress of Soviets), this dictatorship would put into effect, would translate into reality. At the same time the democratic organisations of food supply, control, etc., that have already begun to form would in no way be eliminated. They would, on the contrary, be supported and developed, and all obstacles in the way of their work would be removed.

Only the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasants is capable of smashing the resistance of the capitalists, of displaying truly supreme courage and determination in the exercise of power, and of securing the enthusiastic, selfless and truly heroic support of the masses both in the army and among the peasants.

Power to the Soviets—this is the only way to make further progress gradual, peaceful and smooth, keeping perfect pace with the political awareness and resolve of the majority of the people and with their own experience. Power to the Soviets means the complete transfer of the country's administration and economic control into the hands of the workers and peasants, to whom nobody would dare offer resistance and who, through practice, through their own experience, would soon learn how to distribute the land, products and grain properly.

Rabochy Put No. 10
September 27 (14), 1917
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Collected Works, Vol. 25,
pp. 366-73

From Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?

On what are all trends agreed, from *Rech** to *Novaya Zhizn*** inclusively, from the Kornilovite Cadets to the semi-Bolsheviks, *all*, except the Bolsheviks?

They all agree that the Bolsheviks will either never dare take over full state power alone, or, if they do dare, and do take power, they will not be able to retain it even for the shortest while.

If anybody asserts that the question of the Bolsheviks alone taking over full state power is a totally unfeasible political question, that only a swelled-headed "fanatic" of the worst kind can regard it as feasible, we refute this assertion by quoting the exact statements of the most responsible and most influential political parties and trends of various "hues".

But let me begin with a word or two about the first of the questions mentioned—will the Bolsheviks dare take over full state power alone? I have already had occasion, at the All-Russia Congress of Soviets, to answer this question in the affirmative in no uncertain manner by a remark that I shouted from my seat during one of Tsereteli's ministerial speeches.*** And I have not met in the press, or heard, any

* *Rech* (Speech)—a daily newspaper, the central organ of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, published in St. Petersburg from 1906 till 1918.—*Ed.*

** *Novaya Zhizn* (The New Life)—a daily newspaper published in Petrograd from April 1917 till July 1918 by a group of Social-Democrats uniting Left-wing intellectuals of a semi-Menshevik hue.—*Ed.*

*** At the First All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies held in June 1917, the Menshevik Tsereteli claimed that there was no political party in Russia which would agree to take over full power in the country. At this Lenin rejoined that there was such a party: the Bolshevik party.—*Ed.*

statements by Bolsheviks to the effect that we ought not to take power alone. I still maintain that a political party—and the party of the advanced class in particular—would have no right to exist, would be unworthy of the name of party, would be a nonentity in any sense, if it refused to take power when opportunity offers.

We shall now quote statements by the Cadets, Socialist-Revolutionaries and semi-Bolsheviks (I would prefer to say quarter-Bolsheviks) on the question that interests us.

The leading article in *Rech* of September 16:

“Discord and confusion reigned in the Alexandrinsky Theatre, and the socialist press reflects the same picture. Only the views of the Bolsheviks are definite and straightforward. At the Conference, they are the views of the minority. In the Soviets, they represent a constantly growing trend. But in spite of all their verbal pugnacity, their boastful phrases and display of self-confidence, the Bolsheviks, except for a few fanatics, are brave only in words. They would not attempt to take ‘full power’ on their own accord. Disorganisers and disrupters *par excellence*, they are really cowards who in their heart of hearts are fully aware of both their own intrinsic ignorance and the ephemeral nature of their present successes. They know as well as we all do that the first day of their ultimate triumph would also be the first day of their precipitous fall. Irresponsible by their very nature, anarchists in method and practice, they should be regarded only as a trend of political thought, or rather, as one of its aberrations. The best way to get rid of Bolshevism for many a year, to banish it, would be to place the country’s fate in the hands of its leaders. And if it were not for the awareness that experiments of this kind are impermissible and fatal, one might in desperation decide on even this heroic measure. Happily, we repeat, these dismal heroes of the day are not by any means actually out to seize full power. Not under any circumstances are they capable of constructive work. Thus, all their definite and straightforward views are confined to the political rostrum, to soap-box oratory. For practical purposes their position cannot be taken into consideration from any point of view. In one respect, however, it has some practical consequence: it unites all other shades of ‘socialist thought’ opposed to it...”

This is the way the Cadets reason. Here, however, is the view of the biggest, “ruling and governing”, party in Russia, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, also expressed in an unsigned, i.e., editorial, leading article in their official organ *Dyelo Naroda* of September 21:

“...If the bourgeoisie refuse, pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, to work with the democracy on the basis of the platform that was endorsed by the Conference, then the *coalition must*

arise from within the Conference itself. This would be a serious sacrifice on the part of the supporters of the coalition, but even those campaigning for the idea of a 'pure line' of power will have to agree to it. We are afraid, however, that agreement may not be reached here. In that case a third and final combination remains, namely: the government must be organised by that half of the Conference which on principle advocated the idea of a homogeneous government.

"Let us put it definitely: the Bolsheviks will be obliged to form a Cabinet. With the greatest energy, they imbued the revolutionary democrats with hatred of the coalition, promising them all sorts of benefits as soon as 'compromise' was abandoned, and attributing to the latter all the country's misfortunes.

"If they were aware of what they were doing by their agitation, if they were not deceiving the people, it is their duty to redeem the promissory notes they have been handing out right and left.

"The question is clear.

"Let them not make futile attempts to hide behind hastily concocted theory that it is impossible for them to take power.

"The democracy will not accept these theories.

"At the same time, the advocates of coalition must guarantee them full support. These are the three combinations, the three ways, open to us—there are no others!" (The italics are those of *Dyelo Naroda*).

This is the way the Socialist-Revolutionaries reason. And here, finally, is the "position" (if attempts to sit between two stools can be called a position) of the *Novaya Zhizn* "quarter-Bolsheviks", taken from the editorial in *Novaya Zhizn* of September 23.

"If a coalition with Konovalov and Kishkin is formed again, it will mean nothing but a new capitulation by the democracy and the abrogation of the Conference resolution on the formation of a responsible government on the platform of August 14....

"A homogeneous ministry of Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries will be able to feel its responsibility as little as the responsible socialist ministers felt it in the coalition cabinet.... This government would not only be incapable of rallying the 'live forces' of the revolution around itself, but would not even be able to count on any active support from its vanguard—the proletariat.

"But the formation of another type of homogeneous cabinet, a government of the 'proletariat and poor peasants', would be, not a better, but an even worse way out of the situation, in fact it would not be a way out at all, but sheer bankruptcy. True, nobody is advancing such a slogan except in casual, timid and later systematically 'explained away' comments in *Rabochy Put*."

(This glaring untruth is "boldly" written by responsible journalists who have forgotten even the *Dyelo Naroda* editorial of September 21.)

"Formally, the Bolsheviks have now revived the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets'. It was withdrawn after the July days, when the Soviets, represented by the Central Executive Committee, definitely adopted an active anti-Bolshevik policy. Now, however, not only can the 'Soviet line' be regarded as straightened out, but there is every ground to assume that at the proposed Congress of Soviets the Bolsheviks will have a majority. Under such circumstances, the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets', resurrected by the Bolsheviks, is a 'tactical line' for achieving precisely the dictatorship of the proletariat and the 'poor peasants'. True, the Soviets also imply the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies; the Bolshevik slogan therefore implies a power resting on the overwhelmingly greater part of the entire democracy of Russia. In that case, however, the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets' loses all independent significance, for it makes the Soviets almost identical in composition to the Pre-parliament set up by the Conference...."

(*Novaya Zhizn's* assertion is a brazen lie, equivalent to declaring that spurious and fraudulent democracy is "almost identical" to democracy: the Pre-parliament is a *sham* which passes off the will of the minority of the people, particularly of Kuskova, Berkenheim, Chaikovsky and Co., as the will of the majority. This is the first point. The second point is that at the Conference even the Peasants' Soviets that had been packed by the Avksentyevs and Chaikovskys gave such a high percentage opposed to the coalition that taken together with the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, they would have brought about the *absolute collapse of the coalition*. And the third point is that "Power to the Soviets" means that the power of the Peasants' Soviets would embrace mainly the rural districts, and in the rural districts the pre-dominance of the *poor* peasants is assured.)

"If it is one and the same thing, then the Bolshevik slogan should be immediately withdrawn. If, however, 'Power to the Soviets' is only a disguise for the dictatorship of the proletariat, then such a power would mean precisely the failure and collapse of the revolution.

"Does it need proof that the proletariat, isolated not only from the other classes in the country, but also from the real live forces of the democracy, will not be able either technically to lay hold of the state apparatus and set it in motion in an exceptionally complicated situation, or politically to resist all the pressure by hostile forces that will sweep away not only the proletarian dictatorship, but the entire revolution into the bargain?

"The only power that will answer the requirements of the present situation is a really honest coalition within the democracy."

* * *

We apologise to the reader for quoting these lengthy extracts, but they are absolutely necessary. It is necessary to present a precise picture of the positions taken by the different parties hostile to the Bolsheviks. It is necessary to prove in a definite manner the extremely important fact that *all* these parties have admitted that the question of the Bolsheviks taking full state power alone is not only feasible, but also urgent.

Let us now proceed to examine the arguments which convince "everybody", from the Cadets to the *Novaya Zhizn* people, that the Bolsheviks will not be able to retain power.

The respectable *Rech* advances no arguments whatsoever. It merely pours out upon the Bolsheviks a flood of the choices and most irate abuse. The extract we quoted shows, among other things, how utterly wrong it would be to say, "Watch out, comrades, for what the enemy advises must certainly be bad", thinking that *Rech* is "provoking" the Bolsheviks to take power. If, instead of weighing up the general and concrete considerations in a practical way, we allow ourselves to be "persuaded" by the plea that the bourgeoisie are "provoking" us to take power, we shall be fooled by the bourgeoisie, for the latter will of course always maliciously prophesy millions of disasters that will result from the Bolsheviks taking power and will always maliciously shout, "It would be better to get rid of the Bolsheviks at one blow and 'for many a year' by allowing them to take power and then crushing them." These cries are also "provocation", if you will, but from a different angle. The Cadets and the bourgeoisie do not by any means "advise", and have never "advised", us to take power; they are only trying to *frighten* us with the allegedly insoluble problems of government.

No. We must not allow ourselves to be frightened by the screams of the frightened bourgeoisie. We must bear firmly in mind that we have never set ourselves "insoluble" social problems, and as for the *perfectly* soluble problem of taking immediate steps towards socialism, which is the only way out of the exceedingly difficult situation, that will be *solved only* by the dictatorship of the proletariat and poor

peasants. Victory, and lasting victory, is now more than ever, more than anywhere else, assured for the proletariat in Russia if it takes power.

We shall in a purely practical manner discuss the *concrete* circumstances that make a certain moment unfavourable; but we shall not for a moment allow ourselves to be scared by the savage howls of the bourgeoisie; and we shall not forget that the question of the Bolsheviks taking full power is becoming really *urgent*. Our Party will now be threatened with an immeasurably greater danger if we forget this than if we were to admit that taking power is "premature". In this respect, there can be *nothing* "premature" now: there is every chance in a million, except one or two perhaps, in favour of this.

Concerning the irate abuse poured out by *Rech*, we can, and must, say:

*In savage cries of irritation
We hear the voice of approbation,
Not in dulcet sounds of praise!**

That the bourgeoisie hate us so passionately is one of the most striking proofs that we are showing the people the *right* ways and means of overthrowing the rule of the bourgeoisie.

* * *

This time, by way of rare exception, *Dyelo Naroda* did not deign to honour us with its abuse nor did it advance a ghost of an argument. It merely tried, by indirect hints, to *frighten* us with the prospect that "the Bolsheviks will be obliged to form a cabinet". I can quite believe that while trying to frighten us, the Socialist-Revolutionaries are themselves sincerely scared to death by the phantom of the frightened liberal. I can equally believe that the Socialist-Revolutionaries do succeed in certain exceptionally high and exceptionally rotten institutions, such as the Central Executive Committee and similar "contact" (i.e., contact

* This is a quotation from Nekrasov's poem "Blessed Is the Unspiteful Poet".—*Ed.*

with the Cadets, in plain language, hobnobbing with the Cadets) commissions, in scaring some Bolsheviki because, first, the atmosphere in all those Central Executives, Pre-parliaments, etc., is abominable, putrid to the point of nausea, and harmful for *any* man to breathe for any length of time; and secondly, sincerity is contagious, and a sincerely frightened philistine is capable of converting even an individual revolutionary into a philistine for a time.

But however much we may, "humanly" speaking, understand the sincere fright of a Socialist-Revolutionary who has had the misfortune to be a minister in the company of the Cadets, or who is eligible as a minister in the eyes of the Cadets, we would be committing a political error that might only too easily border on treachery to the proletariat if we allowed ourselves to be scared. Let us have your practical arguments, gentlemen! Cherish no hope that we shall allow ourselves to be scared by your fright!

* * *

This time we find practical arguments only in *Novaya Zhizn*. On this occasion the paper comes out in the role of counsel for the bourgeoisie, a role that suits it far better than that of counsel for the defence of the Bolsheviki, which so obviously "shocks" this lady with many good points.

The counsel has advanced *six* pleas:

- 1) the proletariat is "isolated from the other classes in the country";
- 2) it is "isolated from the real live forces of the democracy";
- 3) it "will not be able technically to lay hold of the state apparatus";
- 4) it "will not be able to set this apparatus in motion";
- 5) "the situation is exceptionally complicated";
- 6) it "will be incapable of resisting all the pressure by hostile forces that will sweep away not only the proletarian dictatorship, but the entire revolution into the bargain".

Novaya Zhizn formulates the first plea in a ridiculously clumsy fashion, for in capitalist and semi-capitalist society we know of only three classes: the bourgeoisie, the petty

bourgeoisie (which consists mainly of the peasantry), and the proletariat. What sense is there in talking about the proletariat being isolated from the other classes when the point at issue is the proletariat's struggle against the bourgeoisie, revolution against the bourgeoisie?

Evidently, *Novaya Zhizn* wanted to say that the proletariat is isolated from the peasants, for it could not possibly have meant the landowners. It could not, however, say clearly and definitely that the proletariat is now isolated from the peasants, for the utter incorrectness of this assertion would be too obvious.

It is difficult to imagine that in a capitalist country the proletariat should be so little isolated from the petty bourgeoisie—and, mark you, in a revolution *against the bourgeoisie*—as the proletariat now is in Russia. The latest returns of the voting by “curias” *for* and *against* coalition with the bourgeoisie in Tsereteli's “Bulygin Duma”,* i.e., in the notorious “Democratic” Conference,** constitute one of the objective and incontrovertible proofs of this. If we take the Soviets' curias we get:

	For coalition	Against
Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies	83	192
Soviets of Peasants' Deputies	402	70
<hr/>		
All Soviets	185	262

* This State Duma which was to be consultative, i.e., with no right to pass laws, derived its name from Minister of the Interior A. G. Bulygin who drafted a bill for its convocation in 1905. As a result of the upsurge of the revolution the tsarist government failed to convene the “Bulygin Duma”.—*Ed.*

** *The All-Russia Democratic Conference* was called on the initiative of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in Petrograd in September 1917 to discuss the question of power. But it was actually designed to distract the attention of the masses from the struggle for a socialist revolution. The Democratic Conference at which Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries were in the majority adopted a decision to convene the so-called Pre-parliament to create an illusion of the existence of the parliamentary system in Russia. The Bolsheviks refused to take part in the Pre-parliament.—*Ed.*

So, the majority as a whole is on the side of the proletarian slogan: *against* coalition with the bourgeoisie. We have seen above that even the Cadets are obliged to admit the growth of Bolshevik influence in the Soviets. And here we have the Conference convened by *yesterday's* leaders in the Soviets, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, who have an assured majority in the central institutions! Obviously, the *actual* degree to which the Bolsheviks predominate in the Soviets is here *understated*.

Both on the question of coalition with the bourgeoisie and on the question of immediately transferring the landed estates to peasant committees, the Bolsheviks already have a *majority* in the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, a *majority of the people*, a majority of the petty bourgeoisie. *Rabochy Put* No. 19, of September 24 quotes from No. 25 of the organ of the Socialist-Revolutionaries *Znamya Truda* a report on a conference of local Soviets of Peasants' Deputies held in Petrograd on September 18. At this conference the Executive Committees of four Peasants' Soviets (Kostroma, Moscow, Samara' and Taurida gubernias) voted for an unrestricted coalition. The Executive Committees of *three* gubernias and *two* armies (Vladimir, Ryazan and the Black Sea gubernias) voted in favour of a coalition without the Cadets. The Executive Committees of *twenty-three* gubernias and *four* armies voted against a coalition.

So, the majority of the peasants are against a coalition!

So much for the "isolation of the proletariat".

We should note, by the way, that the supporters of a coalition were three outlying gubernias, Samara, Taurida and the Black Sea, where there is a relatively very large number of rich peasants and big landowners who employ hired labour, and also four industrial gubernias (Vladimir, Ryazan, Kostroma and Moscow) in which the peasant bourgeoisie are also stronger than in the majority of the gubernias in Russia. It would be interesting to collect more detailed figures on this question and to ascertain whether information is available concerning the *poor* peasants in the gubernias where there are larger numbers of "*rich*" peasants.

It is interesting, moreover, that the "non-Russian groups" revealed a considerable predominance of opponents of a coal-

tion, namely, 40 votes against 15. The policy of annexation and open violence pursued by the Bonapartist Kerensky and Co. towards the non-sovereign nations of Russia has borne fruit. Wide sections of the people of the oppressed nations (i.e., including the mass of the petty bourgeoisie) trust the proletariat of Russia more than they do the bourgeoisie, for here history has brought to the fore the struggle for liberation of the oppressed nations against the oppressing nations. The bourgeoisie has despicably betrayed the cause of freedom of the oppressed nations; the proletariat is faithful to the cause of freedom.

At the present time the national and agrarian questions are fundamental questions for the petty-bourgeois sections of the population of Russia. This is indisputable. And on both these questions the proletariat is "not isolated"—farther from it than ever. It has the majority of the people behind it. It *alone* is capable of pursuing such a determined, genuinely "revolutionary-democratic" policy on both questions which would immediately ensure the proletarian state power not only the support of the majority of the population, but also a real outburst of revolutionary enthusiasm among the people. This is because, for the first time, the people would not see the ruthless oppression of peasants by landowners and of Ukrainians by Great Russians on the part of the government, as was the case under tsarism, nor the effort to continue the same policy camouflaged in pompous phrases under the republic, nor nagging, insult, chicanery, procrastination, underhand dealing and evasions (all that with which Kerensky rewards the peasants and the oppressed nations), but would receive warm sympathy proved by deeds, immediate and revolutionary measures against the landowners, immediate restitution of *full* freedom for Finland, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, for the Moslems, and so on.

The Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik gentlemen know this perfectly well, and are therefore dragging in the semi-Cadet bosses of the co-operative societies to help them pursue their *reactionary*-democratic policy *against* the people. That is why they will never dare canvass popular opinion, take a popular referendum, or at least a vote of all the local Soviets, of all the local organisations, concerning definite

points of practical policy, for example, whether all the landed estates should at once be handed over to peasant committees, whether certain demands of the Finns or the Ukrainians should be conceded, etc.

Take the question of peace, the crucial issue of today. The proletariat "is isolated from the other classes"... On this issue the proletariat truly represents the *whole* nation, all live and honest people *in all* classes, the vast majority of the petty bourgeoisie; because only the proletariat, on achieving power, will *immediately* offer a just peace to all the belligerent nations, because only the proletariat will dare take genuinely *revolutionary* measures (publication of the secret treaties, and so forth) to achieve the speediest and most just peace possible.

The proletariat is not isolated. The gentlemen of *Novaya Zhizn* who are shouting about the proletariat being isolated are only betraying their subjective fear of the bourgeoisie. The objective state of affairs in Russia is undoubtedly such that the proletariat, *precisely at the present time*, is not "isolated" from the majority of the petty bourgeoisie. Precisely now, after the sad experience with the "coalition", the proletariat enjoys the sympathy of the *majority* of the people. *This* condition for the retention of power by the Bolsheviks *does exist*.

* * *

The second plea is that the proletariat "is isolated from the real live forces of the democracy". What this means is incomprehensible. It is probably "Greek", as the French say in such cases.

The writers of *Novaya Zhizn* would make good ministers. They would be quite suitable as ministers in a Cadet cabinet because all these ministers need is the ability to spout plausible, polished, but utterly meaningless phrases with which to cover up the dirtiest work and which are therefore sure of winning the applause of the imperialists and social-imperialists. The *Novaya Zhizn* writers are sure to earn the applause of the Cadets, Breshkovskaya, Plekhanov and Co. for asserting that the proletariat is isolated from the real live forces of the democracy, because *indirectly*

they imply—or will be understood to imply—that the Cadets, Breshkovskaya, Plekhanov, Kerensky and Co. are the “live forces of democracy”.

This is not true. They are dead forces. The history of the coalition has proved this.

Overawed by the bourgeoisie and by their bourgeois-intellectual environment, the *Novaya Zhizn* people regard as “live” the *Right* wing of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks like *Volya Naroda*, *Yedinstvo*, and others who in essentials do not differ from the Cadets. We, however, regard as live only those who are connected with the people and not with the kulaks, only those whom the lessons of the coalition have repelled. The “active live forces” of the petty-bourgeois democracy are represented by the *Left* wing of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. That this wing has gained strength, particularly since the July counter-revolution, is one of the surest objective signs that the proletariat is *not* isolated.

This has been made even more strikingly evident by the very recent swing to the left of the Socialist-Revolutionary Centrists, as is proved by Chernov’s statement on September 24 that his group cannot support the new coalition with Kishkin and Co. This swing to the left of the Socialist-Revolutionary Centre, which up to now had constituted the overwhelming majority of the members of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, the leading and dominant party from the point of view of the number of votes it obtained in the urban and particularly in the rural districts, proves that the statements we quoted from *Dyelo Naroda* that the democracy must, under certain circumstances, “guarantee full support” for a purely Bolshevik government are at any rate not mere empty phrases.

Facts like the refusal of the Socialist-Revolutionary Centre to support the new coalition with Kishkin, or the predominance of the *opponents* of the coalition among the *Menshevik-defencists* in the provinces (Jordania in the Caucasus, etc.), are objective proof that a certain section of the *people* which has up to now followed the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries *will support* a purely Bolshevik government.

It is precisely from the *live* forces of the democracy that the proletariat of Russia is now not isolated.

* * *

The third plea, that the proletariat "will not be able technically to lay hold of the state apparatus" is, perhaps, the most common and most frequent. It deserves most attention for this reason, and also because it indicates one of the most *serious* and *difficult* tasks that will confront the victorious proletariat. There is no doubt that these tasks will be very difficult, but if we, who call ourselves socialists, indicate this difficulty only to *shirk* these tasks, in practice the distinction between us and the lackeys of the bourgeoisie will be reduced to nought. The difficulty of the tasks of the proletarian revolution should prompt the proletariat's supporters to make a closer and more definite study of the means of carrying out these tasks.

The state apparatus is primarily the standing army, the police and the bureaucracy. By saying that proletariat will not be able technically to lay hold of this apparatus, the writers of *Novaya Zhizn* reveal their utter ignorance and their reluctance to take into account either facts or the arguments long ago cited in Bolshevik literature.

All the *Novaya Zhizn* writers regard themselves, if not as Marxists, then at least as being familiar with Marxism, as educated socialists. But Marx, basing himself on the experience of the Paris Commune, taught that the proletariat *cannot* simply lay hold of the ready-made state machine and use it for its own purposes, that the proletariat must *smash* this machine and substitute a new one for it (I deal with this in greater detail in a pamphlet, the first part of which is now finished and will soon appear under the title *The State and Revolution. A Marxist Theory of the State and the Tasks of the Proletariat in the Revolution*). This new type of state machinery was created by the Paris Commune, and the Russian Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies are a "state apparatus" of the *same type*. I have indicated this many times since April 4, 1917; it is dealt with in the resolutions of Bolshevik conferences and also in Bolshevik literature. *Novaya Zhizn* could, of course, have expressed its utter disagreement with Marx and with the Bolsheviks, but for a paper that has so often,

and so haughtily, scolded the Bolsheviks for their allegedly frivolous attitude to difficult problems to evade this question completely is tantamount to issuing itself a certificate of mental poverty.

The proletariat *cannot* "lay hold of" the "state apparatus" and "set it in motion". But it can *smash* everything that is oppressive, routine, incorrigibly bourgeois in the old state apparatus and substitute its *own*, new apparatus. The Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies are exactly this apparatus.

That *Novaya Zhizn* has completely forgotten about this "state apparatus" can be called nothing but monstrous. Behaving in this way in their theoretical reasoning, the *Novaya Zhizn* people are, in essence, doing in the sphere of political theory what the Cadets are doing in political practice. Because, if the proletariat and the revolutionary democrats *do not* in fact *need* a new state apparatus, then the Soviets lose their *raison d'être*, lose their right to existence, and the Kornilovite Cadets are *right* in trying to reduce the Soviets to nought!

This monstrous theoretical blunder and political blindness on the part of *Novaya Zhizn* is all the more monstrous because even the internationalist Mensheviks (with whom *Novaya Zhizn* formed a bloc during the last City Council elections in Petrograd) have on this question shown some proximity to the Bolsheviks. So, in the declaration of the Soviet majority made by Comrade Martov at the Democratic Conference, we read:

"The Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, set up in the first days of the revolution by a mighty burst of creative enthusiasm that stems from the people themselves, constitute the new fabric of the revolutionary state that has replaced the outworn state fabric of the old regime...."

This is a little too flowery; that is to say, rhetoric here covers up lack of clear political thinking. The Soviets have *not yet* replaced the old "fabric", and this old "fabric" is *not* the state fabric of the old regime, but the state fabric of *both* tsarism *and* of the bourgeois republic. But at any rate, Martov here stands head and shoulders above *Novaya Zhizn*.

The Soviets are a new state apparatus which, in the first place, provides an armed force of workers and peasants; and this force is not divorced from the people, as was the old standing army, but is very closely bound up with the people. From the military point of view this force is incomparably more powerful than previous forces; from the revolutionary point of view, it cannot be replaced by anything else. Secondly, this apparatus provides a bond with the people, with the majority of the people, so intimate, so indissoluble, so easily verifiable and renewable, that nothing even remotely like it existed in the previous state apparatus. Thirdly, this apparatus, by virtue of the fact that its personnel is elected and subject to recall at the people's will without any bureaucratic formalities, is far more democratic than any previous apparatus. Fourthly, it provides a close contact with the most varied professions, thereby facilitating the adoption of the most varied and most radical reforms without red tape. Fifthly, it provides an organisational form for the vanguard, i.e., for the most class-conscious, most energetic and most progressive section of the *oppressed* classes, the workers and peasants, and so constitutes an apparatus by means of which the vanguard of the oppressed classes can elevate, train, educate, and lead the *entire vast mass* of these classes, which has up to now stood completely outside of political life and history. Sixthly, it makes it possible to combine the advantages of the parliamentary system with those of immediate and direct democracy, i.e., to vest in the people's elected representatives both legislative and *executive* functions. Compared with the bourgeois parliamentary system, this is an advance in democracy's development which is of world-wide, historic significance.

In 1905, our Soviets existed only in embryo, so to speak, as they lived altogether only a few weeks. Clearly, under the conditions of that time, their comprehensive development was out of the question. It is still out of the question in the 1917 Revolution, for a few months is an extremely short period and—this is most important—the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders have *prostituted* the Soviets, have reduced their role to that of a talking shop, of an accomplice in the compromising policy of the leaders. The Soviets have been rotting and decaying alive under

the leadership of the Liebers, Dans, Tseretelis and Chernovs. The Soviets will be able to develop properly, to display their potentialities and capabilities to the full only by taking over *full* state power; for otherwise they have *nothing to do*, otherwise they are either simply embryos (and to remain an embryo too long is fatal), or playthings. "Dual power" means paralysis for the Soviets.

If the creative enthusiasm of the revolutionary classes had not given rise to the Soviets, the proletarian revolution in Russia would have been a hopeless cause, for the proletariat could certainly not retain power with the old state apparatus, and it is impossible to create a new apparatus immediately. The sad history of the prostitution of the Soviets by the Tseretelis and Chernovs, the history of the "coalition", is also the history of the liberation of the Soviets from petty-bourgeois illusions, of their passage through the "purgatory" of the practical experience of the utter abomination and filth of *all* and *sundry* bourgeois coalitions. Let us hope that this "purgatory" has steeled rather than weakened the Soviets.

* * *

The chief difficulty facing the proletarian revolution is the establishment on a country-wide scale of the most precise and most conscientious accounting and control, of *workers' control* of the production and distribution of goods.

When the writers of *Novaya Zhizn* argued that in advancing the slogan "workers' control" we were slipping into syndicalism, this argument was an example of the stupid schoolboy method of applying "Marxism" without studying it, just *learning it by rote* in the Struve manner. Syndicalism 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 the forefront. If we simply say in unison with the *Novaya Zhizn* writers: *not workers' control but state control*, it is simply a bourgeois-reformist phrase, it is, in essence, a purely Cadet formula, because the Cadets have no objection to the workers *participating* in "state" control. The Kornilovite Cadets know perfectly well that such participation offers the bourgeoisie the

best way of fooling the workers, the most subtle way of politically *bribing* all the Gvozdyovs, Nikitins, Prokopoviches, Tseretelis and the rest of that gang.

When we say: "workers' control", always *juxtaposing* this slogan to dictatorship of the proletariat, always putting it *immediately after* the latter, we thereby explain what kind of state we mean. The state is the organ of *class* domination. Of which class? If of the bourgeoisie, then it is the Cadet-Kornilov-"Kerensky" state which has been "Kornilovising" and "Kerenskyising" the working people of Russia for more than six months. If it is of the proletariat, if we are speaking of a proletarian state, *that is*, of the proletarian dictatorship, then workers' control *can* become the country-wide, all-embracing, omnipresent, most precise and most conscientious *accounting* of the production and distribution of goods.

This is the chief difficulty, the chief task that faces the proletarian, i.e., socialist, revolution. Without the Soviets, this task would be impracticable, at least in Russia. The Soviets *indicate* to the proletariat the organisational work which *can* solve this historically important problem.

This brings us to another aspect of the question of the state apparatus. In addition to the chiefly "oppressive" apparatus—the standing army, the police and the bureaucracy—the modern state possesses an apparatus which has extremely close connections with the banks and syndicates, an apparatus which performs an enormous amount of accounting and registration work, if it may be expressed this way. This apparatus must not, and should not, be smashed. It must be wrested from the control of the capitalists; the capitalists and the wires they pull must be *cut off, lopped off, chopped away from* this apparatus; it must be *subordinated* to the proletarian Soviets; it must be expanded, made more comprehensive, and nation-wide. And this *can* be done by utilising the achievements already made by large-scale capitalism (in the same way as the proletarian revolution can, in general, reach its goal only by utilising these achievements).

Capitalism has created an accounting *apparatus* in the shape of the banks, syndicates, postal service, consumers' societies, and office employees' unions. *Without big banks socialism would be impossible.*

The big banks are the "state apparatus" which we need to bring about socialism, and which we take ready-made from capitalism; our task here is merely to lop off what capitalistically mutilates this excellent apparatus, to make it even bigger, even more democratic, even more comprehensive. Quantity will be transformed into quality. A single State Bank, the biggest of the big, with branches in every rural district, in every factory, will constitute as much as nine-tenths of the socialist apparatus. This will be country-wide book-keeping, country-wide accounting of the production and distribution of goods, this will be, so to speak, something in the nature of the skeleton of socialist society.

We can "lay hold of" and "set in motion" this "state apparatus" (which is not fully a state apparatus under capitalism, but which will be so with us, under socialism) at one stroke, by a single decree, because the actual work of book-keeping, control, registering, accounting and counting is performed by employees, the majority of whom themselves lead a proletarian or semi-proletarian existence.

By a single decree of the proletarian government these employees can and must be transferred to the status of state employees, in the same way as the watchdogs of capitalism like Briand and other bourgeois ministers, by a single decree, transfer railwaymen on strike to the status of state employees. We shall need many more state employees of this kind, and more can be obtained, because capitalism has simplified the work of accounting and control, has reduced it to a comparatively simple system of book-keeping, which any literate person can do.

The conversion of the bank, syndicate, commercial, etc., etc., rank-and-file employees into state employees is quite feasible both technically (thanks to the preliminary work performed for us by capitalism, including finance capitalism) and politically, provided the Soviets exercise control and supervision.

As for the higher officials, of whom there are very few, but who gravitate towards the capitalists, they will have to be dealt with in the same way as the capitalists, i.e., "severely". Like the capitalists, they will offer resistance. This resistance will have to be broken, and if the immortally

naïve Peshekhonov, as early as June 1917, lisped like the infant that he was in state affairs, that "the resistance of the capitalists has been broken", this childish phrase, this childish boast, this childish swagger, *will be converted by the proletariat into reality.*

We can do this, for it is merely a question of breaking the resistance of an insignificant minority of the population, literally a handful of people, over each of whom the employees' unions, the trade unions, the consumers' societies and the Soviets will institute such *supervision* that every Tit Titych* will be *surrounded* as the French were at Sedan. We know these Tit Tityches by name: we only have to consult the lists of directors, board members, large shareholders, etc. There are several hundred, at most several thousand of them in the *whole* of Russia, and the proletarian state, with the apparatus of the Soviets, of the employees' unions, etc., will be able to appoint ten or even a hundred supervisors to each of them, so that instead of "breaking resistance" it may even be possible, by means of *workers' control* (over the capitalists), to make all resistance *impossible*.

The important thing will not be even the confiscation of the capitalists' property, but country-wide, all-embracing workers' control over the capitalists and their possible supporters. Confiscation alone leads nowhere, as it does not contain the element of organisation, of accounting for proper distribution. Instead of confiscation, we could easily impose a *fair* tax (even on the Shingaryov scale, for instance), taking care, of course, to preclude the possibility of anyone evading assessment, concealing the truth, evading the law. And this possibility can be *eliminated only* by the workers' control of the *workers' state*.

Compulsory syndication, i.e., compulsory amalgamation in associations under state control—this is what capitalism has prepared the way for, this is what has been carried out in Germany by the Junkers' state, this is what can be easily carried out in Russia by the Soviets, by the proletar-

* *Tit Titych*—a rich merchant, a character from A. N. Ostrovsky's play *Shouldering Another's Trouble*. Lenin uses the name to denote capitalist tycoons.—*Ed.*

ian dictatorship, and] this is what will *provide us with a state apparatus* that will be universal, up-to-date, and non-bureaucratic.*

* * *

The fourth plea of the counsels for the bourgeoisie is that the proletariat will not be able "to set the state apparatus in motion". There is nothing new in this plea compared with the preceding one. We could not, of course, either lay hold of or set in motion the old apparatus. The new apparatus, the Soviets, *has already* been set in motion by "a mighty burst of creative enthusiasm that stems from the people themselves". We only have to free it from the *shackles* put on it by the domination of the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders. This apparatus *is already* in motion; we only have to free it from the monstrous, petty-bourgeois impediments preventing it from going full speed ahead.

Two circumstances must be considered here to supplement what has already been said. In the first place, the new means of control have been created *not* by us, but by capitalism in its military-imperialist stage; and in the second place, it is important to introduce more democracy into the *administration* of a proletarian state.

The grain monopoly and bread rationing were introduced not by us, but by the capitalist state in war-time. It had already introduced universal labour conscription within the framework of capitalism, which is war-time penal servitude for the workers. But here too, as in all its history-making activities, the proletariat takes its weapons from capitalism and does not "invent" or "create them out of nothing".

The grain monopoly, bread rationing and labour conscription in the hands of the proletarian state, in the hands of sovereign Soviets, will be the most powerful means of accounting and control, means which, applied to the capitalists, and to *the rich in general*, applied to them by the

* For further details of the meaning of compulsory syndication see my pamphlet: *The Impending Catastrophe and How to Combat It*. [See *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, pp. 342-45.—Ed.]—*Author's note*.

workers, will provide a force unprecedented in history for "setting the state apparatus in motion", for overcoming the resistance of the capitalists, for subordinating them to the proletarian state. These means of control and of *compelling people to work* will be more potent than the laws of the Convention and its guillotine.

The guillotine *only* terrorised, only broke *active* resistance. For us, *this is not enough*.

For us, this is not enough. We must not only "terrorise" the capitalists, i.e., make them feel the omnipotence of the proletarian state and give up all idea of actively resisting it. We must also break *passive* resistance, which is undoubtedly more dangerous and harmful. We must not only break resistance of every kind. We must also *compel the capitalists to work* within the framework of the new state organisation. It is not enough to "remove" the capitalists; we must (after removing the undesirable and incorrigible "resisters") employ them *in the service of the new state*. This applies both to the capitalists and to the upper section of the bourgeois intellectuals, office employees, etc.

And we have the means to do this. The means and instruments for this have been placed in our hands by the capitalist state in the war. These means are the grain monopoly, bread rationing and labour conscription. "He who does not work, neither shall he eat"—this is the fundamental, the first and most important rule the Soviets of Workers' Deputies can and will introduce when they become the ruling power.

Every worker has a work-book. This book does not degrade him, although *at present* it is undoubtedly a document of capitalist wage slavery, certifying that the workman belongs to some parasite.

The Soviets will introduce work-books *for the rich* and *then* gradually for the whole population (in a peasant country work-books will probably not be needed for a long time for the overwhelming majority of the peasants). The work-book will cease to be the badge of the "common herd", a document of the "lower" orders, a certificate of wage slavery. It will become a document certifying that in the new society there are no longer any "workmen", nor, on the other hand, are there any longer men *who do not work*.

The rich will be obliged to get a work-book from the workers' or office employees' union with which their occupation is most closely connected, and every week, or other definite fixed period, they will have to get from that union a certificate to the effect that they are performing their work conscientiously; without this they will not be able to receive bread ration cards or provisions in general. The proletarian state will say: we need good organisers of banking and the amalgamation of enterprises (in this matter the capitalists have more experience, and it is easier to work with experienced people), and we need far, far more engineers, agronomists, technicians and scientifically trained specialists of every kind than were needed before. We shall give all these specialists work to which they are accustomed and which they can cope with; in all probability we shall introduce complete wage equality only gradually and shall pay those specialists higher salaries during the transition period. We shall place them, however, under comprehensive workers' control and we shall achieve the complete and absolute operation of the rule "He who does not work, neither shall he eat". We shall not invent the organisational form of the work, but take it ready-made from capitalism—we shall take over the banks, syndicates, the best factories, experimental stations, academies, and so forth; all that we shall have to do is to borrow the best models furnished by the advanced countries.

Of course, we shall not in the least descend to a utopia, we are not deserting the soil of most sober, practical reason when we say that the entire capitalist class will offer the most stubborn resistance, but this resistance will be broken by the organisation of the entire population in Soviets. Those capitalists who are exceptionally stubborn and recalcitrant will, of course, have to be punished by the confiscation of their whole property and by imprisonment. On the other hand, however, the victory of the proletariat will bring about *an increase* in the number of cases of the kind that I read about in today's *Izvestia* for example:

"On September 26, two engineers came to the Central Council of Factory Committees to report that a group of engineers had decided to form a union of socialist engineers. The Union believes that the present time is actually the beginning of the social revolution and places

itself at the disposal of the working people, desiring, in defence of the workers' interests, to work in complete unity with the workers' organisations. The representatives of the Central Council of Factory Committees answered that the Council will gladly set up in its organisation an Engineers' Section which embody in its programme the main theses of the First Conference of Factory Committees on workers' control over production. A joint meeting of delegates of the Central Council of Factory Committees and of the initiative group of socialist engineers will be held within the next few days." (*Izvestia*, September 27, 1917.)

* * *

The proletariat, we are told, will not be able to set the state apparatus in motion.

Since the 1905 Revolution, Russia has been governed by 130,000 landowners, who have perpetrated endless violence against 150,000,000 people, heaped unconstrained abuse upon them, and condemned the vast majority to inhuman toil and semi-starvation.

Yet we are told that the 240,000 members of the Bolshevik Party will not be able to govern Russia, govern her in the interests of the poor and against the rich. These 240,000 are already backed by no less than a million votes of the adult population, for this is precisely the proportion between the number of Party members and the number of votes cast for the Party that has been established by the experience of Europe and the experience of Russia as shown, for example, by the elections to the Petrograd City Council last August. We therefore already have a "state apparatus" of *one million* people devoted to the socialist state for the sake of high ideals and not for the sake of a fat sum received on the 20th of every month.

In addition to that we have a "magic way" to enlarge our state apparatus *tenfold* at once, at one stroke, a way which no capitalist state ever possessed or could possess. This magic way is to draw the working people, to draw the poor, into the daily work of state administration.

To explain how easy it will be to employ this magic way and how faultlessly it will operate, let us take the simplest and most striking example possible.

The state is to forcibly evict a certain family from a flat and move another in. This often happens in the capitalist

state, and it will also happen in our proletarian or socialist state.

The capitalist state evicts a working-class family which has lost its breadwinner and cannot pay the rent. The bailiff appears with police, or militia, a whole squad of them. To effect an eviction in a working-class district a whole detachment of Cossacks is required. Why? Because the bailiff and the militiaman refuse to go without a very strong military guard. They know that the scene of an eviction arouses such fury among the neighbours, among thousands and thousands of people who have been driven to the verge of desperation, arouses such hatred towards the capitalists and the capitalist state, that the bailiff and the squad of militiamen run the risk of being torn to pieces at any minute. Large military forces are required, several regiments must be brought into a big city, and the troops must come from some distant, outlying region so that the soldiers will not be familiar with the life of the urban poor, so that the soldiers will not be "infected" with socialism.

The proletarian state has to forcibly move a very poor family into a rich man's flat. Let us suppose that our squad of workers' militia is fifteen strong; two sailors, two soldiers, two class-conscious workers (of whom, let us suppose, only one is a member of our Party, or a sympathiser), one intellectual, and eight from the poor working people, of whom at least five must be women, domestic servants, unskilled labourers, and so forth. The squad arrives at the rich man's flat, inspects it and finds that it consists of five rooms occupied by two men and two women—"You must squeeze up a bit into two rooms this winter, citizens, and prepare two rooms for two families now living in cellars. Until the time, with the aid of engineers (you are an engineer, aren't you?), we have built good dwellings for everybody, you will have to squeeze up a little. Your telephone will serve ten families. This will save a hundred hours of work wasted on shopping, and so forth. Now in your family there are two unemployed persons who can perform light work: a citizeness fifty-five years of age and a citizen fourteen years of age. They will be on duty for three hours a day supervising the proper distribution of provisions for ten families and keeping the necessary account of this. The

student citizen in our squad will now write out this state order in two copies and you will be kind enough to give us a signed declaration that you will faithfully carry it out."

This, in my opinion, can illustrate how the distinction between the old bourgeois and the new socialist state apparatus and state administration could be illustrated.

We are not utopians. We know that an unskilled labourer or a cook cannot immediately get on with the job of state administration. In this we agree with the Cadets, with Breshkovskaya, and with Tsereteli. We differ, however, from these citizens in that we demand an immediate break with the prejudiced view that only the rich, or officials chosen from rich families, are capable of *administering* the state, of performing the ordinary, everyday work of administration. We demand that *training* in the work of state administration be conducted by class-conscious workers and soldiers and that this training be begun at once, i.e., that a *beginning* be made at once in training all the working people, all the poor, for this work.

We know that the Cadets are also willing to teach the people democracy. Cadet ladies are willing to deliver lectures to domestic servants on equal rights for women in accordance with the best English and French sources. And also, at the very next concert-meeting, before an audience of thousands, an exchange of kisses will be arranged on the platform: the Cadet lady lecturer will kiss Breshkovskaya, Breshkovskaya will kiss ex-Minister Tsereteli, and the grateful people will therefore receive an object lesson in republican equality, liberty and fraternity....

Yes, we agree that the Cadets, Breshkovskaya and Tsereteli are in their own way devoted to democracy and are propagating it among the people. But what is to be done if our conception of democracy is somewhat different from theirs?

In our opinion, to ease the incredible burdens and miseries of the war and also to heal the terrible wounds the war has inflicted on the people, *revolutionary* democracy is needed, *revolutionary* measures of the kind described in the example of the distribution of housing accommodation in the interests of the poor. *Exactly the same* procedure must be adopted

in both town and country for the distribution of provisions, clothing, footwear, etc., in respect of the land in the rural districts, and so forth. For the administration of the state in *this* spirit we can at once set in motion a state apparatus consisting of ten if not twenty million people, an apparatus such as no capitalist state has ever known. We alone can create such an apparatus, for we are sure of the fullest and devoted sympathy of the vast majority of the population. We alone can create such an apparatus, because we have class-conscious workers disciplined by long capitalist "schooling" (it was not for nothing that we went to learn in the school of capitalism), workers who are *capable* of forming a workers' militia and of *gradually* expanding it (beginning to expand it at once) into a militia *embracing the whole people*. The class-conscious workers must lead, but for the work of administration they can enlist the vast mass of the working and oppressed people.

It goes without saying that this new apparatus is bound to make mistakes in taking its first steps. But did not the peasants make mistakes when they emerged from serfdom and began to manage their own affairs? Is there any way other than practice by which the people can learn to govern themselves and to avoid mistakes? Is there any way other than by proceeding immediately to genuine self-government by the people? The chief thing now is to abandon the prejudiced bourgeois-intellectualist view that only special officials, who by their very social position are entirely dependent upon capital, can administer the state. The chief thing is to put an end to the state of affairs in which bourgeois officials and "socialist" ministers are trying to govern in the old way, but are incapable of doing so and, after seven months, are faced with a peasant revolt in a peasant country! The chief thing is to imbue the oppressed and the working people with confidence in their own strength, to prove to them in practice that they can and must themselves ensure the *proper*, most strictly regulated and organised distribution of bread, all kinds of food, milk, clothing, housing, etc., *in the interests of the poor*. Unless this is done, Russia *cannot* be saved from collapse and ruin. The conscientious, bold, universal move to hand over administrative work to proletarians and semi-proletarians, will, however,

rouse such unprecedented revolutionary enthusiasm among the people, will so multiply the people's forces in combating distress, that much that seemed impossible to our narrow, old, bureaucratic forces will become possible for the millions, who will *begin to work for themselves* and not for the capitalists, the gentry, the bureaucrats, and not out of fear of punishment.

* * *

Pertinent to the question of the state apparatus is also the question of centralism raised with unusual vehemence and ineptitude by Comrade Bazarov in *Novaya Zhizn* No. 138 of September 27, in an article entitled: "The Bolsheviki and the Problem of Power".

Comrade Bazarov reasons as follows: "The Soviets are not an apparatus suitable for all spheres of state life", for, he says, seven months' experience has shown, and "scores and hundreds of documents in the possession of the Economic Department of the St. Petersburg Executive Committee" have confirmed, that the Soviets, although actually enjoying "full power" in many places, "have not been able to achieve anything like satisfactory results in combating economic ruin". What is needed is an apparatus "divided up according to branches of production, with strict centralisation within each branch, and subordinated to one, country-wide centre". "It is a matter", if you please, "not of replacing the old apparatus, but merely of reforming it ... no matter how much the Bolsheviki may jeer at people with a plan..."

All these arguments of Comrade Bazarov's are positively amazing for their helplessness, they echo the arguments of the bourgeoisie and reflect their class point of view.

In fact, to say that the Soviets have anywhere in Russia ever enjoyed "full power" is simply ridiculous (if it is not a repetition of the selfish class lie of the capitalists). Full power means power over all the land, over all the banks, over all the factories; a man who is at all familiar with the facts of history and science on the connection between politics and economics could not have "forgotten" this "trifling" circumstance.

The bourgeoisie's device is to *withhold* power from the Soviets, *sabotage* every important step they take, while at the same time retaining government in their own hands, retaining power over the land, the banks, etc., and then throwing the blame for the ruin upon the Soviets! This is exactly what the whole sad experience of the coalition amounts to.

The Soviets have never had full power, and the measures they have taken could not result in anything but palliatives that added to the confusion.

The effort to prove the necessity for centralism to the Bolsheviks who are centralists by conviction, by their programme and by the entire tactics of their Party, is really like forcing an open door. The writers of *Novaya Zhizn* are wasting their time only because they have totally failed to understand the meaning and significance of our jeers at their "country-wide" point of view. And the *Novaya Zhizn* people have failed to understand this because they merely pay *lip-service* to the doctrine of the class struggle, but do not accept it seriously. Repeating the words about the class struggle they have learned by rote, they are constantly slipping into the "above-class point of view", amusing in theory and reactionary in practice, and are calling this fawning upon the bourgeoisie a "country-wide" plan.

The state, dear people, is a class concept. The state is an organ or instrument of violence exercised by one class against another. So long as it is an instrument of violence exercised by the bourgeoisie against the proletariat, the proletariat can have only one slogan: *destruction* of this state. But when the state will be a proletarian state, when it will be an instrument of violence exercised by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, we shall be fully and unreservedly in favour of a strong state power and of centralism.

To put it in more popular language, we do not jeer at "plans", but at Bazarov and Co.'s failure to understand that by repudiating "workers' control", by repudiating the "dictatorship of the proletariat" they *are for* the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. There is no middle course; a middle course is the futile dream of the petty-bourgeois democrat.

Not a single central body, not a single Bolshevik has ever argued against *centralisation* of the Soviets, against their

amalgamation. None of us objects to having factory committees in each branch of production, or to their centralisation. Bazarov is *wide of the mark*.

We laugh, have laughed, and will laugh not at "centralism", and not at "plans", but at *reformism*, because, after the experience of the coalition, your reformism is utterly ridiculous. And to say "not replace the apparatus but reform it" means to be a reformist, means to become not a revolutionary but a reformist democrat. Reformism means nothing more than concessions on the part of the ruling class, but *not* its overthrow; it makes concessions, but power remains in *its hands*.

This is precisely what has been tried during six months of the coalition.

This is what we laugh at. Having failed to obtain a thorough grasp of the doctrine of the class struggle, Bazarov allows himself to be caught by the bourgeoisie who sing in chorus "Just so, just so, we are by no means opposed to reform, we are in favour of the workers participating in country-wide control, we fully agree with that", and good Bazarov *objectively* sings the descant for the capitalists.

This has always been and always will be the case with people who in the thick of intense class struggle want to take up a "middle" position. And it is because the writers of *Novaya Zhizn* are incapable of understanding the class struggle that their policy is such a ridiculous and eternal oscillation between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

Get busy on "plans", dear citizens, that is not politics, that is not the class struggle; here you may be of use to the people. You have many economists on your paper. Unite with those engineers and others who are willing to work on problems of regulating production and distribution; devote the centre page of your big "apparatus" (your paper) to a practical study of precise facts on the production and distribution of goods in Russia, on banks, syndicates, etc., etc.—that is how you will be of use to the people; that is how your sitting between two stools will not be particularly harmful; such work on "plans" will earn not the ridicule, but the gratitude of the workers.

When the proletariat is victorious it will do the following, it will set economists, engineers, agronomists, and so

forth, to work *under the control* of the workers' organisations on drawing up a "plan", on verifying it, on devising labour-saving methods of centralisation, on devising the simplest, cheapest, most convenient and universal measures and methods of control. For this we shall pay the economists, statisticians and technicians good money ... but we shall not give them anything to eat if they do not perform this work conscientiously and entirely *in the interests of the working people*.

We are in favour of centralism and of a "plan", but of the centralism and plan of the *proletarian* state, of proletarian regulation of production and distribution in the interests of the poor, the working people, the exploited, *against* the exploiters. We can agree to only one meaning of the term "country-wide", namely, that which breaks the resistance of the capitalists, which gives all power to the majority of the people, i.e., the proletarians and semi-proletarians, the workers and the poor peasants.

* * *

The fifth plea is that the Bolsheviks will not be able to retain power because "the situation is exceptionally complicated"....

O wise men! They, perhaps, would be willing to reconcile themselves to revolution if only the "situation" were not "exceptionally complicated".

Such revolutions never occur, and sighs for such a revolution amount to nothing more than the reactionary wails of a bourgeois intellectual. Even if a revolution has started in a situation that seemed to be not very complicated, the development of the revolution itself *always* creates an *exceptionally* complicated situation. A revolution, a real, profound, a "people's" revolution, to use Marx's expression,* is the incredibly complicated and painful process of the death of the old and birth of the new social order, of the mode of life of tens of millions of people. Revolution is a most intense, furious, desperate class struggle and civil war. Not

* See Marx's letter to L. Kugelmann of April 12, 1871.—Ed.

a single great revolution in history has taken place without civil war. And only a "man in a muffler" can think that civil war is conceivable without an "exceptionally complicated situation".

If the situation were not exceptionally complicated there would be no revolution. If you are afraid of wolves don't go into the forest.

There is nothing to discuss in the fifth plea, because there is no economic, political, or any other meaning whatever in it. It contains only the yearning of people who are distressed and frightened by the revolution. To characterise this yearning I shall take the liberty of mentioning two little things from my personal experience.

I had a conversation with a wealthy engineer shortly before the July days. This engineer had once been a revolutionary, had been in the Social-Democratic movement and even a member of the Bolshevik Party. Now he was full of fear and rage at the turbulent and indomitable workers. "If they were at least like the German workers," he said (he is an educated man and has been abroad), "of course, I understand that the social revolution is, in general, inevitable, but here, when the workers' level has been so reduced by the war ... it is not a revolution, it is an abyss."

He was willing to accept the social revolution if history were to lead to it in the peaceful, calm, smooth and precise manner of a German express train pulling into a station. A sedate conductor would open the carriage door and announce: "Social Revolution Station! *Alle Aussteigen!* (All change!)" In that case he would have no objection to changing his position of engineer under the Tit Tityches to that of engineer under the workers' organisations.

That man has seen strikes. He knows what a storm of passion the most ordinary strike arouses even in the most peaceful times. He, of course, understands how many million times more furious this storm must be when the class struggle has aroused *all* the working people of a vast country, when war and exploitation have driven almost to desperation millions of people who for centuries have been tormented by the landowners, for decades have been robbed and downtrodden by the capitalists and the tsar's officials. He understands all this "theoretically", he only pays *lip-service*

to this, he is simply terrified by the "exceptionally complicated situation".

After the July days, thanks to the extremely solicitous attention with which the Kerensky government honoured me, I was obliged to go underground. Of course, it was the workers who sheltered people like us. In a small working-class house in a remote working-class suburb of Petrograd, dinner is being served. The hostess puts bread on the table. The host says: "Look what fine bread. 'They' dare not give us bad bread now. And we had almost given up even thinking that we'd ever get good bread in Petrograd again."

I was amazed at this class appraisal of the July days. My thoughts had been revolving around the political significance of those events, weighing the role they played in the general course of events, analysing the situation that caused this zigzag in history and the situation it would create, and how we ought to change our slogans and alter our Party apparatus to adapt it to the changed situation. As for bread, I, who had not known want, did not give it a thought. I took bread for granted, as a by-product of the writer's work, as it were. The mind approaches the foundation of everything, the class struggle for bread, through political analysis that follows an extremely complicated and devious path.

This member of the oppressed class, however, even though one of the well-paid and quite intelligent workers, takes the bull by the horns with that astonishing simplicity and straightforwardness, with that firm determination and amazing clarity of outlook from which we intellectuals are as remote as the stars in the sky. The whole world is divided into two camps: "us", the working people, and "them", the exploiters. Not a shadow of embarrassment over what had taken place; it was just one of the battles in the long struggle between labour and capital. When you fell trees, chips fly.

"What a painful thing is this 'exceptionally complicated situation' created by the revolution," that's how the bourgeois intellectual thinks and feels.

"We squeezed 'them' a bit; 'they' won't dare to lord it over us as they did before. We'll squeeze again—and chuck them out altogether," that's how the worker thinks and feels.

* * *

The sixth and last plea: the proletariat "will be incapable of resisting all the pressure by hostile forces that will sweep away not only the proletarian dictatorship, but the entire revolution into the bargain".

Don't try to scare us, gentlemen, you won't succeed. We saw these hostile forces and their pressure in Kornilovism (from which the Kerensky regime in no way differs). Everybody saw, and the people remember, how the proletariat and the poor peasants swept away the Kornilov gang, and how pitiful and helpless proved to be the position of the supporters of the bourgeoisie and of the few exceptionally well-to-do local small landowners who were exceptionally "hostile" to the revolution. *Dyelo Naroda* of September 30 urges the workers to "be patient and put up with" Kerensky (i.e., Kornilov) and the fake Tsereteli Bulygin Duma until the convocation of the Constituent Assembly (convened under the protection of "military measures" against insurgent peasants!) and, with great gusto, it repeats precisely *Novaya Zhizn's* sixth plea and shouts until it is hoarse: "The Kerensky government will under no circumstances submit" (to the rule of the Soviets, the rule of the workers and peasants, which *Dyelo Naroda*, not wishing to lag behind the pogrom-mongers and anti-Semites, monarchists and Cadets, calls the rule of "Trotsky and Lenin": these are the lengths to which the Socialist-Revolutionaries go!).

But neither *Novaya Zhizn* nor *Dyelo Naroda* can scare the class-conscious workers. "The Kerensky government," you say, "will under no circumstances submit", i.e., it will repeat the Kornilov revolt, to put it more simply, bluntly and clearly. And the gentlemen of *Dyelo Naroda* dare to say that this will be "civil war", that this is a "horrible prospect"!

No, gentlemen, you will not fool the workers. It will not be civil war but a hopeless revolt of a handful of Kornilovites. If they want to "refuse to submit" to the people and at all costs provoke a repetition on a wide scale of what happened to the Kornilov men in Vyborg—if that is what the Socialist-Revolutionaries want, if that is what the member of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party Kerensky

wants, he may drive the people to desperation. But you will not scare the workers and soldiers with this, gentlemen.

What boundless insolence. They faked up a new Bulygin Duma; by means of fraud they recruited a crowd of reactionary co-operators and village kulaks to help them, added to these the capitalists and landowners (the so-called property-owning classes) and with the aid of this gang of Kornilovites they want to *thwart the will of the people*, the will of the workers and peasants.

They have brought affairs in a peasant country to such a pass that peasant revolt is spreading everywhere like a river in flood! Think of it! In a democratic republic in which 80 per cent of the population are peasants, the peasants have been driven to revolt.... This same *Dyelo Naroda*, Chernov's newspaper, the organ of the "Socialist-Revolutionary" Party, which on September 30 has the effrontery to advise the workers and peasants to "be patient", was obliged to admit in a leading article on September 29:

"So far practically nothing has been done to put an end to those relations of bondage that still prevail in the villages of central Russia."

This same *Dyelo Naroda*, in the same leading article of September 29, says that "the dead hand of Stolypin is still making itself strongly felt" in the methods employed by the "revolutionary ministers"; in other words, putting it more clearly and simply, it brands Kerensky, Nikitin, Kishkin and Co. as *Stolypins*.

The "Stolypins" Kerensky and Co. have driven the peasants to revolt, are now taking "military measures" against the peasants, are trying to soothe the people with the convocation of the Constituent Assembly (although Kerensky and Tsereteli have already *deceived* the people once by solemnly proclaiming on July 8 that the Constituent Assembly would be convened on the appointed date, September 17; they then *broke their promise* and postponed the Constituent Assembly even against the advice of the *Menshevik Dan*, postponed the Constituent Assembly not to the end of October as the Menshevik Central Executive Committee of that time wished, but to the end of November). The "Stolypins" Kerensky and Co. are trying to soothe the people with the

imminent convocation of the Constituent Assembly, as if the people can believe those who have already lied in this matter, as if the people can believe that the Constituent Assembly will be *properly* convened by a government which has taken *military measures* in remote villages, that is to say, is openly *conniving* at the arbitrary arrest of class-conscious peasants and the *rigging* of the elections.

The government has driven the peasants to revolt and now has the effrontery to say to them: "You must 'be patient', you must wait, trust the government which is pacifying insurgent peasants by 'military measures'!"

To bring matters to such a pitch that hundreds of thousands of Russian soldiers perish in the offensive after June 19, the war is being protracted, German sailors have mutinied and are throwing their officers overboard, to bring matters to such a pitch, all the time uttering phrases about peace but *not offering* a just peace to *all* the belligerents, and yet to have the effrontery to tell the workers and peasants, to tell the dying soldiers, "you must be patient", trust the government of the "Stolypin man" Kerensky, trust the Kornilov generals for another month, perhaps in that month they will send several tens of thousands more soldiers to the slaughter.... "You must be patient"....

Isn't that shameless?

But you won't fool the soldiers, gentlemen of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Kerensky's fellow party members.

The workers and soldiers will not endure the Kerensky government for a single day, for an *extra* hour, for they know that the *Soviet* Government will *immediately* offer all the belligerents a just peace and therefore will *in all probability* achieve an immediate armistice and a speedy peace.

Not for a single day, not for an *extra* hour will the soldiers of our peasant army allow the Kerensky government—the government which is employing *military measures* to suppress the peasant revolt—to remain in power against the will of the Soviets.

No, gentlemen of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, Kerensky's fellow party members, you won't fool the workers and peasants any more.

* * *

On the question of the pressure by hostile forces which the mortally frightened *Novaya Zhizn* assures us will sweep away the proletarian dictatorship, still another monstrous logical and political mistake is made, which only people who have allowed themselves to be frightened out of their wits can fail to see.

"Pressure by hostile forces will sweep away the proletarian dictatorship," you say. Very well. But you are all economists and educated people, dear fellow-citizens. You all know that to contrast democracy to the bourgeoisie is senseless and a sign of ignorance; it is the same as contrasting pounds to yards, for there is a democratic bourgeoisie and undemocratic groups of the petty bourgeoisie (capable of raising a Vendée).

"Hostile forces" is merely an empty phrase. The class term is *bourgeoisie* (backed by the landowners).

The bourgeoisie and the landowners, the proletariat, and the petty bourgeoisie, the small proprietors, primarily the peasants—these are the three main "forces" into which Russia, like every capitalist country, is divided. These are the three main "forces" that have long been revealed in every capitalist country (including Russia) not only by scientific economic analysis, but also by the *political experience* of the modern history of all countries, by the experience of all European revolutions since the eighteenth century, by the experience of the two Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917.

So, you threaten the proletariat with the prospect that its rule will be swept away by the pressure of the bourgeoisie? That, and that alone, is what your threat amounts to, it has no other meaning.

Very well. If, for example, the bourgeoisie can sweep away the rule of the workers and poor peasants, then the only alternative is a "coalition", i.e., an alliance, or agreement, between the petty bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie. Nothing else can be contemplated!

But coalition has been tried for about six months and it has led to bankruptcy, and you yourselves, my dear but dense citizens of *Novaya Zhizn*, have *renounced* coalition.

So what do we get?

You have become so muddled, citizens of *Novaya Zhizn*, you have allowed yourselves to be so scared, that you cannot think straight in the extremely simple matter of *counting even up to three, let alone up to five.*

Either all power to the bourgeoisie—the slogan you have long ceased to advocate, and which the bourgeoisie themselves dare not even hint at, for they know that the people overthrew this power with one hitch of the shoulder at the time of the April 20-21 events, and would overthrow* it now with thrice that determination and ruthlessness; or power to the petty bourgeoisie, i.e., a coalition (alliance, agreement) between them and the bourgeoisie, for the petty bourgeoisie do not wish to and *cannot* take power alone and independently, as has been proved by the experience of all revolutions, and as is proved by economics, which explains that in a capitalist country it is possible to stand for capital and it is possible to stand for labour, but it is impossible to stand for long in between. In Russia this coalition has for six months tried scores of ways and failed.

Or, finally, all power to the proletarians and the poor peasants against the bourgeoisie in order to break their resistance. This has not yet been tried, and you, gentlemen of *Novaya Zhizn*, are *dissuading* the people from this, you are trying to frighten them with your own fear of the bourgeoisie.

No fourth way can be invented.

If *Novaya Zhizn*, therefore, is afraid of the proletarian dictatorship and rejects it because, as it claims, the proletarian power may be defeated by the bourgeoisie, it is tantamount to its *surreptitiously reverting* to the position of *compromise* with the capitalists! It is as clear as daylight, that whoever is afraid of resistance, whoever does not believe that it is possible to break this resistance, whoever warns

* On April 20-21 (May 3-4), 1917, the workers and soldiers of Petrograd took part in a protest demonstration against the Note of May 1 (April 18), 1917, of the Foreign Minister Milyukov. In it Milyukov assured the Entente governments that the people of Russia allegedly were eager to continue the imperialist war "to the finish". As a result of the indignation that swept the popular masses and led to the protest demonstrations against the foreign policy of the Provisional Government. Milyukov and the War Minister Guchkov were compelled to resign.—*Ed.*

the people: "beware of the resistance of the capitalists, you will not be able to cope with it", is *thereby* again calling for compromise with the capitalists.

Novaya Zhizn is hopelessly and pitifully muddled, as are all the petty-bourgeois democrats who now realise that the coalition is bankrupt, dare not defend it openly and, at the same time, protected by the bourgeoisie, fear the transfer of all power to the proletarians and poor peasants.

* * *

To fear the resistance of the capitalists and yet to call oneself a revolutionary, to wish to be regarded as a socialist—isn't that disgraceful? How low must international socialism, corrupted by opportunism, have fallen ideologically if such voices *could* be raised?

We have already seen the strength of the capitalists' resistance; the entire people have seen it, for the capitalists are more class-conscious than the other classes and at once realised the significance of the Soviets, at once exerted *all their efforts* to the utmost, resorted to everything, went to all lengths, resorted to the most incredible lies and slander, to military plots *in order to frustrate the Soviets*, to reduce them to nought, to prostitute them (with the aid of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries), to transform them into talking shops, to wear down the peasants and workers by months and months of empty talk and playing at revolution.

We have not yet seen, however, the strength of resistance of the proletarians and poor peasants, for this strength will become fully apparent only when power is in the hands of the proletariat, when tens of millions of people who have been crushed by want and capitalist slavery see from experience and *feel* that state power has 'passed into the hands of the oppressed classes, that the state is helping the poor to fight the landowners and capitalists, is *breaking* their resistance. *Only* then shall we see what untapped forces of resistance to the capitalists are latent among the people; only then will what Engels called "latent socialism" manifest itself. Only then, for every *ten thousand* overt and con-

ceased enemies of working-class rule, manifesting themselves actively or by passive resistance, there will arise *a million* new fighters who had been politically dormant, writhing in the torments of poverty and despair, having ceased to believe that they were human, that they had the right to live, that they too could be served by the entire might of the modern centralised state, that contingents of the proletarian militia could, with the fullest confidence, also call upon *them* to take a direct, immediate, daily part in state administration.

The capitalists and landowners, with the kind help of Plekhanov, Breshkovskaya, Tsereteli, Chernov and Co., have done *everything* in their power to *defile* the democratic republic, to defile it by servility to wealth to such a degree that the people are being overcome by apathy, indifference; *it is all the same to them*, because the hungry man cannot see the difference between the republic and the monarchy; the freezing, barefooted, worn-out soldier sacrificing his life for alien interests is not inclined to love the republic.

But when every labourer, every unemployed worker, every cook, every ruined peasant sees, not from the newspapers, but with his own eyes, that the proletarian state is not cringing to wealth but is helping the poor, that this state does not hesitate to adopt revolutionary measures, that it confiscates surplus stocks of provisions from the parasites and distributes them to the hungry, that it forcibly installs the homeless in the houses of the rich, that it compels the rich to pay for milk but does not give them a drop until the children of *all* poor families are sufficiently supplied, that the land is being transferred to the working people and the factories and banks are being placed under the control of the workers, and that immediate and severe punishment is meted out to the millionaires who conceal their wealth—when the poor see and feel this, no capitalist or kulak forces, no forces of world finance capital which manipulates thousands of millions, will vanquish the people's revolution; on the contrary, *the socialist revolution* will triumph all over the world for it is maturing in all countries.

Our revolution will be invincible if it is not afraid of itself, if it transfers all power to the proletariat, for behind us stand the immeasurably larger, more developed, more

organised world forces of the proletariat which are temporarily held down by the war but not destroyed; on the contrary, the war has multiplied them.

* * *

How can one be afraid that the Bolshevik government, that is to say, the proletarian government, which is assured of the devoted support of the poor peasants, will be "swept away" by the capitalist gentlemen! What shortsightedness! What disgraceful fear of the people! What hypocrisy! Those who show this fear belong to that "high" (by capitalist standards, but actually *rotten*) "society" which utters the word "justice" without believing in it, from habit, as a trite phrase, attaching no meaning to it.

Here is an example.

Mr. Peshekhonov is a well-known semi-Cadet. A more moderate Trudovik, one of the same mind as the Breshkovskayas and Plekhanovs, will not be found. There has never been a minister more servile to the bourgeoisie. The world had never seen a more ardent advocate of "coalition", of compromise with the capitalists.

Here are the admissions this gentleman was *forced* to make in his speech at the "Democratic" (read: Bulygin) Conference as reported by the defencist *Izvestia*:

"There are two programmes. One is the programme of group claims, class and national claims. This programme is most frankly advocated by the Bolsheviks. It is not easy, however, for the other sections of the democracy to reject this programme. They are the claims of the working people, the claims of the cheated and oppressed nationalities. It is not so easy, therefore, for the democracy to break with the Bolsheviks, to reject these class demands, primarily because in essence these demands are just. But this programme, for which we fought before the revolution, for the sake of which we made the revolution, and which we would all unanimously support under other circumstances, constitutes a very grave danger under present conditions. The danger is all the greater now because these demands have to be presented at a time when it is impossible for the state to comply with them. We must first defend the whole—the state, to save it from doom, and there is only one way to do that; not the satisfaction of demands, however just and cogent they may be, but, on the contrary, restriction and sacrifice, which must be contributed from all quarters." (*Izvestia*, September 17.)

Mr. Peshekhonov fails to understand that as long as the capitalists are in power he is defending *not* the whole, but the selfish interests of Russian and "Allied" imperialist capital. Mr. Peshekhonov fails to understand that the war would cease to be an imperialist, predatory war of annexation only after a rupture with the capitalists, with *their* secret treaties, with *their* annexations (seizure of alien territory), with *their* banking and financial swindles. Mr. Peshekhonov fails to understand that only *after* this would the war become—if the enemy rejected the formal offer of a just peace—a defensive war, a just war. Mr. Peshekhonov fails to understand that the defence potential of a country that has thrown off the yoke of capital, that has given the peasants land and has placed the banks and factories under workers' control, would be *many times* greater than the defence potential of a capitalist country.

The main thing that Mr. Peshekhonov *fails* to understand is that he *surrenders* his entire position, the entire position of the entire petty-bourgeois democracy when he is forced to admit the justice of Bolshevism, to admit that its demands are the demands of the "*working people*", i.e., of the majority of the people.

This is where our strength lies. This is why our government will be invincible; because even our opponents are forced to admit that the Bolshevik programme is that of the "*working people*" and the "*oppressed nationalities*".

After all, Mr. Peshekhonov is the political friend of the Cadets, of the *Yedinstvo* and *Dyelo Naroda* people, of the Breshkovskayas and Plekhanovs, he is the representative of the kulaks and of the gentlemen whose wives and sisters would come tomorrow to gouge out with their umbrellas the eyes of wounded Bolsheviks if they were to be defeated by Kornilov's or (which is the same thing) Kerensky's troops.

A gentleman like that is *forced* to admit the "justice" of the Bolshevik demands.

For him "justice" is merely an empty phrase. For the mass of semi-proletarians, however, and for the majority of the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie who have been ruined, tortured and worn out by the war, it is not an empty phrase, but a most acute, most burning and immense question of

death from starvation, of a crust of bread. That is why *no* policy can be based on a "coalition", on a "compromise" between the interests of the starving and ruined and the interests of the exploiters. That is why the Bolshevik government is *assured* of the support of the overwhelming majority of *these* people.

Justice is an empty word, say the intellectuals and those rascals who are inclined to proclaim themselves Marxists on the lofty grounds that they have "contemplated the *hand parts*" of economic materialism.

Ideas become a power when they grip the people. And precisely at the present time the Bolsheviks, i.e., the representatives of revolutionary proletarian internationalism, have embodied in their policy the idea that is motivating countless working people all over the world.

Justice alone, the mere anger of the people against exploitation, would never have brought them on to the true path of socialism. But now that, thanks to capitalism, the material apparatus of the big banks, syndicates, railways, and so forth, has grown, now that the immense experience of the advanced countries has accumulated a stock of engineering marvels, the employment of which is being *hindered* by capitalism, now that the class-conscious workers have built up a party of a quarter of a million members to systematically lay hold of this apparatus and set it in motion with the support of all the working and exploited people—now that these conditions *exist*, no power on earth can prevent the Bolsheviks, *if they do not allow themselves to be scared* and if they succeed in taking power, from retaining it until the triumph of the world socialist revolution.

Written at the end
of September-October 1 (14),
1917

Published in *Prosveshcheniye*
No. 1-2
October 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 26,
pp. 90-130

Report on the Tasks of the Soviet Power Delivered at the Meeting of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies October 25 (November 7), 1917

Newspaper Report

Comrades, the workers' and peasants' revolution, about the necessity of which the Bolsheviks have always spoken, has been accomplished.

What is the significance of this workers' and peasants' revolution? Its significance is, first of all, that we shall have a Soviet government, our own organ of power, in which the bourgeoisie will have no share whatsoever. The oppressed masses will themselves create a power. The old state apparatus will be shattered to its foundations and a new administrative apparatus set up in the form of the Soviet organisations.

From now on, a new phase in the history of Russia begins, and this, the third Russian revolution, should in the end lead to the victory of socialism.

One of our urgent tasks is to put an immediate end to the war. It is clear to everybody that in order to end this war, which is closely bound up with the present capitalist system, capital itself must be fought.

We shall be helped in this by the world working-class movement, which is already beginning to develop in Italy, Britain and Germany.

The proposal we make to international democracy for a just and immediate peace will everywhere awaken an ardent response among the international proletarian masses. All the secret treaties* must be immediately published in order to strengthen the confidence of the proletariat.

* The secret treaties signed by tsarist Russia and the imperialist states were published by the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs of Soviet Russia in December 1917 on the basis of the decree of the Sec-

Within Russia a huge section of the peasantry have said that they have played long enough with the capitalists, and will now march with the workers. A single decree putting an end to landed proprietorship will win us the confidence of the peasants. The peasants will understand that the salvation of the peasantry lies only in an alliance with the workers. We shall institute genuine workers' control over production.

We have now learned to make a concerted effort. The revolution that has just been accomplished is evidence of this. We possess the strength of mass organisation, which will overcome everything and lead the proletariat to the world revolution.

We must now set about building a proletarian socialist state in Russia.

Long live the world socialist revolution! (*Stormy applause.*)

Izvestia TsIK No. 207,
October 26, 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 26,
pp. 239-41

ond All-Russia Congress of Soviets. Over a hundred treaties and other secret documents of the tsarist and of the Provisional Government were exempted from the archives of the former Ministry of Foreign Affairs, deciphered and published. They were first published in the newspapers and later in nine separate editions. Their publication played an important part in exposing the imperialist character of the First World War.—*Ed.*

Draft Regulations on Workers' Control

1. *Workers' control* over the production, storage, purchase and sale of all products and raw materials shall be introduced in all industrial, commercial, banking, agricultural and other enterprises employing not less than five workers and office employees (together), or with an annual turnover of not less than 10,000 rubles.

2. Workers' control shall be exercised by all the workers and office employees of an enterprise, either directly, if the enterprise is small enough to permit it, or through their elected representatives, who shall be elected *immediately* at general meetings, at which minutes of the elections shall be taken and the names of those elected communicated to the government and to the local Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

3. Unless permission is given by the elected representatives of the workers and office employees, the suspension of work of an enterprise or an industrial establishment of state importance (see Clause 7), or any change in its operation is strictly prohibited.

4. The elected representatives shall be given access to *all* books and documents and to *all* warehouses and stocks of materials, instruments and products, without exception.

5. The decisions of the elected representatives of the workers and office employees are binding upon the owners of enterprises and may be annulled only by trade unions and their congresses.

6. In all enterprises of state importance *all* owners and *all* representatives of the workers and office employees elected for the purpose of exercising workers' control shall be

answerable to the state for the maintenance of the strictest order and discipline and for the protection of property. Persons guilty of dereliction of duty, concealment of stocks, accounts, etc., shall be punished by the confiscation of the whole of their property and by imprisonment for a term of up to five years.

7. By enterprises of state importance are meant all enterprises working for defence, or in any way connected with the manufacture of articles necessary for the existence of the masses of the population.

8. More detailed rules on workers' control shall be drawn up by the local Soviets of Workers' Deputies and by conferences of factory committees, and also by committees of office employees at general meetings of their representatives.

Written October 26 or 27
(November 8 or 9), 1917

First published in 1929
in the second and third
editions of Lenin's
Collected Works, Vol. XXII

Collected Works, Vol. 26,
pp. 264-65

To the Population

Comrades—workers, soldiers, peasants and all working people!

The workers' and peasants' revolution has definitely triumphed in Petrograd, having dispersed or arrested the last remnants of the small number of Cossacks deceived by Kerensky. The revolution has triumphed in Moscow too. Even before the arrival of a number of troop trains dispatched from Petrograd, the officer cadets and other Kornilovites in Moscow signed peace terms—the disarming of the cadets and the dissolution of the Committee of Salvation.*

Daily and hourly reports are coming in from the front and from the villages announcing the support of the overwhelming majority of the soldiers in the trenches and the peasants in the uyezds for the new government and its decrees on peace and the immediate transfer of the land to the peasants. The victory of the workers' and peasants' revolution is assured because the majority of the people have already sided with it.

It is perfectly understandable that the landowners and capitalists, and the *top groups* of office employees and civil servants closely linked with the bourgeoisie, in a word, all the wealthy and those supporting them, react to the new revolution with hostility, resist its victory, threaten to

* *The Committee of Salvation, the Committee of Public Security, was formed on October 25 (November 7), 1917, as an organ of counter-revolution in Moscow. It led the counter-revolutionary revolt of officer cadets which began on October 28 (November 10). On November 2 (15) the revolt was suppressed and the Committee of Public Security capitulated.—Ed.*

close the banks, disrupt or bring to a standstill the work of the different establishments, and hamper the revolution in every way, openly or covertly. Every politically-conscious worker was well aware that we would inevitably encounter resistance of this kind. The entire Party press of the Bolsheviks has written about this on numerous occasions. Not for a single minute will the working classes be intimidated by this resistance; they will not falter in any way before the threats and strikes of the supporters of the bourgeoisie.

The majority of the people are with us. The majority of the working and oppressed people all over the world are with us. Ours is the cause of justice. Our victory is assured.

The resistance of the capitalists and the high-ranking employees will be smashed. Not a single person will be deprived of his property except under the special state law proclaiming nationalisation of the banks and syndicates. This law is being drafted. Not one of the working people will suffer the loss of a kopek; on the contrary, he will be helped. Apart from the strictest accounting and control, apart from levying the set taxes in full the government has no intention of introducing any other measure.

In support of these just demands the vast majority of the people have rallied round the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government.

Comrades, working people! Remember that now *you yourselves* are at the helm of state. No one will help you if you yourselves do not unite and take into *your hands all affairs* of the state. *Your Soviets* are from now on the organs of state authority, legislative bodies with full powers.

Rally around your Soviets. Strengthen them. Get on with the job yourselves; begin right at the bottom, do not wait for anyone. Establish the strictest revolutionary law and order, mercilessly suppress any attempts to create anarchy by drunkards, hooligans, counter-revolutionary officer cadets, Kornilovites and their like.

Ensure the strictest control over production and accounting of products. Arrest and hand over to the revolutionary courts all who dare to injure the people's cause, irrespective of whether the injury is manifested in sabotaging production (damage, delay and subversion), or in hoarding grain and

products or holding up shipments of grain, disorganising the railways and the postal, telegraph and telephone services, or any resistance whatever to the great cause of peace, the cause of transferring the land to the peasants, of ensuring workers' control over the production and distribution of products.

Comrades, workers, soldiers, peasants and all working people! Take *all* power into the hands of *your* Soviets. Be watchful and guard like the apple of your eye your land, grain, factories, equipment, products, transport—all that from now onwards will be *entirely* your property, public property. Gradually, with the consent and approval of the majority of the peasants, in keeping with their *practical* experience and that of the workers, we shall go forward firmly and unswervingly to the victory of socialism—a victory that will be sealed by the advanced workers of the most civilised countries, bring the peoples lasting peace and liberate them from all oppression and exploitation.

V. Ulyanov (*Lenin*)

Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars

November 5, 1917
Petrograd

Pravda No. 4
(evening edition),
November 19 (6), 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 26,
pp. 296-98

Reply to Questions from Peasants

In reply to numerous questions from peasants, be it known that all power in the country henceforth belongs wholly to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. The workers' revolution has won in Petrograd and Moscow and is winning everywhere else in Russia. The Workers' and Peasants' Government ensures the alliance of the mass of the peasants, the poor peasants, the majority of the peasants, with the workers against the landowners, against the capitalists.

Hence the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies, primarily the uyezd and then the gubernia Soviets, are from now on, pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, vested with full governmental authority in their localities. Landed proprietorship has been *abolished* by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets.* A decree on land has already been issued by the present Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government. In conformity with this decree all landed estates pass over wholly to the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies.

The volost land committees must at once take over the administration of all landed estates, instituting the strictest accounting, maintaining perfect order and safeguarding

* *The Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies* met in Petrograd on October 25-26 (November 7-8), 1917. The Congress proclaimed the transfer of power to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, endorsed the Decree on Peace and the Decree on Land submitted by Lenin and formed the worker and peasant government, the Council of People's Commissars, with Lenin at its head.—*Ed.*

with utmost strictness the former property of the landowners, which henceforth is the property of the whole people and which the people themselves must therefore protect.

All rulings of the volost land committees issued with the approval of the uyezd Soviets of Peasants' Deputies have the force of *law* and must be carried out unconditionally and without delay.

The Workers' and Peasants' Government appointed by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets has been named the Council of People's Commissars.

The Council of People's Commissars calls upon the peasants to take all power into their own hands in their respective localities. The workers give their full, undivided, all-round support to the peasants, are getting the production of machines and implements started, and ask the peasants to help by delivering grain.

V. Ulyanov (Lenin)

Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars

Petrograd
November 5, 1917

Izvestia TsIK No. 219
November 8, 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 26,
pp. 299-300

The Salaries of High-Ranking Office Employees and Officials

Draft Decree for the Council
of People's Commissars*

Recognising the need for energetic measures to reduce the salaries of high-ranking office employees and officials in all state, public and private institutions and enterprises, the Council of People's Commissars decrees:

1) that the salary limit for People's Commissars be fixed at 500 rubles a month where there are no children, and 100 rubles extra for each child; housing to be at the rate of not more than 1 room for each member of the family; 2) that all local Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies be asked to prepare and carry out revolutionary measures to impose special taxes on high-ranking employees; 3) that the Ministry for Finance be instructed to draft a general law concerning this reduction; 4) that the Ministry for Finance and all the respective commissars be instructed to immediately study the estimates of the ministries and cut all excessively high salaries and pensions.

Written November 18
(December 1), 1917

First published in 1933
In *Lenin Miscellany XXI*

Collected Works, Vol. 42,
pp. 37-38

* This draft was adopted by the Council of People's Commissars with only a few amendments in November 1917.

The decision of the Council of People's Commissars of January 2 (15), 1918, "On the Rate of Payment for Top Officials" specified that the limits set on the salaries for the People's Commissars did not involve a ban on paying high rates to specialists.—*Ed.*

Draft Decree on the Right of Recall*

No elective institution or representative assembly can be regarded as being truly democratic and really representative of the people's will unless the electors' right to recall those elected is accepted and exercised. This fundamental principle of true democracy applies to all representative assemblies without exception, including the Constituent Assembly.

Because the system of proportional representation is more democratic than the majority system, it demands more complex measures for the exercise of the right of recall, that is, the actual subordination of the elected to the people. But it would be betraying democracy and abdicating the basic principles and tasks of the socialist revolution, which has begun in Russia, to refuse, on that ground, to practise the right of recall, or to hamper or restrict its exercise in any way. What proportional representation demands is not a curtailment of the right of recall but a mere change of form.

Since the system of proportional representation is based on acceptance of the party system and the conduct of elections by organised parties, any major change in the balance of class forces and the relation of classes to parties, especially in the event of splits within major parties, necessarily produces the need for a re-election in any electoral district where there is a clear and obvious discrepancy between the will

* The draft decree was adopted by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and published on November 23 (December 6) in the newspaper *Izvestia TsIK* No. 233.—*Ed.*

of the various classes and their strength, on the one hand, and the party composition of those elected, on the other. True democracy makes it imperative that the appointment of re-elections should not depend only on the institution to be re-elected, that is, that the desire on the part of those elected to retain their seats should not work against the exercise of the people's will to recall its representatives.

In view of this, the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, resolves:

The Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies of each electoral district shall have the right to appoint re-elections to all city, Zemstvo and all other representative institutions in general, not excluding the Constituent Assembly. The Soviets shall also have the right to set the date for the re-elections, which shall be held in the usual manner, in strict conformity with the principles of the system of proportional representation.

Written November 19
(December 2), 1917

Published in *Minutes
of the All-Russia Central
Executive Committee of Soviets
of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants'
and Cossacks' Deputies
Second Convocation,*
VTsIK Publishers

Collected Works, Vol. 26,
pp. 336-37

Report on the Right of Recall at a Meeting of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee November 21 (December 4), 1917

The question of re-election is one of actually implementing the democratic principle. It is the accepted practice in all leading countries that only the elected are entitled to speak in the language of state legislation. But having allowed the right of summons for the conduct of affairs of state, the bourgeoisie intentionally withheld the right of recall—the right of actual control.

In all revolutionary periods in history, a prominent feature in the struggle for constitutional changes has been the fight for the right of recall.

Democratic representation exists and is accepted under all parliamentary systems, but this right of representation is curtailed by the fact that the people have the right to cast their votes once in every two years, and while it often turns out that their votes have installed those who help to oppress them, they are deprived of the democratic right to put a stop to that by removing these men.

But this democratic right of recall has survived in countries with old democratic traditions, for instance, in some cantons of Switzerland and some states of America.

Any great revolution clearly confronts the people not only with the use of existing statutes but also with the framing of appropriate new statutes. It is necessary, therefore, in view of the impending convocation of the Constituent Assembly, to review the new electoral statutes.

The Soviets have been created by the working people themselves, by their revolutionary energy and initiative, and that is the only guarantee of their working entirely to promote the interests of the masses. The truly popular

nature of the Soviets is evident in the fact that every peasant sends his representatives to the Soviet and is also entitled to recall them.

Various parties in this country have been in power. The last time power passed from one party to another there was a revolution, a rather stormy revolution, but if we had had the right of recall, a simple vote would have sufficed.

There is this word freedom. In the old days it meant freedom for the bourgeoisie to manipulate its millions for swindling, freedom to use its forces through such swindling. We have done with the bourgeoisie and that kind of freedom. The state is an institution for coercion. In the old days, it was the coercion of the whole people by a handful of money-bags. We want to turn the state into an institution enforcing the will of the people. We want to institute coercion in the working people's interests.

Failure to grant the right of recall from the Constituent Assembly is failure to elicit the revolutionary will of the people, it is usurpation of the people's rights. We do have proportional representation, which is indeed the most democratic. Under this system it may be somewhat difficult to introduce the right of recall but the difficulties entailed are purely technical and are fairly easy to overcome. In any case there is no contradiction between proportional representation and the right of recall.

The people do not cast their votes for individuals but for parties. The party spirit is rather strong in Russia, and as far as the people are concerned each party has a definite political character. That is why any party split must bring confusion unless the right of recall is provided for. The Socialist-Revolutionary Party enjoyed great influence. But a split occurred after the election lists had been put out. The lists cannot be altered, nor can the convocation of the Constituent Assembly be postponed. As a result, the people actually voted for a party which had ceased to exist. This was proved by the Left-wing Second Peasant Congress.*

* Lenin refers to the *Extraordinary All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies* held between November 11 and 25 (November 24-December 8), 1917.

The Congress was the scene of sharp conflict between the Right and Left wings of Socialist-Revolutionaries as a result of which the

It turned out that the peasants were not misled by individuals but by the party split. This state of things needs to be set right. The direct, consistent and immediate democratic principle, namely, the right of recall, must be introduced.

One thing we should be wary of is being faced with an unrepresentative election. Given a high level of mass consciousness—compare the revolutions of 1905 and 1917—there is nothing to fear from introducing the right of re-election.

The people were told that the Soviet is a plenipotentiary organ: they believed it and acted upon that belief. The process of democratisation must be carried forward and the right of recall introduced.

The right of recall should be given to the Soviets, as the best embodiment of the idea of state power, of coercion. The transfer of power from one party to another may then take place peacefully, by mere re-election.

Pravda No. 196
December 5 (November 22),
1917 and *Soldatskaya Pravda*
No. 87 November 24, 1917

Collected Works,
Vol. 26, pp. 338-40

Right Socialist-Revolutionaries left the Congress. The delegates moved to the Smolny Institute, where the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, the Extraordinary Congress of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies and the Petrograd Soviet met in a joint session which adopted a resolution confirming the Decree on Peace and the Decree on Land passed by the Second Congress of States and the decree of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on workers' control.—*Ed.*

***From Speech at the First All-Russia Congress
of the Navy
November 22 (December 5), 1917***

Minutes

"But alongside the Provisional Government were the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, which were produced by the revolutionary initiative of the insurgent people, and which, as time goes on, are rallying ever wider sections of the working masses. In Russia the people have produced and given support to a truly popular government, something no other European revolution has achieved, and the credit for this accrues to the Soviets alone. The oppressed masses were confronted with a highly difficult task, that of building a new state on their own. You can see how much effort the bourgeoisie has thrown into its resistance to us, how attempts are being made to sabotage our activity, and what a flood of lies and slander is being poured on us in and out of season.

"Accusations of terrorism and violence are being heaped on us, but we take these in our stride. We say we are not anarchists, and are committed to establishing a state. However, the capitalist state has to be smashed and the power of the capitalists destroyed. It is our task to build a new socialist state. We shall be working tirelessly towards that goal, and we shall be neither intimidated nor deterred by any obstacles. Evidence of this is to be seen in the new Government's first steps. But the transition to a new system is an extremely involved process and requires a firm government to make it easier. Until recently, power has been in the hands of monarchs and the henchmen of the bourgeoisie. All their efforts and policies have served the purpose of coercing the masses. By contrast we say: there must be firm power, coercion is necessary, but we shall direct it against

the handful of capitalists, the bourgeois class. We shall always retaliate with coercion against any attempts—hopeless and mad attempts they must be—to resist Soviet power. In every case, responsibility for this will fall upon those who resist.”

Comrade Lenin then discussed the establishment of a state machine which, in the interests of the people, should be free from red tape and should leave a lot of room for the operation of the nation's creative forces. He went on:

“The bourgeoisie and bourgeois intellectual sections of the population are subverting the people's power in every possible way. The working masses have no one to look to but themselves. There is no doubt that the great tasks facing the people are tremendously difficult. But there is need for self-assurance, there is need for all the elements awakened among the people and capable of action to join existing organisations and those that will be set up by the working masses. Divided the masses are helpless; united they are strong. They have gained self-assurance and, refusing to be put out by the bourgeoisie's badgering, they have set about running the state on their own. Difficulties may crop up at the start, due to inadequate training. But the art of practical government, which has been monopolised by the bourgeoisie, must be mastered. In this respect the Navy has shown itself to be well to the fore, offering a brilliant example of the creative capacity latent in the working masses.”

**Report on the Economic Condition of Petrograd
Workers and the Tasks of the Working
Class Delivered at the Meeting
of the Workers' Section of the Petrograd
Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies
December 4(17), 1917**

Newspaper Report

The Revolution of October 25 had shown the exceptional political maturity of the proletariat and its ability to stand firm in opposition to the bourgeoisie, said the speaker. The complete victory of socialism, however, would require a tremendous organisational effort filled with the knowledge that the proletariat must become the ruling class.

The proletariat was faced with the tasks of transforming the state system on socialist lines, for no matter how easy it would be to cite arguments in favour of a middle course such a course would be insignificant, the country's economic situation having reached a state that would rule out any middle course. There was no place left for half-measures in the gigantic struggle against imperialism and capitalism.

The point at issue was—win or lose.

The workers should and did understand this; this was obvious because they had rejected half-way, compromise decisions. The more profound the revolution, the greater the number of active workers required to accomplish the replacement of capitalism by a socialist machinery. Even if there were no sabotage, the forces of the petty bourgeoisie would be inadequate. The task was one that could be accomplished only by drawing on the masses, only by the independent activity of the masses. The proletariat, therefore, should not think of improving its position at the moment, but should think of becoming the ruling class. It could not be expected that the rural proletariat would be clearly and firmly conscious of its own interests. Only the working class could be, and every proletarian, conscious of the great pros-

pects, should feel himself to be a leader and carry the masses with him.

The proletariat should become the ruling class in the sense of being the leader of all who work; it should be the ruling class politically.

The illusion that only the bourgeoisie could run the state must be fought against. The proletariat must take the rule of the state upon itself.

The capitalists were doing everything they could to complicate the tasks of the working class. And all working-class organisations—trade unions, factory committees and others—would have to conduct a determined struggle in the economic sphere. The bourgeoisie was spoiling everything, sabotaging everything, in order to wreck the working-class revolution. And the tasks of organising production devolved entirely on the working class. They should do away, once and for all, with the illusion that state affairs or the management of banks and factories were beyond the power of the workers. All this could be solved only by tremendous day-to-day organisational work.

It was essential to organise the exchange of products and introduce regular accounting and control—these were tasks for the working class, and the knowledge necessary for their accomplishment had been provided by factory life.

Every factory committee should concern itself not only with the affairs of its own factory, but should also be an organisation nucleus helping arrange the life of the state as a whole.

It was easy to issue a decree on the abolition of private property, but it must and could be implemented only by the workers themselves. Let there be mistakes—they would be the mistakes of a new class creating a new way of life.

There was not and could not be a definite plan for the organisation of economic life.

Nobody could provide one. But it could be done from below, by the masses, through their experience. Instructions would, of course, be given and ways would be indicated, but it was necessary to begin simultaneously from above and from below.

The Soviets would have to become bodies regulating all production in Russia, but in order that they should not

become staff headquarters without troops, work in the lower echelons was needed....*

The working-class masses must set about the organisation of control and production on a country-wide scale. Not the organisation of individuals, but the organisation of all the working people, would be a guarantee of success; if they achieved that, if they organised economic life, everything opposing them would disappear of its own accord.

Pravda No. 208
December 20 (7), 1917
and *Soldatskaya Pravda*
No. 104
December 14, 1917

Collected Works, Vol. 26,
pp. 364-66

* Several illegible words were omitted.—*Ed.*

How To Organise Competition?

Bourgeois authors have been using up reams of paper praising competition, private enterprise, and all the other magnificent virtues and blessings of the capitalists and the capitalist system. Socialists have been accused of refusing to understand the importance of these virtues, and of ignoring "human nature". As a matter of fact, however, capitalism long ago replaced small, independent commodity production, under which competition could develop enterprise, energy and bold initiative to any *considerable* extent, by large- and very large-scale factory production, joint-stock companies, syndicates and other monopolies. Under *such* capitalism, competition means the incredibly brutal suppression of the enterprise, energy and bold initiative of the *mass* of the population, of its overwhelming majority, of ninety-nine out of every hundred toilers; it also means that competition is replaced by financial fraud, nepotism, servility on the upper rungs of the social ladder.

Far from extinguishing competition, socialism, on the contrary, for the first time creates the opportunity for employing it on a really *wide* and on a really *mass* scale, for actually drawing the majority of working people into a field of labour in which they can display their abilities, develop the capacities, and reveal those talents, so abundant among the people whom capitalism crushed, suppressed and strangled in thousands and millions.

Now that a socialist government is in power our task is to organise competition.

The hangers-on and spongers on the bourgeoisie described socialism as a uniform, routine, monotonous and drab

barrack system. The lackeys of the money-bags, the lickspittles of the exploiters, the bourgeois intellectual gentlemen used socialism as a bogey to "frighten" the people, who, under capitalism, were doomed to the penal servitude and the barrack-like discipline of arduous, monotonous toil, to a life of dire poverty and semi-starvation. The first step towards the emancipation of the people from this penal servitude is the confiscation of the landed estates, the introduction of workers' control and the nationalisation of the banks. The next steps will be the nationalisation of the factories, the compulsory organisation of the whole population in consumers' societies, which are at the same time societies for the sale of products, and the state monopoly of the trade in grain and other necessities.

Only now is the opportunity created for the truly mass display of enterprise, competition and bold initiative. Every factory from which the capitalist has been ejected, or in which he has at least been curbed by genuine workers' control, every village from which the landowning exploiter has been smoked out and his land confiscated has only now become a field in which the working man can reveal his talents, unbend his back a little, rise to his full height, and feel that he is a human being. For the first time after centuries of working for others, of forced labour for the exploiter, it has become possible to *work for oneself* and moreover to employ all the achievements of modern technology and culture in one's work.

Of course, this greatest change in human history from working under compulsion to working for oneself cannot take place without friction, difficulties, conflicts and violence against the inveterate parasites and their hangers-on. No worker has any illusions on that score. The workers and poor peasants, hardened by dire want and by many long years of slave labour for the exploiters, by their countless insults and acts of violence, realise that it will take time to *break* the resistance of those exploiters. The workers and peasants are not in the least infected with the sentimental illusions of the intellectual gentlemen, of the *Novaya Zhizn* crowd and other slush, who "shouted" themselves hoarse "denouncing" the capitalists and "gesticulated" against them, only to burst into tears and to behave like whipped puppies

when it came to *deeds*, to putting threats into action, to carrying out in practice the work of *removing* the capitalists.

The great change from working under compulsion to working for oneself, to labour planned and organised on a gigantic, national (and to a certain extent international, world) scale, also requires—in addition to “*military*” measures for the suppression of the exploiters’ resistance—tremendous *organisational*, organising effort on the part of the proletariat and the poor peasants. The organisational task is interwoven to form a single whole with the task of ruthlessly suppressing by military methods yesterday’s slave-owners (capitalists) and their packs of lackeys—the bourgeois intellectual gentlemen. Yesterday’s slave-owners and their “intellectual” stooges say and think, “We have always been organisers and chiefs. We have commanded, and we want to continue doing so. We shall refuse to obey the ‘common people’, the workers and peasants. We shall not submit to them. We shall convert knowledge into a weapon for the defence of the privileges of the money-bags and of the rule of capital over the people.”

That is what the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intellectuals say, think, and do. From the point of view of *self-interest* their behaviour is comprehensible. The hangers-on and spongers on the feudal landowners, the priests, the scribes, the bureaucrats as Gogol depicted them, and the “intellectuals” who hated Belinsky, also found it “hard” to part with serfdom. But the cause of the exploiters and of their “intellectual” menials is hopeless. The workers and peasants are beginning to break down their resistance—unfortunately, not yet firmly, resolutely and ruthlessly enough—and *break it down they will*.

“They” think that the “common people”, the “common” workers and poor peasants, will be unable to cope with the great, truly heroic, in the world-historic sense of the word, organisational tasks which the socialist revolution has imposed upon the working people. The intellectuals who are accustomed to serving the capitalists and the capitalist state say in order to console themselves: “You cannot do without us.” But their insolent assumption has no truth in it; educated men are already making their appearance on the side of the people, on the side of the working people, and are helping to break the resistance of the servants of capital. There

are a great many talented organisers among the peasants and the working class, and they are only just beginning to become aware of themselves, to awaken, to stretch out towards great, vital, creative work, to tackle with their own forces the task of building socialist society.

One of the most important tasks today, if not the most important, is to develop this independent initiative of the workers, and of all the working and exploited people generally, develop it as widely as possible in creative *organisational* work. At all costs we must break the old, *absurd*, savage, despicable and disgusting prejudice that only the so-called "upper classes", only the rich, and those who have gone through the school of the rich, are capable of administering the state and directing the organisational development of socialist society.

This is a prejudice fostered by rotten routine, by petrified views, slavish habits, and still more by the sordid selfishness of the capitalists, in whose interest it is to administer while plundering and to plunder while administering. The workers will not forget for a moment that they need the power of knowledge. The extraordinary striving after knowledge which the workers reveal, particularly now, shows that mistaken ideas about this do not and cannot exist among the proletariat. But every *rank-and-file* worker and peasant who can read and write, who can judge people and has practical experience, is capable of *organisational* work. Among the "common people", of whom the bourgeois intellectuals speak with such haughtiness and contempt, there are *many* such men and women. This sort of talent among the working class and the peasants is a rich and still untapped source.

The workers and peasants are still "timid", they have not yet become accustomed to the idea that *they* are now the *ruling* class; they are not yet resolute enough. The revolution could not *at one stroke* instil these qualities into millions and millions of people who all their lives had been compelled by want and hunger to work under the threat of the stick. But the Revolution of October 1917 is strong, viable and invincible because it *awakens* these qualities, breaks down the old impediments, removes the worn-out shackles, and leads the working people on to the road of the *independent* creation of a new life.

Accounting and control—this is the *main* economic task of every Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, of every consumers' society, of every union or committee of supplies, of every factory committee or organ of workers' control in general.

We must fight against the old habit of regarding the measure of labour and the means of production, from the point of view of the slave whose sole aim is to lighten the burden of labour or to obtain at least some little bit *from the bourgeoisie*. The advanced, class-conscious workers have already started this fight, and they are offering determined resistance to the newcomers who flocked to the factory world in particularly large numbers during the war and who now would like to treat the *people's* factory, the factory that has come into the possession of the people, in the old way, with the sole aim of "snatching the biggest possible piece of the pie and clearing out". All the class-conscious, honest and thinking peasants and working people will take their place in this fight by the side of the advanced workers.

Accounting and control, *if* carried on by the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies as the supreme state power, or on the instructions, on the authority, of *this* power—widespread, general, universal accounting and control, the accounting and control of the amount of labour performed and of the distribution of products—is the *essence* of socialist transformation, once the political rule of the proletariat has been established and secured.

The accounting and control essential for the transition to socialism can be exercised only by the people. Only the voluntary and conscientious co-operation of the *mass* of the workers and peasants in accounting and controlling *the rich, the rogues, the idlers and the rowdies*, a co-operation marked by revolutionary enthusiasm, can conquer these survivals of accursed capitalist society, these dregs of humanity, these hopelessly decayed and atrophied limbs, this contagion, this plague, this ulcer that socialism has inherited from capitalism.

Workers and peasants, working and exploited people! The land, the banks and the factories have now become the property of the entire people! You *yourselves* must set to work to take account of and control the production and distribu-

tion of products—this, and this *alone* is the road to the victory of socialism, the only guarantee of its victory, the guarantee of victory over all exploitation, over all poverty and want! For there is enough bread, iron, timber, wool, cotton and flax in Russia to satisfy the needs of everyone, if only labour and its products are properly distributed, if only a *business-like, practical* control over this distribution by the entire people is established, provided only we can defeat the enemies of the people: the rich and their hangers-on, and the rogues, the idlers and the rowdies, *not only* in politics, but also in *everyday economic* life.

No mercy for these enemies of the people, the enemies of socialism, the enemies of the working people! War to the death against the rich and their hangers-on, the bourgeois intellectuals; war on the rogues, the idlers and the rowdies! All of them are of the same brood—the spawn of capitalism, the offspring of aristocratic and bourgeois society; the society in which a handful of men robbed and insulted the people; the society in which poverty and want forced thousands and thousands on to the path of rowdyism, corruption and roguery, and caused them to lose all human semblance; the society which inevitably cultivated in the working man the desire to escape exploitation even by means of deception, to wriggle out of it, to escape, if only for a moment, from loathsome labour, to procure at least a crust of bread by any possible means, at any cost, so as not to starve, so as to subdue the pangs of hunger suffered by himself and by his near ones.

The rich and the rogues are two sides of the same coin, they are the two principal categories of *parasites* which capitalism fostered; they are the principal enemies of socialism. These enemies must be placed under the special surveillance of the entire people; they must be ruthlessly punished for the slightest violation of the laws and regulations of socialist society. Any display of weakness, hesitation or sentimentality in this respect would be an immense crime against socialism.

In order to render these parasites harmless to socialist society we must organise the accounting and control of the amount of work done and of production and distribution by the entire people, by millions and millions of workers and

peasants, participating voluntarily, energetically and with revolutionary enthusiasm. And in order to organise this accounting and control, which is *fully within the ability* of every honest, intelligent and efficient worker and peasant, we must rouse their organising talent, the talent that is to be found in their midst; we must rouse among them—and organise on a national scale—*competition* in the sphere of organisational achievement; the workers and peasants must be brought to see clearly the difference between the necessary advice of an educated man and the necessary control by the “common” worker and peasant of the *slovenliness* that is so usual among the “educated”.

This slovenliness, this carelessness, untidiness, unpunctuality, nervous haste, the inclination to substitute discussion for action, talk for work, the inclination to undertake everything under the sun without finishing anything, are characteristics of the “educated”; and this is not due to the fact that they are bad by nature, still less is it due to their evil will; it is due to all their habits of life, the conditions of their work, to fatigue, to the abnormal separation of mental from manual labour, and so on, and so forth.

Among the mistakes, shortcomings and defects of our revolution a by no means unimportant place is occupied by the mistakes, etc., which are due to these deplorable—but at present inevitable—characteristics of the intellectuals in our midst, and to the *lack* of sufficient supervision by the *workers* over the *organisational* work of the intellectuals.

The workers and peasants are still “timid”; they must get rid of this timidity, and they *certainly* will get rid of it. We cannot dispense with the advice, the instruction of educated people, of intellectuals and specialists. Every sensible worker and peasant understands this perfectly well, and the intellectuals in our midst cannot complain of a lack of attention and comradely respect on the part of the workers and peasants. Advice and instruction, however, is one thing, and the organisation of *practical* accounting and control is another. Very often the intellectuals give excellent advice and instruction, but they prove to be ridiculously, *absurdly*, shamefully “unhandy” and incapable of *carrying out* this advice and instruction, of exercising *practical control* over the translation of words into deeds.

In this very respect it is utterly impossible to dispense with the help and the *leading role* of the practical organisers from among the "people", from among the factory workers and working peasants. "It is not the gods who make pots"—this is the truth that the workers and peasants should get well drilled into their minds. They must understand that the whole thing now is *practical work*; that the historical moment has arrived when theory is being transformed into practice, vitalised by practice, corrected by practice, tested by practice; when the words of Marx, "Every step of real movement is more important than a dozen programmes",* become particularly true—every step in really curbing in practice, restricting, fully registering the rich and the rogues and keeping them under control is worth more than a dozen excellent arguments about socialism. For, "theory, my friend, is grey, but green is the eternal tree of life".**

Competition must be arranged between practical organisers from among the workers and peasants. Every attempt to establish stereotyped forms and to impose uniformity from above, as intellectuals are so inclined to do, must be combated. Stereotyped forms and uniformity imposed from above have nothing in common with democratic and socialist centralism. The unity of essentials, of fundamentals, of the substance, is not disturbed but ensured by *variety* in details, in specific local features, in methods of *approach*, in *methods* of exercising control, in *ways* of exterminating and rendering harmless the parasites (the rich and the rogues, slovenly and hysterical intellectuals, etc., etc.).

The Paris Commune gave a great example of how to combine initiative, independence, freedom of action and vigour from below with voluntary centralism free from stereotyped forms. Our Soviets are following the same road. But they are still "timid"; they have not yet got into their stride, have not yet "bitten into" their new, great, creative task of building the socialist system. The Soviets must set to work more boldly and display greater initiative. All "communes"—factories, villages, consumers' societies, and committees of

* See Marx's letter to W. Bracke of May 5, 1875 (Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Moscow, 1965, pp. 296-97).—*Ed.*

** Goethe, *Faust*, Part I, Scene 4 "Faust's Study".—*Ed.*

supplies—must *compete* with each other as practical organisers of accounting and control of labour and distribution of products. The programme of this accounting and control is simple, clear and intelligible to all—everyone to have bread; everyone to have sound footwear and good clothing; everyone to have warm dwellings; everyone to work conscientiously; not a single rogue (including those who shirk their work) to be allowed to be at liberty, but kept in prison, or serve his sentence of compulsory labour of the hardest kind; not a single rich man who violates the laws and regulations of socialism to be allowed to escape the fate of the rogue, which should, in justice, be the fate of the rich man. “He who does not work, neither shall he eat”—this is the *practical* commandment of socialism. This is how things should be organised *practically*. These are the *practical* successes our “communes” and our worker and peasant organisers should be proud of. And this applies particularly to the organisers among the intellectuals (*particularly*, because they are *too much, far too much* in the habit of being proud of their general instructions and resolutions).

Thousands of practical forms and methods of accounting and controlling the rich, the rogues and the idlers must be devised and put to a practical test by the communes themselves, by small units in town and country. Variety is a guarantee of effectiveness here, a pledge of success in achieving the single common aim—to *clean* the land of Russia of all vermin, of fleas—the rogues, of bugs—the rich, and so on and so forth. In one place half a score of rich, a dozen rogues, half a dozen workers who shirk their work (in the manner of rowdies, the manner in which many compositors in Petrograd, particularly in the Party printing-shops, shirk their work) will be put in prison. In another place they will be put to cleaning latrines. In a third place they will be provided with “yellow tickets” after they have served their time, so that everyone shall keep an eye on them, as *harmful* persons, until they reform. In a fourth place, one out of every ten idlers will be shot on the spot. In a fifth place mixed methods may be adopted, and by probational release, for example, the rich, the bourgeois intellectuals, the rogues and rowdies who are corrigible will be given an opportunity to reform quickly. The more variety there will be, the better and richer

will be our general experience, the more certain and rapid will be the success of socialism, and the easier will it be for practice to devise—for only practice can devise—the *best* methods and means of struggle.

In what commune, in what district of a large town, in what factory and in what village are there *no* starving people, *no* unemployed, *no* idle rich, *no* despicable lackeys of the bourgeoisie, saboteurs who call themselves intellectuals? Where has most been done to raise the productivity of labour, to build good new houses for the poor, to put the poor in the houses of the rich, to regularly provide a bottle of milk for every child of every poor family? It is on these points that *competition* should develop between the communes, communities; producer-consumers' societies and associations, and Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. This is the work in which *talented organisers* should come to the fore *in practice* and be promoted to work in state administration. There is a great deal of talent among the people. It is merely suppressed. It must be given an opportunity to display itself. It *and it alone*, with the support of the people, can save Russia and save the cause of socialism.

Written December 24-27, 1917
(January 6-9, 1918)

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Collected Works, Vol. 26,
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Signed: *V. Lenin*

Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People*

I. The Constituent Assembly resolves:

1. Russia is hereby proclaimed a Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. All power, centrally and locally, is vested in these Soviets.

2. The Russian Soviet Republic is established on the principle of a free union of free nations, as a federation of Soviet national republics.

II. Its fundamental aim being to abolish all exploitation of man by man, to completely eliminate the division of society into classes, to mercilessly crush the resistance of the exploiters, to establish a socialist organisation of society and to achieve the victory of socialism in all countries, the Constituent Assembly further resolves:

1. Private ownership of land is hereby abolished. All land together with all buildings, farm implements and other appurtenances of agricultural production, is proclaimed the property of the entire working people.

2. The Soviet laws on workers' control and on the Supreme Economic Council are hereby confirmed for the purpose of guaranteeing the power of the working people over the exploiters and as a first step towards the complete conversion of the factories, mines, railways, and other means of production and transport into the property of the workers' and peasants' state.

* The draft of the *Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People* was submitted at a sitting of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on January 3 (16), 1918. It was submitted to the Constituent Assembly for approval but was rejected by a counter-revolutionary majority of the Assembly. On January 12 (25) the Declaration was endorsed by the Third All-Russia Congress of Soviets and afterwards it formed the basis of the Soviet Constitution.—*Ed.*

3. The conversion of all banks into the property of the workers' and peasants' state is hereby confirmed as one of the conditions for the emancipation of the working people from the yoke of capital.

4. For the purpose of abolishing the parasitic sections of society, universal labour conscription is hereby instituted.

5. To ensure the sovereign power of the working people, and to eliminate all possibility of the restoration of the power of the exploiters, the arming of the working people, the creation of a socialist Red Army of workers and peasants and the complete disarming of the propertied classes are hereby decreed.

III. 1. Expressing its firm determination to wrest mankind from the clutches of finance capital and imperialism, which have in this most criminal of wars drenched the world in blood, the Constituent Assembly whole-heartedly endorses the policy pursued by Soviet power of denouncing the secret treaties, organising most extensive fraternisation with the workers and peasants of the armies in the war, and achieving at all costs, by revolutionary means, a democratic peace between the nations, without annexations and indemnities and on the basis of the free self-determination of nations.

2. With the same end in view, the Constituent Assembly insists on a complete break with the barbarous policy of bourgeois civilisation, which has built the prosperity of the exploiters belonging to a few chosen nations on the enslavement of hundreds of millions of working people in Asia, in the colonies in general, and in the small countries.

The Constituent Assembly welcomes the policy of the Council of People's Commissars in proclaiming the complete independence of Finland,* commencing the evacuation of troops from Persia,** and proclaiming freedom of self-determination for Armenia.***

* In December 1917 the Soviet Government passed a decree on Finland's state independence. Lenin personally handed the text of the decree to the Finnish Prime Minister Svinhufvud who led the Finnish Government delegation.

** In December 1917 the Soviet Government made a proposal to the Persian Government to elaborate a general plan for the withdrawal of Russian troops from Persia sent there by the tsarist government.

*** In December 1917 the Soviet Government endorsed a decree on Turkish Armenia ensuring its right to self-determination.

3. The Constituent Assembly regards the Soviet law on the cancellation of the loans contracted by the governments of the tsar, the landowners and the bourgeoisie as a first blow struck at international banking, finance capital, and expresses the conviction that Soviet power will firmly pursue this path until the international workers' uprising against the yoke of capital has completely triumphed.

IV. Having been elected on the basis of party lists drawn up prior to the October Revolution, when the people were not yet in a position to rise *en masse* against the exploiters, had not yet experienced the full strength of resistance of the latter in defence of their class privileges, and had not yet applied themselves in practice to the task of building socialist society, the Constituent Assembly considers that it would be fundamentally wrong, even formally, to put itself in opposition to Soviet power.

In essence the Constituent Assembly considers that now, when the people are waging the last fight against their exploiters, there can be no place for exploiters in any government body. Power must be vested wholly and entirely in the working people and their authorised representatives—the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

Supporting Soviet power and the decrees of the Council of People's Commissars, the Constituent Assembly considers that its own task is confined to establishing the fundamental principles of the socialist reconstruction of society.

At the same time, endeavouring to create a really free and voluntary, and therefore all the more firm and stable, union of the working classes of all the nations of Russia, the Constituent Assembly confines its own task to setting up the fundamental principles of a federation of Soviet Republics of Russia, while leaving it to the workers and peasants of each nation to decide independently at their own authoritative Congress of Soviets whether they wish to participate in the federal government and in the other federal Soviet institutions, and on what terms.

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Collected Works, Vol. 26,
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***From Report on the Activities
of the Council of People's Commissars
Delivered at the Third All-Russia Congress
of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers'
and Peasants' Deputies
January 11(24), 1918***

A new state—the Republic of Soviets, the republic of the working people, of the exploited classes that are breaking down the old bourgeois barriers, now stands against the old bourgeois system. New state forms have been created, which make it possible to suppress the exploiters, to overcome the resistance of this insignificant handful who are still strong because of yesterday's money-bags and yesterday's store of knowledge. They—the professors, teachers and engineers—transform their knowledge into an instrument for the exploitation of the working people, saying they want their knowledge to serve the bourgeoisie, otherwise they refuse to work. But their power has been broken by the workers' and peasants' revolution, and a state is rising against them in which the people themselves freely elect their own representatives.

It is precisely at the present time that we can say that we really have an organisation of power which clearly indicates the transition to the complete abolition of any power, of any state. This will be possible when every trace of exploitation has been abolished, that is, in socialist society.

Now I shall deal briefly with the measures which the socialist Soviet Government of Russia has begun to realise. The nationalisation of the banks was one of the first measures adopted for the purpose, not only of wiping the landowners from the face of Russian earth, but also of eradicating the rule of the bourgeoisie and the possibility of capital oppressing millions and tens of millions of the working people. The banks are important centres of modern capitalist econ-

omy. They collect fantastic wealth and distribute it over this vast country; they are the nerve centres of capitalist life. They are subtle and intricate organisations, which grew up in the course of centuries; and against them were hurled the first blows of Soviet power which at first encountered desperate resistance in the State Bank. But this resistance did not deter Soviet power. We succeeded in the main thing in organising the State Bank; this main thing is in the hands of the workers and peasants. After these basic measures, which still require a lot of working out in detail, we proceeded to lay our hands on the private banks.

We did not act in the way the compromisers would probably have recommended us to do, i.e., first wait until the Constituent Assembly is convened, then perhaps draft a bill and introduce it in the Constituent Assembly and by that inform the bourgeoisie of our intentions and enable them to find a loophole through which to extricate themselves from this unpleasant thing; perhaps draw them into our company, and then make state laws—that would be a “state act”.

That would be the rejection of socialism. We acted quite simply; not fearing to call forth the reproaches of the “educated” people, or rather of the uneducated supporters of the bourgeoisie who were trading in the remnants of their knowledge, we said we had at our disposal armed workers and peasants. This morning they must occupy all the private banks. (*Applause.*) After they have done that, after power is in our hands, only after this, we shall discuss what measures to adopt. In the morning the banks were occupied and in the evening the Central Executive Committee issued a decree: “The banks are declared national property”—state control, the socialisation of banking, its transfer to Soviet power, took place.

There was not a man among us who could imagine that an intricate and subtle apparatus like banking, which grew out of the capitalist system of economy in the course of centuries, could be broken or transformed in a few days. We never said that. And when scientists, or pseudo-scientists, shook their heads and prophesied, we said: you can prophesy what you like. We know only one way for the proletarian revolution, namely, to occupy the enemy’s positions—to learn to rule by experience, from our mistakes. We do not

in the least belittle the difficulties in our path, but we have done the main thing. The source of capitalist wealth has been undermined in the place of its distribution. After all this the repudiation of the state loans, the overthrow of the financial yoke, was a very easy step. The transition to confiscation of the factories, after workers' control had been introduced, was also very easy. When we were accused of breaking up production into separate departments by introducing workers' control, we brushed aside this nonsense. In introducing workers' control, we knew that it would take much time before it spread to the whole of Russia, but we wanted to show that we recognise only one road—changes from below; we wanted the workers themselves, from below, to draw up the new, basic economic principles. Much time will be required for this.

From workers' control we passed on to the creation of a Supreme Economic Council. Only this measure, together with the nationalisation of the banks and railways which will be carried out within the next few days, will make it possible for us to begin work to build up a new socialist economy. We know perfectly well the difficulties that confront us in this work; but we assert that only those who set to work to carry out this task relying on the experience and the instinct of the working people are socialists in deed. The people will commit many mistakes, but the main thing has been done. They know that when they appeal to Soviet power they will get whole-hearted support against the exploiters. There is not a single measure intended to ease their work that was not entirely supported by Soviet power. Soviet power does not know everything and cannot handle everything in time, and very often it is confronted with difficult tasks. Very often delegations of workers and peasants come to the government and ask, for example, what to do with such-and-such a piece of land. And frequently I myself have felt embarrassed when I saw that they had no very definite views. And I said to them: you are the power, do all you want to do, take all you want, we shall support you, but take care of production, see that production is useful. Take up useful work, you will make mistakes, but you will learn. And the workers have already begun to learn; they have already begun to fight against the saboteurs. Education has been turned into a fence

which hinders the advance of the working classes; it will be pulled down.

Undoubtedly, the war is corrupting people both in the rear and at the front; people who are working on war supplies are paid far above the rates, and this attracts all those who did themselves to keep out of the war, the vagabond and semi-vagabond elements who are imbued with one desire, to "grab" something and clear out. But these elements are the worst that has remained of the old capitalist system and are the vehicles of all the old evils; these we must kick out, remove, and we must put in the factories all the best proletarian elements and form them into nuclei of future socialist Russia. This is not an easy task, it will give rise to many conflicts, to much friction and many clashes. We, the Council of People's Commissars, and I personally, have heard complaints and threats from them, but we have remained calm, knowing that now we have a judge to whom we can appeal. That judge is the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. (*Applause.*) The word of this judge is indisputable, and we shall always rely upon it.

Capitalism deliberately differentiates the workers in order to rally an insignificant handful of the upper section of the working class around the bourgeoisie. Conflicts with this section are inevitable. We shall not achieve socialism without a struggle. But we are ready to fight, we have started it and we shall finish it with the aid of the apparatus called the Soviets. The Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies will easily solve any problem we bring before it. For however strong the group of privileged workers may be, when they are brought before the representative body of all the workers, then this court, I repeat, will be indisputable for them. This sort of adjustment is only just beginning. The workers and peasants have not yet sufficient confidence in their own strength; age-old tradition has made them far too used to waiting for orders from above. They have not yet fully appreciated the fact that the proletariat is the ruling class; there are still elements among them who are frightened and downtrodden and who imagine that they must pass through the despicable school of the bourgeoisie. This most despicable of bourgeois notions has remained alive longer than all the rest, but it is dying and will die out completely. And we are con-

vinced that with every step Soviet power takes the number of people will constantly grow who have completely thrown off the old bourgeois notion that a simple worker and peasant cannot administer the state. Well, if he sets to doing it, he can and will learn! (*Applause.*)

And it will be our organisational task to select leaders and organisers from among the people. This enormous, gigantic work is now on the agenda. There could even be no thought of carrying it out if it were not for Soviet power, a filtering apparatus which can promote people.

Not only have we a state law on control, we have something even far more valuable—attempts on the part of the proletariat to enter into agreements with the manufacturers' associations in order to guarantee the workers' management over whole branches of industry. Such an agreement has begun to be drawn up, and is almost completed, between the leather workers and the all-Russia leather manufacturers' society. I attach very special importance to these agreements, they show that the workers are becoming aware of their strength.

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*From Report on the Review
of the Programme and on Changing
the Name of the Party
Delivered at the Seventh
Extraordinary Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)
March 8, 1918*

We have a new type of state in Soviet power; we shall try to outline its purpose and structure, we shall try to explain why this new type of democracy in which there is so much that is chaotic and irrational, to explain what makes up its living spirit—the transfer of power to the working people, the elimination of exploitation and the machinery of suppression. The state is the machinery of suppression. The exploiters must be suppressed, but they cannot be suppressed by police, they must be suppressed by the masses themselves, the machinery must be linked with the masses, must represent them as the Soviets do. They are much closer to the masses, they provide an opportunity to keep closer to the masses, they provide greater opportunities for the education of those masses. We know very well that the Russian peasant is anxious to learn; and we want him to learn, not from books, but from his own experience. Soviet power is machinery, machinery that will enable the masses to begin right away learning to govern the state and organise production on a nation-wide scale. It is a task of tremendous difficulty. It is, however, historically important that we are setting about its fulfilment, and not only from the point of view of our one country; we are calling upon European workers to help. We must give a concrete explanation of our programme from precisely that common point of view. That is why we consider it a continuation of the road taken by the Paris Commune. That is why we are confident that the European workers will be able to help once they have entered on that path. They will do what we are doing, but do it better, and the centre of gravity will shift from the formal

point of view to the concrete conditions. In the old days the demand for freedom of assembly was a particularly important one, whereas our point of view on freedom of assembly is that nobody can now prevent meetings, and Soviet power has only to provide premises for meetings. General proclamations of broad principles are important to the bourgeoisie: "All citizens have freedom to assemble, but they must assemble in the open, we shall not give them premises." But we say: "Fewer empty phrases, and more substance." The palaces must be expropriated—not only the Taurida Palace, but many others as well—and we say nothing about freedom of assembly. That must be extended to all other points in the democratic programme. We must be our own judges. All citizens must take part in the work of the courts and in the government of the country. It is important for us to draw literally all working people into the government of the state. It is a task of tremendous difficulty. But socialism cannot be implemented by a minority, by the Party. It can be implemented only by tens of millions when they have learned to do it themselves. We regard it as a point in our favour that we are trying to help the masses themselves set about it immediately, and not to learn to do it from books and lectures. If we state these tasks of ours clearly and definitely we shall thereby give an impetus to the discussion of the question and its practical presentation by the European masses. We are perhaps making a bad job of what has to be done, but we are urging the masses to do what they have to. If what our revolution is doing is not accidental (and we are firmly convinced that it is not), if it is not the product of a Party decision but the inevitable product of any revolution that Marx called "popular", i.e., a revolution that the masses themselves create by their slogans, their efforts and not by a repetition of the programme of the old bourgeois republic—if we present matters in this way, we shall have achieved the most important thing. And here we come to the question of whether we should abolish the difference between the maximum and minimum programmes. Yes and no. I do not fear this abolition, because the viewpoint we held in summer should no longer exist. I said then, when we still had not taken power, that it was "too soon", but now that we have taken power and tested it, it is not too soon. In place of the

old programme we must now write a new programme of Soviet power and not in any way reject the use of bourgeois parliamentarism. It is a utopia to think that we shall not be thrown back.

It cannot be denied historically that Russia has created a Soviet Republic. We say that if ever we are thrown back, while not rejecting the use of bourgeois parliamentarism—if hostile class forces drive us to that old position—we shall aim at what has been gained by experience, at Soviet power, at the Soviet type of state, at the Paris Commune type of state. That must be expressed in the programme. In place of the minimum programme, we shall introduce the Programme of Soviet power. A definition of the new type of state must occupy an important place in our programme.

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Collected Works,
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From Rough Outline of the Draft Programme

Ten Theses on Soviet Power

Consolidation and Development of Soviet Power

The consolidation and development of Soviet power as the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat and poor peasantry (semi-proletarians), a form already tested by experience and brought to the fore by the mass movement and the revolutionary struggle.

The consolidation and development must consist in the accomplishment (a broader, more general and planned accomplishment) of those tasks which historically devolve on this form of state power, on this new type of state, namely:

(1) union and organisation of the working and exploited masses oppressed by capitalism, and only them, i.e., only the workers and poor peasantry, semi-proletarians, with automatic exclusion of the exploiting classes and rich representatives of the petty bourgeoisie;

(2) union of the most vigorous, active, class-conscious part of the oppressed classes, their vanguard, which must educate every member of the working population for independent participation in the management of the state, not theoretically but practically;

(3) (4) abolition of parliamentarism (as the separation of legislative from executive activity); union of legislative and executive state activity. Fusion of administration with legislation;

(3) (4) closer connection of the whole apparatus of state power and state administration with the masses than under previous forms of democracy;

(5) creation of an armed force of workers and peasants, one least divorced from the people (Soviets = armed work-

ers and peasants). Organised character of nation-wide arming of the people, as one of the first steps towards arming the whole people;

(6) more complete democracy, through less formality and making election and recall easier;

(7) close (and direct) connection with occupations and with productive-economic units (elections based on factories, and on local peasant and handicraft areas). This close connection makes it possible to carry out profound socialist changes;

(8) (partly, if not wholly, covered by the preceding)—the possibility of getting rid of bureaucracy, of doing without it, the beginning of the realisation of this possibility;

(9) transfer of the focus of attention in questions of democracy from formal recognition of a formal equality of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, of poor and rich, to the practical feasibility of the enjoyment of freedom (democracy) by the working and exploited mass of the population;

(10) the further development of the Soviet organisation of the state must consist in every member of a Soviet being obliged to carry out constant work in administering the state, alongside participation in meetings of the Soviet;—and furthermore in each and every member of the population being drawn gradually both into taking part in Soviet organisation (on the condition of subordination to organisations of the working people) and into serving in state administration.

The Fulfilment of These Tasks Requires:

a) in the political sphere: development of the Soviet Republic.

Advantages of Soviets (*Prosveshcheniye*, pp 13-14)*; [six items];

extension of the Soviet Constitution *in so far as* the resistance of the exploiters ceases to the *whole* population;

federation of nations, as a transition to a *conscious* and closer unity of the working people, when they have learnt *voluntarily* to rise above national dissension;

* See present volume, pp. 62—64.—*Ed.*

necessarily ruthless suppression of the resistance of the exploiters; standards of "general" (*i.e.*, bourgeois) democracy are subordinate to this aim, give way to it:

"Liberties" and democracy *not* for all, but *for* the working and exploited masses, to emancipate them from exploitation; ruthless suppression of exploiters;

NB: chief stress is shifted *from* formal *recognition* of liberties (such as existed under bourgeois parliamentarism) to actually ensuring the *enjoyment* of liberties by the working people who are overthrowing the exploiters, e.g., from *recognition* of freedom of assembly to the *handing over* of all the best halls and premises to the workers, from recognition of freedom of speech to the handing over of all the best printing presses to the workers, and so forth.

A brief enumeration of these "liberties" from the old minimum programme.

[Arming the workers and disarming the bourgeoisie.]

Transition *through* the Soviet state to the gradual abolition of the state by systematically drawing an ever greater number of citizens, and subsequently *each and every* citizen, into direct and *daily* performance of their share of the burdens of administering the state.

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From Original Version of the Article
**"The Immediate Tasks
of the Soviet Government"**

Chapter XI

The resolution of the Extraordinary Congress of Soviets, which I referred to at the beginning, mentions, among other things, the need to create a harmonious and strong organisation. At the present time the degree of organisation, both of Soviet institutions and of economic units operating within the bounds of Russia, is extremely low. It could be said that immense disorganisation prevails.

But it would be incorrect to regard this as a state of ruin, collapse and decline. If the bourgeois press makes such an appraisal, it is clear that the interests of the capitalist class compel people to look at things in this way, or rather compel them to appear to look at them thus. In fact, however, anyone who is capable of looking at things at all historically will not doubt for a moment that the present state of disorganisation is a state of transition—of transition from the old to the new—a state of growth of what is new. The transition from the old to the new, if it proceeds as sharply as it has in Russia since February 1917, presupposes of course a gigantic destruction of what has become obsolete and moribund in social life. And it is clear that the search for the new cannot at once provide those definite, established, almost fixed and final forms which previously took shape in the course of centuries and lasted for centuries. The present Soviet institutions and the economic organisations which are characterised by the concept of workers' control in industry—those organisations are still in a period of ferment and instability. In these organisations, naturally, the aspect characterised by discussion and the airing of questions at meetings prevails

over the business aspect. It could not be otherwise, for without drawing new sections of the people into socialist construction, without awakening to activity the broad masses hitherto asleep, there could be no question of any revolutionary change. The endless discussions and endless holding of meetings—about which the bourgeois press talks so much and so acrimoniously—is a necessary transition of the masses still completely unprepared for social construction, a transition from historical somnolence to new historical creativeness. There is absolutely nothing terrible in the fact that this transition is protracted in some places, or in the fact that the training of the masses in new work does not go forward with the rapidity which could be dreamt of by a man who is accustomed to work in isolation and does not understand what is involved in rousing hundreds, thousands and millions to independent political life. But in realising this we must also realise the turn that is now beginning in this respect. While Soviet institutions had not spread throughout Russia, while socialisation of the land and nationalisation of factories remained an exception to the general rule, it was natural that social management of the national economy (considered on a nation-wide scale) could not emerge from the stage of preliminary discussional preparation either, from the stage of discussion and interpretation. Just now a fundamental change is taking place, Soviet institutions have spread all over Russia. From Great Russia they have spread to the vast majority of the other nationalities of Russia. Socialisation of the land in the countryside and workers' control in the towns have ceased to be exceptions; instead, they have become the rule.

On the other hand, the extremely critical and even desperate situation the country is in as regards ensuring at least the mere possibility of existence for the majority of the population, as regards safeguarding it from famine—these economic conditions urgently demand the achievement of definite practical results. The countryside could subsist on its own grain—there is no doubt of that—but it will be able to do so only if in actual fact an absolutely strict account is taken of all existing grain, and if it can be distributed among the whole population with the greatest

economy and carefulness. Correct distribution requires correct organisation of transport. But it is transport that has suffered the worst destruction by war. And what is most of all necessary for the revival of transport in a country marked by such huge distances as Russia is harmonious, strong organisation and, perhaps, really millions of people working with the precision of clockwork. Now has come the turning-point when—without in any way ceasing to prepare the masses for participation in state and economic administration of all the affairs of society, and without in any way hindering their most detailed discussion of the new tasks (on the contrary, helping them in every way to carry out this discussion so that they independently think out and arrive at correct decisions)—we must at the very same time begin strictly to separate two categories of democratic functions: on the one hand, discussions and the airing of questions at public meetings, and, on the other hand, the establishment of strictest responsibility for executive functions and absolutely businesslike, disciplined, voluntary fulfilment of the assignments and decrees necessary for the economic mechanism to function really like clockwork. It was impossible to pass to this at once; some months ago it would have been pedantry or even malicious provocation to demand it. Generally speaking, this change cannot be brought about by any decree, by any prescription. But the time has come when the achievement of precisely this change is the pivot of all our revolutionary reforms. Now it has been prepared for, now the conditions for it have matured, now it is impossible to postpone it or wait for it any longer. Not long ago, in discussing the question of the reorganisation and correct planning of railway transport, the question arose of how far one-man managerial authority (which could be called dictatorial) is compatible with democratic organisations in general, with the collective principle in management especially, and with the Soviet socialist principle of organisation in particular. Undoubtedly, the opinion is very widely held that there can be no question of such compatibility, that one-man dictatorial authority is incompatible with democracy, the Soviet type of state and collective management. Nothing could be more mistaken than this opinion.

The democratic principle of organisation—in its highest form, in which the Soviets put into effect proposals and demands for the active participation of the masses not only in discussing general rules, decisions and laws, and in controlling their fulfilment, but also directly in their implementation—implies that every representative of the masses, every citizen, must be put in such conditions that he can participate in the discussion of state laws, in the choice of his representatives and in the implementation of state laws. But it does not at all follow from this that we shall permit the slightest chaos or disorder as regards who is responsible in each individual case for definite executive functions, for carrying out definite orders, for controlling a definite joint labour process during a certain period of time. The masses must have the right to choose responsible leaders for themselves. They must have the right to replace them, the right to know and check each smallest step of their activity. They must have the right to put forward any worker without exception for administrative functions. But this does not at all mean that the process of collective labour can remain without definite leadership, without precisely establishing the responsibility of the person in charge, without the strictest order created by the single will of that person. Neither railways nor transport, nor large-scale machinery and enterprises in general can function correctly without a single will linking the entire working personnel into an economic organ operating with the precision of clockwork. Socialism owes its origin to large-scale machine industry. If the masses of the working people in introducing socialism prove incapable of adapting their institutions in the way that large-scale machine industry should work, then there can be no question of introducing socialism. That is why in the period we are now passing through, when the Soviet government and the dictatorship of the proletariat have grown sufficiently strong, when the main lines of the enemy opposing us, i.e., of the exploiters opposing us, have been sufficiently destroyed or rendered harmless, when the functioning of Soviet institutions has adequately prepared the mass of the population for independent participation in all spheres of social life—at the present moment we are im-

mediately confronted with the tasks of strictly separating discussion and airing questions at meetings from unfailing execution of all instructions of the person in charge. This means separating the necessary, useful preparation of the masses for executing a certain measure and checking up on its execution, which is fully recognised by every Soviet, from the actual execution itself. The masses can now—this is guaranteed them by the Soviets—take all power into their hands and consolidate this power. But to prevent this resulting in the overlapping of authority and irresponsibility from which we are suffering incredibly at the present time, it is necessary that for each executive function we should know precisely what persons, having been chosen to act as responsible leaders, bear responsibility for the functioning of the economic organism as a whole. This requires that as often as possible, when there is the slightest opportunity for it, responsible persons should be elected for one-man management in all sections of the economic organism as a whole. There must be voluntary fulfilment of the instructions of this individual leader, there must be a transition from the mixed form of discussions, public meetings, fulfilment—and at the same time criticism, checking and correction—to the strict regularity of a machine enterprise. The great majority of the labour communes of Russia, the mass of the workers and peasants, are already approaching this task or have already arrived at it. The Soviet government's task is to undertake the role of interpreting the fundamental change that is now beginning and of giving this necessity legal form.

Dictated between
March 23 and 28, 1918

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Collected Works, Vol. 27,
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***From* The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government**

...The first task of every party of the future is to convince the majority of the people that its programme and tactics are correct. This task stood in the forefront both in tsarist times and in the period of the Chernovs' and Tseretelis' policy of compromise with the Kerenskys and Kishkins. This task has now been fulfilled in the main, for, as the recent Congress of Soviets in Moscow incontrovertibly proved, the majority of the workers and peasants of Russia are obviously on the side of the Bolsheviki; but of course, it is far from being completely fulfilled (and it can never be completely fulfilled).

The second task that confronted our Party was to capture political power and to suppress the resistance of the exploiters. This task has not been completely fulfilled either, and it cannot be ignored because the monarchists and Constitutional-Democrats on the one hand, and their henchmen and hangers-on, the Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, on the other, are continuing their efforts to unite for the purpose of overthrowing Soviet power. In the main, however, the task of suppressing the resistance of the exploiters was fulfilled in the period from October 25, 1917, to (approximately) February 1918, or to the surrender of Bogayevsky.

A third task is now coming to the fore as the immediate task and one which constitutes the peculiar feature of the present situation, namely, the task of organising *administration* of Russia. Of course, we advanced and tackled this task on the very day following October 25, 1917. Up to now, however, since the resistance of the exploiters still

took the form of open civil war, up to now the task of administration *could not* become the *main*, the *central* task.

Now it has become the main and central task. We, the Bolshevik Party, have *convinced* Russia. We have *won* Russia from the rich for the poor, from the exploiters for the working people. Now we must *administer* Russia. And the whole peculiarity of the present situation, the whole difficulty, lies in understanding *the specific features of the transition* from the principal task of convincing the people and of suppressing the exploiters by armed force to the principal task of *administration*.

For the first time in human history a socialist party has managed to complete in the main the conquest of power and the suppression of the exploiters, and has managed to *approach directly* the task of *administration*. We must prove worthy executors of this most difficult (and most gratifying) task of the socialist revolution. We must *fully realise* that in order to administer successfully, *besides* being able to convince people, besides being able to win a civil war, we must be able to do *practical organisational work*. This is the most difficult task, because it is a matter of organising in a new way the most deep-rooted, the economic, foundations of life of scores of millions of people. And it is the most gratifying task, because only *after* it has been fulfilled (in the principal and main outlines) will it be possible to say that Russia *has become* not only a Soviet, but also a socialist, republic.

The Significance of the Struggle for Country-Wide Accounting and Control

The state, which for centuries has been an organ for oppression and robbery of the people, has left us a legacy of the people's supreme hatred and suspicion of everything that is connected with the state. It is very difficult to overcome this, and only a Soviet government can do it. Even a Soviet government, however, will require plenty of time and enormous perseverance to accomplish it. This "legacy" is especially apparent in the problem of accounting and control—the fundamental problem facing the socialist revolu-

tion on the morrow of the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. A certain amount of time will inevitably pass before the people, who feel free for the first time now that the landowners and the bourgeoisie have been overthrown, will understand—not from books, but from their own, *Soviet* experience—will understand and *feel* that without comprehensive state accounting and control of the production and distribution of goods, the power of the working people, the freedom of the working people, *cannot* be maintained, and that a return to the yoke of capitalism is *inevitable*.

All the habits and traditions of the bourgeoisie, and of the petty bourgeoisie in particular, also oppose *state* control, and uphold the inviolability of “sacred private property”, of “sacred” private enterprise. It is now particularly clear to us how correct is the Marxist thesis that anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism are *bourgeois* trends, how irrevocably opposed they are to socialism, proletarian dictatorship and communism. The fight to instil into the people’s minds the idea of *Soviet* state control and accounting, and to carry out this idea in practice; the fight to break with the rotten past, which taught the people to regard the procurement of bread and clothes as a “private” affair, and buying and selling as a transaction “which concerns only myself”—is a great fight of world-historic significance, a fight between socialist consciousness and bourgeois-anarchist spontaneity.

We have introduced workers’ control as a law, but this law is only just beginning to operate and is only just beginning to penetrate the minds of broad sections of the proletariat. In our agitation we do not sufficiently explain that lack of accounting and control in the production and distribution of goods means the death of the rudiments of socialism, means the embezzlement of state funds (for all property belongs to the state and the state is the Soviet state in which power belongs to the majority of the working people). We do not sufficiently explain that carelessness in accounting and control is downright aiding and abetting the German and the Russian Kornilovs, who can overthrow the power of the working people *only* if we fail to cope with the task of accounting and control, and who, with the aid of the whole of the rural bourgeoisie, with the aid of

the Constitutional-Democrats, the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, are "watching" us and waiting for an opportune moment to attack us. And the advanced workers and peasants do not think and speak about this sufficiently. Until workers' control has become a fact, until the advanced workers have organised and carried out a victorious and ruthless crusade against the violators of this control, or against those who are careless in matters of control, it will be impossible to pass from the first step (from workers' control) to the second step towards socialism, i.e., to pass on to workers' regulation of production.

The socialist state can arise only as a network of producers' and consumers' communes, which conscientiously keep account of their production and consumption, economise on labour, and steadily raise the productivity of labour, thus making it possible to reduce the working day to seven, six and even fewer hours. Nothing will be achieved unless the strictest, country-wide, comprehensive accounting and control of *grain* and the *production of grain* (and later of all other essential goods) are set going. Capitalism left us a legacy of mass organisations which can facilitate our transition to the mass accounting and control of the distribution of goods, namely, the consumers' co-operative societies. In Russia these societies are not so well developed as in the advanced countries, nevertheless, they have over ten million members. The Decree on Consumers' Co-operative Societies, issued the other day, is an extremely significant phenomenon, which strikingly illustrates the peculiar position and the specific tasks of the Soviet Socialist Republic at the present moment.

The decree is an agreement with the bourgeois co-operative societies and the workers' co-operative societies which still adhere to the bourgeois point of view. It is an agreement, or compromise, firstly because the representatives of the above-mentioned institutions not only took part in discussing the decree, but actually had a decisive say in the matter, for the parts of the decree which were strongly opposed by these institutions were dropped. Secondly, the essence of the compromise is that the Soviet government has abandoned the principle of admission of new members to co-operative societies without entrance fees (which is

the only consistently proletarian principle); it has also abandoned the idea of uniting the whole population of a given locality in a *single* co-operative society. Contrary to this principle, which is the only socialist principle and which corresponds to the task of abolishing classes, the "working-class co-operative societies" (which in this case call themselves "class" societies only because they subordinate themselves to the class interests of the bourgeoisie) were given the right to continue to exist. Finally, the Soviet government's proposal to expel the bourgeoisie entirely from the boards of the co-operative societies was also considerably modified, and only owners of private capitalist trading and industrial enterprises were forbidden to serve on the boards.

Had the proletariat, acting through the Soviet government, managed to organise accounting and control on a national scale, or at least laid the foundation for such control, it would not have been necessary to make such compromises. Through the food departments of the Soviets, through the supply organisations under the Soviets we should have organised the population into a single co-operative society under proletarian management. We should have done this without the assistance of the bourgeois co-operative societies, without making any concession to the purely bourgeois principle which prompts the workers' co-operative societies to remain workers' societies *side by side* with bourgeois societies, *instead of* subordinating these bourgeois co-operative societies entirely to themselves, merging the two together and taking the *entire* management of the society and the supervision of the consumption of the rich *in their own hands*.

In concluding such an agreement with the bourgeois co-operative societies, the Soviet government concretely defined its tactical aims and its peculiar methods of action in the present stage of development as follows: by directing the bourgeois elements, utilising them, making certain partial concessions to them, we create the conditions for further progress that will be slower than we at first anticipated, but surer, with the base and lines of communication better secured and with the positions which have been won better consolidated. The Soviets can (*and should*) now

gauge their successes in the field of socialist construction, among other things, by extremely clear, simple and practical standards, namely, in how many communities (communes or villages, or blocks of houses, etc.) co-operative societies have been organised, and to what extent their development has reached the point of embracing the whole population.

The Development of Soviet Organisation

The socialist character of Soviet, i.e., *proletarian*, democracy, as concretely applied today, lies first in the fact that the electors are the working and exploited people; the bourgeoisie is excluded. Secondly, it lies in the fact that all bureaucratic formalities and restrictions of elections are abolished; the people themselves determine the order and time of elections, and are completely free to recall any elected person. Thirdly, it lies in the creation of the best mass organisation of the vanguard of the working people, i.e., the proletariat engaged in large-scale industry, which enables it to lead the vast mass of the exploited, to draw them into independent political life, to educate them politically by their own experience; therefore for the first time a start is made by the *entire* population in learning the art of administration, and in beginning to administer.

These are the principal distinguishing features of the democracy now applied in Russia, which is a higher *type* of democracy, a break with the bourgeois distortion of democracy, transition to socialist democracy and to the conditions in which the state can begin to wither away.

It goes without saying that the element of petty-bourgeois disorganisation (which must *inevitably* be apparent to some extent in *every* proletarian revolution, and which is especially apparent in our revolution, owing to the petty-bourgeois character of our country, its backwardness and the consequences of a reactionary war) cannot but leave its impress upon the Soviets as well.

We must work unremittingly to develop the organisation of the Soviets and of the Soviet government. There is a petty-bourgeois tendency to transform the members of

the Soviets into "parliamentarians", or else into bureaucrats. We must combat this by drawing *all* the members of the Soviets into the practical work of administration. In many places the departments of the Soviets are gradually merging with the Commissariats. Our aim is to draw *the whole of the poor* into the practical work of administration, and all steps that are taken in this direction—the more varied they are, the better—should be carefully recorded, studied, systematised, tested by wider experience and embodied in law. Our aim is to ensure that *every* toiler, having finished his eight hours' "task" in productive labour, shall perform state duties *without pay*; the transition to this is particularly difficult, but this transition alone can guarantee the final consolidation of socialism. Naturally, the novelty and difficulty of the change lead to an abundance of steps being taken, as it were, gropingly, to an abundance of mistakes, vacillation—without this, any marked progress is impossible. The reason why the present position seems peculiar to many of those who would like to be regarded as socialists is that they have been accustomed to contrasting capitalism with socialism abstractly, and that they profoundly put between the two the word "leap" (some of them, recalling fragments of what they have read of Engels's writings, still more profoundly add the phrase "leap from the realm of necessity into the realm of freedom"). The majority of these so-called socialists, who have "read in books" about socialism but who have never seriously thought over the matter, are unable to consider that by "leap" the teachers of socialism meant turning-points on a world-historical scale, and that leaps of this kind extend over decades and even longer periods. Naturally, in such times, the notorious "intelligentsia" provides an infinite number of mourners of the dead. Some mourn over the Constituent Assembly, others mourn over bourgeois discipline, others again mourn over the capitalist system, still others mourn over the cultured landowner, and still others again mourn over imperialist Great Power policy, etc., etc.

The real interest of the epoch of great leaps lies in the fact that the abundance of fragments of the old, which sometimes accumulate more rapidly than the rudiments

(not always immediately discernible) of the new, calls for the ability to discern what is most important in the line or chain of development. History knows moments when the most important thing for the success of the revolution is to heap up as large a quantity of the fragments as possible, i.e., to blow up as many of the old institutions as possible; moments arise when enough has been blown up and the next task is to perform the "prosaic" (for the petty-bourgeois revolutionary, the "boring") task of clearing away the fragments; and moments arise when the careful nursing of the rudiments of the new system, which are growing amidst the wreckage on a soil which as yet has been badly cleared of rubble, is the most important thing.

It is not enough to be a revolutionary and an adherent of socialism or a Communist in general. You must be able at each particular moment to find the particular link in the chain which you must grasp with all your might in order to hold the whole chain and to prepare firmly for the transition to the next link; the order of the links, their form, the manner in which they are linked together, the way they differ from each other in the historical chain of events, are not as simple and not as meaningless as those in an ordinary chain made by a smith.

The fight against the bureaucratic distortion of the Soviet form of organisation is assured by the firmness of the connection between the Soviets and the "people", meaning by that the working and exploited people, and by the flexibility and elasticity of this connection. Even in the most democratic capitalist republics in the world, the poor never regard the bourgeois parliament as "their" institution. But the Soviets are "theirs" and not alien institutions to the mass of workers and peasants. The modern "Social-Democrats" of the Scheidemann or, what is almost the same thing, of the Martov type are repelled by the Soviets, and they are drawn towards the respectable bourgeois parliament, or to the Constituent Assembly, in the same way as Turgenev, sixty years ago, was drawn towards a moderate monarchist and noblemen's Constitution and was repelled by the peasant democracy of Dobrolyubov and Chernyshevsky.

It is the closeness of the Soviets to the "people", to the

working people, that creates the special forms of recall and other means of control from below which must be most zealously developed now. For example, the Councils of Public Education, as periodical conferences of Soviet electors and their delegates called to discuss and control the activities of the Soviet authorities in this field, deserve full sympathy and support. Nothing could be sillier than to transform the Soviets into something congealed and self-contained. The more resolutely we now have to stand for a ruthlessly firm government, for the dictatorship of individuals *in definite processes of work*, in definite aspects of *purely executive functions*, the more varied must be the forms and methods of control from below in order to counteract every shadow of a possibility of distorting the principles of Soviet government, in order repeatedly and tirelessly to weed out bureaucracy.

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Signed: *N. Lenin*

Six Theses on the Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government

1. The international position of the Soviet Republic is extremely difficult and critical, because the deepest and fundamental interests of international capital and imperialism induce it to strive not only for a military onslaught on Russia, but also for an agreement on the partition of Russia and the strangulation of the Soviet power.

Only the intensification of the imperialist slaughter of the peoples in Western Europe and the imperialist rivalry between Japan and America in the Far East paralyse, or restrain, these aspirations, and then only partially, and only for a certain, probably short, time.

Therefore, the tactics of the Soviet Republic must be, on the one hand, to exert every effort to ensure the country's speediest economic recovery, to increase its defence capacity, to build up a powerful socialist army; on the other hand, in international policy, the tactics must be those of manoeuvring, retreat, waiting for the moment when the international proletarian revolution—which is now maturing more quickly than before in a number of advanced countries—fully matures.

2. In the sphere of domestic policy, the task that comes to the forefront at the present time in conformity with the resolution adopted by the All-Russia Congress of Soviets on March 15, 1918, is the task of organisation. It is this task, in connection with the new and higher organisation of production and distribution on the basis of socialised large-scale machine (labour) production, that constitutes the chief content—and chief condition of complete vic-

tory—of the socialist revolution that was begun in Russia on October 25, 1917.

3. From the purely political point of view, the essence of the present situation is that the task of convincing the working people of Russia that the programme of the socialist revolution is correct and the task of winning Russia from the exploiters for the working people have, in main and fundamental outline, been carried out, and the chief problem that comes to the forefront now is—how to administer Russia. The organisation of proper administration, the undeviating fulfilment of the decisions of the Soviet government—this is the urgent task of the Soviets, this is the condition for the complete victory of the Soviet type of state, which it is not enough to proclaim in formal decrees, which it is not enough to establish and introduce in all parts of the country, but which must also be practically organised and tested in the course of the regular, everyday work of administration.

4. In the sphere of the economic building of socialism, the essence of the present situation is that our work of organising the country-wide and all-embracing accounting and control of production and distribution, and of introducing proletarian control of production, lags far behind the direct expropriation of the expropriators—the landowners and capitalists. This is the fundamental fact determining our tasks.

From this it follows, on the one hand, that the struggle against the bourgeoisie is entering a new phase, namely: the centre of gravity is shifting to the organisation of accounting and control. Only in this way is it possible to consolidate all the economic achievements directed against capital, all the measures in nationalising individual branches of the national economy that we have carried out since October; and only in this way is it possible to prepare for the successful consummation of the struggle against the bourgeoisie, i.e., the complete consolidation of socialism.

From this basic fact follows, on the other hand, the explanation as to why the Soviet government was obliged in certain cases to take a step backward, or to agree to compromise with bourgeois tendencies. Such a step backward and departure from the principles of the Paris Com-

mune was, for example, the introduction of high salaries for a number of bourgeois experts. Such a compromise was the agreement with the bourgeois co-operatives concerning steps and measures for gradually bringing the entire population into the co-operatives. Compromises of this kind will be necessary until the proletarian government has put country-wide control and accounting firmly on its feet; and our task is, while not in the least concealing their unfavourable features from the people, to exert efforts to improve accounting and control as the only means and method of completely eliminating all compromises of this kind. Compromises of this kind are needed at the present time as the sole (because we are late with accounting and control) guarantee of slower, but surer progress. When the accounting and control of production and distribution is fully introduced the need for such compromises will disappear.

5. Particular significance now attaches to measures for raising labour discipline and the productivity of labour. Every effort must be exerted for the steps already undertaken in this direction, especially by the trade unions, to be sustained, consolidated and increased. This includes, for example, the introduction of piece-work, the adoption of much that is scientific and progressive in the Taylor system, the payment of wages commensurate with the general results of the work of a factory, the exploitation of rail and water transport, etc. This also includes the organisation of competition between individual producers' and consumers' communes, selection of organisers, etc.

6. The proletarian dictatorship is absolutely indispensable during the transition from capitalism to socialism, and in our revolution this truth has been fully confirmed in practice. Dictatorship, however, presupposes a revolutionary government that is really firm and ruthless in crushing both exploiters and hooligans, and our government is too mild. Obedience, and unquestioning obedience at that, during work to the one-man decisions of Soviet directors, of the dictators elected or appointed by Soviet institutions, vested with dictatorial powers (as is demanded, for example, by the railway decree), is far, very far from being guaranteed as yet. This is the effect of the influence of petty-

bourgeois anarchy, the anarchy of small-proprietor habits, aspirations and sentiments, which fundamentally contradict proletarian discipline and socialism. The proletariat must concentrate all its class-consciousness on the task of combating this petty-bourgeois anarchy, which is not only directly apparent (in the support given by the bourgeoisie and their hangers-on, the Mensheviks, Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc., to every kind of resistance to the proletarian government), but also indirectly apparent (in the historical vacillation displayed on the major questions of policy by both the petty-bourgeois Left Socialist-Revolutionaries* and the trend in our Party** called "Left Communist", which descends to the methods of petty-bourgeois revolutionariness and copies the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries).

Iron discipline and the thorough exercise of proletarian dictatorship against petty-bourgeois vacillation—this is the general and summarising slogan of the moment.

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* *Left Socialist-Revolutionaries*—members of the party of the Left Socialist-Revolutionary internationalists that was organised at its first All-Russia Congress held in November 1917; until then the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries had constituted the Left wing of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. After the October Socialist Revolution the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries entered into an agreement with the Bolsheviks and their representatives joined the Soviet Government. In January and February 1918 the Central Committee of the Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party campaigned against the signing of the Brest Peace Treaty and when it was signed and ratified by the Fourth Congress of Soviets in March 1918, the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries withdrew from the Council of People's Commissars. In July 1918 the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries assassinated the German ambassador Mirbach in Moscow with the provocative aim of embroiling Soviet Russia in a war with Germany and simultaneously engineered an armed revolt against Soviet power. The revolt was suppressed in a few days.—*Ed.*

** Lenin refers to the "Left Communists" headed by N. I. Bukharin which was formed at the beginning of 1918, during the peace talks with Germany. The "Left Communists" launched a fierce campaign against the signing of the Brest Peace Treaty. After the conclusion of the peace treaty they opposed the party's policy on a number of questions of economic development.—*Ed.*

Speech at the First All-Russia Congress of Economic Councils May 26, 1918

Comrades, permit me first of all to greet the Congress of Economic Councils in the name of the Council of People's Commissars. (*Applause.*)

Comrades, the Supreme Economic Council now has a difficult, but a most rewarding task. There is not the slightest doubt that the further the gains of the October Revolution go, the more profound the upheaval it started becomes, the more firmly the socialist revolution's gains become established and the socialist system becomes consolidated, the greater and higher will become the role of the Economic Councils, which alone of all the state institutions are to endure. And their position will become all the more durable the closer we approach the establishment of the socialist system and the less need there will be for a purely administrative apparatus, for an apparatus which is solely engaged in administration. After the resistance of the exploiters has been finally broken, after the working people have learned to organise socialist production, this apparatus of administration in the proper, strict, narrow sense of the word, this apparatus of the old state, is doomed to die; while the apparatus of the type of the Supreme Economic Council is destined to grow, to develop and become strong, performing all the main activities of organised society.

That is why, comrades, when I look at the experience of our Supreme Economic Council and of the local councils, with the activities of which it is closely and inseparably connected, I think that, in spite of much that is unfinished, incomplete and unorganised, we have not even the slight-

est grounds for pessimistic conclusions. For the task which the Supreme Economic Council sets itself, and the task which all the regional and local councils set themselves, is so enormous, so all-embracing, that there is absolutely nothing that gives rise to alarm in what we all observe. Very often—of course, from our point of view, perhaps too often—the proverb “measure thrice and cut once” has not been applied. Unfortunately, things are not so simple in regard to the organisation of the economy on socialist lines as they are expressed in that proverb.

With the transition of all power—this time not only political and not even mainly political, but economic power, that is, power that affects the deepest foundations of everyday human existence—to a new class, and, moreover, to a class which for the first time in the history of humanity is the leader of the overwhelming majority of the population, of the whole mass of the working and exploited people—our tasks become more complicated.

It goes without saying that in view of the supreme importance and the supreme difficulty of the organisational tasks that confront us, when we must organise the deepest foundations of the existence of hundreds of millions of people on entirely new lines, it is impossible to arrange matters as simply as in the proverb “measure thrice and cut once”. We, indeed, are not in a position to measure a thing innumerable times and then cut out and fix what has been finally measured and fitted. We must build our economic edifice as we go along, trying out various institutions, watching their work, testing them by the collective common experience of the working people, and, above all, by the results of their work. We must do this as we go along, and, moreover, in a situation of desperate struggle and frenzied resistance by the exploiters, whose frenzy grows the nearer we come to the time when we can pull out the last bad teeth of capitalist exploitation. It is understandable that if even within a brief period we have to alter the types, the regulations and the bodies of administration in various branches of the national economy several times, there are not the slightest grounds for pessimism in these conditions, although, of course, this gives considerable grounds for malicious outbursts on the part of the

bourgeoisie and the exploiters, whose best feelings are hurt. Of course, those who take too close and too direct a part in this work, say, the Chief Water Board, do not always find it pleasant to alter the regulations, the norms and the laws of administration three times; the pleasure obtained from work of this kind cannot be great. But if we abstract ourselves somewhat from the direct unpleasantness of extremely frequent alteration of decrees, and if we look a little deeper and further into the enormous world-historic task that the Russian proletariat has to carry out with the aid of its own still inadequate forces, it will become immediately understandable that even far more numerous alterations and testing in practice of various systems of administration and various forms of discipline are inevitable; that in such a gigantic task, we could never claim, and no sensible socialist who has ever written on the prospects of the future ever even thought, that we could immediately establish and compose the forms of organisation of the new society according to some predetermined instruction and at one stroke.

All that we knew, all that the best experts on capitalist society, the greatest minds who foresaw its development, exactly indicated to us was that transformation was historically inevitable and must proceed along a certain main line, that private ownership of the means of production was doomed by history, that it would burst, that the exploiters would inevitably be expropriated. This was established with scientific precision, and we knew this when we grasped the banner of socialism, when we declared ourselves socialists, when we founded socialist parties, when we transformed society. We knew this when we took power for the purpose of proceeding with socialist reorganisation; but we could not know the forms of transformation, or the rate of development of the concrete reorganisation. Collective experience, the experience of millions can alone give us decisive guidance in this respect, precisely because, for our task, for the task of building socialism, the experience of the hundreds and hundreds of thousands of those upper sections which have made history up to now in feudal society and in capitalist society is insufficient. We cannot proceed in this way precisely because

we rely on joint experience, on the experience of millions of working people.

We know, therefore, that organisation, which is the main and fundamental task of the Soviets, will inevitably entail a vast number of experiments, a vast number of steps, a vast number of alterations, a vast number of difficulties, particularly in regard to the question of how to fit every person into his proper place, because we have no experience of this; here we have to devise every step ourselves, and the more serious the mistakes we make on this path, the more the certainty will grow that with every increase in the membership of the trade unions, with every additional thousand, with every additional hundred thousand that come over from the camp of working people, of exploited, who have hitherto lived according to tradition and habit, into the camp of the builders of Soviet organisations, the number of people who should prove suitable and organise the work on proper lines is increasing.

Take one of the secondary tasks that the Economic Council—the Supreme Economic Council—comes up against with particular frequency, the task of utilising bourgeois experts. We all know, at least those who take their stand on the basis of science and socialism, that this task can be fulfilled only when—that this task can be fulfilled only to the extent that international capitalism has developed the material and technical prerequisites of labour, organised on an enormous scale and based on science, and hence on the training of an enormous number of scientifically educated specialists. We know that without this socialism is impossible. If we re-read the works of those socialists who have observed the development of capitalism during the last half-century, and who have again and again come to the conclusion that socialism is inevitable, we shall find that all of them without exception have pointed out that socialism alone will liberate science from its bourgeois fetters, from its enslavement to capital, from its slavery to the interests of dirty capitalist greed. Socialism alone will make possible the wide expansion of social production and distribution on scientific lines and their actual subordination to the aim of easing the lives of the working people and of improving their welfare as much as possible.

Socialism alone can achieve this. And we know that it must achieve this, and in the understanding of this truth lies the whole complexity and the whole strength of Marxism.

We must achieve this while relying on elements which are opposed to it, because the bigger capital becomes the more the bourgeoisie suppresses the workers. Now that power is in the hands of the proletariat and the poor peasants and the government is setting itself tasks with the support of the people, we have to achieve these socialist changes with the help of bourgeois experts who have been trained in bourgeois society, who know no other conditions, who cannot conceive of any other social system. Hence, even in cases when these experts are absolutely sincere and loyal to their work they are filled with thousands of bourgeois prejudices, they are connected by thousands of ties, imperceptible to themselves, with bourgeois society, which is dying and decaying and is therefore putting up furious resistance.

We cannot conceal these difficulties of endeavour and achievement from ourselves. Of all the socialists who have written about this, I cannot recall the work of a single socialist or the opinion of a single prominent socialist on future socialist society, which pointed to this concrete, practical difficulty that would confront the working class when it took power, when it set itself the task of turning the sum total of the very rich, historically inevitable and necessary for us store of culture and knowledge and technique accumulated by capitalism from an instrument of capitalism into an instrument of socialism. It is easy to do this in a general formula, in abstract reasoning, but in the struggle against capitalism, which does not die at once but puts up increasingly furious resistance the closer death approaches, this task is one that calls for tremendous effort. If experiments take place in this field, if we make repeated corrections of partial mistakes, this is inevitable because we cannot, in this or that sphere of the national economy, immediately turn specialists from servants of capitalism into servants of the working people, into their advisers. If we cannot do this at once it should not give rise to the slightest pessimism, because the task which we set ourselves is a task of world-historic difficulty and

significance. We do not shut our eyes to the fact that in a single country, even if it were a much less backward country than Russia, even if we were living in better conditions than those prevailing after four years of unprecedented, painful, severe and ruinous war, we could not carry out the socialist revolution completely, solely by our own efforts. He who turns away from the socialist revolution now taking place in Russia and points to the obvious disproportion of forces is like the conservative "man in a muffler" who cannot see further than his nose, who forgets that not a single historical change of any importance takes place without there being several instances of a disproportion of forces. Forces grow in the process of the struggle, as the revolution grows. When a country has taken the path of profound change, it is to the credit of that country and the party of the working class which achieved victory in that country, that they should take up in a practical manner the tasks that were formerly raised abstractly, theoretically. This experience will never be forgotten. The experience which the workers now united in trade unions and local organisations are acquiring in the practical work of organising the whole of production on a national scale cannot be taken away, no matter how difficult the vicissitudes the Russian revolution and the international socialist revolution may pass through. It has gone down in history as socialism's gain, and on it the future world revolution will erect its socialist edifice.

Permit me to mention another problem, perhaps the most difficult problem, for which the Supreme Economic Council has to find a practical solution. This is the problem of labour discipline. Strictly speaking, in mentioning this problem, we ought to admit and emphasise with satisfaction that it was precisely the trade unions, their largest organisations, namely, the Central Committee of the Metalworkers' Union and the All-Russia Trade Union Council, the supreme trade union organisations uniting millions of working people, that were the first to set to work independently to solve this problem and this problem is of world-historic importance. In order to understand it we must abstract ourselves from those partial, minor failures, from the incredible difficulties which, if taken separately,

seem to be insurmountable. We must rise to a higher level and survey the historical change of systems of social economy. Only from this angle will it be possible to appreciate the immensity of the task which we have undertaken. Only then will it be possible to appreciate the enormous significance of the fact that on this occasion, the most advanced representatives of society, the working and exploited people are, on their own initiative, taking on themselves the task which hitherto, in feudal Russia, up to 1861, was solved by a handful of landed proprietors, who regarded it as their own affair*. At that time it was their affair to bring about state integration and discipline.

We know how the feudal landowners created this discipline. It was oppression, humiliation and the incredible torments of penal servitude for the majority of the people. Recall the whole of this transition from serfdom to the bourgeois economy. From all that you have witnessed—although the majority of you could not have witnessed it—and from all that you have learned from the older generations, you know how easy, historically, seemed the transition to the new bourgeois economy after 1861, the transition from the old feudal discipline of the stick, from the discipline of the most senseless, arrogant and brutal humiliation and personal violence, to bourgeois discipline, to the discipline of starvation, to so-called free hire, which in fact was the discipline of capitalist slavery. This was because mankind passed from one exploiter to another; because one minority of plunderers and exploiters of the people's labour gave way to another minority, who were also plunderers and exploiters of the people's labour; because the feudal landowners gave way to the capitalists, one minority gave way to another minority, while the toiling and exploited classes remained oppressed. And even this change from one exploiter's discipline to another exploiter's discipline took years, if not decades, of effort; it extended over a transition period of years, if not decades. During this period the old feudal landowners quite sincerely believed that everything was going to rack and ruin, that it was impossible to manage the country without serfdom;

* This refers to the abolition of serfdom in Russia in 1861.—*Ed.*

while the new, capitalist boss encountered practical difficulties at every step and gave up his enterprise as a bad job. The material evidence, one of the substantial proofs of the difficulty of this transition was that Russia at that time imported machinery from abroad, in order to have the best machinery to use, and it turned out that no one was available to handle this machinery, and there were no managers. And all over Russia one could see excellent machinery lying around unused, so difficult was the transition from the old feudal discipline to the new, bourgeois, capitalist discipline.

And so, comrades, if you look at the matter from this angle, you will not allow yourselves to be misled by those people, by those classes, by those bourgeoisie and their hangers-on whose sole task is to sow panic, to sow despondency, to cause complete despondency concerning the whole of our work, to make it appear to be hopeless, who point to every single case of indiscipline and corruption, and for that reason give up the revolution as a bad job, as if there has ever been in the world, in history, a single really great revolution in which there was no corruption, no loss of discipline, no painful experimental steps, when the people were creating a new discipline. We must not forget that this is the first time that this preliminary stage in history has been reached, when a new discipline, labour discipline, the discipline of comradesly contact, Soviet discipline, is being created in fact by millions of working and exploited people. We do not claim, nor do we expect, quick successes in this field. We know that this task will take an entire historical epoch. We have begun this historical epoch, an epoch in which we are breaking up the discipline of capitalist society in a country which is still bourgeois, and we are proud that all politically conscious workers, absolutely all the toiling peasants are everywhere helping this destruction; an epoch in which the people voluntarily, on their own initiative, are becoming aware that they must—not on instructions from above, but on the instructions of their own living experience—change this discipline based on the exploitation and slavery of the working people into the new discipline of united labour, the discipline of the united, organised workers and working peasants of the

whole of Russia, of a country with a population of tens and hundreds of millions. This is a task of enormous difficulty, but it is also a thankful one, because only when we solve it in practice shall we have driven the last nail into the coffin of capitalist society which we are burying. (Applause.)

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Collected Works, Vol. 27, pp. 408-15

Comments on the Draft "Regulations for the Management of the Nationalised Enterprises"

Communism requires and presupposes the greatest possible centralisation of large-scale production throughout the country. The all-Russia centre, therefore, should definitely be given the right of direct control over all the enterprises of the given branch of industry. The regional centres define their functions depending on local conditions of life, etc., in accordance with the general production directions and decisions of the centre.

To deprive the all-Russia centre of the right of direct control over all the enterprises of the given industry throughout the country, as follows from the commission's draft, would be regional anarcho-syndicalism, and not communism.

Written June 2, 1918

First published in 1959
in *Lenin Miscellany XXXVI*

Collected Works, Vol. 42,
p. 96

The Democratism and Socialist Nature of Soviet Power

The democratism of Soviet power and its socialist nature are expressed in the fact

that the supreme state authority is vested in the Soviets, which are made up of representatives of the working people (workers, soldiers and peasants), freely elected and removable at any time by the masses, hitherto oppressed by capital;

that the local Soviets freely amalgamate on a basis of democratic centralism into a single, federal union as represented by the Soviet state power of the Russian Soviet Republic;

that the Soviets concentrate in their hands not only the legislative power and supervision of law enforcement, but direct enforcement of the laws through all the members of the Soviets with a view to a gradual transition to the performance of legislative functions and state administration by the whole working population.

Taking further into consideration,

that any direct or indirect legalisation of the rights of ownership of the workers of any given factory or any given trade on their particular production, or of their right to weaken or impede the orders of the state authority, is a flagrant distortion of the basic principles of Soviet power and a complete rejection of socialism....*

Written in the first half of 1918
First published April 22, 1957
in *Pravda* No. 112

Collected Works, Vol. 42,
pp. 100-01

* The manuscript here breaks off.—*Ed.*

Speech at the Congress of Chairmen of Gubernia Soviets

July 30, 1918

Newspaper Report

Comrades, your job is one of administration, which plays a dominant part in the affairs of the Council of People's Commissars. Quite naturally, many difficulties lie ahead of you. In the majority of gubernia Executive Committees it is evident that the masses are at last beginning to tackle the work of administration themselves. There are certainly bound to be difficulties. One of our greatest shortcomings has been that we still draw too little on the workers for our staffs. But it was never our intention to adapt the old apparatus to the new system of administration, and we do not regret that with the abolition of the old apparatus everything has to be built anew with so much difficulty. The workers and peasants possess greater constructive abilities than might have been expected. It is to the revolution's credit that it swept away the old administrative apparatus. Yet at the same time we must admit that the people's chief shortcoming is their timidity and reluctance to take things into their own hands.

Some of our gubernia Soviets have been inefficient, but now the work is steadily improving. Information has been coming in from many parts of the country stating that the work is progressing without any misunderstandings or conflicts. Although only eight months have elapsed, the Russian revolution has proved that the new class which has taken administration into its own hands is capable of coping with the task. Although it is short-staffed, the administrative apparatus is running more smoothly every day. Our apparatus is still at a stage where no definite results are visible, a fact which the enemy keeps harping

on. Nevertheless, quite a lot has already been done. The transfer of land and industry to the working people, the exchange of goods and the organisation of food supply are being carried into effect in face of fantastic difficulties. The working people must be promoted to independent work in building up and running the socialist state. Only practice will teach them that the old exploiting class is finished and done with.

Our chief and most urgent task is administration, organisation and control. This is a thankless and inconspicuous job; but it is in doing this job that the managerial and administrative talents of the workers and peasants will develop more and more effectively.

Now to the new Constitution.* It embodies what experience has already given, and will be corrected and supplemented as it is being put into effect. The main thing about the Constitution is that the Soviet government is completely dissociating itself from the bourgeoisie, preventing them from participating in building up the state.

The workers and peasants, upon whom the government has called to run the country, and who have remained remote from such affairs for so long, were bound to want to build the state by their own experience. The effect of the slogan "All Power to the Soviets!" was that the people in the localities wanted to gain experience in building the state by learning from their own mistakes. Such a transitional period was unavoidable, and it has proved beneficial. In this tendency towards separatism, there was much that was healthy and wholesome in the sense that it displayed a creative spirit. The Soviet Constitution has defined the relations between the volost authority and the uyezdz authority, between the uyezdz authority and the gubernia authority, and between the latter and the centre.

Only large-scale, planned construction, which aims at evenly utilising economic and business values, deserves to be called socialist. The Soviet government certainly does not intend to belittle the importance of the local authorities

* *The Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic* was endorsed by the Fifth All-Russia Congress of Soviets on July 4, 1918.

or kill their autonomy and initiative. Even the peasants realise through their own experience the need for centralism.

Izvestia VTsIK No. 161,
July 31, 1918
Pravda No. 160,
August 1, 1918

Collected Works, Vol. 28,
pp. 35-37

From Letter to American Workers

Let the corrupt bourgeois press shout to the whole world about every mistake our revolution makes. We are not daunted by our mistakes. People have not become saints because the revolution has begun. The toiling classes who for centuries have been oppressed, downtrodden and forcibly held in the vice of poverty, brutality and ignorance cannot avoid mistakes when making a revolution. And, as I pointed out once before, the corpse of bourgeois society cannot be nailed in a coffin and buried. The corpse of capitalism is decaying and disintegrating in our midst, polluting the air and poisoning our lives, enmeshing that which is new, fresh, young and virile in thousands of threads and bonds of that which is old, moribund and decaying.

For every hundred mistakes we commit, and which the bourgeoisie and their lackeys (including our own Mensheviks and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries) shout about to the whole world, 10,000 great and heroic deeds are performed, greater and more heroic because they are simple and inconspicuous amidst the everyday life of a factory district or a remote village, performed by people who are not accustomed (and have no opportunity) to shout to the whole world about their successes.

But even if the contrary were true—although I know such an assumption is wrong—even if we committed 10,000 mistakes for every 100 correct actions we performed, even in that case our revolution would be great and invincible, and so it will be in the eyes of world history, because, for the first time, not the minority, not the rich alone, not the educated alone, but the real people, the vast majority of

the working people, are *themselves* building a new life, are *by their own experience* solving the most difficult problems of socialist organisation.

Every mistake committed in the course of such work, in the course of this most conscientious and earnest work of tens of millions of simple workers and peasants in reorganising their whole life, every such mistake is worth thousands and millions of "flawless" successes achieved by the exploiting minority—successes in swindling and duping the working people. For only *through* such mistakes will the workers and peasants *learn* to build the new life, learn to do *without* capitalists; only in this way will they hack a path for themselves—through thousands of obstacles—to victorious socialism.

Mistakes are being committed in the course of their revolutionary work by our peasants, who at one stroke, in one night, October 25-26 (old style), 1917, entirely abolished the private ownership of land, and are now, month after month, overcoming tremendous difficulties and correcting their mistakes themselves, solving in a practical way the most difficult tasks of organising new conditions of economic life, of fighting the kulaks, providing land for the *working people* (and not for the rich), and of changing to *communist* large-scale agriculture.

Mistakes are being committed in the course of their revolutionary work by our workers, who have already, after a few months, nationalised almost all the biggest factories and plants, and are learning by hard, everyday work the new task of managing whole branches of industry, are setting the nationalised enterprises going, overcoming the powerful resistance of inertia, petty-bourgeois mentality and selfishness, and, brick by brick, are laying the foundation of *new* social ties, of a *new* labour discipline, of a *new* influence of the workers' trade unions over their members.

Mistakes are committed in the course of their revolutionary work by our Soviets, which were created as far back as 1905 by a mighty upsurge of the people. The Soviets of Workers and Peasants are a new *type* of state, a new and higher *type* of democracy, a form of the proletarian dictatorship, a means of administering the state *without* the

bourgeoisie and *against* the bourgeoisie. For the first time democracy is here serving the people, the working people, and has ceased to be democracy for the rich as it still is in all bourgeois republics, even the most democratic. For the first time, the people are grappling, on a scale involving one hundred million, with the problem of implementing the dictatorship of the proletariat and semi-proletariat—a problem which, if not solved, makes socialism *out of the question*.

Let the pedants, or the people whose minds are incurably stuffed with bourgeois-democratic or parliamentary prejudices, shake their heads in perplexity about our Soviets, about the absence of direct elections, for example. These people have forgotten nothing and have learned nothing during the period of the great upheavals of 1914-18. The combination of the proletarian dictatorship with the new democracy for the working people—of civil war with the widest participation of the people in politics—such a combination cannot be brought about at one stroke, nor does it fit in with the outworn modes of routine parliamentary democracy. The contours of a new world, the world of socialism, are rising before us in the shape of the Soviet Republic. It is not surprising that this world does not come into being ready-made, does not spring forth like Minerva from the head of Jupiter.

The old bourgeois-democratic constitutions waxed eloquent about formal equality and right of assembly; but our proletarian and peasant Soviet Constitution casts aside the hypocrisy of formal equality. When the bourgeois republicans overturned thrones they did not worry about formal equality between monarchists and republicans. When it is a matter of overthrowing the bourgeoisie, only traitors or idiots can demand formal equality of rights for the bourgeoisie. "Freedom of assembly" for workers and peasants is not worth a farthing when the best buildings belong to the bourgeoisie. Our Soviets have *confiscated* all the good buildings in town and country from the rich and have *transferred all* of them to the workers and peasants for *their* unions and meetings. This is *our* freedom of assembly—for the working people! This is the meaning and content of our Soviet, our socialist Constitution!

That is why we are all so firmly convinced that no matter what misfortunes may still be in store for it, our Republic of Soviets is *invincible*.

N. Lenin

August 20, 1918

Pravda No. 178,
August 22, 1918

Collected Works, Vol. 28,
pp. 71-74

***From Speech on the Anniversary
of the Revolution Delivered at the Sixth
Extraordinary All-Russia Congress
of Soviets of Workers', Peasants', Cossacks'
and Red Army Deputies
November 6, 1918***

Furthermore, from the first steps of Soviet organisation we have now reached a stage where, as Comrade Sverdlov justly remarked in opening this Congress, there is no place in Russia, however remote, where Soviet authority has not asserted itself and become an integral part of the Soviet Constitution, which is based on long experience gained in the struggle of the working and oppressed people.

We now have a powerful Red Army instead of being utterly defenceless after the last four years' war, which evoked hatred and aversion among the mass of the exploited and left them terribly weak and exhausted, and which condemned the revolution to a most difficult and drastic period when we were defenceless against the blows of German and Austrian imperialism. Finally, and most important of all, we have come from being isolated internationally, from which we suffered both in October and at the beginning of the year, to a position where our only, but firm allies, the working and oppressed people of the world, have at last rebelled. We have reached a stage where the leaders of the West-European proletariat, like Liebknecht and Adler, leaders who spent many months in prison for their bold and heroic attempts to gather opposition to the imperialist war, have been set free under the pressure of the rapidly developing workers' revolutions in Vienna*

* In the autumn of 1918 a revolution took place in Vienna which brought down the Habsburgs and a republic was proclaimed in Austria. Arbeiterräte (Councils of Workers' Deputies on the Soviet model) were

and Berlin*. Instead of being isolated, we are now in a position where we are marching side by side, shoulder to shoulder with our international allies. Those are the chief achievements of the past year. I want to say a few words about the road we have covered, about this transitional stage.

At first our slogan was workers' control. We said that despite all the promises of the Kerensky government, the capitalists were continuing to sabotage production and increase dislocation. We can now see that this would have ended in complete collapse. So the first fundamental step that every socialist, workers' government has to take is workers' control. We did not decree socialism immediately throughout industry, because socialism can only take shape and be consolidated when the working class has learnt how to run the economy and when the authority of the working people has been firmly established. Socialism is mere wishful thinking without that. That is why we introduced workers' control, appreciating that it was a contradictory and incomplete measure, but an essential one so that the workers themselves might tackle the momentous tasks of building up industry in a vast country without and opposed to exploiters.

Everyone who took a direct, or even indirect, part in this work, everyone who lived through all the oppression and brutality of the old capitalist regime, learned a great deal. We know that little has been accomplished. We know

set up in Vienna and other towns but as a result of the treacherous policy of the Social-Democratic leaders who came out in defence of the bourgeois system the role of the Councils was made insignificant and the struggle of the advanced contingents of the working class for the dictatorship of the proletariat was suppressed.—*Ed.*

* In November 1918 in Germany a revolution broke out which overthrew the Junker-bourgeois monarchy of Wilhelm II. Soldiers and Workers' Councils were formed all over Germany. But at the First All-German Congress of Councils held in December 1918, the Social-Democratic leaders managed to secure the adoption of a resolution on the transfer of legislative and executive powers to the government which virtually signified the abolition of the Workers' Councils. The counter-revolutionary detachments led by the Social-Democrat Minister of War, Noske suppressed the revolutionary movement of the Berlin proletariat with extreme cruelty.—*Ed.*

that in this extremely backward and impoverished country where innumerable obstacles and barriers were put in the workers' way, it will take them a long time to learn to run industry. But we consider it most important and valuable that the workers have themselves tackled the job, and that we have passed from workers' control, which in all the main branches of industry was bound to be chaotic, disorganised, primitive and incomplete, to workers' industrial administration on a national scale.

The trade unions' position has altered. Their main function now is to send their representatives to all management boards and central bodies, to all the new organisations which have taken over a ruined and deliberately sabotaged industry from capitalism. They have coped with industry without the assistance of those intellectuals who from the very outset deliberately used their knowledge and education—the result of mankind's store of knowledge—to frustrate the cause of socialism, rather than assist the people in building up a socially-owned economy without exploiters. These men wanted to use their knowledge to put a spoke in the wheel, to hamper the workers who were least trained for tackling the job of administration.

We can now say that the main hindrance has been removed. It was extremely difficult, but the sabotage of all people gravitating towards the bourgeoisie has been checked. The workers have succeeded in taking this basic step, in laying the foundations of socialism, despite tremendous handicaps. We are not exaggerating and are not afraid to tell the truth. It is true that in terms of our ultimate goal, little has been accomplished. But a great deal, a very great deal, has been done to strengthen the foundations. When speaking of socialism, we cannot say that great sections of workers have laid the foundations in a politically-conscious way in the sense that they have taken to reading books and pamphlets. By political consciousness we mean that they have tackled this formidable task with their own hands and by their own efforts. And they have committed thousands of blunders from each of which they have themselves suffered. But every blunder trained and

steeled them in organising industrial administration, which has now been established and put upon a firm foundation. They saw their work through. From now on the work will be different, for now all workers, not just the leaders and advanced workers, but great sections of workers, know that they themselves, with their own hands, are building socialism and have already laid its foundations, and no force in the country can prevent them from seeing the job through.

We may have had great difficulties in industry, where we had to cover a road which to many seemed long, but which was actually short and led from workers' control to workers' administration, yet far greater preparatory work had to be done in the more backward countryside. Anyone who has studied rural life and come into contact with the peasants would say that it was only in the summer and autumn of 1918 that the urban October Revolution became a real rural October Revolution. And the Petrograd workers and the Petrograd garrison soldiers fully realised when they took power that great difficulties would crop up in rural organisational work, and our progress there would have to be more gradual and that it would be the greatest folly to try to introduce socialised farming by decree, for only an insignificant number of enlightened peasants might support us, while the vast majority had no such object in view. We therefore confined ourselves to what was absolutely essential in the interests of promoting the revolution—in no case to endeavour to outrun the people's development, but to wait until a movement forward occurred as a result of their own experience and their own struggle. In October we confined ourselves to sweeping away at one blow the age-old enemy of the peasants, the feudal landowner, the big landed proprietor. This was a struggle in which all the peasants joined. At this stage the peasants were not yet divided into proletarians, semi-proletarians, poor peasants and bourgeoisie. We socialists knew there would be no socialism without such a struggle, but we also realised that knowing it was not enough—it had to be brought home to the millions, and through their own experience, not through propaganda. And for that reason, since the peasants as a whole could only conceive of the

revolution on the basis of equal land tenure, we openly declared in our decree of October 26, 1917, that we would take the Peasant Mandate on the Land* as our starting-point.

We said frankly that it did not accord with our views, that it was not communism, but we were not imposing on the peasants something that was merely in accord with our programme and not with their views. We said we were marching alongside them, as with fellow-workers, fully confident that the development of the revolution would lead them to the conclusions we ourselves had drawn. The result of this policy is the peasant movement. The agrarian reform began with the socialisation of the land which we voted for and carried out, though openly declaring that it did not accord with our views. We knew that the idea of equal land tenure had the support of the vast majority, and we had no desire to force anything upon them. We were prepared to wait until the peasants themselves abandoned the idea and advanced further. So we waited and we have been able to prepare our forces.

The law we then passed was based on general democratic principles, on that which unites the rich kulak peasant

* The Decree on Land passed by the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets on October 26, 1917, on the next day after the establishment of Soviet power abolished landed estates and private landed property and transferred all land to the people.

The Decree included the Mandate on the Land compiled on the basis of 242 local peasants' mandates. One of its points provided for equalitarian land tenure. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and other Narodniks who upheld this slogan believed that the transfer of the land to its tillers on the basis of "equalitarianism" would lead to the "socialisation of the land". However, in actual fact, the introduction of equalitarian land tenure which presupposed the retention of individual peasant farms, far from leading the countryside to socialism, would inevitably have made for an accelerated development of capitalist relations in the village.

Lenin and his colleagues in the Party agreed to include the point on equalitarian land tenure in the Decree on Land, since they believed that the peasants should realise the fallacy of this slogan from their own experience. Lenin's forecast was borne out. The entire further development of social relations in the countryside brought home to the working peasants the need to adopt the path of collectivisation of agriculture.—*Ed.*

with the poor peasant—hatred for the landowner. It was based on the general idea of equality which was undoubtedly a revolutionary idea directed against the old monarchist system. From this law we had to pass to differentiation of the peasants. The land socialisation law was universally accepted; it was unanimously adopted both by us and by those who did not subscribe to Bolshevik policy. We gave the agricultural communes the biggest say in deciding who should own the land. We left the road open for agriculture to develop along socialist lines, knowing perfectly well that at that time, October 1917, it was not yet ready for it. Our preparatory work cleared the way for the gigantic and epoch-making step we have now taken, one that has not been taken by any other country, not even by the most democratic republic. That step was taken this summer by all the peasants, even in the most remote villages of Russia. When food difficulties arose and famine threatened, when the heritage of the past and the aftermath of the accursed four years of war made themselves felt, when counter-revolution and the civil war had deprived us of our richest grain region, when all this reached a climax and the cities were menaced by famine, the only, the most reliable and firm bulwark of our government, the advanced workers of the towns and industrial regions, went en masse to the countryside. It is slander to say the workers went there to provoke an armed conflict between workers and peasants. Events expose that slander. The workers went to put down the rural exploiters, the kulaks, who were making huge fortunes out of grain profiteering at a time when people were starving. They went to help the poor peasants, that is, the majority of the rural population. The July crisis, when kulak revolts swept the whole of Russia, clearly showed that their mission had not been in vain, that they had extended the hand of alliance, and that their preparatory work had merged with the efforts of the peasants. The working and exploited country people settled the July crisis by rising up everywhere and coming out in alliance with the urban proletariat. Today Comrade Zinoviev told me over the telephone that 18,000 people are attending the regional congress of Poor Peasants' Committees in Petrograd

and that there is remarkable enthusiasm and high spirits.*

As events unfolding throughout Russia became more evident, the village poor realised from their own experience when they went into action what the struggle against the kulaks meant, and that to keep the cities supplied with food and to re-establish commodity exchange, without which the countryside cannot live, they must part company with the rural bourgeoisie and the kulaks. They have to organise separately. And we have now taken the first and most momentous step of the socialist revolution in the countryside. We could not have taken that step in October. We gauged the moment when we could approach the people. And we have now reached a point where the socialist revolution in the rural areas has begun, where in every village, even the most remote, the peasant knows that his rich neighbour, the kulak, if he is engaged in grain profiteering, sees everything in the light of his old, backwoods mentality.

And so the countryside, the rural poor, uniting with their leaders, the city workers, are only now providing us with a firm and stable foundation for real socialist construction. Socialist construction will only now begin in the countryside. Only now are Soviets and farms being formed which are systematically working towards large-scale socialised farming, towards making full use of knowledge, science and technology, realising that even simple, elementary human culture cannot be based on the old, reactionary, ignorant way of life. The work here is even more difficult than in industry, and even more mistakes are being made by our local committees and Soviets. But they learn from their mistakes. We are not afraid of

* *Poor Peasants' Committees* were set up under the decree of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee of June 11, 1918, entitled "On the Organisation of the Village Poor and Provision of Supplies to Them". The Committees were charged with the task of keeping account of food supplies in the peasant farms, exposing hoarding by kulaks, and helping the Soviet food organisations in the work of confiscating their surpluses; they were also to provide food for the poor, etc. At the end of 1918 the Poor Peasants' Committees which had fulfilled their tasks merged with volost and village Soviets.

mistakes when they are made by ordinary people who take a conscientious attitude to socialist construction, because we rely only on the experience and effort of our own people.

Newspaper report published
November 9, 1918
in *Pravda* No. 242
and *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 244

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*Sixth Extraordinary
All-Russia Congress of Soviets.
Verbatim Report*

Collected Works, Vol. 28,
pp. 138-44

From The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky

...Take the structure of the state. Kautsky picks at all manner of "trifles", down to the argument that under the Soviet Constitution elections are "indirect", but he misses the point. He fails to see the *class* nature of the state apparatus, of the machinery of state. Under bourgeois democracy the capitalists, by thousands of tricks—which are the more artful and effective the more "pure" democracy is developed—*drive* the people away from administrative work, from freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, etc. The Soviet government is the *first* in the world (or strictly speaking, the second, because the Paris Commune began to do the same thing) to *enlist* the people, specifically the *exploited* people, in the work of administration. The working people are *barred* from participation in bourgeois parliaments (they *never decide* important questions under bourgeois democracy, which are decided by the stock exchange and the banks) by thousands of obstacles, and the workers know and feel, see and realise perfectly well that the bourgeois parliaments are institutions *alien* to them, *instruments for the oppression* of the workers by the bourgeoisie, institutions of a hostile class, of the exploiting minority.

The Soviets are the direct organisation of the working and exploited people themselves, which *helps* them to organise and administer their own state in every possible way. And in this it is the vanguard of the working and exploited people, the urban proletariat, that enjoys the advantage of being best united by the large enterprises; it is easier for it than for all others to elect and exercise

control over those elected. The Soviet form of organisation automatically *helps* to unite all the working and exploited people around their vanguard, the proletariat. The old bourgeois apparatus—the bureaucracy, the privileges of wealth, of bourgeois education, of social connections, etc. (these real privileges are the more varied the more highly bourgeois democracy is developed)—all this disappears under the Soviet form of organisation. Freedom of the press ceases to be hypocrisy, because the printing-plants and stocks of paper are taken away from the bourgeoisie. The same thing applies to the best buildings, the palaces, the mansions and manor houses. Soviet power took thousands upon thousands of these best buildings from the exploiters at one stroke, and in this way made the right of assembly—without which democracy is a fraud—a *million times* more democratic for the people. Indirect elections to non-local Soviets make it easier to hold congresses of Soviets, they make the *entire* apparatus less costly, more flexible, more accessible to the workers and peasants at a time when life is seething and it is necessary to be able very quickly to recall one's local deputy or to delegate him to a general congress of Soviets.

Proletarian democracy is *a million times* more democratic than any bourgeois democracy; Soviet power is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic.

To fail to see this one must either deliberately serve the bourgeoisie, or be politically as dead as a doornail, unable to see real life from behind the dusty pages of bourgeois books, be thoroughly imbued with bourgeois-democratic prejudices, and thereby objectively convert oneself into a lackey of the bourgeoisie.

To fail to see this one must be incapable of *presenting the question* from the point of view of the *oppressed* classes:

Is there a single country in the world, even among the most democratic bourgeois countries, in which the *average rank-and-file* worker, the average rank-and-file *farm labourer*, or village semi-proletarian generally (i.e., the representative of the oppressed, of the overwhelming majority of the population), enjoys anything approaching such *liberty* of holding meetings in the best buildings, such *liberty* of using

the largest printing-plants and biggest stocks of paper to express his ideas and to defend his interests, such *liberty* of promoting men and women of his own class to administer and to "knock into shape" the state, as in Soviet Russia?

It is ridiculous to think that Mr. Kautsky could find in any country even one out of a thousand of well-informed workers or farm labourers who would have any doubts as to the reply. Instinctively, from hearing fragments of admissions of the truth in the bourgeois press, the workers of the whole world sympathise with the Soviet Republic precisely because they regard it as a *proletarian* democracy, a *democracy for the poor* and not a democracy for the rich that every bourgeois democracy, even the best, actually is.

We are governed (and our state is "knocked into shape") by bourgeois bureaucrats, by bourgeois members of parliament, by bourgeois judges—such is the simple, obvious and indisputable truth which tens and hundreds of millions of people belonging to the oppressed classes in all bourgeois countries, including the most democratic, know from their own experience, feel and realise every day.

In Russia, however, the bureaucratic machine has been completely smashed, razed to the ground; the old judges have all been sent packing, the bourgeois parliament has been dispersed—and *far more accessible* representation has been given to the workers and peasants; *their* Soviets have replaced the bureaucrats, or *their* Soviets have been put in control of the bureaucrats, and *their* Soviets have been authorised to elect the judges. This fact alone is enough for all the oppressed classes to recognise that Soviet power, i.e., the present form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, is a million times more democratic than the most democratic bourgeois republic.

Kautsky does not understand this truth, which is so clear and obvious to every worker, because he has "forgotten", "unlearned" to put the question: democracy for *which class*? He argues from the point of view of "pures" (i.e., non-class? or above-class?) democracy. He argues like Shylock: my "pound of flesh" and nothing else. Equality for all citizens—otherwise there is no democracy.

We must ask the learned Kautsky, the "Marxist" and "socialist" Kautsky:

Can there be equality between the exploited and the exploiters?

It is dreadful, it is incredible that such a question should have to be put in discussing a book written by the ideological leader of the Second International. But "having put your hand to the plough, don't look back", and having undertaken to write about Kautsky, I must explain to the learned man why there can be no equality between the exploiter and the exploited.

Written in October not later than
November 10, 1918
Appendix II—in November,
later than the 10th, 1918

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Collected Works, Vol. 28,
pp. 247-50

Rough Draft of Rules for the Administration of Soviet Institutions

1

Collective discussion and decision of all questions of administration in Soviet institutions must be accompanied by the precisely defined *responsibility of every person* holding any Soviet post for the *performance of definite*, and clearly and explicitly specified, functions and *practical jobs*.

Henceforth, this rule, without which it will be impossible to select the most suitable people for each office and job or to exercise effective control, must be *unreservedly obeyed*.

Accordingly, every Soviet body and every Soviet institution without exception shall immediately:

First, adopt a decision precisely distributing the work and responsibilities among all their members or officials;

Second, define the exact responsibility of all persons entrusted with the performance of any duties whatever, especially such as concern the speedy and proper collection and distribution of materials and products.

This rule is binding on all Soviet institutions, and in particular on local, uyezd, urban and other Economic Councils and Economic Departments of Executive Committees. Such Departments and Economic Councils shall immediately assign responsibility to definite persons for the speedy and proper collection of *each* of the raw materials and products needed by the population.

All leading Soviet bodies—Executive Committees, gubernia and city Soviets, etc.—shall immediately reorganise their work with a view to giving prime place to effective control for actual fulfilment of the decisions of

the central authorities and of local institutions. Other kinds of work are to be turned over, as far as possible, to subcommittees consisting of a small number of members of the given body.

2

With a view to eliminating red tape and to the more effective disclosure of abuses, and also to the exposure and removal of dishonest officials ensconced in Soviet institutions, the following rules are hereby established:

Every Soviet institution shall post notices of its reception days and hours outside as well as inside its premises, for all to see without having to obtain passes. The premises assigned for the reception of the public shall be freely accessible without any passes whatever.

Every Soviet institution shall keep a register for recording in brief the name of every visitor, the nature of his business, and to whom it has been entrusted.

Sundays and holidays shall be reception days.

State Control officials shall have the right to be present at all receptions, and it shall be their duty to attend from time to time during reception hours, to examine the visitors' register, and to draw up a report of their visit and the result of their examination of the register and interrogation of the public.

The Commissariats of Labour, State Control and Justice shall everywhere organise information bureaus, which shall be open to all without passes and free of charge, reception on Sundays being compulsory; the said Commissariats shall widely announce to the public the days and hours the bureaus are open.

It shall be the duty of these information bureaus, not only to give all information requested, orally or in writing, but also to draw up written declarations free of charge for persons who are illiterate or unable to draw up such declarations properly themselves. It shall be obligatory to enlist the services for work on these bureaus of members of *all* parties represented on the Soviets, as well as of parties which are not represented in the government, and also members of the non-party trade unions and non-party unions of intellectuals.

3

The task of defending the Soviet Republic imperatively calls for the greatest economy of forces and the most productive utilisation of manpower.

With these ends in view it is ordered—in the first place in regard to all Soviet institutions, later to be extended to every enterprise and body—that:

1. Every more or less independent department of every Soviet institution without exception shall within three days submit to the local Executive Committee (and in Moscow to the People's Commissariat of Justice as well) brief information on the following: (a) name of institution; (b) name of department; (c) nature of its work, in brief; (d) number of subdepartments, sections, or other divisions, with a list of such; (e) number of employees, male and female; (f) volume of work, calculated as far as possible, for example, in number of cases handled, volume of correspondence, or other indices.

Local Executive Committees (in Moscow, the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies in agreement with the People's Commissariat of Justice and the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee) shall immediately: (1) take measures to verify whether the above rule is being promptly and properly observed; (2) draw up within one week after the aforesaid information has been received a plan for co-ordinating, uniting and *merging* departments which are engaged in similar or kindred affairs.

The commissions which the above-mentioned institutions charge with this task shall include representatives of the Departments for the Interior, Justice, State Control and Labour, as well as of other departments, if need be. The commissions shall submit to the Council of People's Commissars and the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee brief *weekly* reports on what has been done to merge kindred departments and to economise labour.

2. In every town in which there are kindred departments or institutions—central, regional, town, gubernia or uyezd—the highest institution shall immediately set up a

commission for the purpose of co-ordinating and amalgamating all these institutions, with a view to the maximum economy of forces; this commission to be guided by the rules and schedule indicated in Clause 1.

3. These same commissions (clauses 1 and 2) are instructed, and on the same grounds, to take urgent measures to substitute female labour for male labour to the utmost and to draw up a list of males who can be transferred to work in the army or for the army, or to other work of an operative and practical and not of an office nature.

4. These same commissions (clauses 1 and 2) are instructed, in agreement with the local organisations of the Russian Communist Party, to make such alteration in staffs as to leave members of the R.C.P. (of not less than two years' standing) only in leading and responsible posts; all other posts to be filled by non-Party people, or by members of other parties, so as to release as large a number of members of the R.C.P. as possible for other work.

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Collected Works, Vol. 28,
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To the Business Manager of the Council of People's Commissars

18.I. 1919

I direct you to report to me immediately all complaints received by the Managing Department of the Council of People's Commissars against all government offices and persons; complaints in writing must be reported to me within twenty-four hours, oral ones—within forty-eight hours.

The Managing Department should introduce a special registration of these complaints, the person in charge of the office of the Managing Department being responsible for careful supervision over the fulfilment of my instructions written on these complaints.

V. Ulyanov (Lenin)
Chairman, Council of People's Commissars

First published in 1945
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Collected Works, Vol. 44,
pp. 188-89

A Little Picture in Illustration of Big Problems

Comrade Sosnovsky, editor of *Bednota*, has brought me a remarkable book. As many workers and peasants as possible should be made familiar with it. Most valuable lessons, splendidly illustrated by vivid examples, are to be drawn from it on some of the major problems of socialist construction. The book, by Comrade Alexander Todorsky, is called *A Year with Rifle and Plough* and was published in the little town of Vesyegonsk by the local uyezd Executive Committee to mark the anniversary of the October Revolution.

The author describes the year's experience of the men in charge of organising Soviet power in the Vesyegonsk Uyezd—first the civil war, the revolt of the local kulaks and its suppression, and then “peaceful creative life”. The author has succeeded in giving such a simple, and at the same time such a lively, account of the course of the revolution in this rural backwater, that to attempt to retell it could only weaken its effect. This book should be distributed as widely as possible, and it would be very good if many more of those who have been working among the people and with the people, in the very thick of life, sat down to describe their experiences. The publication of several hundred, or even several dozen, such descriptions, the best, most truthfully and plainly told and containing numerous valuable facts, would be infinitely more useful to the cause of socialism than many of the newspaper and magazine articles and books by professional journalists and writers who only too often cannot see real life for the paper they write on.

Let me give a brief example from Comrade Todorsky's narrative. It was suggested that “merchant hands” should

not be allowed to go "unemployed", but should be encouraged to "set to work".

"...With this end in view, three young, energetic and very business-like manufacturers, E. Yefremov, A. Loginov and N. Kozlov, were summoned to the Executive Committee and ordered on pain of imprisonment and confiscation of all property to set up a sawmill and tannery. The work was started immediately.

"The Soviet authorities were not mistaken in their choice of men, and the manufacturers, to their credit, were among the first to realise that they were not dealing with 'casual and temporary guests', but with real masters who had taken power firmly into their hands.

"Having quite rightly realised this, they set to work energetically to carry out the orders of the Executive Committee, with the result that Veseyegonsk now has a sawmill going at full swing, covering the needs of the local population and filling orders for a new railway under construction.

"As to the tannery, the premises are now ready, and the engine, drums and other machinery, obtained from Moscow, are being installed, so that in a month and a half, or two at the most, Veseyegonsk will be getting fine leather of its own make.

"The building of two Soviet plants by 'non-Soviet' hands is a good example of how to fight a class which is hostile to us.

"To rap the exploiters over the knuckles, to render them harmless or 'finish them off', is only half the job. The whole job will be done only when we compel them to work, and with the fruits of their labour help to improve the new life and strengthen Soviet power."

These fine and absolutely true words should be carved in stone and prominently displayed in every Economic Council, food organisation, factory, land department and so on. For what has been understood by our comrades in remote Veseyegonsk is all too often stubbornly ignored by Soviet officials in the capitals. It is quite common to meet a Soviet intellectual or worker, a Communist, who turns his nose up at the mere mention of co-operative societies and declares with an air of profound importance—and with equally profound stupidity—that these are not Soviet hands, they are bourgeois people, shopkeepers, Mensheviks, that at such and such a time and place the co-operators used their financial manipulations to conceal aid given to whiteguards, and that in our Socialist Republic the supply and distribution apparatus must be built up by clean Soviet hands.

Such arguments are typical insofar as the truth is so mixed with falsehood that we consequently get a most

dangerous distortion of the aims of communism that can do incalculable harm to our cause.

The co-operatives certainly are an apparatus of bourgeois society, an apparatus which grew up in an atmosphere of "shopkeeping" and which has trained its leaders in the spirit of bourgeois politics and in a bourgeois outlook, and has therefore been producing a large proportion of whiteguards or their accomplices. That is undeniable. But it is a bad thing when absurd conclusions are drawn from undeniable truths, by their oversimplification and slapdash application. We can only build communism out of the material created by capitalism, out of that refined apparatus which has been moulded under bourgeois conditions and which—as far as concerns the human material in the apparatus—is therefore inevitably imbued with the bourgeois mentality. That is what makes the building of communist society difficult, but it is also a guarantee that it can and will be built. In fact, what distinguishes Marxism from the old, utopian socialism is that the latter wanted to build the new society not from the mass human material produced by bloodstained, sordid, rapacious, shopkeeping capitalism, but from very virtuous men and women reared in special hothouses and cucumber frames. Everyone now sees that this absurd idea really is absurd and everyone has discarded it, but not everyone is willing or able to give thought to the opposite doctrine of Marxism and to think out how communism can (and should) be built from the mass human material which has been corrupted by hundreds and thousands of years of slavery, serfdom, capitalism, by small individual enterprise, and by the war of every man against his neighbour to obtain a place in the market, or a higher price for his product or his labour.

The co-operatives are a bourgeois apparatus. Hence they do not deserve to be trusted *politically*; but this does not mean we may turn our backs on the task of using them for administration and construction. Political distrust means we must not put non-Soviet people in *politically* responsible posts. It means the Cheka must keep a sharp eye on members of classes, sections or groups that have leanings towards the whiteguards. (Though, incidentally, one need not go to the same absurd lengths as Comrade Latsis, one of our finest,

tried and tested Communists, did in his Kazan magazine, *Krasny Terror*. He wanted to say that Red terror meant the forcible suppression of exploiters who attempted to restore their rule, but instead, he put it this way [on page 2 of the first issue of his magazine]: "Don't search [!!!?] the records for evidence of whether his revolt against the Soviet was an armed or only a verbal one.")

Political distrust of the members of a bourgeois apparatus is legitimate and essential. But to refuse to use them in administration and construction would be the height of folly, fraught with untold harm to communism. If anybody tried to recommend a Menshevik as a socialist, or as a political leader, or even as a political adviser, he would be committing a great mistake, for the history of the revolution in Russia has definitely shown that the Mensheviks (and the Socialist-Revolutionaries) are not socialists, but petty-bourgeois democrats who are capable of siding with the *bourgeoisie* every time the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie becomes particularly acute. But petty-bourgeois democracy is not a chance political formation, not an exception, but a *necessary* product of capitalism. And it is not only the old, precapitalist, economically reactionary middle peasants who are the "purveyors" of this democracy. So, too, are the co-operative societies with their capitalist training that have sprung from the soil of large-scale capitalism, the intellectuals, etc. After all, even backward Russia produced, side by side with the Kolupayevs and Razuvayevs,* capitalists who knew how to make use of the services of educated intellectuals, be they Menshevik, Socialist-Revolutionary or non-Party. Are we to be more stupid than those capitalists and fail to use such "building material" in erecting a communist Russia?

Written at the end of 1918
or beginning of 1919

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* *Kolupayevs and Razuvayevs*—types of rich peasants described by Saltykov-Shchedrin in his books *Mon repos-refuge*, *Abroad*, and *Letters to an Aunt*.—Ed.

***From* Theses and Report on Bourgeois
Democracy and the Dictatorship
of the Proletariat Submitted to the First
Congress of the Communist International
March 4, 1919**

14. Proletarian dictatorship is similar to the dictatorship of other classes in that it arises out of the need, as every other dictatorship does, to forcibly suppress the resistance of the class that is losing its political sway. The fundamental distinction between the dictatorship of the proletariat and the dictatorship of other classes—landlord dictatorship in the Middle Ages and bourgeois dictatorship in all the civilised capitalist countries—consists in the fact that the dictatorship of the landowners and bourgeoisie was the forcible suppression of the resistance offered by the vast majority of the population, namely, the working people. In contrast, proletarian dictatorship is the forcible suppression of the resistance of the exploiters, i.e., an insignificant minority of the population, the landowners and capitalists.

It follows that proletarian dictatorship must inevitably entail not only a change in democratic forms and institutions, generally speaking, but precisely such a change as provides an unparalleled extension of the actual enjoyment of democracy by those oppressed by capitalism—the toiling classes.

And indeed, the form of proletarian dictatorship that has already taken shape, i.e., Soviet power in Russia, the Räte-System in Germany, the Shop Stewards Committees* in Britain and similar Soviet institutions in other countries, all this implies and presents to the toiling classes, i.e., the vast majority of the population, greater practical opportuni-

* *Shop Stewards Committees*—elective labour organisations in various industries in Britain, which were particularly widespread during the First World War. Unlike the compromising trade unions which pursued a policy of “civil peace” and renounced the strike struggle, the Shop Stewards Committees championed the interests and demands of

ties for enjoying democratic rights and liberties than ever existed before, even approximately, in the best and the most democratic bourgeois republics.

The substance of Soviet government is that the permanent and only foundation of state power, the entire machinery of state, is the mass-scale organisation of the classes oppressed by capitalism, i.e., the workers and the semi-proletarians (peasants who do not exploit the labour of others and regularly resort to the sale of at least a part of their own labour-power). It is the people, who even in the most democratic bourgeois republics, while possessing equal rights by law, have in fact been debarred by thousands of devices and subterfuges from participation in political life and enjoyment of democratic rights and liberties, that are now drawn into constant and unflinching, moreover, decisive, participation in the democratic administration of the state.

15. The equality of citizens, irrespective of sex, religion, race, or nationality, which bourgeois democracy everywhere has always promised but never effected, and never could effect because of the domination of capital, is given immediate and full effect by the Soviet system, or dictatorship of the proletariat. The fact is that this can only be done by a government of the workers, who are not interested in the means of production being privately owned and in the fight for their division and redivision.

16. The old, i.e., bourgeois, democracy and the parliamentary system were so organised that it was the mass of working people who were kept farthest away from the machinery of government. Soviet power, i.e., the dictatorship of the proletariat, on the other hand, is so organised as to bring the working people close to the machinery of government. That, too, is the purpose of combining the legislative and executive authority under the Soviet organisation of the state and of replacing territorial constituencies by production units—the factory.

17. The army was a machine of oppression not only under

the workers, led the strike movement and carried on anti-war propaganda.

After the October Revolution, during the armed intervention of the imperialist countries against the Soviet Republic, the Shop Stewards Committees actively supported Soviet Russia.—*Ed.*

the monarchy. It remains as such in all bourgeois republics, even the most democratic ones. Only the Soviets, the permanent organisations of government authority of the classes that were oppressed by capitalism, are in a position to destroy the army's subordination to bourgeois commanders and really merge the proletariat with the army; only the Soviets can effectively arm the proletariat and disarm the bourgeoisie. Unless this is done, the victory of socialism is impossible.

18. The Soviet organisation of the state is suited to the leading role of the proletariat as a class most concentrated and enlightened by capitalism. The experience of all revolutions and all movements of the oppressed classes, the experience of the world socialist movement teaches us that only the proletariat is in a position to unite and lead the scattered and backward sections of the working and exploited population.

19. Only the Soviet organisation of the state can really effect the immediate break-up and total destruction of the old, i.e., bourgeois, bureaucratic and judicial machinery, which has been, and has inevitably had to be, retained under capitalism even in the most democratic republics, and which is, in actual fact, the greatest obstacle to the practical implementation of democracy for the workers and working people generally. The Paris Commune took the first epoch-making step along this path. The Soviet system has taken the second.

20. Destruction of state power is the aim set by all socialists, including Marx above all. Genuine democracy, i.e., liberty and equality, is unrealisable unless this aim is achieved. But its practical achievement is possible only through Soviet, or proletarian, democracy, for by enlisting the mass organisations of the working people in constant and unflinching participation in the administration of the state, it immediately begins to prepare the complete withering away of any state.

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Collected Works, Vol. 28,
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Re Draft Decree on the Reorganisation of State Control

1

Notes on the Question of Reorganising State Control

- 1) A workers' organ, or an organ enlisting workers' participation, at the centre and in the localities.
- 2) Voluntary inspectors as a system.
2 bis: Two-thirds women mandatory.
- 3) Immediate practical tasks:
 - (α) inspection raids, on citizens' complaints
 - (β) fight against red tape
 - (γ) revolutionary measures of struggle against abuses and red tape
 - (δ) transport
 - (ϵ) raising labour productivity
 - (ζ) increasing food output.

2

Note to Stalin

I think the following should be added to the decree on control:

- 1) Formation of central (and local) bodies with workers' participation;
- 2) Introduction by law of the systematic participation of witnesses from among the workers, with compulsory participation of up to two-thirds women;
- 3) Giving immediate priority to the following as our urgent tasks:
 - (α) lightning inquiries into citizens' complaints
 - (β) combating red tape

- (γ) revolutionary measures to combat abuses and red tape
- (δ) special attention to boosting labour productivity, and
- (ε) to increasing the quantity of products, etc.

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The Note—November 7, 1928
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Newspaper) No. 260 (Leningrad)

From Rough Draft of the Programme of the R.C.P. *

...The Russian Communist Party, developing the general tasks of the Soviet government in greater detail, at present formulates them as follows.

In the Political Sphere

Prior to the capture of political power by the proletariat it was (obligatory) necessary to make use of bourgeois democracy, parliamentarism in particular, for the political education and organisation of the working masses; now that the proletariat has won political power and a higher type of democracy is being put into effect in the Soviet Republic, any step backward to bourgeois parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy would undoubtedly be reactionary service to the interests of the exploiters, the landowners and capitalists. Such catchwords as supposedly popular, national, general, extra-class but actually bourgeois democracy serve the interests of the exploiters alone, and as long as the land and other means of production remain private property the most democratic republic must inevitably remain a bourgeois dictatorship, a machine for the suppression of the overwhelming majority of working people by a handful of capitalists.

* The R.C.P.(B.) draft programme, elaborated by V. I. Lenin, was used as the foundation of the Party Programme, adopted by the Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) in March 1919.—*Ed.*

The historical task that has fallen to the lot of the Soviet Republic, a new type of state that is transitional until the state disappears altogether, is the following:

(1) The creation and development of universal mass organisations of precisely those classes that are oppressed under capitalism—the proletariat and semi-proletariat. A bourgeois-democratic republic at best permits the organisation of the exploited masses, by declaring them free to organise, but actually has always placed countless obstacles in the way of their organisation, obstacles that were connected with the private ownership of the means of production in a way that made them irremovable. For the first time in history, Soviet power has not only greatly facilitated the organisation of the masses who were oppressed under capitalism, but has made that organisation the essential permanent basis of the entire state apparatus, local and central, from top to bottom. Only in this way is it possible to ensure democracy for the great majority of the population (the working people), i.e., actual participation in state administration, in contrast to the actual administration of the state mainly by members of the bourgeois classes as is the case in the most democratic bourgeois republics.

(2) The Soviet system of state administration gives a certain actual advantage to that section of the working people that all the capitalist development that preceded socialism has made the most concentrated, united, educated and steeled in the struggle, i.e., to the urban industrial proletariat. This advantage must be used systematically and unswervingly to counteract the narrow guild and narrow trade interests that capitalism fostered among the workers and which split them into competitive groups, by uniting the most backward and disunited masses of rural proletarians and semi-proletarians more closely with the advanced workers, by snatching them away from the influence of the village kulaks and village bourgeoisie, and organising and educating them for communist development.

(3) Bourgeois democracy that solemnly announced the equality of all citizens, in actual fact hypocritically concealed the domination of the capitalist exploiters and deceived the masses with the idea that the equality of exploiters and exploited is possible. The Soviet organisation

of the state destroys this deception and this hypocrisy by the implementation of real democracy, i.e., the real equality of all working people, and by excluding the exploiters from the category of members of society possessing full rights. The experience of world history, the experience of all revolts of the exploited classes against their exploiters shows the inevitability of long and desperate resistance of the exploiters in their struggle to retain their privileges. Soviet state organisation is adapted to the suppression of that resistance, for unless it is suppressed there can be no question of a victorious communist revolution.

(4) The more direct influence of the working masses on state structure and administration—i.e., a higher form of democracy—is also effected under the Soviet type of state, first, by the electoral procedure and the possibility of holding elections more frequently, and also by conditions for re-election and for the recall of deputies which are simpler and more comprehensible to the urban and rural workers than is the case under the best forms of bourgeois democracy;

(5) secondly, by making the economic, industrial unit (factory) and not a territorial division the primary electoral unit and the nucleus of the state structure under Soviet power. This closer contact between the state apparatus and the masses of advanced proletarians that capitalism has united, in addition to effecting a higher level of democracy, also makes it possible to effect profound socialist reforms.

(6) Soviet organisation has made possible the creation of armed forces of workers and peasants which are much more closely connected with the working and exploited people than before. If this had not been done it would have been impossible to achieve one of the basic conditions for the victory of socialism—the arming of the workers and the disarming of the bourgeoisie.

(7) Soviet organisation has developed incomparably farther and deeper that feature of bourgeois democracy which marks historically its great progressive nature as compared with medieval times, i.e., the participation of the people in the election of individuals to office. In none of the most democratic bourgeois states have the working masses ever been able to enjoy the electoral rights formally granted

them by the bourgeoisie (who actually hinder their enjoyment) anywhere near as extensively, frequently, universally, easily and simply as they are enjoyed under Soviet power. Soviet power has, at the same time, swept away those negative aspects of bourgeois democracy that the Paris Commune began to abolish, i.e., parliamentarism, or the separation of legislative and executive powers, the narrow, limited nature of which Marxism has long since indicated. By merging the two aspects of government the Soviets bring the state apparatus closer to the working people and remove the fence of the bourgeois parliament that fooled the masses with hypocritical signboards concealing the financial and stock-exchange deals of parliamentary businessmen and ensured the inviolability of the bourgeois apparatus of state administration.

(8) Soviet state organisation alone has enabled the proletarian revolution to smash the old bourgeois state apparatus at one blow and destroy it to the very foundations; had this not been done no start could have been made on socialist development. Those strongholds of the bureaucracy which everywhere, both under monarchies and in the most democratic bourgeois republics, has always kept the state bound to the interests of the landowners and capitalists, have been destroyed in present-day Russia. The struggle against the bureaucracy, however, is certainly not over in our country. The bureaucracy is trying to regain some of its positions and is taking advantage, on the one hand, of the unsatisfactory cultural level of the masses of the people and, on the other, of the tremendous, almost superhuman war efforts of the most developed section of the urban workers. The continuation of the struggle against the bureaucracy, therefore, is absolutely necessary, is imperative, to ensure the success of future socialist development.

(9) Work in this field is closely connected with the implementation of the chief historical purpose of Soviet power, i.e., to advance towards the final abolition of the state, and should consist of the following. First, every member of a Soviet must, without fail, do a certain job of state administration; secondly, these jobs must be consistently changed so that they embrace all aspects of government, all its branches; and, thirdly, literally all the working population must be

drawn into independent participation in state administration by means of a series of gradual measures that are carefully selected and unfailingly implemented.

(10) By and large, the difference between bourgeois democracy and parliamentarism on the one hand, and Soviet or proletarian democracy on the other, boils down to this: the centre of gravity of the former is in its solemn and pompous declarations of numerous liberties and rights which the majority of the population, the workers and peasants, cannot enjoy to the full. Proletarian, or Soviet, democracy, on the contrary, has transferred the centre of gravity away from the declaration of rights and liberties for the entire people to the actual participation of none but the working people, who were oppressed and exploited by capital, in the administration of the state, the actual use of the best buildings and other premises for meetings and congresses, the best printing-works and the biggest warehouses (stocks) of paper for the education of those who were stultified and downtrodden under capitalism, and to providing a real (actual) opportunity for those masses gradually to free themselves from the burden of religious prejudices, etc., etc. It is precisely in making the benefits of culture, civilisation and democracy really available to the working and exploited people that Soviet power sees its most important work, work which it must continue unswervingly in the future.

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***From Report on the Party Programme
Delivered at the Eighth Congress
of the R.C.P.(B.)
March 19, 1919***

The next question which, according to the division of subjects, falls to my share is the *question of bureaucracy and of enlisting the broad mass of the people in Soviet work*. We have been hearing complaints about bureaucracy for a long time; the complaints are undoubtedly well founded. We have done what no other state in the world has done in the fight against bureaucracy. The apparatus which was a thoroughly bureaucratic and bourgeois apparatus of oppression, and which remains such even in the freest of bourgeois republics, we have destroyed to its very foundations. Take, for example, the courts. Here, it is true, the task was easier; we did not have to create a new apparatus, because anybody can act as a judge basing himself on the revolutionary sense of justice of the working classes. We have still by no means completed the work in this field but in a number of respects we have made the courts what they should be. We have created bodies on which not only men, but also women, the most backward and conservative section of the population, can be made to serve without exception.

The employees in the other spheres of government are more hardened bureaucrats. The task here is more difficult. We cannot live without this apparatus; every branch of government creates a demand for such an apparatus. Here we are suffering from the fact that Russia was not sufficiently developed as a capitalist country. Germany, apparently, will suffer less from this, because her bureaucratic apparatus passed through an extensive school, which sucks people dry but compels them to work and not just wear out armchairs, as happens in our offices. We dispersed these old bureaucrats, shuffled them and then began to place them in new posts. The tsarist bureaucrats began to join

the Soviet institutions and practise their bureaucratic methods, they began to assume the colouring of communists and, to succeed better in their careers, to procure membership cards of the Russian Communist Party. And so, they have been thrown out of the door but they creep back in through the window. What makes itself felt here most is the lack of cultured forces. These bureaucrats may be dismissed, but they cannot be re-educated all at once. Here we are confronted chiefly with organisational, cultural and educational problems.

We can fight bureaucracy to the bitter end, to a complete victory, only when the whole population participates in the work of government. In the bourgeois republics not only is this impossible, *but the law itself prevents it*. The best of the bourgeois republics, no matter how democratic they may be, have thousands of legal hindrances which prevent the working people from participating in the work of government. What we have done, was to remove these hindrances, but so far we have not reached the stage at which the working people could participate in government. Apart from the law, there is still the level of culture, which you cannot subject to any law. The result of this low cultural level is that the Soviets, which by virtue of their programme are organs of government *by the working people*, are in fact organs of government *for the working people* by the advanced section of the proletariat, but not by the working people as a whole.

Here we are confronted by a problem which cannot be solved except by prolonged education. At present this task is an inordinately difficult one for us, because, as I have had frequent occasion to say, the section of workers who are governing is inordinately, incredibly *small*. We must secure help. According to all indications, such a reserve is growing up within the country. There cannot be the slightest doubt of the existence of a tremendous thirst for knowledge and of tremendous progress in education—mostly attained outside the schools—of tremendous progress in educating the working people. This progress cannot be confined within any school framework, but it is tremendous. All indications go to show that we shall obtain a vast reserve in the near future, which will replace the representa-

tives of the small section of proletarians who have overstrained themselves in the work. But, in any case, our present situation in this respect is extremely difficult. Bureaucracy has been defeated. The exploiters have been eliminated. But the cultural level has not been raised, and therefore the bureaucrats are occupying their old positions. They can be forced to retreat only if the proletariat and the peasants are organised far more extensively than has been the case up to now, and only if real measures are taken to enlist the workers in government. You are all aware of such measures in the case of every People's Commissariat, and I shall not dwell on them.

The last point I have to deal with is the question of *the leading role of the proletariat and disfranchisement*. Our Constitution recognises the precedence of the proletariat in respect of the peasants and disfranchises the exploiters. It was this that the pure democrats of Western Europe attacked most. We answered, and are answering, that they have forgotten the most fundamental propositions of Marxism, they have forgotten that with them it is a case of bourgeois democracy, whereas we have passed to *proletarian democracy*. There is not a single country in the world which has done even one-tenth of what the Soviet Republic has done in the past few months for the workers and the poor peasants in enlisting them in the work of administering the state. That is an absolute truth. Nobody will deny that in the matter of true, not paper, democracy, in the matter of enlisting the workers and peasants, we have done more than has been done or could be done by the best of the democratic republics in hundreds of years. It was this that determined the significance of the Soviets, it was owing to this that the Soviets have become a slogan for the proletariat of all countries.

But this in no way saves us from stumbling over the inadequate culture of the people. We do not at all regard the question of disfranchising the bourgeoisie from an absolute point of view, because it is theoretically quite conceivable that the dictatorship of the proletariat may suppress the bourgeoisie at every step without disfranchising them. This is theoretically quite conceivable. Nor do we propose our Constitution as a model for other countries. All

we say is that whoever conceives the transition to socialism without the suppression of the bourgeoisie is not a socialist. But while it is essential to suppress the bourgeoisie as a class, it is not essential to deprive them of suffrage and of equality. We do not want freedom for the bourgeoisie, we do not recognise equality of exploiters and exploited, but this question is so handled in the programme that the Constitution does not prescribe such measures as the inequality of workers and peasants. They were embodied in the Constitution *after* they were already in actual practice. It was not even the Bolsheviks who drew up the Constitution of the Soviets; it was drawn up to their own detriment by the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries before the Bolshevik revolution. They drew it up in accordance with the conditions actually obtaining. The organisation of the proletariat proceeded much more rapidly than the organisation of the peasants, which fact made the workers the bulwark of the revolution and gave them a virtual advantage. The next task is gradually to pass from these advantages to their equalisation. Nobody drove the bourgeoisie out of the Soviets either before or after the October Revolution. *The bourgeoisie themselves left the Soviets.*

That is how the matter stands with the question of suffrage for the bourgeoisie. It is our task to put the question with absolute clarity. We do not in the least apologise for our behaviour, but give an absolutely precise enumeration of the facts as they are. As we point out, our Constitution was obliged to introduce this inequality because the cultural level is low and because with us organisation is weak. But we do not make this an ideal; on the contrary, in its programme the Party undertakes to work systematically to abolish this inequality between the better organised proletariat and the peasants. We shall abolish this inequality as soon as we succeed in raising the cultural level. We shall then be able to get along without such restrictions. Even now, after some seventeen months of revolution, these restrictions are of very small practical importance.

Published in *Izvestia VTsIK*
No. 61, March 21, 1919
in *Pravda* No. 62
March 22, 1919

Collected Works, Vol. 29,
pp. 182-85

Draft Third Clause of the General Political Section of the Programme

**(For the Programme Commission
of the Eighth Party Congress)**

Bourgeois democracy confined itself to proclaiming formal rights equally applicable to all citizens, e.g., the right of assembly, of association, of the press. At best all legislative restrictions on these points were abolished in the most democratic bourgeois republics. But, in reality, both administrative practices and particularly the economic bondage of the working people always made it impossible for them, under bourgeois democracy, to make any wide use of these rights and liberties.

By contrast, proletarian or Soviet democracy, instead of the formal proclamation of rights and liberties, guarantees them in practice first and foremost to those classes of the population who were oppressed by capitalism, i.e., the proletariat and the peasantry. For this purpose, the Soviet power expropriates from the bourgeoisie premises, printing presses and stocks of paper, and places them at the entire disposal of the working people and their organisations.

The task of the Russian Communist Party is to draw ever wider masses of working people into the exercise of their democratic rights and liberties, and to extend the material possibilities for this.

Written not later
than March 20h, 1919

First published on April 22, 1956
in *Pravda* No. 113

Collected Works, Vol. 36,
p. 505

From Report on Work in the Countryside
Delivered at the Eighth Congress
of the R.C.P.(B.)
March 23, 1919

...All this obliges us to work for the purpose of introducing the greatest possible clarity into our attitude towards the middle peasant. This is very difficult, because *such clarity does not exist in reality*. Not only is this problem unsolved, it is *insoluble*, if you want to solve it *immediately and all at once*. There are people who say that there was no need to write so many decrees. They blame the Soviet Government for setting about writing decrees without knowing how they were to be put into effect. These people, as a matter of fact, do not realise that they are sinking to the whiteguard position. If we had expected that life in the rural districts could be completely changed by writing a hundred decrees, we would have been absolute idiots. But if we had refrained from indicating in decrees the road that must be followed, we would have been traitors to socialism. These decrees, while in practice they could not be carried into effect fully and immediately, played an important part as propaganda. While formerly we carried on our propaganda by means of general truths, *we are now carrying on our propaganda by our work*. That is also preaching, but it is preaching by action—only not action in the sense of the isolated sallies of some upstarts, at which we scoffed so much in the era of the anarchists and the socialism of the old type. Our decree is a call, but not the old call "Workers, arise and overthrow the bourgeoisie!" No, it is a call to the people, it calls them to practical work. *Decrees are instructions which call for practical work on a mass scale*. That is what is important. Let us assume that decrees do contain much that is useless, much that in practice cannot be put into effect;

but they contain material for practical action, and the purpose of a decree is to teach practical steps to the hundreds, thousands, and millions of people who heed the voice of the Soviet government. This is a trial in practical action in the sphere of socialist construction in the rural districts. If we treat matters in this way we shall acquire a good deal from the sum total of our laws, decrees, and ordinances. We shall not regard them as absolute injunctions which must be put into effect instantly and at all costs.

We must avoid everything that in practice may tend to encourage individual abuses. In places careerists and adventurers have attached themselves to us like leeches, people who call themselves Communists and are deceiving us, and who have wormed their way into our ranks because the Communists are now in power, and because the more honest government employees refused to come and work with us on account of their retrograde ideas, while careerists have no ideas, and no honesty. These people, whose only aim is to make a career, resort in the localities to coercion, and imagine they are doing a good thing. But in fact the result of this at times is that the peasants say, "Long live Soviet power, but *down with the communia!*" (i.e., communism). This is not an invention; these facts are taken from real life, from the reports of comrades in the localities. We must not forget what enormous damage is always caused by lack of moderation, by all rashness, and haste.

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Nos. 67, 68 and 69
March 28, 29 and 30, 1919
in *Pravda* No. 70, April 1

Collected Works, Vol. 29,
pp. 208-10

What Is Soviet Power?

(A Speech on a Gramophone Record)

What is Soviet power? What is the essence of this new power, which people in most countries still will not, or cannot, understand? The nature of this power, which is attracting larger and larger numbers of workers in every country, is the following: in the past the country was, in one way or another, governed by the rich, or by the capitalists, but now, for the first time, the country is being governed by the classes, and moreover, by the masses of those classes, which capitalism formerly oppressed. Even in the most democratic and freest republics, as long as capital rules and the land remains private property, the government will always be in the hands of a small minority, nine-tenths of which consist of capitalists, or rich men.

In this country, in Russia, for the first time in the world history, the government of the country is so organised that only the workers and the working peasants, to the exclusion of the exploiters, constitute those mass organisations known as Soviets, and these Soviets wield all state power. That is why, in spite of the slander that the representatives of the bourgeoisie in all countries spread about Russia, the word "Soviet" has now become not only intelligible but popular all over the world, has become the favourite word of the workers, and of all working people. And that is why, notwithstanding all the persecution to which the adherents of communism in the different countries are subjected, Soviet power must necessarily, inevitably, and in the not distant future, triumph all over the world.

We know very well that there are still many defects in the organisation of Soviet power in this country. Soviet

power is not a miracle-working talisman. It does not, overnight, heal all the evils of the past—illiteracy, lack of culture, the consequences of a barbarous war, the aftermath of predatory capitalism. But it does pave the way to socialism. It gives those who were formerly oppressed the chance to straighten their backs and to an ever-increasing degree to take the whole government of the country, the whole administration of the economy, the whole management of production, into their own hands.

Soviet power is the road to socialism that was discovered by the masses of the working people, and that is why it is the true road, that is why it is invincible.

A speech made at the end
of March 1919

Published in *Pravda* No. 18,
January 21, 1928

Collected Works, Vol. 29,
pp. 248-49

Salaries for Specialists

Draft Decision

May 23, 1919

*Decisions adopted by the C.P.C. Commission
at its meeting on 23. V. 1919:*

1. Salaries over 3,000 rubles shall be appointed by the Board of each Commissariat, reported to the People's Commissariats for Labour and for State Control, and submitted to the Council of People's Commissars for endorsement.

2. Each People's Commissariat is obliged within a week to present a list of all employees who receive over 3,000 rubles a month.

3. Each Commissariat is obliged within a week to present a list of leading specialists and outstanding organisers who have to be paid over 3,000 rubles.

The Board of each Commissariat must declare in the case of each person 1) its assurance that he is an outstanding specialist in such-and-such a field; 2) exactly what outstanding organising job he is doing or is capable of doing.

4. On June 15 only those whose salaries have been endorsed by the Council of People's Commissars shall receive pay at the rate of 3,000 rubles and more.

5. The term within which salaries shall be endorsed by the Council of People's Commissars is to be fixed at not more than one week from the date of presentation.

6. Reports to be delivered by Lenin and Krasin.

7. Avanesov is directed not later than tomorrow, May 24, to submit theses or principles concerning salaries of over 3,000 rubles to non-outstanding specialists.

Please type 6-7 copies.

Greetings to the Hungarian Workers

Comrades, the news we have been receiving from the Hungarian Soviet leaders fills us with enthusiasm and pleasure. Soviet government has been in existence in Hungary* for only a little over two months, yet as regards organisation the Hungarian proletariat already seems to have excelled us. That is understandable, for in Hungary the general cultural level of the population is higher; furthermore, the proportion of industrial workers to the total population is immeasurably greater (in Budapest there are three million of the eight million population of present-day Hungary), and, lastly, in Hungary the transition to the Soviet system, to the dictatorship of the proletariat, has been incomparably easier and more peaceful.

This last circumstance is particularly important. The majority of the European socialist leaders, of both the social-chauvinist and Kautskyite trends, have become so much a prey to purely philistine prejudices, fostered by decades of

* The Soviet republic in Hungary was formed in March 1919. A new government was formed which comprised Communists and Social-Democrats who accepted conditions laid down by the Communists: disarmament of the bourgeoisie, organisation of a Red Army and people's militia, confiscation of the landowners' estates, nationalisation of industry, conclusion of a peace treaty with Soviet Russia and others. Simultaneously, an agreement was signed on the unification of the two parties into a single Socialist Party of Hungary.

The Entente imperialists organised an armed intervention against the Hungarian Soviet Republic. Betrayal on the part of the Social-Democrats who entered into alliance with the imperialists was yet another reason for the destruction of the Hungarian Soviet Republic. On August 1, 1919 Soviet power in Hungary collapsed.—*Ed.*

relatively "peaceful" capitalism and the bourgeois-parliamentary system, that they are unable to understand what Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat mean. The proletariat cannot perform its epoch-making liberating mission unless it removes these leaders from its path, unless it sweeps them out of its way. These people believed, or half-believed, the bourgeois lies about Soviet power in Russia and were unable to distinguish the nature of the new, proletarian democracy—democracy for the working people, socialist democracy, as embodied in Soviet government—from bourgeois democracy, which they slavishly worship and call "pure democracy" or "democracy" in general.

These blind people, fettered by bourgeois prejudices, failed to understand the epoch-making change from bourgeois to proletarian democracy, from bourgeois to proletarian dictatorship. They confused certain specific features of Russian Soviet government, of the history of its development in Russia, with Soviet government as an international phenomenon.

The Hungarian proletarian revolution is helping even the blind to see. The form of transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat in Hungary is altogether different from that in Russia—voluntary resignation of the bourgeois government, instantaneous restoration of working-class unity, socialist unity *on a communist programme*. The nature of Soviet power is now all the clearer; the only form of rule which has the support of the working people and of the proletariat at their head that is now possible anywhere in the world is Soviet rule, the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This dictatorship presupposes the ruthlessly severe, swift and resolute use of force to crush the resistance of the exploiters, the capitalists, landowners, and their underlings. Whoever does not understand this is not a revolutionary, and must be removed from the post of leader or adviser of the proletariat.

But the essence of proletarian dictatorship is not in force alone, or even mainly in force. Its chief feature is the organisation and discipline of the advanced contingent of the working people, of their vanguard; of their sole leader, the proletariat, whose object is to build socialism, abolish the division of society into classes, make all members of

society working people, and remove the basis for all exploitation of man by man. This object cannot be achieved at one stroke. It requires a fairly long period of transition from capitalism to socialism, because the reorganisation of production is a difficult matter, because radical changes in all spheres of life need time, and because the enormous force of habit of running things in a petty-bourgeois and bourgeois way can only be overcome by a long and stubborn struggle. That is why Marx spoke of an entire period of the dictatorship of the proletariat as the period of transition from capitalism to socialism.*

Throughout the whole of this transition period, resistance to the revolution will be offered both by the capitalists and by their numerous myrmidons among the bourgeois intellectuals, who will resist consciously, and by the vast mass of the working people, including the peasants, who are shackled very much by petty-bourgeois habits and traditions, and who all too often will resist unconsciously. Vacillations among these groups are inevitable. As a working man the peasant gravitates towards socialism, and prefers the dictatorship of the workers to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. As a seller of grain, the peasant gravitates towards the bourgeoisie, towards freedom of trade, i.e., back to the "habitual", old, "time-hallowed" capitalism.

What is needed to enable the proletariat to lead the peasants and the petty-bourgeois groups in general is the dictatorship of the proletariat, the rule of one class, its strength of organisation and discipline, its centralised power based on all the achievements of the culture, science and technology of capitalism, its proletarian affinity to the mentality of every working man, its prestige with the disunited, less developed working people in the countryside or in petty industry, who are less firm in politics. Here phrase-mongering about "democracy" in general, about "unity" or the "unity of labour democracy", about the "equality" of all "men of labour", and so on and so forth—the phrase-mongering for which the now petty-bourgeois social-chauvinists and Kautskyites have such a predilection—is of no use whatever. Phrase-mongering only throws

* See K. Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme*.—Ed.

dust in the eyes, blinds the mind and strengthens the old stupidity, conservatism, and routine of capitalism, the parliamentary system and bourgeois democracy.

The abolition of classes requires a long, difficult and stubborn *class struggle*, which, *after* the overthrow of capitalist rule, *after* the destruction of the bourgeois state, *after* the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, *does not disappear* (as the vulgar representatives of the old socialism and the old Social-Democracy imagine), but merely changes its forms and in many respects becomes fiercer.

The proletariat, by means of a class struggle against the resistance of the bourgeoisie, against the conservatism, routine, irresolution and vacillation of the petty bourgeoisie, must uphold its power, strengthen its organising influence, "neutralise" those groups which fear to leave the bourgeoisie and which follow the proletariat too hesitantly, and consolidate the new discipline, the comradely discipline of the working people, their firm bond with the proletariat, their unity with the proletariat—that new discipline, that new basis of social ties in place of the serf discipline of the Middle Ages and the discipline of starvation, the discipline of "free" wage-slavery under capitalism.

In order to abolish classes a period of the dictatorship of one class is needed, the dictatorship of precisely that oppressed class which is capable not only of overthrowing the exploiters, not only of ruthlessly crushing their resistance, but also of breaking ideologically with the entire bourgeois-democratic outlook, with all the philistine phrasemongering about liberty and equality in general (in reality, this phrasemongering implies, as Marx demonstrated long ago, the "liberty and equality" of *commodity owners*, the "liberty and equality" of *the capitalist and the worker*).

More, classes can be abolished only by the dictatorship of that oppressed class which has been schooled, united, trained and steeled by decades of the strike and political struggle against capital—of that class alone which has assimilated all the urban, industrial, big-capitalist culture and has the determination and ability to protect it and to preserve and further develop all its achievements, and make them available to all the people, to all the working people—of that class alone which will be able to bear all

the hardships, trials, privations and great sacrifices which history inevitably imposes upon those who break with the past and boldly hew a road for themselves to a new future—of that class alone whose finest members are full of hatred and contempt for everything petty-bourgeois and philistine, for the qualities that flourish so profusely among the petty bourgeoisie, the minor employees and the “intellectuals”—of that class alone which “has been through the hardening school of labour” and is able to inspire respect for its efficiency in every working person and every honest man.

Hungarian workers! Comrades! You have set the world an even better example than Soviet Russia by your ability to unite all socialists at one stroke on the platform of genuine proletarian dictatorship. You are now faced with the most gratifying and most difficult task of holding your own in a rigorous war against the Entente. Be firm. Should vacillation manifest itself among the socialists who yesterday gave their support to you, to the dictatorship of the proletariat, or among the petty bourgeoisie, suppress it ruthlessly. In war the coward's legitimate fate is the bullet.

You are waging the only legitimate, just and truly revolutionary war, a war of the oppressed against the oppressors, a war of the working people against the exploiters, a war for the victory of socialism. All honest members of the working class all over the world are on your side. Every month brings the world proletarian revolution nearer.

Be firm! Victory will be yours!

May 27, 1919

Lenin

Pravda No. 115,
May 29, 1919

Collected Works, Vol. 29,
pp. 387-94

The Tasks of the Working Women's Movement in the Soviet Republic

**From Speech Delivered at the Fourth Moscow City
Conference of Non-Party Working Women
September 23, 1919**

Owing to her work in the house, the woman is still in a difficult position. To effect her complete emancipation and make her the equal of the man it is necessary for the national economy to be socialised and for women to participate in common productive labour. Then women will occupy the same position as men.

Here we are not, of course, speaking of making women the equal of men as far as productivity of labour, the quantity of labour, the length of the working day, labour conditions, etc., are concerned; we mean that the woman should not, unlike the man, be oppressed because of her position in the family. You all know that even when women have full rights, they still remain factually downtrodden because all housework is left to them. In most cases housework is the most unproductive, the most barbarous and the most arduous work a woman can do. It is exceptionally petty and does not include anything that would in any way promote the development of the woman.

In pursuance of the socialist ideal we want to struggle for the full implementation of socialism, and here an extensive field of labour opens up before women. We are now making serious preparations to clear the ground for the building of socialism, but the building of socialism will begin only when we have achieved the complete equality of women and when we undertake the new work together with women who have been emancipated from that petty, stultifying, unproductive work. This is a job that will take us many, many years.

This work cannot show any rapid results and will not produce a scintillating effect.

We are setting up model institutions, dining-rooms and nurseries, that will emancipate women from housework. And the work of organising all these institutions will fall mainly to women. It has to be admitted that in Russia today there are very few institutions that would help woman out of her state of household slavery. There is an insignificant number of them, and the conditions now obtaining in the Soviet Republic—the war and food situation about which comrades have already given you the details—hinder us in this work. Still, it must be said that these institutions that liberate women from their position as household slaves are springing up wherever it is in any way possible.

We say that the emancipation of the workers must be effected by the workers themselves, and in exactly the same way the emancipation of working women is a matter for the working women themselves. The working women must themselves see to it that such institutions are developed, and this activity will bring about a complete change in their position as compared with what it was under the old, capitalist society.

In order to be active in politics under the old, capitalist regime special training was required, so that women played an insignificant part in politics, even in the most advanced and free capitalist countries. Our task is to make politics available to every working woman. Ever since private property in land and factories has been abolished and the power of the landowners and capitalists overthrown, the tasks of politics have become simple, clear and comprehensible to the working people as a whole, including working women. In capitalist society the woman's position is marked by such inequality that the extent of her participation in politics is only an insignificant fraction of that of the man. The power of the working people is necessary for a change to be wrought in this situation, for then the main tasks of politics will consist of matters directly affecting the fate of the working people themselves.

Here, too, the participation of working women is essential—not only of party members and politically-conscious women, but also of the non-party women and those who

are least politically conscious. Here Soviet power opens up a wide field of activity to working women.

We have had a difficult time in the struggle against the forces hostile to Soviet Russia that have attacked her. It was difficult for us to fight on the battlefield against the forces who went to war against the power of the working people and in the field of food supplies against the profiteers, because of the too small number of people, working people, who came whole-heartedly to our aid with their own labour. Here, too, there is nothing Soviet power can appreciate as much as the help given by masses of non-party working women. They may know that in the old, bourgeois society, perhaps, a comprehensive training was necessary for participation in politics and that this was not available to women. The political activity of the Soviet Republic is mainly the struggle against the landowners and capitalists, the struggle for the elimination of exploitation; political activity, therefore, is made available to the working woman in the Soviet Republic and it will consist in the working woman using her organisational ability to help the working man.

What we need is not only organisational work on a scale involving millions; we need organisational work on the smallest scale and this makes it possible for women to work as well. Women can work under war conditions when it is a question of helping the army or carrying on agitation in the army. Women should take an active part in all this so that the Red Army sees that it is being looked after, that solicitude is being displayed. Women can also work in the sphere of food distribution, on the improvement of public catering and everywhere opening dining-rooms like those that are so numerous in Petrograd.

It is in these fields that the activities of working women acquire the greatest organisational significance. The participation of working women is also essential in the organisation and running of big experimental farms and should not take place only in isolated cases. This is something that cannot be carried out without the participation of a large number of working women. Working women will be very useful in this field in supervising the distribution of food and in making food products more easily obtainable. This work can well be done by non-party working women and

its accomplishment will do more than anything else to strengthen socialist society.

We have abolished private property in land and almost completely abolished the private ownership of factories; Soviet power is now trying to ensure that all working people, non-party as well as Party members, women as well as men, should take part in this economic development. The work that Soviet power has begun can only make progress when, instead of a few hundreds, millions and millions of women throughout Russia take part in it. We are sure that the cause of socialist development will then become sound. Then the working people will show that they can live and run their country without the aid of the landowners and capitalists. Then socialist construction will be so soundly based in Russia that no external enemies in other countries and none inside Russia will be any danger to the Soviet Republic.

Pravda No. 213,
September 25, 1919

Collected Works, Vol. 30,
pp. 43-46

*From The Workers' State and Party Week**

Soviet power is the power of the working people that is fighting for the complete overthrow of the yoke of capital. The first to engage in this fight were the working class of the towns and the factory centres. They won the first victory and conquered state power.

The working class is winning to their side the majority of the peasants. For it is only the peasant huckster, the peasant profiteer, and not the labouring peasant who is drawn to the side of capital, to the side of the bourgeoisie.

The workers of Petrograd, the most advanced, the most politically-conscious workers, have been contributing most of all to the administration of Russia. But we know that among the rank-and-file workers and peasants there are very many people devoted to the interests of the working masses and capable of undertaking the work of leadership. Among them there are many with a talent for organisation and administration to whom capitalism gave no opportunity and whom we are helping and must help in every way to come to the fore and take up the work of building socialism. To discover these new, modest and unperceived talents is no easy matter. It is no easy matter to enlist for state administrative work rank-and-file workers and peasants who

* The Party Week was carried out in the second half of 1919 at the time of intense struggle of the Soviet state against foreign military intervention and internal counter-revolution with the aim of drawing advanced workers, peasants and Red armymen into the Party.

As a result of the Party Week over 200,000 (more than half being workers) joined the Party in 38 gubernias of the European part of the R.S.F.S.R. alone.—*Ed.*

for centuries had been downtrodden and intimidated by the landowners and capitalists.

But this difficult work has to be done, it must be done, so as to draw more deeply on the working class and the labouring peasantry for new forces.

Comrades, non-party workers and labouring peasants, join the Party! We promise you no advantages from joining; it is hard work we are calling you to, the work of organising the state. If you are sincere supporters of communism, set about this work boldly, do not fear its novelty and the difficulty it entails, do not be put off by the old prejudice that only those who have received formal training are capable of this work. That is not true. The work of building socialism can and must be directed by rank-and-file workers and labouring peasants in ever-growing numbers.

The mass of the working people are with us. That is where our strength lies. That is the source of the invincibility of world communism. More new workers from among the masses for the ranks of the Party to take an independent part in building the new life—that is our method of combating all difficulties, that is our path to victory.

October 11, 1919

Pravda No. 228
and *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 228,
October 12, 1919

Collected Works, Vol. 30,
pp. 64-65

Signed: *N. Lenin*

From Results of Party Week in Moscow and Our Tasks

Capitalism stifled, suppressed and killed a wealth of talent among the workers and working peasants. These talents perished under the oppression of want, poverty and the outrage of human dignity. It is our duty now to bring out these talents and put them to work. The new members who have joined the Party during Party Week are undoubtedly for the most part inexperienced and ignorant in matters of state administration. Equally undoubtedly these are most devoted, most sincere and capable people from the sections of society that capitalism artificially *held down*, reduced to the lowest level and did not allow to rise. Among them, however, there is *more* strength, vigour, staunchness, directness and sincerity than among other sections.

It follows that all Party organisations must give especial thought to the employment of these new Party members. They must be *more boldly* given the most varied kinds of state work, they must be tested in practice as rapidly as possible.

Boldness, of course, must not be taken to mean that the new members are to be entrusted *at once* with responsible posts requiring knowledge they do not possess. We must be bold in combating red tape: not for nothing has our Party Programme very definitely raised the question of the causes of a certain revival of bureaucratic methods and indicated methods of combating it. We must be bold in establishing, first of all, *supervision* over office workers, officials and specialists by new Party members who are well acquainted with the condition of the people, their needs and requirements. We must be bold in *immediately*

affording these new members opportunities for developing and displaying their abilities in work *on a broad scale*. We must be bold in breaking with customary routine (among us too—quite often, alas!—there is an excessive fear of encroaching on established Soviet routine, although sometimes the “establishing” has been done not by class-conscious Communists but by old officials and office workers); we must be bold in the sense that we must be prepared with revolutionary speed to alter the form of work for new Party members so as to test them more quickly and to find the appropriate place for them.

In many cases new Party members can be given posts where, in the course of checking up the conscientiousness with which old officials perform their tasks, these Party members will quickly learn the job themselves and be able to take it over independently. In other cases they can be placed so as to renovate and refresh the intermediary links between the mass of workers and peasants on the one hand, and the state apparatus on the other. In our industrial “chief administrations and central boards”, in our agricultural “state farms” there are still many, far too many, saboteurs, landowners and capitalists in hiding, who harm Soviet power in every way. Experienced Party workers in the centre and the localities should show their efficiency through their ability to make intensive use of the new Party forces for a determined fight against this evil.

October 21, 1919

Bulletin of the C.C., R.C.P.(B.)
No. 7, October 22, 1919

Signed: *N. Lenin*

Collected Works, Vol. 30,
pp. 73-74

Two Years of Soviet Rule

From Speech at a Joint Session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, the Moscow Soviet Of Workers' and Red Army Deputies, the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions and Factory Committees, on the Occasion of the Second Anniversary of the October Revolution
November 7, 1919

...Our most important work has been the reorganisation of the old machinery of state, and although this has been a difficult job, over the last two years we have seen the results of the efforts of the working class and we can say that in this sphere we have thousands of working-class representatives who have been all through the fire of the struggle, forcing out the representatives of bourgeois rule step by step. We see workers not only in state bodies; we see them in the food supply services, in the sphere that was controlled almost exclusively by representatives of the old bourgeois government, of the old bourgeois state. The workers have created a food supply apparatus, and although a year ago we could not yet fully cope with the work, although a year ago workers made up only 30 per cent of it, we now have as many as 80 per cent workers in the food supply organisations. These simple and striking figures express the step taken by our country, and for us the important thing is that we have achieved great results in organising proletarian power after the political revolution.

Furthermore, the workers have done and are continuing to do the important job of producing proletarian leaders. Tens and hundreds of thousands of valiant workers are emerging from our midst and are going into battle against the whiteguard generals. Step by step we are gaining power from our enemy; formerly workers were not very skilful in this field, but we are now gradually winning area after area from our enemy, and there are no difficulties that can stop the proletariat. The proletariat is gaining gradually in every sphere despite all difficulties, and is attracting

representatives of the proletarian masses so that in every branch of administration, in every little unit, from top to bottom, representatives of the proletariat themselves go through the school of administration, and then train tens and hundreds of thousands of people capable of independently conducting all the affairs of state administration, of building the state by their own efforts.

Comrades! Lately we have witnessed a particularly brilliant example of success in our work. We know how widespread subbotniks have become among class-conscious workers. We know those representatives of communism who most of all have suffered the torments of famine and bitter cold, but whose contribution in the rear is no smaller than that of the Red Army at the front; we know how, at the critical moment when the enemy was advancing on Petrograd, and Denikin took Orel, when the bourgeoisie were in high spirits and resorted to their last and favourite weapon, the spreading of panic, we announced a Party Week. At that moment the worker Communists went to the industrial workers and other working people, to those who most of all had endured the burden of the imperialist war and were starving and freezing, to those on whom the bourgeois panic-mongers counted most of all, to those who bore most of the burden on their backs; it was to them that we addressed ourselves during the Party Week and said: "You are scared by the burdens of working-class rule, by the threats of the imperialists and capitalists; you see our work and our difficulties; we appeal to you, and we open wide the doors of our Party only to you, only to the representatives of the working people. At this difficult moment we count on you and call you into our ranks there to undertake the whole burden of building the state." You know that it was a terribly difficult moment, both materially and because of the enemy's successes in foreign policy and in the military sphere. And you know what unparalleled, unexpected and unbelievable success marked the end of this Party Week in Moscow alone, where we got over 14 thousand new Party members. There you have the result of the Party Week that is totally transforming, that is remaking the working class, and by the experience of work is turning those who were the passive, inert instru-

ments of the bourgeois government, the exploiters, and the bourgeois state into real creators of the future communist society. We know that we have a reserve of tens and hundreds of thousands of working-class and peasant youths, those who saw and know to the full the old oppression of landowner and bourgeois society, who have seen the unparalleled difficulties of our constructive work, who saw what heroes the first contingent of Party functionaries proved to be in 1917 and 1918, who have been coming to us in bigger numbers and whose devotion is the greater the severer our difficulties. These reserves give us confidence that in these two years we have achieved a firm and sound cohesion and now possess a source from which we shall for a long time be able to draw still more extensively, and so ensure that the working people themselves undertake to develop the state. In this respect we have had such experience during these two years in applying working-class administration in all spheres, that we can say boldly and without any exaggeration that now all that remains is to continue what has been begun, and things will proceed as they have done these two years, but at an ever faster pace.

A brief newspaper report
published in *Izvestia VTsIK*
No 251,
November 9, 1919
Published in full in *Pravda*
No. 251,
November 9, 1919

Collected Works,
Vol. 30, pp. 131-33

**Re Draft Resolution for the
C.C., R.C.P.(B.) Plenum on the Composition
Of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee***

1) Do not include all the People's Commissars (as well as the Chairman of the C.P.C.) and deputy commissars.

2) Reduce the number of intellectuals and Soviet officials of the centre.

3) Considerably increase the number of workers and working peasants who are definitely in close touch with the non-Party mass of workers and peasants.

6) Keep strictly in line with the decision of the Party congress.

Written November 29, 1919

First published in 1959
in *Lenin Miscellany XXXVI*

Collected Works,
Vol. 42, p. 151

* This document was used as a basis for the decision regarding the membership of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee which was to be elected at the 7th All-Russia Congress of Soviets; the decision was endorsed by the plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) on November 29, 1919.—*Ed.*

From The Constituent Assembly Elections and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat

In mockery of the teachings of Marx, those gentlemen, the opportunists, including the Kautskyites, "teach" the people that the proletariat must first win a majority by means of universal suffrage, then obtain state power, by the vote of that majority, and only after that, on the basis of "consistent" (some call it "pure") democracy, organise socialism.

But we say on the basis of the teachings of Marx and the experience of the Russian revolution:

the proletariat must first overthrow the bourgeoisie and win *for itself* state power, and then use that state power, that is, the dictatorship of the proletariat, as an instrument of its class for the purpose of winning the sympathy of the majority of the working people.

* * *

How can state power in the hands of the proletariat become the instrument of its class struggle for influence over the non-proletarian working people, of the struggle to draw them to its side, to win them over, to wrest them from the bourgeoisie?

First, the proletariat achieves this *not* by putting into operation the old apparatus of state power, but by *smashing* it to pieces, levelling it with the ground (in spite of the howls of frightened philistines and the threats of saboteurs), and building a *new* state apparatus. That new state apparatus is adapted to the dictatorship of the proletariat

and to its struggle against the bourgeoisie to *win* the non-proletarian working people. That new apparatus is not anybody's invention, it *grows* out of the proletarian class struggle as that struggle becomes more widespread and intense. That new apparatus of state power, the new *type* of state power, is *Soviet power*.

The Russian proletariat, immediately, a few hours after winning state power, proclaimed the dissolution of the old state apparatus (which, as Marx showed, had been for centuries adapted to serve the class interests of the bourgeoisie, even in the most democratic republic*) and transferred *all power to the Soviets*; and only the working and exploited people could enter the Soviets, all exploiters of every kind were excluded.

In that way the proletariat at once, at one stroke, immediately *after* it had taken state power, *won* from the bourgeoisie *the vast mass* of its supporters in the petty-bourgeois and "socialist" parties; for that mass, the working and exploited people who had been deceived by the bourgeoisie (and by its yes-men, the Chernovs, Kautskys, Martovs and Co.) *on obtaining Soviet power*, acquired, *for the first time*, an instrument of mass struggle for their interests against the bourgeoisie.

Secondly, the proletariat can, and must, at once, or at all events very quickly, win from the bourgeoisie and from petty-bourgeois democrats "*their*" masses, i.e., the masses which follow them—win them *by satisfying their most urgent economic needs in a revolutionary way by expropriating the landowners and the bourgeoisie*.

The bourgeoisie *cannot* do that, no matter how "mighty" its state power may be.

The proletariat *can* do that on the very next day after it has won state power, because for this it has both an apparatus (the Soviets) and economic means (the expropriation of the landowners and the bourgeoisie).

That is exactly how the Russian proletariat *won the peasantry* from the Socialist-Revolutionaries, and won them

* See K. Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, and *The Civil War in France* (Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. I, Moscow, 1962, pp. 331-34, 482-85).—Ed.

literally *a few hours after* achieving state power; a few hours after the victory over the bourgeoisie in Petrograd, the victorious proletariat issued a "decree on land", and in that decree it entirely, at once, with revolutionary swiftness, energy and devotion, *satisfied* all the most urgent economic needs of the *majority* of the peasants, it expropriated the landowners, entirely and without compensation.

To prove to the peasants that the proletarians did not want to steam-roller them, did not want to boss them, but to help them and be their friends, the victorious Bolsheviks did not put a *single word of their own* into that "decree on land", but copied it, word for word, from the peasant mandates (the most revolutionary of them, of course) which the *Socialist-Revolutionaries* had published in the *Socialist-Revolutionary* newspaper.

The Socialist-Revolutionaries fumed and raved, protested and howled that "the Bolsheviks had stolen their programme", but they were only laughed at for that; a fine party, indeed, which had to be defeated and driven from the government in order that everything in its programme that was revolutionary and of benefit to the working people could be carried out!

The traitors, blockheads and pedants of the Second International could never understand such dialectics; the proletariat cannot achieve victory if it does not win the majority of the population to its side. But to limit that winning to polling a majority of votes in an election *under the rule of the bourgeoisie*, or to make it the condition for it, is crass stupidity, or else sheer deception of the workers. In order to win the majority of the population to its side the proletariat must, in the first place, overthrow the bourgeoisie and seize state power; secondly, it must introduce Soviet power and completely smash the old state apparatus, whereby it immediately undermines the rule, prestige and influence of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeois compromisers over the non-proletarian working people. Thirdly, it must *entirely destroy* the influence of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeois compromisers over the *majority* of the non-proletarian masses by satisfying *their* economic needs *in a revolutionary way at the expense of the exploiters*.

It is possible to do this, of course, only when capitalist development has reached a certain level. Failing that fundamental condition, the proletariat cannot develop into a separate class, nor can success be achieved in its prolonged training, education, instruction and trial in battle during long years of strikes and demonstrations when the opportunists are disgraced and expelled. Failing that fundamental condition, the centres will not play that economic and political role which enables the proletariat, after their capture, to lay hold of state power in its entirety, or more correctly, of its vital nerve, its core, its node. Failing that fundamental condition, there cannot be the kinship, closeness and bond between the position of the proletariat and that of the non-proletarian working people which (kinship, closeness and bond) are necessary for the proletariat to influence those masses, for its influence over them to be effective.

December 16, 1919

Published in December 1919
in the journal
The Communist International
Nos. 7-8

Collected Works, Vol. 30,
pp. 263-66

Signed: *N. Lenin*

To the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions

January 16, 1920

To Comrade Tomsy, with a request to bring this before
the All-Russia C.C.T.U.
and the Communist group in the All-Russia C.C.T.U.

Dear Comrades,

I send you herewith a report on the astonishing *red tape*, carelessness, bureaucracy and helplessness displayed in a most important *practical* matter.

I have never doubted that there is still very much bureaucracy in our Commissariats, in all of them.

But I did not expect that there would be *no less* bureaucracy in the trade unions.

This is the greatest disgrace. I very much ask you to read all these documents in the Communist group of the All-Russia C.C.T.U., and to work out *practical* measures for combating bureaucracy, red tape, idleness and helplessness.

Please be good enough to let me know the results.

Melnichansky *himself* rang me up about these 10,000 metalworkers.* I made a fuss at the People's Commissariat of Railways, and now Comrade Melnichansky has let me down....

With communist greetings,

V. Ulyanov (*Lenin*)

First published in *Trud*
No. 18, January 22, 1925

Collected Works, Vol. 35,
p. 433

* The reference is to 10,000 skilled metalworkers who were to be redeployed to undertake railway transport repair work. The leadership of the A.C.C.T.U. (All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions) and M.C.C.T.U. (Moscow City Council of Trade Unions) delayed the working out of the terms for the transfer of the metalworkers to the Moscow railway junction. Lenin's letter was prompted by this delay.—
Ed.

Politbureau of the C. C., R.C.P.(B.) Directives On a Workers' Inspection*

The Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee and the State Control Commissariat to be asked to be guided by the following directives of the C.C., R.C.P.:

1. No new bodies to be set up in any field of state administration, and the existing commissariats to be improved.

2. The Workers' and Peasants' Inspection to be developed, strengthened and extended in every way, all work being directed towards ensuring complete numerical predominance of workers and peasants in State Control.

3. No skilled workers, only unskilled workers, mainly women, to be enlisted in the Workers' Inspection.

4. A new draft of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection under the State Control Commissariat to be drawn up immediately with the co-operation of Avanesov and submitted to the Politbureau not later than 28.1.1920.

Written January 23, 1920

First published in 1928
in *Lenin Miscellany VIII*

Collected Works, Vol. 42,
p. 160

* The question of the reorganisation of the State Control Commission into the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection was brought forward at the end of 1919 and was discussed at the Seventh All-Russia Congress of Soviets. On January 23, 1920 the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) endorsed the directive on the Workers' Inspection proposed by Lenin.—*Ed.*

Remarks on and Addenda to Drafts For "Rules for the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection"

To Comrade Stalin. Copies to Avanesov and Tomsky, and also to Kiselyov, Member of the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee.

On the basis of directive given by the Central Committee the three drafts should, in my opinion, be worked up into one.

I think you should add:

(1) The "Department" of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection at the State Control Commission should be a temporary one for the purpose of involving the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection *in all* departments of the State Control Commission, and should then disappear as a special department.

(2) Purpose: *all* working people, both men and *particularly women*, should serve in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.

(3) For this draw up lists in the localities (in accordance with the Constitution), excluding clerks, etc.

—all others *in turn* to participate in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.

(4) Participation to vary according to the degree of development of the participants—beginning with the role of "listener", or witness, or learner for the illiterate and completely undeveloped workers and peasants, and ending with the granting of all rights (or almost all) to the literate and developed who have been *tested* in some way or another.

(5) Pay special attention to (and make strictly precise rules for), and *extend* control by the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection over accounting for food, *goods*, warehouses,

tools, materials, fuel, etc., etc. (in dining-rooms, etc., especially).

Women, literally every *woman*, must be drawn into this work.

(6) So as not to get into a mess with the involvement of masses of participants they must be drawn into the work gradually, in turn, etc. The ways in which they participate must also be carefully planned (two or three at a time, rarely, in special cases, more, so that they will not waste the working time of the clerks).

(7) Detailed instructions must be compiled.

(8) Officials of the State Control Commission must (in accordance with a special instruction), first, invite representatives of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection to all their operations, and secondly, deliver lectures to *non-party* conferences of workers and peasants (popular lectures according to a specially approved programme on the principles of the State Control Commission and its methods; perhaps the lectures could be replaced by the reading of a pamphlet that we shall publish—that is, the State Control Commission, Stalin and Avanesov, will publish it with the special participation of the Party—and commenting on that pamphlet).

(9) *Gradually* summon peasants from the localities (they must be non-party peasants) to participate in the State Control Commission at the centre; begin with at least (if it is impossible to do more) one or two from each gubernia and then, depending on transport and other conditions, *increase the number*. The same thing for non-party workers.

(10) Gradually introduce the verification of the participation of working people in the State Control Commission by the Party and the trade unions, i.e., through these organisations verify whether everyone participates and what results come from the participation insofar as learning the business of state administration is concerned.

Lenin

January 24, 1920

***From Speech Delivered at the Third
All-Russia Congress of Economic Councils
January 27, 1920***

Newspaper Report

Comrade Lenin said that he would only touch lightly on those questions which he had had lately to deal with most. One of them was the organisation of administration—the question of corporate management or one-man management. In the controversies on this subject the question had been discussed on the basis of abstract reasoning in which the superiority of corporate management over individual management was argued. But this led very far away from the practical tasks of the moment. Such arguments went back to an early stage in the development of the Soviet system, a stage that had already passed. It was time to put the matter on a more business-like footing.

“Corporate management,” continued Lenin, “as the chief type of organisation of Soviet administration, is something embryonic, something needed in the early stages, when you have to start from scratch. But when more or less stable forms have been established, the transition to practical work involves individual management, for that system best ensures the most effective utilisation of human abilities, and a real, not verbal, verification of work done.

“The experience of the Soviet government in army organisation must not be regarded as something isolated: War embraces all forms of organisation in all spheres. The development of our army led to successful results only because it was carried on in the spirit of general Soviet organisation, on the basis of class relations that affect all development. We find here the same thin layer of the leading class, the proletariat, and the peasantry forming the mass. The nature of this relationship may not have

been so fully apparent in other spheres, but it was thoroughly tested in the army, which stands face to face with the enemy and pays dearly for every mistake. This experience is worth thinking about. Developing systematically, it passed from a corporate form that was casual and vague to a corporate form elevated to the status of a system of organisation and permeating all the institutions of the army; and now, as a general tendency, it has arrived at the principle of one-man responsibility as the only correct method of work. In any sphere of Soviet work you will find a small number of politically-conscious proletarians, a mass of less developed proletarians and, as the substratum, a huge mass of peasants, all of whose habits tend towards private enterprise and, consequently, towards freedom of trade and profiteering, which the Mensheviks, the Socialist-Revolutionaries and non-party people call freedom, but which we call the heritage of capitalism. These are the conditions under which we have to act, and they call for relevant methods. And taking the experience of the army, we find in the organisation of its administration a systematic development from the original forms, from the corporate principle to the individual principle, which is now being applied there in at least a half of all cases.

“At best, corporate management involves a tremendous waste of forces and is not suited to the rapid and accurate work demanded by the conditions of centralised large-scale industry. If you take the advocates of corporate management, you will find that their resolutions formulate, in an extremely abstract way, the concept that every member of a collegium must be held individually responsible for the fulfilment of its tasks. That for us is now elementary. But those of you who have had practical experience know that only in one case out of a hundred is this actually adhered to. In the vast majority of cases it remains on paper. No member of a collegium is assigned precise duties and held personally responsible for the performance of those duties. Generally, there is no verification of work done. Let us assume that the Central Committee of a trade union nominates Vasily Vasilyevich Vasilyev for some office, and you ask to see a list of assignments performed by him and verified by efficient people—you will not get

anything of the kind. We are all of us only just beginning to adopt really efficient methods.

"Our fault is that we imagine we can do everything ourselves. Our most acute shortcoming is a lack of executives, yet we do not know how to draw them from the rank-and-file workers and peasants, among whom there is an abundance of talented administrators and organisers. It would be much better if we abandoned general, and in most cases absolutely sterile, controversy for business-like methods, and that as soon as possible. We would then really be carrying out the duties of organisers of the advanced class, and would pick out hundreds and thousands of new talented organisers. We must promote them, test them, assign them tasks, tasks of greater and greater complexity. I hope that after the Congress of the Economic Councils, after having reviewed the work done, we shall take this path and increase and multiply the number of organisers, so as to reinforce and enlarge that exceedingly thin layer which has been worn to shreds during the past two years. For in order to accomplish the task we are setting ourselves, that of saving Russia from poverty, hunger and cold, we need ten times more organisers, who would be answerable to tens of millions of people.

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January 28, 1920

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January 29, 1920

Collected Works, Vol. 30,
pp. 309-11

***From Speech Delivered at a Non-Party
Conference
in Blagusha-Lefortovo District
February 9, 1920***

Newspaper Report

Comrades, before concluding my speech I would like to say a few words about the measures decided on at the last session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. The session decided on a number of measures which will shortly be published in the newspapers, and which should be read and discussed at all meetings of workers, in clubs, factories and Red Army units. One of the most important decisions of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, one to which in my opinion the most profound attention should be directed, concerns the fight against red tape in our institutions. One of the measures is the decision of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee to transform our State Control into a workers' and peasants' control, or a workers' inspection. We shall not drive out the old officials—just as we did not drive the experts out of the army, but attached worker commissars to them—we must attach groups of workers to these bourgeois experts, to look on, to learn and to take this work into their own hands. Workers must enter all the government establishments so as to supervise the entire government apparatus. And this should be done by the non-party workers, who should elect their representatives at non-party conferences of workers and peasants. They must come to the assistance of the Communists who are being overtaxed by the tremendous burden they have to bear. We must pour as many workers and peasants as possible into this apparatus. We shall tackle this job and accomplish it, and thus drive red tape out of

our institutions. The broad non-party masses must keep a check on all government affairs, and must themselves learn to govern.

Pravda No. 32,
February 13, 1920

Collected Works, Vol. 30,
p. 351

A Letter to R.C.P. Organisations on Preparations for the Party Congress

Dear Comrades,

The Party Congress has been appointed for March 27. The agenda of the Congress has been published, and no doubt all Party organisations have already begun to prepare for the Congress. The Central Committee of the Party deems it its duty to express certain views in connection with this work.

Our Party, which by its persistent struggle over a period of fifteen years (1903-17) had proved its bonds with the working class of Russia, its ability to combat bourgeois influences within the working class and to lead the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat in the most diverse and most difficult circumstances, naturally had to take upon itself the direct implementation of the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat after the October Revolution. The Congress of our Party is therefore of the utmost importance not only for the entire working-class movement, but also for the entire development of Soviet power and for the guidance of the Russian—and to a certain extent the international—communist movement.

The importance of our Party Congress in this respect is still further enhanced by the specific features of the present moment, when the Soviet government has to accomplish a most difficult transition from the military tasks that formerly absorbed its entire attention to the tasks of peaceful economic development.

The membership of our Party has greatly increased, chiefly owing to the immense influx of workers and peasants during the Party Weeks that were organised at the

most difficult period of our revolution, when Yudenich and Denikin were closest to Petrograd and Moscow. The workers and peasants who joined the Party at such a critical moment constitute a fine and reliable body of leaders of the revolutionary proletariat and of the non-exploiting section of the peasantry. We are confronted with the task of helping, as rapidly, successfully and efficiently as possible, to complete the training of these new members of the Party, of helping to mould them into a body of builders of communism, people who are the most politically conscious and capable of filling the most responsible posts, and at the same time most closely connected with the masses, i.e., with the majority of the workers and of the peasants who do not exploit the labour of others.

Relevant to the specific nature of the present moment, the chief item on the agenda of the forthcoming Congress will be the question of economic development and, in particular, of the measures, ways and means, and results of having a greater proportion of workers in our chief administrations, central boards and Soviet government apparatus in general.

This must be the principal question at the Party Congress, for the principal question in the entire Soviet development in Russia (and—inasmuch as she has become the centre of the world revolution—to a large extent in international communism as well) is the transition from the fight on the bloody front to the fight on the bloodless front, the front of labour, the front of the war against economic chaos, the war for the restoration, improvement, reorganisation and development of Russia's entire economy.

The procurement and transportation of large state supplies of foodstuffs, the restoration of the ruined transport system, the implementation of these measures with military speed, energy and discipline; side by side with this and indivisibly from it, the greater proportion of workers employed in the Soviet government apparatus, the elimination of sabotage and red tape from this apparatus, the achievement of the maximum productivity of labour, the utmost exertion of all the forces of the country for the restoration of the economy—such is the task imperatively dictated by circumstances, an urgent task demanding meth-

ods involving the supreme revolutionary energy of millions and millions of workers and peasants.

The Party Congress must take into account the experience of the labour armies, that young and new institution; it must take into account the experience gained by the entire apparatus of Soviet government over a period of more than two years, and adopt a number of decisions permitting the whole of our Socialist Republic to concentrate all the forces of the working people with redoubled firmness, determination, energy and efficiency on achieving the best possible solution of the urgent problem of rapidly and thoroughly overcoming economic chaos.

We invite all Party members and all Party organisations to concentrate the maximum effort on this problem, both in the practical work of all Soviet institutions and in the work of preparation for the Congress. For these tasks merge into one indivisible whole.

Happily, the time for purely theoretical discussions, disputes over general questions and the adoption of resolutions on principles has passed. That stage is over; it was dealt with and settled yesterday and the day before yesterday. We must march ahead, and we must realise that we are now confronted by a *practical* task, the *business* task of rapidly overcoming economic chaos, and we must do it with all our strength, with truly revolutionary energy, and with the same devotion with which our finest worker and peasant comrades, the Red Army men, defeated Kolchak, Yudenich and Denikin.

We must march ahead, we must look ahead, and we must bring to the Congress the *practical experience* of economic development to which thought has been given and which has been carefully *analysed* by the common labour and common effort of all members of the Party.

We have learned something, and in order to march ahead and to overcome economic chaos, what we have to do is not to start anew, not to reconstruct everything right and left, but to *utilise* to the utmost what has already been created. There must be as little general reconstruction as possible and as many as possible business-like measures, ways, means and directions for the attainment of our chief

aim which have been tested in practice and verified by results—we must enlist more workers in our apparatus, and see that it is done still more widely, still more rapidly and still better, we must enlist an even greater number of workers and labouring peasants in the work of administering industry and the national economy generally; not only must we enlist individual workers and peasants who have best proved themselves on the job, but we must enlist to a larger extent the *trade unions* and conferences of non-party workers and peasants; we must enlist literally all bourgeois specialists (because there are incredibly few of them)—i.e., specialists who have been trained under bourgeois conditions and who have reaped the fruits of bourgeois culture. We must organise things so that, in conformity with the demands of our Party Programme, our working masses may really *learn from these bourgeois specialists* and at the same time place them “in a comradesly environment of common labour hand in hand with the masses of rank-and-file workers led by class-conscious Communists” (as our Party Programme puts it); such are our chief aims.

Comrades, we have hitherto been able to surmount the untold difficulties which history has placed in the way of the first socialist republic because the proletariat has properly understood its tasks as dictator, i.e., as the leader, organiser and teacher of all the working people. We won because we have always correctly defined the most urgent, insistent and pressing task and have really concentrated on this task the forces of all the working people, of the whole nation.

Military victories are easier to win than economic victory. It was much easier to defeat Kolchak, Yudenich and Denikin than to defeat the old petty-bourgeois customs, relations, habits and economic conditions upheld and reproduced by millions and millions of small owners, alongside of the workers, together with them, and in the midst of them.

Victory in this field requires greater endurance, greater patience, greater persistence, greater steadfastness, greater system in work, greater organisational and administrative skill on the grand scale. This is what we, a backward nation, lack most of all.

Let all members of the Party exert their efforts to bring to the Party Congress *practical* experience, tested, analysed and summarised. If we bend all our efforts and succeed in pooling, testing and analysing in a careful, thorough-going and business-like way this *practical* experience, exactly what each of us has attempted and completed, or has seen others attempt and complete, then, and only then, will our Party Congress, and, following it, all our Soviet institutions, accomplish the *practical* task of overcoming economic chaos as rapidly and surely as possible.

From congresses and meetings to discuss general questions to congresses and meetings to summarise *practical experience*—that is the slogan of our times. The task of the moment and the task of the Party Congress, as we conceive it, is to learn from practical experience, to discard what is harmful, to combine all that is valuable, in order to determine precisely a number of immediate practical measures, and to carry out these measures at all costs, not hesitating at any sacrifices.

Written between
February 17 and 26, 1920

Published in the *Bulletin*
of the C.C., R.C.P.(B.)
No. 13, March 2, 1920

Collected Works, Vol. 30,
pp. 403-07

To the Working Women

Comrades, the elections to the Moscow Soviet show that the Communist Party is gaining ground among the working class.

Working women must take a bigger part in the elections. The Soviet government is the first and only government in the world to have completely abolished all the old, despicable bourgeois laws which placed women in a position of inferiority to men, which placed men in a privileged position, for example, in respect of marital rights and of children. The Soviet government, the government of the working people, is the first and only government in the world to have abolished all the privileges of men in property questions, privileges which the marriage laws of all bourgeois republics, even the most democratic, still preserve.

Wherever there are landowners, capitalists and merchants, women cannot be the equal of men even before the law.

Where there are no landowners, capitalists or merchants, and where the government of the working people is building a new life without these exploiters, men and women are equal before the law.

But that is not enough.

Equality before the law is not necessarily equality in fact.

We want the working woman to be the equal of the working man not only before the law but in actual fact. For this working women must take an increasing part in

the administration of socialised enterprises and in the administration of the state.

By taking part in administration, women will learn quickly and will catch up with the men.

Elect more working women to the Soviet, both Communist women and non-party women. As long as they are honest working women capable of performing their work sensibly and conscientiously, even if they are not members of the Party—elect them to the Moscow Soviet!

Send more working women to the Moscow Soviet! Let the Moscow proletariat show that it is prepared to do everything, and is doing everything, to fight for victory, to fight the old inequality, the old bourgeois humiliation of women!

The proletariat cannot achieve complete liberty until it has won complete liberty for women.

N. Lenin

February 21, 1920

Pravda No. 40,
February 22, 1920

Collected Works, Vol. 30,
pp. 371-72

***From Speech Delivered at a Meeting
of the Moscow Soviet
of Workers' and Red Army Deputies
March 6, 1920***

The worker and peasant masses who have to build up our entire state must start by organising State Control. You will obtain this apparatus from among the worker and peasant masses, from among the young workers and peasants who have been fired as never before with the independent desire, the readiness and determination to set about the work of administering the state themselves. We have learned from the experiences of the war and shall promote thousands of people who have passed through the school of the Soviets and are capable of governing the state. You must recruit the most diffident and undeveloped, the most timid of the workers for the workers' inspection and promote them. Let them progress in this work. When they have seen how the workers' inspection participates in state affairs, let them gradually proceed from the simple duties they are able to carry out—at first only as onlookers—to more important functions of state. You will secure a flow of assistants from the widest sources who will take upon themselves the burden of government, who will come to lend a hand and to work. We need tens of thousands of new advanced workers. Turn for support to the non-party workers and peasants, turn to them, for our Party must remain a narrow party, surrounded as it is by enemies on all sides. At a time when hostile elements are trying by every method of warfare, deceit and provocation to cling to us and to take advantage of the fact that membership of a government party offers certain privileges, we must act in contact with the non-party people. The laws on the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection grant the right to enlist

non-party workers and peasants and their conferences in the work of government. This apparatus is one of the means whereby we can increase the number of workers and peasants who will help us to achieve victory on the internal front in a few years. For a long time this victory will not be as simply, decisively and clearly apparent as the victory on the war front. This victory demands vigilance and effort, and you can ensure it by carrying out the job of development of Moscow and its environs and helping in the general work of restoring the transport system, of restoring that general economic organisation which will help us to get rid of the direct and indirect influence of the profiteers and to vanquish the old traditions of capitalism. We should not grudge a few years for this. Even if we had these conditions, such social reforms as these would be without parallel, and here to set ourselves tasks designed only for a short period of time would be a great mistake.

Brief newspaper report
published in *Izvestia VTsIK*
No. 52, March 7, 1920

First published in full in 1921
in *Verbatim Reports*
of the Plenary Sessions
of the Moscow Soviet
of Workers', Peasants'
and Red Army Deputies,
Moscow

Collected Works, Vol. 30,
pp. 415-16

From "Left-Wing" Communism—an Infantile Disorder

In Russia today, the connection between leaders, party, class and masses, as well as the attitude of the dictatorship of the proletariat and its Party to the trade unions, are concretely as follows: the dictatorship is exercised by the proletariat organised in the Soviets; the proletariat is guided by the Communist Party of Bolsheviks, which, according to the figures of the latest Party Congress (April 1920), has a membership of 611,000. The membership varied greatly both before and after the October Revolution, and used to be much smaller, even in 1918 and 1919.* We are apprehensive of an excessive growth of the Party, because careerists and charlatans, who deserve only to be shot, inevitably do all they can to insinuate themselves into the ranks of the ruling party. The last time we opened wide the doors of the Party—to workers and peasants only—was when (in the winter of 1919) Yudenich was within a few versts of Petrograd, and Denikin was in Orel (about 350 versts from Moscow), i.e., when the Soviet Republic was in mortal danger, and when adventurers, careerists, charlatans and unreliable persons generally could not possibly count on making a profitable career (and had more reason

* The number of Party members in the period from the February bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1917 to 1919 inclusive followed the pattern outlined below: by the Seventh (April) All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. (B.) in 1917 there were 80,000 Party members; by the Sixth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) (July-August 1917)—about 240,000; by the Seventh Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) (March 1918) not less than 300,000 and by the Eighth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.) (March 1919)—313,766.—*Ed.*

to expect the gallows and torture) by joining the Communists. The Party, which holds annual congresses (the most recent on the basis of one delegate per 1,000 members), is directed by a Central Committee of nineteen elected at the Congress, while the current work in Moscow has to be carried on by still smaller bodies, known as the Organising Bureau and the Political Bureau, which are elected at plenary meetings of the Central Committee, five members of the Central Committee to each bureau. This, it would appear, is a full-fledged "oligarchy". No important political or organisational question is decided by any state institution in our Republic without the guidance of the Party's Central Committee.

In its work, the Party relies directly on the *trade unions*, which, according to the data of the last congress (April 1920), now have a membership of over four million and are formally *non-Party*. Actually, all the directing bodies of the vast majority of the unions, and primarily, of course, of the all-Russia general trade union centre or bureau (the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions), are made up of Communists and carry out all the directives of the Party. Thus, on the whole, we have a formally non-communist, flexible and relatively wide and very powerful proletarian apparatus, by means of which the Party is closely linked up with the *class* and the *masses*, and by means of which, under the leadership of the Party, the *class dictatorship* is exercised. Without close contacts with the trade unions, and without their energetic support and devoted efforts, not only in economic *but also in military* affairs, it would of course have been impossible for us to govern the country and to maintain the dictatorship for two and a half months, let alone two and a half years. In practice, these very close contacts naturally call for highly complex and diversified work in the form of propaganda, agitation, timely and frequent conferences, not only with the leading trade union workers, but with influential trade union workers generally; they call for a determined struggle against the Mensheviks, who still have a certain though very small following to whom they teach all kinds of counter-revolutionary machinations, ranging from an ideological defence of (*bourgeois*) democracy and the preaching that the trade unions should

be "independent" (independent of proletarian state power!) to sabotage of proletarian discipline, etc., etc.

We consider that contacts with the "masses" through the trade unions are not enough. In the course of our revolution, practical activities have given rise to such institutions as *non-Party workers' and peasants' conferences*, and we strive by every means to support, develop and extend this institution in order to be able to observe the temper of the masses, come closer to them, meet their requirements, promote the best among them to state posts, etc. Under a recent decree on the transformation of the People's Commissariat of State Control into the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, non-Party conferences of this kind have been empowered to select members of the State Control to carry out various kinds of investigations, etc.

Then, of course, all the work of the Party is carried on through the Soviets, which embrace the working masses, irrespective of occupation. The district congresses of Soviets are *democratic* institutions, the like of which even the best of the democratic republics of the bourgeois world have never known; through these congresses (whose proceedings the Party endeavours to follow with the closest attention), as well as by continually appointing class-conscious workers to various posts in the rural districts, the proletariat exercises its role of leader of the peasantry, gives effect to the dictatorship of the urban proletariat, wages a systematic struggle against the rich, bourgeois, exploiting and profiteering peasantry, etc.

Such is the general mechanism of the proletarian state power viewed "from above", from the standpoint of the practical implementation of the dictatorship.

Written April-May 1920

Published in pamphlet form
June 1920

Collected Works, Vol. 31,
pp. 47-49

From Theses on the Fundamental Tasks of the Second Congress of the Communist International

4. Victory over capitalism calls for proper relations between the leading (Communist) party, the revolutionary class (the proletariat) and the masses, i.e., the entire body of the toilers and the exploited. Only the Communist Party, if it is really the vanguard of the revolutionary class, if it really comprises all the finest representatives of that class, if it consists of fully conscious and staunch Communists who have been educated and steeled by the experience of a persistent revolutionary struggle, and if it has succeeded in linking itself inseparably with the whole life of its class and, through it, with the whole mass of the exploited, and in completely winning the confidence of this class and this mass—only such a party is capable of leading the proletariat in a final, most ruthless and decisive struggle against all the forces of capitalism. On the other hand, it is only under the leadership of such a party that the proletariat is capable of displaying the full might of its revolutionary onslaught, and of overcoming the inevitable apathy and occasional resistance of that small minority, the labour aristocracy, who have been corrupted by capitalism, the old trade union and co-operative leaders, etc.—only then will it be capable of displaying its full might, which, because of the very economic structure of capitalist society, is infinitely greater than its proportion of the population. Finally, it is only after they have been really emancipated from the yoke of the bourgeoisie and of the bourgeois machinery of state, only after they have found an opportunity of organising in their Soviets in a really free way (free from the exploiters), that the masses, i.e., the toilers and ex-

exploited as a body, can display, for the first time in history, all the initiative and energy of tens of millions of people who have been crushed by capitalism. Only when the Soviets have become the sole state apparatus is it really possible to ensure the participation, in the work of administration, of the entire mass of the exploited, who, even under the most enlightened and freest bourgeois democracy, have always actually been excluded 99 per cent from participation in the work of administration. It is only in the Soviets that the exploited masses really begin to learn—not in books, but from their own practical experience—the work of socialist construction, of creating a new social discipline and a free union of free workers.

Written June-July 1920

Published in the journal
The Communist International
No. 12, July 20, 1920

Collected Works, Vol. 31,
pp. 187-88

***From* Report of the Commission on the
National and the Colonial Questions Delivered
at the Second Congress
of the Communist International
July 26, 1920**

Next, I would like to make a remark on the subject of peasants' Soviets. The Russian Communists' practical activities in the former tsarist colonies, in such backward countries as Turkestan, etc., have confronted us with the question of how to apply the communist tactics and policy in pre-capitalist conditions. The preponderance of pre-capitalist relationships is still the main determining feature in these countries, so that there can be no question of a purely proletarian movement in them. There is practically no industrial proletariat in these countries. Nevertheless, we have assumed, we must assume, the role of leader even there. Experience has shown us that tremendous difficulties have to be surmounted in these countries. However, the practical results of our work have also shown that despite these difficulties we are in a position to inspire in the masses an urge for independent political thinking and independent political action, even where a proletariat is practically non-existent. This work has been more difficult for us than it will be for comrades in the West-European countries, because in Russia the proletariat is engrossed in the work of state administration. It will readily be understood that peasants living in conditions of semi-feudal dependence can easily assimilate and give effect to the idea of Soviet organisation. It is also clear that the oppressed masses, those who are exploited, not only by merchant capital but also by the feudalists, and by a state based on feudalism, can apply this weapon, this type of organisation, in their conditions too. The idea of Soviet organisation is a simple one, and is applicable, not only to proletar-

ian, but also to peasant feudal and semi-feudal relations. Our experience in this respect is not as yet very considerable. However, the debate in the commission, in which several representatives from colonial countries participated, demonstrated convincingly that the Communist International's theses should point out that peasants' Soviets, Soviets of the exploited, are a weapon which can be employed, not only in capitalist countries but also in countries with pre-capitalist relations, and that it is the absolute duty of Communist parties and of elements prepared to form Communist parties, everywhere to conduct propaganda in favour of peasants' Soviets or of working people's Soviets, this to include backward and colonial countries. Wherever conditions permit, they should at once make attempts to set up Soviets of the working people.

This opens up a very interesting and very important field for our practical work. So far our joint experience in this respect has not been extensive, but more and more data will gradually accumulate. It is unquestionable that the proletariat of the advanced countries can and should give help to the working masses of the backward countries, and that the backward countries can emerge from their present stage of development when the victorious proletariat of the Soviet Republics extends a helping hand to these masses and is in a position to give them support.

There was quite a lively debate on this question in the commission, not only in connection with the theses I signed, but still more in connection with Comrade Roy's theses, which he will defend here, and certain amendments to which were unanimously adopted.

The question was posed as follows: are we to consider as correct the assertion that the capitalist stage of economic development is inevitable for backward nations now on the road to emancipation and among whom a certain advance towards progress is to be seen since the war? We replied in the negative. If the victorious revolutionary proletariat conducts systematic propaganda among them, and the Soviet governments come to their aid with all the means at their disposal—in that event it will be mistaken to assume that the backward peoples must inevitably go through the capitalist stage of development. Not only should we create

independent contingents of fighters and party organisations in the colonies and the backward countries, not only at once launch propaganda for the organisation of peasants' Soviets and strive to adapt them to the pre-capitalist conditions, but the Communist International should advance the proposition, with the appropriate theoretical grounding, that with the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries, backward countries can go over to the Soviet system and, through certain stages of development, to communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage.

The necessary means for this cannot be indicated in advance. These will be prompted by practical experience. It has, however, been definitely established that the idea of the Soviets is understood by the mass of the working people in even the most remote nations, that the Soviets should be adapted to the conditions of a pre-capitalist social system, and that the Communist parties should immediately begin work in this direction in all parts of the world.

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in the book *Second Congress
of the Communist International.
Verbatim Report.*
Communist International
Publishers, Petrograd

Collected Works, Vol. 31,
pp. 242-44

***From Speech Delivered at a General Meeting
of Communists of Zamoskvorechye District
Moscow***

November 29, 1920

Brief Newspaper Report

Comrade Lenin dwelt in detail on the problem of the struggle against bureaucratic methods which, in its differences with the majority at the gubernia conference,* our so-called "opposition" is advancing almost as a matter of principle. Though he thought that the fact that the "opposition" had raised this question was in itself a healthy sign, Lenin at the same time attacked the opposition for its frivolous attitude to the question. Indicating the causes of the recrudescence of bureaucratic methods in our Soviet state and the roots now nourishing them, Lenin very emphatically warned the comrades against the idea that this evil could be combated by resolutions on paper and by abstract criticism devoid of any substance. The Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who were out to make capital out of this question, both reproached us with being unable to combat red tape in our Soviet apparatus. There had been a time when these gentlemen had said that we would be unable to preserve our Soviet state; now they said: "They have preserved it, it is true, but bureaucratic methods remain in the Soviet institutions, even though Lenin said in such-and-such a book that red tape would be abolished under the rule of the Soviets."

But that was not how the matter stood.

First of all, general living standards had to be raised, so that the worker would not have to go about in search of flour, with a sack on his back, and hundreds of thou-

* The reference is to the Moscow Gubernia Conference of the R.C.P.(B.) which was held from November 20 to 22, 1920.—*Ed.*

sands and millions of working people should pass through the school of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and learn to administer the state (which was something nobody had taught us), so that they might replace hundreds of thousands of bourgeois bureaucrats.

Incidentally, a reference to the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. That body had been set up nearly a year before, but it had so far made itself felt very little as a school training people in the administration of the state. It would not be amiss for comrades who really wanted to expedite the fight against bureaucratic methods to work in this sphere and learn some useful lessons.

Lenin remarked that the question of combating red tape was particularly acute in Moscow, because there the comrades came up against, not only Moscow bureaucrats but bureaucrats on a national scale, since central institutions were concentrated there. There were 200,000 Soviet functionaries in Moscow, of whom only 10,000 could be transferred with their institutions to Petrograd in the near future.

It was only to be expected that red tape in the Soviet apparatus would penetrate into the Party apparatus, for these apparatuses are interwoven most intimately. The fight against the evil could and should be placed on the order of the day—not, however, in the sense of criticism for criticism's sake, but of practical suggestions as to the methods of waging that struggle, and better still, of a real struggle in the institutions in which the criticising comrades were working, and of publicity for the results and lessons of the struggle.

***From Report of the All-Russia Central
Executive Committee and the Council
of People's Commissars on Foreign and Home
Policy Delivered at the Eighth All-Russia
Congress of Soviets
December 22, 1920***

The greater the scope and extent of historical events, the greater is the number of people participating in them, and, contrariwise, the more profound the change we wish to bring about, the more must we rouse an interest and an intelligent attitude towards it, and convince more millions and tens of millions of people that it is necessary. In the final analysis, the reason our revolution has left all other revolutions far behind is that, through the Soviet form of government, it has aroused tens of millions of people, formerly uninterested in state development, to take an active part in the work of building up the state. Let us now consider, from this aspect, the new tasks which confronted us and were expressed in tens and hundreds of decisions passed by the Soviet government during this period; they accounted for nine-tenths of the work of the Council of Labour and Defence (we shall speak of this later), and probably more than half of the work of the Council of People's Commissars, namely, the economic tasks, the elaboration of a single economic plan, the reorganisation of the very foundations of the economy of Russia, the very foundations of small-scale peasant economy. These tasks require that all members of trade unions, without exception, should be drawn into this absolutely new work, something that was alien to them under capitalism. Now ask yourselves whether we at present have the condition for the rapid and unequivocal success that we had during the war, the condition of the masses being drawn into the work. Are the members of the trade unions and the majority of the non-Party people convinced that our new methods and our great tasks of economic development are necessary? Are they as convinced of this as they were of the

necessity of devoting everything to the war, of sacrificing everything for the sake of victory on the war front? If the question is presented in that way, you will be compelled to answer that they are certainly not. They are far from being as fully convinced of this as they should be.

War was a matter which people understood and were used to for hundreds and thousands of years. The acts of violence and brutality formerly committed by the landowners were so obvious that it was easy to convince the people; it was not difficult to convince even the peasants of the richer grain regions, who are least connected with industry, that we were waging war in the interests of the working people, and it was therefore possible to arouse almost universal enthusiasm. It will be more difficult to get the peasant masses and the members of the trade unions to understand these tasks now, to get them to understand that we cannot go on living in the old way, that however firmly capitalist exploitation has been implanted in the course of decades, it must be overcome. We must get everybody to understand that Russia belongs to us, and that only we, the masses of workers and peasants, can by our activities and our strict labour discipline remould the old economic conditions of existence and put a great economic plan into practice. There can be no salvation apart from this. We are lagging behind the capitalist powers and shall continue to lag behind them; we shall be defeated if we do not succeed in restoring our economy. That is why we must repeat the old truths I have just reminded you of, the old truths regarding the importance of organisational problems, of labour discipline, regarding the immense role of the trade unions—an absolutely exclusive role in this sphere, because there is no other organisation which unites the broad masses; that is why we must not only repeat these old truths, but must with every fibre of our being realise that the transition from military tasks to economic tasks has begun.

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in the book

*The Eighth All-Russia
Congress of Soviets.
Weekly Bulletin of the Congress*
No. 9

*Collected Works, Vol. 31,
pp. 498-500*

Integrated Economic Plan

What is being said and written on this subject leaves a very painful impression. Take L. Kritsman's articles in *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn* (I—December 14, 1920; II—December 23; III—February 9; IV—February 16; and V—February 20). There is nothing there but empty talk and word-spinning, a refusal to consider and look into what has been done in this field. Five long articles of reflection on how to approach the study of facts and data, instead of any actual examination of them.

Take Milyutin's theses (*Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*, February 19), or Larin's (*ibid.*, February 20); listen to the speeches of "responsible" comrades: they all have the same basic defects as Kritsman's articles. They all reveal the dull-est sort of scholasticism, including a lot of twaddle about the law of concatenation, etc. It is a scholasticism that ranges from the literary to the bureaucratic, to the exclusion of all practical effort.

But what is even worse is the highbrow bureaucratic disdain for the vital work that has been done and that needs to be continued. Again and again there is the emptiest "drawing up of theses" and a concoction of plans and slogans, in place of painstaking and thoughtful study of our own practical experience.

The only serious work on the subject is the *Plan for the Electrification of the R.S.F.S.R.*, the report of GOELRO (the State Commission for the Electrification of Russia) to the Eighth Congress of Soviets, published in December 1920 and distributed at the Congress. It outlines an integrated economic plan which has been worked out—only as a rough

approximation, of course—by the best brains in the Republic on the instructions of its highest bodies. We have to make a very modest start in fighting the complacency born of the ignorance of the grandees, and the intellectualist conceit of the Communist literati, by telling the story of this book, and describing its content and significance.

More than a year ago—February 2-7, 1920—the All-Russia Central Executive Committee met in session and adopted a resolution on electrification which says:

“Along with the most immediate, vital and urgent tasks in organising transport, coping with the fuel and food crises, fighting epidemics, and forming disciplined labour armies, Soviet Russia now has, for the first time, an opportunity of starting on more balanced economic development, and working out a nation-wide state economic plan on scientific lines and consistently implementing it. In view of the prime importance of electrification ... mindful of the importance of electrification for industry, agriculture and transport, ... and so on and so forth ..., the Committee resolves: to authorise the Supreme Economic Council to work out, in conjunction with the People's Commissariat for Agriculture, a project for the construction of a system of electric power stations....”

This seems to be clear enough, doesn't it? “A nation-wide state economic plan on scientific lines”: is it possible to misread these words in the decision adopted by our highest authority? If the literati and the grandees, who boast of their communism before the “experts”, are ignorant of this decision it remains for us to remind them that ignorance of our laws is no argument.

In pursuance of the All-Russia C.E.C. resolution, the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council, on February 21, 1920, confirmed the Electrification Commission set up under the Electricity Department, after which the Council of Defence endorsed the statute on GOELRO, whose composition the Supreme Economic Council was instructed to determine and confirm by agreement with the People's Commissariat for Agriculture. On April 24, 1920, GOELRO issued its *Bulletin* No. 1, containing a detailed programme of works and a list of the responsible persons, scientists, engineers, agronomists and statisticians on the several sub-commissions to direct operations in the various areas, together with the specific assignments each had undertaken.

The list of persons and their assignments runs to ten printed pages of *Bulletin* No. 1. The best talent available to the Supreme Economic Council, the People's Commissariat for Agriculture and the People's Commissariat for Communications has been recruited.

The GOELRO effort has produced this voluminous—and first-class—scientific publication. Over 180 specialists worked on it. There are more than 200 items on the list of works they have submitted to GOELRO. We find, first, a summary of these works (the first part of the volume, running to over 200 pages): a) electrification and a state economic plan; followed by b) fuel supply (with a detailed "fuel budget" for the R.S.F.S.R. *over the next ten years*, with an estimate of the manpower required); c) water power; d) agriculture; e) transport; and f) industry.

The plan ranges over about ten years and gives an indication of the number of workers and capacities (in 1,000 hp). Of course, it is only a rough draft, with possible errors, and a "rough approximation", but it is a real scientific plan. We have precise calculations by experts for every major item, and every industry. To give a small example, we have their calculations for the output of leather, footwear at two pairs a head (300 million pairs), etc. As a result, we have a material and a financial (gold rubles) balance-sheet for electrification (about 370 million working days, so many barrels of cement, so many bricks, poods of iron, copper, and other things; turbine generator capacities, etc.). It envisages ("at a very rough estimate") an 80 per cent increase in manufacturing, and 80-100 per cent, in extracting industry over the next ten years. The gold balance deficit (+11,000 million—17,000 million leaves a total deficit of about 6,000 million) "can be covered by means of concessions and credit operations".

It gives the site of the first 20 steam and 10 water power district electric stations, and a detailed description of the economic importance of each.

The general summary is followed, in the same volume, by a list of works for each area (with a separate paging): Northern, Central Industrial (both of which are especially well set out in precise detail based on a wealth of scientific data), Southern, Volga, Urals, Caucasian (the Caucasus

is taken as a whole in anticipation of an economic agreement between its various Republics), Western Siberia and Turkestan. For each of the areas, electric power capacities are projected beyond the first units; this is followed by the "GOELRO Programme A", that is, the plan for the use of *existing* electric power stations on the most rational and economic lines. Here is another small example: it is estimated that a grid of the Petrograd stations (Northern Area) could yield the following economy (p. 69): up to one-half of the capacities could be diverted to the logging areas of the North, such as Murmansk and Archangel, etc. The resulting increase in the output and export of timber could yield "*up to 500 million rubles' worth of foreign exchange a year in the immediate period ahead*".

"Annual receipts from the sale of our northern timber could very well equal our gold reserves over the next few years" (ibid., p. 70), provided, of course, we stop talking about plans and start studying and *applying* the plan already worked out by our scientists.

Let me add that we have an embryonic calendar programme for a number of other items (though not for all, of course). This is more than a general plan: it is an estimate for each year, from 1921 to 1930, of the number of stations that can be run in, and the proportions to which the existing ones can be enlarged, provided again we start doing what I have just said, which is not easy in view of the ways of our intellectualist literati and bureaucratic grandees.

A look at Germany will bring out the dimensions and value of GOELRO's effort. Over there, the scientist Ballod produced a similar work: he compiled a scientific plan for the socialist reconstruction of the whole national economy of Germany.* But his being a capitalist country, the plan never got off the ground. It remains a lone-wolf effort, and an exercise in literary composition. With us over here it was a state assignment, mobilising hundreds of specialists and producing an integrated economic plan on scientific

* The reference is to *Der Zukunftsstaat, Produktion und Konsum im Sozialstaat* (The State of the Future, Production and Consumption in a Socialist State) by the German professor of Political economy Karl Ballod. The book was published in 1898 in Germany.—Ed.

lines within 10 months (and not two, of course, as we had originally planned). We have every right to be proud of this work, and it remains for us to *understand how* it should be used. What we now have to contend with is failure to understand *this fact*.

The resolution of the Eighth Congress of Soviets says: "The Congress ... *approves the work of the Supreme Economic Council, etc., especially that of GOELRO in drawing up the plan for the electrification of Russia ... regards this plan as the first step in a great economic endeavour, authorises the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, etc., to put the finishing touches to the plan and to endorse it, at the very earliest date.... It authorises the adoption of all measures for the most extensive popularisation of this plan.... A study of this plan must be an item in the curricula of all educational establishments of the Republic, without exception*", etc.

The bureaucratic and intellectualist defects of our apparatus, especially of its top drawer, are most glaringly revealed by the attitude to this resolution taken by some people in Moscow and their efforts to twist it, to the extent of ignoring it altogether. Instead of advertising the plan, the literati produce theses and empty disquisitions on how to start working out a plan. The grandees, in purely bureaucratic fashion, lay stress on the need to "approve" the plan, by which they do not mean concrete assignments (the dates for the construction of the various installations, the purchase of various items abroad, etc.) but some muddled idea, such as working out a *new* plan. The misunderstanding this produces is monstrous, and there is talk of partially restoring the old before getting on with the new. Electrification, it is said, is something of an "electrofiction". Why not gasification, we are asked; GOELRO, they also say, is full of bourgeois specialists, with only a handful of Communists; GOELRO should provide the cadres of experts, instead of staffing the general planning commission, and so forth.

The danger lies in this discord, for it betrays an inability to work, and the prevalence of intellectualist and bureaucratic complacency, to the exclusion of all real effort. The conceited ignoramus is betrayed by his jibes at the "fantastic" plan, his questions about gasification, etc. The

nerve of their trying, offhand, to pick holes in something it took an army of first-class specialists to produce! Isn't it a shame to try to shrug it off with trite little jokes, and to put on airs about one's right "to withhold approval"?

It is time we learned to put a value on science and got rid of the "communist" conceit of the dabbler and the bureaucrat; it is time we learned to work systematically, making use of our own experience and practice.

Of course, "plans" naturally give rise to endless argument and discussion, but when the task is to get down to the study of the only scientific plan before us, we should not allow ourselves to engage in general statements and debates about underlying "principles". We should get down to correcting it on the strength of *practical* experience and a more detailed study. Of course, the grandees always retain the right to "give or withhold approval". A sober view of this right, and a reasonable reading of the resolution of the Eighth Congress concerning the approval of the plan, which it endorsed and handed down to us for the broadest popularisation, show that approval must be taken to mean the placing of a series of orders and the issue of a set of instructions, such as the items to be purchased, the building to be started, the materials to be collected and forwarded, etc. Upon the other hand, "approval" from the bureaucratic standpoint means arbitrary acts on the part of the grandees, the red-tape runaround, the commissions-of-inquiry game, and the strictly bureaucratic foul-up of anything that is going.

Let us look at the matter from yet another angle. There is a special need to tie in the scientific plan for electrification with existing short-term plans and their actual implementation. That this must be done is naturally beyond doubt. But how is it to be done? To find out, the economists, the literati, and the statisticians should stop their twaddle about the plan in general, and get on with a detailed study of the implementation of our plans, our mistakes in this practical business, and ways of correcting them. Otherwise we shall have to grope our way long. Over and above such a study of our practical experience, there remains the very small matter of administrative technique. Of planning commissions we have more than enough. Take two men

from the department under Ivan Ivanovich and integrate them with one from the department under Pavel Pavlovich, or vice versa. Link them up with a subcommission of the general planning commission. All of which boils down to administrative technique. Various combinations should be tried out, and the best selected. That is elementary.

The whole point is that we have yet to learn the art of approach, and stop substituting intellectualist and bureaucratic projecteering for vibrant effort. We have, and have had, short-term food and fuel plans, and there are glaring mistakes in both. That is unquestionable. But the efficient economist, instead of penning empty theses, will get down to a study of the facts and figures, and analyse our own practical experience. He will pinpoint the mistakes and suggest a remedy. This kind of study will suggest to the efficient administrator the transfers, alterations of records, recasting of the machinery, etc., to be proposed or put through. You don't find us doing anything of the sort.

The main flaw is in the wrong approach to the relationships between the Communists and the specialists, the administrators and the scientists and writers. There is no doubt at all that some aspects of the integrated economic plan, as of any other undertaking, call for the administrative approach or for decisions by Communists alone. Let me add that new aspects of that kind can always come to the fore. That, however, is the purely abstract way of looking at it. Right now, our communist writers and administrators are taking quite the wrong approach, because they have failed to realise that in this case we should be learning all we can from the bourgeois specialists and scientists, and cutting out the administrative game. GOELRO's is the only integrated economic plan we can hope to have just now. It should be amplified, elaborated, corrected and applied in the light of well scrutinised practical experience. The opposite view boils down to the purely "pseudo-radical conceit, which in actual fact is nothing but ignorance", as our Party Programme puts it. Ignorance and conceit are equally betrayed by the view that we can have another general planning commission in the R.S.F.S.R. in addition to GOELRO, which, of course, is not to deny that some

advantage may be gained from partial and business-like changes in its membership. It is only on this basis—by continuing what has been started—that we can hope to make any serious improvements in the general economic plan; any other course will involve us in an administrative game, or high-handed action, to put it bluntly. The task of the Communists inside GOELRO is to issue fewer orders, rather, to refrain from issuing any at all, and to be very tactful in their dealings with the scientists and technicians (the R.C.P. Programme says: “Most of them inevitably have strong bourgeois habits and take bourgeois view of things”). The task is to learn from them and to help them to broaden their world view on the basis of achievements in their particular field, always bearing in mind that the engineer’s way to communism is *different* from that of the underground propagandist and the writer; he is guided along *by the evidence of his own science*, so that the agronomist, the forestry expert, etc., each have *their own path* to tread towards communism. The Communist who has failed to prove his ability to bring together and guide the work of specialists in a spirit of modesty, going to the heart of the matter and studying it in detail, is a potential menace. We have many such Communists among us, and I would gladly swap dozens of them for one conscientious qualified bourgeois specialist.

There are two ways in which Communists outside GOELRO can help to establish and implement the integrated economic plan. Those of them who are economists, statisticians or writers should start by making a study of our own practical experience, and suggest corrections and improvements only after such a detailed study of the facts. Research is the business of the scientist, and once again, because we are no longer dealing with general principles, but with practical experience, we find that we can obtain much more benefit from a “specialist in science and technology”, even if a bourgeois one, than from the conceited Communist who is prepared, at a moment’s notice, to write “theses”, issue “slogans” and produce meaningless abstractions. What we need is more factual knowledge and fewer debates on ostensible communist principles.

Upon the other hand, the Communist administrator’s

prime duty is to see that he is not carried away by the issuing of orders. He must learn to start by looking at the achievements of science, insisting on a verification of the facts, and locating and studying the mistakes (through reports, articles in the press, meetings, etc.), before proceeding with any corrections. We need more practical studies of our mistakes, in place of the Tit Titych type of tactics ("I might give my approval, if I feel like it").

Men's vices, it has long been known, are for the most part bound up with their virtues. This, in fact, applies to many leading Communists. For decades, we had been working for the great cause, preaching the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, teaching men to mistrust the bourgeois specialists, to expose them, deprive them of power and crush their resistance. That is a historic cause of world-wide significance. But it needs only a slight exaggeration to prove the old adage that there is only one step from the sublime to the ridiculous. Now that we have convinced Russia, now that we have wrested Russia from the exploiters and given her to the working people, now that we have crushed the exploiters, we must learn to run the country. This calls for modesty and respect for the efficient "specialists in science and technology", and a business-like and careful analysis of our numerous *practical* mistakes, and their gradual but steady correction. Let us have less of this intellectualist and bureaucratic complacency, and a deeper scrutiny of the practical experience being gained in the centre and in the localities, and of the available achievements of science.

February 21, 1921

Pravda No. 29,
February 22, 1921

Signed: *N. Lenin*

Collected Works, Vol. 32,
pp. 137-45

From The Tax in Kind

Look at the economic aspect of the evils of bureaucracy. We see nothing of them on May 5, 1918. Six months after the October Revolution, with the old bureaucratic apparatus smashed from top to bottom, we feel none of its evils.

A year later, the Eighth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (March 18-23, 1919) adopted a new Party Programme in which we spoke forthrightly of "*a partial revival of bureaucracy within the Soviet system*"—not fearing to admit the evil, but desiring to reveal, expose and pillory it and to stimulate thought, will, energy and action to combat it.

Two years later, in the spring of 1921, after the Eighth Congress of Soviets (December 1920), which discussed the evils of bureaucracy, and after the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (March 1921), which summed up the controversies closely connected with an analysis of these evils, we find *them* even more distinct and sinister. What are their economic roots? They are mostly of a dual character: on the one hand, a developed bourgeoisie needs a bureaucratic apparatus, primarily a military apparatus, and then a judiciary, etc., to use against the revolutionary movement of the workers (and partly of the peasants). That is something we have not got. Ours are class courts directed against the bourgeoisie. Ours is a class army directed against the bourgeoisie. The evils of bureaucracy are not in the army, but in the institutions serving it. In our country bureaucratic practices have different economic roots, namely, the atomised and scattered state of the small producer with his poverty, illiteracy, lack of culture, the

absence of roads and *exchange* between agriculture and industry, the absence of connection and interaction between them. This is largely the result of the civil war. We could not restore industry when we were blockaded, besieged on all sides, cut off from the whole world and later from the grain-bearing South, Siberia, and the coalfields. We could not afford to hesitate in introducing War Communism, or daring to go to the most desperate extremes: to save the workers' and peasants' rule we had to suffer an existence of semi-starvation and worse than semi-starvation, but to hold on at all costs, in spite of unprecedented ruin and the absence of economic intercourse. We did not allow ourselves to be frightened, as the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks did (who, in fact, followed the bourgeoisie largely because they were scared). But the factor that was crucial to victory in a blockaded country—a besieged fortress—revealed its negative side by the spring of 1921, just when the last of the whiteguard forces were finally driven from the territory of the R.S.F.S.R. In the besieged fortress, it was possible and imperative to “lock up” all exchange; with the masses displaying extraordinary heroism this could be borne for three years. After that, the ruin of the small producer increased, and the restoration of large-scale industry was further delayed, and postponed. Bureaucratic practices, as a legacy of the “siege” and the superstructure built over the isolated and downtrodden state of the small producer, fully revealed themselves.

We must learn to admit an evil fearlessly in order to combat it the more firmly, in order to start from scratch again and again; we shall have to do this many a time in every sphere of our activity, finish what was left undone and choose different approaches to the problem. In view of the obvious delay in the restoration of large-scale industry, the “locking up” of exchange between industry and agriculture has become intolerable. Consequently, we must concentrate on what we can do: restoring small industry, helping things from that end, propping up the side of the structure that has been half-demolished by the war and blockade. We must do everything possible to develop trade at all costs, without being afraid of capitalism, because the limits we have put to it (the expropriation of the landown-

ers and of the bourgeoisie in the economy, the rule of the workers and peasants in politics) are sufficiently narrow and "moderate". This is the fundamental idea and economic significance of the tax in kind.

All Party and Soviet workers must concentrate their efforts and attention on generating the utmost local initiative in economic development—in the gubernias, still more in the uyezds, still more in the volosts and villages—for the special purpose of immediately improving peasant farming, even if by "small" means, on a small scale, helping it by developing small local industry. The integrated state economic plan demands that this should become the focus of concern and "priority" effort. Some improvement here, closest to the broadest and deepest "foundation", will permit of the speediest transition to a more vigorous and successful restoration of large-scale industry.

Hitherto the food supply worker has known only one fundamental instruction: collect 100 per cent of the grain appropriations. Now he has another instruction: collect 100 per cent of the tax in the shortest possible time and then collect another 100 per cent in exchange for the goods of large-scale *and small* industry. Those who collect 75 per cent of the tax and 75 per cent (of the second hundred) in exchange for the goods of large-scale and small industry will be doing more useful work of national importance than those who collect 100 per cent of the tax and 55 per cent (of the second hundred) by means of exchange. The task of the food supply worker now becomes more complicated. On the one hand, it is a fiscal task: collect the tax as quickly and as efficiently as possible. On the other hand, it is a general economic task: try to direct the co-operatives, assist small industry, develop local initiative in such a way as to increase the exchange between agriculture and industry and put it on a sound basis. Our bureaucratic practices prove that we are still doing a very bad job of it. We must not be afraid to admit that in this respect *we still have a great deal to learn from the capitalist*. We shall compare the practical experience of the various gubernias, uyezds, volosts and villages: in one place private capitalists, big and small, have achieved so much; those are their approximate profits. That is the tribute, the fee, we have to pay for

the "schooling". We shall not mind paying for it if we learn a thing or two. That much has been achieved in a neighbouring locality through co-operation. Those are the profits of the co-operatives. And in a third place, that much has been achieved by purely state and communist methods (for the present, this third case will be a rare exception).

It should be the primary task of every regional economic centre and economic conference of the gubernia executive committees immediately to organise various experiments, or systems of "exchange" for the surplus stocks remaining after the tax in kind has been paid. In a few months' time practical results must be obtained for comparison and study. Local or imported salt; paraffin oil from the nearest town; the handicraft wood-working industry; handicrafts using local raw materials and producing certain, perhaps not very important, but necessary and useful, articles for the peasants; "green coal" (the utilisation of small local water power resources for electrification), and so on and so forth—all this must be brought into play in order to stimulate exchange between industry and agriculture at all costs. Those who achieve the best results in this sphere, even by means of private capitalism, even without the co-operatives, or without directly transforming this capitalism into state capitalism, will do more for the cause of socialist construction in Russia than those who "ponder over" the purity of communism, draw up regulations, rules and instructions for state capitalism and the co-operatives, but do nothing practical to stimulate trade.

Isn't it paradoxical that private capital should be helping socialism?

Not at all. It is, indeed, an irrefutable economic fact. Since this is a small-peasant country with transport in an extreme state of dislocation, a country emerging from war and blockade under the political guidance of the proletariat—which controls the transport system and large-scale industry—it inevitably follows, first, that at the present moment local exchange acquires first-class significance, and, second, that there is a possibility of assisting socialism by means of private capitalism (not to speak of state capitalism).

Let's not quibble about words. We still have too much of that sort of thing. We must have more variety in practical experience and make a wider study of it. In certain circumstances, the exemplary organisation of local work, even on the smallest scale, is of far greater national importance than many branches of central state work. These are precisely the circumstances now prevailing in peasant farming in general, and in regard to the exchange of the surplus products of agriculture for industrial goods in particular. Exemplary organisation in this respect, even in a single volost, is of far greater national importance than the "exemplary" improvement of the central apparatus of any People's Commissariat; over the past three and a half years our central apparatus has been built up to such an extent that it has managed to acquire a certain amount of harmful routine; we cannot improve it quickly to any extent, we do not know how to do it. Assistance in the work of radically improving it, securing an influx of fresh forces, combating bureaucratic practices effectively and overcoming this harmful routine must come from the localities and the lower ranks, with the model organisation of a "complex", even if on a small scale. I say "complex", meaning not just one farm, one branch of industry, or one factory, but a *totality* of economic relations, a *totality* of economic exchange, even if only in a small locality.

Those of us who are doomed to remain at work in the centre will continue the task of improving the apparatus and purging it of bureaucratic evils, even if only on a modest and immediately achievable scale. But the greatest assistance in this task is coming, and will come, from the localities. Generally speaking, as far as I can observe, things are better in the localities than at the centre; and this is understandable, for, naturally, the evils of bureaucracy are concentrated at the centre. In this respect, Moscow cannot but be the worst city, and in general the worst "locality", in the Republic. In the localities we have deviations from the average to the good and the bad sides, the latter being less frequent than the former. The deviations towards the bad side are the abuses committed by former government officials, landowners, bourgeois and other scum who play up to the Communists and who sometimes commit abomin-

able outrages and acts of tyranny against the peasantry. This calls for a terrorist purge, summary trial and the firing squad. Let the Martovs, the Chernovs, and non-Party philistines like them, beat their breasts and exclaim: "I thank Thee, Lord, that I am not as 'these', and have never accepted terrorism." These simpletons "do not accept terrorism" because they choose to be servile accomplices of the whiteguards in fooling the workers and peasants. The Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks "do not accept terrorism" because under the flag of "socialism" they are fulfilling their function of *placing the masses at the mercy of the whiteguard terrorism*. This was proved by the Kerensky regime and the Kornilov putsch in Russia, by the Kolchak regime in Siberia, and by Menshevism in Georgia. It was proved by the heroes of the Second International and of the "Two-and-a-Half"* International in Finland, Hungary, Austria, Germany, Italy, Britain, etc. Let the flunkey accomplices of whiteguard terrorism wallow in their repudiation of all terrorism. We shall speak the bitter and indubitable truth: in countries beset by an unprecedented crisis, the collapse of old ties, and the intensification of the class struggle after the imperialist war of 1914-18—and that means all the countries of the world—terrorism cannot be dispensed with, notwithstanding the hypocrites and phrase-mongers. Either the whiteguard, bourgeois terrorism of the American, British (Ireland), Italian (the fascists), German, Hungarian and other types, or Red, proletarian terrorism. There is no middle course, no "third" course, nor can there be any.

The deviations towards the good side are the success achieved in combating the evils of bureaucracy, the great

* The Two-and-a-Half International or Viennese International (officially called An International Association of Centrist Parties)—an organisation of Centrist socialist parties and groups which left the Second International under the pressure of the revolutionary masses—was set up at the conference in Vienna in February 1921, while criticising the Second International in words the Two-and-a-Half International actually pursued an opportunist policy on the major questions of the proletarian movement.

In May 1923 the Second and Two-and-a-Half Internationals united in the so-called Socialist Workers' International.—*Ed.*

attention shown for the needs of the workers and peasants, and the great care in developing the economy, raising the productivity of labour and stimulating local exchange between agriculture and industry. Although the good examples are more numerous than the bad ones, they are, nevertheless, rare. Still, they are there. Young, fresh communist forces, steeled by civil war and privation, are coming forward in all localities. We are still doing far too little to promote these forces regularly from lower to higher posts. This can and must be done more persistently, and on a wider scale than at present. Some workers can and should be transferred from work at the centre to local work. As leading men of uyezds, and of *volosts*, where they can organise economic work *as a whole* on *exemplary* lines, they will do far more good, and perform work of far greater *national* importance, than by performing some function at the centre. The exemplary organisation of the work will help to train new workers and provide examples that other districts could follow with relative ease. We at the centre shall be able to do a great deal to encourage the other districts all over the country to "follow" the good examples, and even make it mandatory for them to do so.

By its very nature, the work of developing "exchange" between agriculture and industry, the exchange of after-tax surpluses for the output of small, mainly handicraft, industry, calls for independent, competent and intelligent *local initiative*. That is why it is now extremely important from the national standpoint to organise the work in the uyezds and volosts on exemplary lines. In military affairs, during the last Polish war, for example, we were not afraid of departing from the bureaucratic hierarchy, "downgrading", or transferring members of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic to lower posts (while allowing them to retain their higher rank at the centre). Why not now transfer several members of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, or members of collegiums, or other high-ranking comrades, to uyezd or even volost work? Surely, we have not become so "bureaucratized" as to "be ashamed" of that. And we shall find scores of workers in the central bodies who will be glad to accept. The economic

development of the whole Republic will gain enormously; and the exemplary volosts, or uyezds, will play not only a great, but a positively crucial and historic role.

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Collected Works,
Vol. 32, pp. 351-57

***From* Draft of a Letter
of the C.C., R.C.P.(B.) on the Attitude
to Non-Party Workers***

Every Gubernia Party Committee is obliged to report to the Central Committee not only on the success of every non-Party conference, but prior to every non-Party conference, setting forth its conditions and preparedness.

At the same time it is absolutely essential to step up the work of preserving and developing the Communists' ties with the non-Party masses. For this purpose it is necessary:

not only to regularly hold general meetings for the rank-and-file workers and peasants, but arrange business reports to the rank-and-file workers and peasants by officials holding key posts. Such reports must be delivered at least twice a month in order that the non-Party rank and file be given an opportunity to criticise the Soviet institutions and their work. Reports are to be made not only by Communists, but by all officials in top posts, first and foremost those of the food supply and economic council agencies.

Every gubernia committee is obliged to forward exact information monthly to the Central Committee about the number and progress of all these reports, as well as the demands made by the non-Party people at these meetings.

The C.C. will draw up more detailed instructions on the organisation of such reports, on the measures for checking ties with the masses, on the progress of the work for im-

* On May 4, 1921 the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) endorsed the draft letter and on May 7 the letter was printed in *Pravda* as a circular to all Gubernia and Uyezdz Committees and to communist groups and trade unions.—*Ed.*

proving their condition, and on fighting the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who are acting under the guise of non-Party people, etc.

Written in April, not
later than 27, 1921

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in *Lenin Miscellany XX*

Collected Works,
Vol. 42,
p. 298-99

To M. F. Sokolov

Comrade *M. Sokolov*, Secretary of the Department
for Management of Property Evacuated from Poland

May 16

Dear Comrade,

I have received and read your draft report for May 18.*

You write that I have "slipped up". On the one hand, you say, by leasing forests, land, etc., we are introducing *state capitalism*, and on the other hand, he (Lenin) "talks" about "expropriating the landowners".

This seems to you a contradiction.

You are mistaken. Expropriation means *deprivation of property*. A lessee is *not* a property-owner. That means there is no contradiction.

The introduction of capitalism (*in moderation* and skillfully, as I say more than once in my pamphlet**) is possible without restoring the landowners' property. A lease is a contract *for a period*. Both ownership and control remain *with us*, the workers' state.

* This refers to the draft of the co-report by M. F. Sokolov "On the Tax in Kind and the Change in the Course of the Policy of the Soviet Power" for the general meeting of the R.C.P.(B.) group in the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, sent to Lenin by the author with a request for him to read it and answer some questions contained in it.—*Ed.*

** The reference is to *The Tax in Kind (Collected Works, Vol. 32, pp. 329-64)*.—*Ed.*

"What fool of a lessee will spend money on model organisation," you write, "if he is pursued by the thought of possible expropriation...."

Expropriation is a *fact*, not a *possibility*. That makes a big difference. *Before* actual expropriation not a single capitalist would have entered our service as a lessee. Whereas now "they", the capitalists, have fought three years, and wasted *hundreds of millions of rubles in gold* of their own (and those of the Anglo-French, the biggest *money-bags* in the world) on war with us. Now they are having a bad time abroad. What choice have they? Why should they not accept an agreement? For 10 years you get not a bad income, otherwise ... you die of hunger abroad. Many will hesitate. Even if only five out of 100 try the experiment, it won't be too bad.

You write:

"Independent mass activity is *possible* only when we *wipe off* the face of the earth that ulcer which is called the bureaucratic chief administrations and central boards."

Although I have not been out in the provinces, I know this bureaucracy and all the harm it does. Your mistake is to think that it can be destroyed all at once, like an ulcer, that it can be "wiped off the face of the earth".

This is a mistake. You can throw out the tsar, throw out the landowners, throw out the capitalists. We have done this. But you cannot "throw out" bureaucracy in a peasant country, you cannot "wipe it off the face of the earth". You can only *reduce* it by slow and stubborn effort.

To "throw off" the "bureaucratic ulcer", as you put it in another place, is wrong in its very formulation. It means you don't understand the question. To "throw off" an ulcer of this kind is *impossible*. It can only be *healed*. Surgery in *this* case is an absurdity, an *impossibility*; only a *slow cure* —all the rest is charlatanry or naiveté.

You are naïve, that's just what it is, excuse my frankness. But you yourself write about your youth.

It's naïve to wave aside a healing process by referring to the fact that you have 2-3 times tried to fight the bureaucrats and suffered defeat. First of all, I reply to this, your unsuccessful experiment, you have to try, not 2-3

times, but 20-30 times—repeat your attempts, start over again.

Secondly, where is the evidence that you fought correctly, skilfully? Bureaucrats are smart fellows, many scoundrels among them are extremely cunning. You won't catch them with your bare hands. Did you fight correctly? Did you *encircle* the "enemy" according to all the rules of the art of war? I don't know.

It's no use your quoting Engels.* Was it not some "intellectual" who suggested that quotation to you? A futile quotation, if not something worse. It smells of the doctrine. It resembles despair. But for us to despair is either ridiculous or disgraceful.

The struggle against bureaucracy in a peasant and absolutely exhausted country is a long job, and this struggle must be carried on persistently, without losing heart at the first reverse.

"*Throw off*" the "chief administrations"? Nonsense. What will you set up *instead*? You don't know. You must not *throw them off*, but cleanse them, heal them, heal and cleanse them ten times and a hundred times. And not lose heart.

If you give your lecture (I have absolutely no objection to this), read my letter to you as well, please.

I shake your hand, and beg you not to tolerate the "spirit of dejection" in yourself.

Lenin

Written May 16, 1921

First published in *Pravda* No. 1,
January 1, 1924

Collected Works, Vol. 35,
pp. 491-93

* In his draft for the co-report M. F. Sokolov quoted Engels: "The worst thing that can befall a leader of an extreme party is to be compelled to take over a government at a time when society is not yet ripe for the domination of the class he represents and for the measures which that domination implies" (Engels, *The Peasant War in Germany*, Moscow, 1965, p. 112).—*Ed.*

Instructions of the Council of Labour and Defence to Local Soviet Bodies

Draft*

The primary task of the Soviet Republic is to restore the productive forces and revive agriculture, industry and transport. The ruin and impoverishment caused everywhere by the imperialist war are so vast that an economic crisis is raging throughout the world, and even in the advanced countries, which before the war were way ahead of Russia in their development and which suffered much less from the war than she did, economic rehabilitation is proceeding with enormous difficulty and will take many long years. This situation prevails even in many of the "victor" countries, despite the fact that they are allied with the richest capitalist powers and are exacting a fat tribute from the defeated, dependent and colonial countries.

Backward Russia, which in addition to the imperialist war endured more than three years of civil war, imposed upon the workers and peasants by the landowners and capitalists with the help of the world bourgeoisie, naturally finds the difficulties of economic rehabilitation so much more formidable. The heavy crop failure in 1920, the lack of fodder and the loss of cattle have had a disastrous effect on peasant farming.

In conformity with the law passed by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, a tax in kind has been substituted for the surplus appropriation system. The farmer is free to exchange his surplus produce for various goods. The

* *Draft Instructions of the Council of Labour and Defence to Local Soviet Bodies* was endorsed by the Presidium of the All-Russia C.E.C. on June 30, 1921.—Ed.

tax rates have been announced by order of the Council of People's Commissars. The tax amounts to approximately one-half of the produce obtained under the surplus appropriation system. The Council of People's Commissars has issued a new law on the co-operative societies giving them wider powers in view of the free exchange of surplus farm produce.

These laws have done a great deal for the immediate improvement of the condition of peasant farming and stimulation of peasant interest in enlarging the area under crop and improving methods of farming and livestock breeding. They have also done much to help revive and develop small local industry which can do without the procurement and transportation of large state stocks of food, raw materials and fuel.

Particularly great importance now attaches to independent local initiative in improving peasant farming, developing industry and establishing exchange between agriculture and industry. Great opportunities are being created for the application of new forces and fresh energy to the work of restoring the country's economy.

The Council of Labour and Defence, upon whom, in pursuance of the decision of the Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets, devolves the duty of co-ordinating and directing the activity of the People's Commissariats for the various sectors of the economy, insistently urges all local bodies to do their utmost to develop extensive activities for the all-round improvement of peasant farming and the revival of industry, in strict conformity with the new laws and in the light of the fundamental propositions and instructions given below.

We now have two main criteria of success in our work of economic development on a nation-wide scale. First, success in the speedy, full and, from the state point of view, proper collection of the tax in kind; and second—and this is particularly important—success in the exchange of manufactured goods for agricultural produce between industry and agriculture.

This is most vital, urgent and imperative. It will put all our efforts to the test and lay the foundations for implementing our great electrification plan, which will result in

the restoration of our large-scale industry and transport to such proportions and on such a technical basis that we shall overcome starvation and poverty once and for all.

We must collect 100 per cent of the tax in kind, and, in addition, an equal quantity of food products through the free exchange of surplus farm produce for manufactured goods. Of course, this will not be achieved everywhere all at once, but it should be our short-term goal. We can achieve it in a very short time if we take the right view of the state of our economy and put our hearts into reviving it the right way. All local authorities and bodies in every gubernia, uyezd, regional centre and autonomous republic must join forces and co-ordinate their efforts to stimulate the exchange of surplus produce. Experience will show how far we can do this by increasing the output and delivery of goods made by the state in the big socialist factories. It will show how far we succeed in encouraging and developing small local industry, and what part will be played in this by the co-operative societies and the private traders, manufacturers and capitalists who are under state control. We must try out every method, giving the utmost scope to local initiative. The new task before us has never been tackled anywhere else before. We are trying to solve it in the conditions of post-war ruin, which prevent any precise estimation of our resources or of the effort we can expect of the workers and peasants, who have made such incredible sacrifices to defeat the landowners and capitalists. We must be bolder in widely applying a variety of methods and taking different approaches, giving rein to capital and private trade in varying degree, without being afraid to implant some capitalism, as long as we succeed in stimulating exchange at once and thereby revive agriculture and industry. We must ascertain the country's resources by practical experience, and determine the best way to improve the condition of the workers and peasants to enable us to proceed with the wider and more fundamental work of building up the economy and implementing the electrification plan.

The two main questions to which every Soviet official engaged in economic work must pay attention are: how much of their surplus farm produce, over and above the

tax, have the peasants exchanged for the manufactures of small industry and private trade, and how much for manufactured goods provided by the state? These are the main lines to follow over the short haul in order to achieve the greatest results. They will provide the success indicators and enable us to decide on the subsequent tasks. Every aspect of economic construction in general must be geared to these two immediate tasks.

To attain this co-ordination, encourage local initiative, enterprise and large-scale operations to the utmost, and make sure that central bodies are guided by local experience and local supervision, and vice versa, thereby eliminating red tape and bureaucratic practices, the Council of Labour and Defence has ordered (see text of the order) that:

first, regular economic conferences should be convened in all districts for the purpose of co-ordinating the work of the local departments of all the People's Commissariats for the various sectors of the economy;

second, proper records of the local economic conferences should be kept to facilitate the pooling of experience and the organising of emulation, and mainly, to utilise the work of the local organisations and its results as a means of checking up on the methods and organisation of the central bodies.

The local economic conferences should be organised on the lines of the C.L.D. (Council of Labour and Defence) and their relationship with the local executive committees should be similar to those between the C.L.D. and the Council of People's Commissars. The C.L.D. functions as a commission of the Council of People's Commissars. The appointment of members of the Council of People's Commissars to the C.L.D. ensures the fullest co-ordination of the work of both bodies, eliminates the possibility of any friction between them, expedites matters and simplifies procedures. Having no staff of its own, the C.L.D. utilises that of various government departments, striving to simplify their procedures and co-ordinate their operations.

Gubernia economic councils should stand in the same relationship to the gubernia executive committees, and that is the actual trend in practice. The C.L.D., in confirming the appointment of members and chairmen of re-

gional and territorial economic councils, strives to take account of the experience of local workers and consults with them on all its confirmations. The regional economic councils must certainly strive, and will continue to strive, to co-ordinate their work with that of the gubernia economic councils, securing their fullest co-operation, keeping them informed and stimulating their interest. This is hardly the time to try to reduce these relationships to a set of regulations, for experience is still very short and any such attempt might result in a purely bureaucratic exercise. It is far more appropriate to allow practice to determine initially the most suitable form of relationship (the C.L.D. worked side by side with the Council of People's Commissars for about a year, virtually without a constitution). Let these forms be at first not absolutely stable: variety is desirable, useful and even necessary to enable us to make a more precise study and a fuller comparison of the various systems of relationships.

Uyezd and volost economic councils should be organised on the same lines, naturally with a lot of leeway in modifying the main type, that is, the executive committees may assume all the functions and duties of the Economic Conferences, convert their own "executive" or "economic" meetings into Economic Conferences, appoint (say, in the volosts and sometimes in the uyezds) special committees or even individuals to exercise all or some of the functions of the Economic Conferences, and so on and so forth. The *village committees** should be the bottom rung and should operate as the lower units of the C.L.D. in the rural districts. The Council of People's Commissars has already passed a law, issued in May 1921, which gives the village committees wider powers and defines their relationship with the village Soviets. The gubernia executive committees must draw up provisional regulations suitable for the given locality which, however, must not restrict, but give *the greatest possible scope* to "local" initiative in general, and that of the lowest units *in particular*.

* *Village Peasant Committees* for the improvement of agriculture were set up at village Soviets in accordance with the All-Russia Central Executive Committee decree of January 10, 1921.—Ed.

In industrial uyezds and settlements, the district committees and factory committees, or the management boards of factories, should serve as the lower units of the C.L.D., depending on whether one or more branches of industry are being dealt with. In any case, *co-operation* with the uyezd executive committees, volost executive committees and village committees in directing *all* local economic life is absolutely essential in one form or another.

Furthermore, it is exceptionally important that local organisations should submit to the C.L.D. regular and precise information on their activity, for one of our main evils is the inadequate study of practical experience, inadequate exchange of experience and mutual control—putting orders from the centre to the test of local experience, and subjecting local work to control by the centre. One of the most important means of combating bureaucratic practices and red tape should be to check the way the laws and orders from the centre are carried out locally, and this requires the printing of *public* reports, with *non-Party people* and people not working in the departments necessarily *taking a greater hand*. *Nashe Khozyaistvo*, “the fortnightly journal of the Tver Gubernia Economic Council” (No. 1, April 15, 1921; No. 2, April 30, 1921), is evidence that the local need to study, elucidate and publicise the results of our economic experience is being realised and satisfied the correct way. It will not be possible, of course, to publish a journal in every gubernia, not within the next few months, at any rate; nor will it be possible everywhere to have a fortnightly printing of 3,000 copies, as is the case in Tver. But every gubernia, and every uyezd even, can—and should—compile a report on local economic activities once every two months (or initially at longer intervals, by way of exception) and issue it in a printing of, say, 100 to 300 copies. The paper and the printing facilities for such a small operation will surely be found everywhere, provided we realise its urgency and importance, and see the necessity to satisfy this need by taking the paper from many of the departments which print a mass of useless and hardly urgent material. The copy could be set up in small type and printed in two columns (as the comrades in Tver are doing); the feasibility and urgency of this will be quite clear

if we realise the simple truth that even a hundred copies, distributed one to every gubernia library and all the major state libraries, will provide a source of information for *the whole of Russia*, which may perhaps be scanty but *sure*, and will serve as a record of experience.

These reports must be published regularly, even if in small printings, in order to maintain a proper record of experience, and actually pool it, and enlist all the prominent and capable organisers among the non-Party people. This is something we can and must do immediately.

When drawing up the reports, the questions put must be answered as briefly and precisely as possible. The questions fall into four groups, the first being those especially prominent at the present time. They must be answered in every report with the maximum precision and in the greatest detail. That is particularly necessary because this group of questions is extremely vital and urgent for most uyezds at this very moment. Other questions will come to the fore for the smaller part of the uyezds and districts, that is, the purely industrial ones. The second group consists of questions which must also be answered in every report, but the answers can and should frequently be given in the form of brief summaries of reports already submitted to the government departments concerned. In all such cases, the reports to the C.L.D. must give: the dates on which the reports were sent off; the departments to which they were sent; and a brief summary of the reports in figures. The C.L.D. requires such reports for supervision over the various departments, as well as for the totals indicating the results in food supplies, fuel, industry, and so forth. The third group contains questions that need *not* be answered in every report. The answers to these questions must be given initially, that is, in the first report, but subsequent reports should add only the supplementary and new information as it accumulates. In many cases, there will be nothing to report at all on these questions every two months. The fourth group consists of miscellaneous, supplementary questions, which are not indicated in advance; they are not formulated by the centre but arise locally. This group must be compiled by the local bodies, and is not limited in any way. It goes without saying that questions pertaining to

state secrets (army, or such as are connected with military operations, security, etc.) must be answered in special reports not for publication, but intended exclusively for the C.L.D. as confidential reports.

Here is a list of these questions:

First Group of Questions

1. Commodity Exchange with the Peasantry

At present, this question ranks first in importance and urgency. First, the state cannot carry on any economic development unless the army and the urban workers have regular and adequate supplies of food; the exchange of commodities must become the principal means of collecting foodstuffs. Secondly, commodity exchange is a test of the relationship between industry and agriculture and the foundation of all our work to create a fairly well regulated monetary system. All economic councils and all economic bodies must now concentrate on commodity exchange (which also includes the exchange of manufactured goods, for the manufactured goods made by socialist factories and exchanged for the foodstuffs produced by the peasants are not commodities in the politico-economic sense of the word; at any rate, they are not only commodities, they are no longer commodities, they are ceasing to be commodities).

What preparations have been made for commodity exchange? What has been done specifically to prepare for it? By the Commissariat for Food? By the co-operative societies? The number of co-operative shops available for this purpose? Are there such shops in every volost? In how many villages? Stock of goods for commodity exchange? Prices on the "free" market? Surplus stocks of grain and other farm produce? Is there any, and how much, experience in commodity exchange? Totals and results? What is being done to prevent the pilferage of goods stocks earmarked for exchange, and of food stocks (a particularly important point demanding investigation of *every case* of pilferage)?

Salt and paraffin oil as articles for commodity exchange? Textiles? Other goods? What items are needed most? What

are the chief peasant shortages? What can be supplied by local, small, handicraft industry? Or by developing local industry?

Facts and figures showing how commodity exchange is organised and the results achieved are most important for the conduct of the experiment on a country-wide scale.

Has the proper relationship been established between the Commissariat for Food, the body controlling and supervising commodity exchange, and the co-operative societies, the bodies carrying on commodity exchange? How does this relationship operate in practice? In each locality?

What part does private trade play in commodity exchange? To what extent is private trade developing, or developed? Number of private traders; their turnover in the major items, particularly foodstuffs?

2. The State's Attitude to the Capitalists

Commodity exchange and freedom of trade inevitably imply the appearance of capitalists and capitalist relationships. There is no reason to fear this. The workers' state has enough resources to keep *within the proper bounds* and control these relationships, which are useful and necessary in conditions of small-scale production. The thing to do at present is to make a close study of their dimensions and devise suitable methods (not restrictive, or rather, not prohibitive) of state control and accountancy.

To what extent is private trade developing as a result of the substitution of the tax for the surplus appropriation system? Can it be estimated or not? Is it only profiteering or regular trade as well? Is it registered, and if so, what are the results?

Private enterprise: have there been any offers from capitalists and entrepreneurs to lease enterprises or establishments, or commercial premises? Exact number of such offers and an analysis of them? How are the results of trading operations assessed (if only approximately)? Ditto as regards the accounts of leaseholders and commission agents, if any?

Have there been any offers from commission agents? To buy produce for the state on a commission basis? Or to market and distribute it? Or to organise industrial enterprises?

Handicraft industry: changes since the introduction of the tax in kind? Extent of development? Source of information?

3. Encouragement of Enterprise in Commodity Exchange, and in Economic Development in General

This question is closely bound up with the preceding one. The encouragement of initiative may often prove to have no connection with capitalist relationships. All economic councils and economic bodies in general should ask themselves: how is this to be encouraged? In view of the novelty of the task, it is scarcely possible to issue any definite instructions at present. The thing is to pay great attention to the question, encourage all initiative in economic matters, make a careful study of practical experience and let the country know what is being done.

When the small farmer pays his tax to the state and enters into commodity exchange with it (with the socialist factory) the economic situation created imperatively demands that the state, through its local bodies, should give all possible encouragement to enterprise and initiative. The exchange of the observations and experience of local bodies will enable us to collect material, and later on, perhaps, to supplement this general and inadequate formulation of the question with a number of examples and detailed instructions.

4. Co-ordination of the Economic Work of Various Departments in the Local Administrative Areas: Volosts, Uyezds and Gubernias

One of the great evils hindering our economic development is the absence of co-ordination in the work of the various local departments. Great attention must be devoted to this question. It is the function of the economic councils to eliminate this flaw and to stimulate the enterprise of

local bodies. There must be a collection of practical examples to secure improvements and hold out the successful cases as a model for all. During the extreme food shortage, for instance, it was natural and inevitable that local bodies should be highly restricted in making decisions on the use of grain collected. As grain stocks increase, and under appropriate control, they must have a freer hand to do so. This can and should help to reduce red tape, cut down haulage of goods, encourage production and improve the condition of the workers and peasants. The food supply, small local industry, fuel, large-scale state industry, etc., are all bound up together, and their necessary division into "departments" for the purposes of state administration will cause harm unless constant efforts are made to co-ordinate them, remove friction, red tape, departmental narrow-mindedness and bureaucratic methods. The local bodies, which are closer to the mass of workers and peasants, have a better view of these defects, and it is therefore their business to devise methods of eliminating them by pooling their experience.

It is absolutely essential that definite, careful and detailed replies should be submitted to the following question: What has been done and how to co-ordinate the activity of the local state farms, timber committees, uyezd land departments, economic councils, and so forth?

How are officials penalised for satisfying local requirements to the detriment of the centre and in violation of orders from the centre? The names of those penalised? Is the number of such offences diminishing? Have the penalties been increased? If so, in what way?

5. Improvement of the Condition of the Workers and

6. Ditto of the Peasants

Every success achieved in economic development improves the condition of the workers and peasants. But, first, here again departmental narrow-mindedness and the lack of co-ordination are doing a great deal of harm. And, second, these questions must be brought up well to the fore to allow a careful observation of the results achieved

in this sphere. What exactly has been achieved? In what way? Answers to these questions are essential.

Weariness and in some cases downright exhaustion as a result of the long years of war, first the imperialist war and then the civil war, are so great that it is absolutely essential to make special efforts to improve the condition of the workers and peasants. Very far from everything is being done that could and should be done, even with our meagre resources. By no means all the departments and agencies are concentrating on it. It is therefore a matter of urgent necessity to collect and study local experience in this field. The reports should be compiled as precisely, fully and carefully as possible. If that is done, it will at once become evident which departments lag most and where. We shall then secure an improvement more quickly through a common effort.

7. Increasing the Number of Government Officials in Economic Development

It is extremely important for us to enlarge this group of workers, but very little systematic effort is being made to do so. Under capitalism, the individual proprietors strove to obtain—secretly from one another, and tripping each other up—the services of good salesmen, managers and directors. It took them decades to do this, and only a few of the best firms achieved good results. Today, the workers' and peasants' state is the "proprietor", and it must select the best men for economic development; it must select the best administrators and organisers on the special and general, local and national scale, doing this *publicly*, in a methodical and systematic manner and on a broad scale. Now and again we still see traces of the initial period of the Soviet power—the period of fierce civil war and intense sabotage, traces of Communists isolating themselves in a narrow circle of rulers, being fearful or incapable of enlisting the services of sufficient numbers of non-Party people.

We must set to work quickly and energetically to correct this. A number of capable and honest non-Party people are coming to the fore from the ranks of the workers, peas-

ants and intellectuals, and they should be promoted to more important positions in economic work, with the Communists continuing to exercise the necessary control and guidance. Conversely, we must have non-Party people controlling the Communists. For this purpose, groups of non-Party workers and peasants, whose honesty has been tested, should be invited to take part, on the one hand, in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, and on the other, in the informal verification and appraisal of work, quite apart from any official appointment.

In their reports to the C.L.D., the local bodies, particularly in the volosts, uyezds and districts, which have the best knowledge of the worker and peasant masses, should give *lists* of non-Party people who have proved their honesty at work, or who have simply become prominent at non-Party conferences, or who command universal respect in their factory, village, volost, etc., and should indicate their assignments in economic construction. By work is meant official position as well as *unofficial participation in control and verification*, regular attendance at informal conferences, etc.

There must be regular replies to these questions, for otherwise the socialist state will be unable to organise correctly the enlistment of the masses in the work of economic development. There are any number of honest and loyal workers. There are many of them among the non-Party people, but we do not know them. Only local reports can help us to find them and try them out in wider and gradually expanding fields of work, and cure the evil of isolation of Communist Party cells from the masses, an evil that is in evidence in many places.

8. Methods and Results of Combating Bureaucratic Practices and Red Tape

At first, most answers to this question will probably be very simple: methods—nil; results—nil. The decisions of the Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets have been read and forgotten.

But although the situation in this field is deplorable, we shall certainly not imitate those who give way to despair. We know that in Russia bureaucratic routine and red tapo

are mostly due to the low standard of culture and the consequences of the extreme ruin and impoverishment resulting from the war. This evil can be overcome only by strenuous and persistent effort over a long period of years. Therefore, we must not give way to despair, but make a new start every time, pick it up where it was abandoned, and try diverse ways of achieving our goal.

The reorganisation of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection; enlistment of the services of non-Party people with and without this inspection; legal proceedings; reduction and careful selection of staffs; verification and co-ordination of the work of the various departments, and so on and so forth—all these measures, everything indicated in the decisions of the Eighth Congress of Soviets, all the measures and methods mentioned in the press must be systematically, steadily and repeatedly tried out, compared and studied.

The gubernia economic councils, and all the other bodies co-ordinating and directing economic development in the localities, must insist on the implementation of measures prescribed by the law and indicated by practical experience. Local experience must be pooled. Answers to this question must be sent in to the C.L.D., regardless of how hard it may be at first to teach people to give exact, full and timely answers. The C.L.D. will see to it that this is done. It will undoubtedly produce good results, even if not as quickly as is expected by those who tend to reduce the "combating of red tape" to a mere phrase (or to a repetition of white-guard, Socialist-Revolutionary and also Menshevik, gossip) instead of working hard to take definite steps.

Second Group of Questions

9. Revival of Agriculture: a) Peasant Farming;
- b) State Farms; c) Communes; d) Artels;
- e) Co-operatives; f) Other Forms of Collective Farming

The briefest summaries, giving the figures of the reports sent to the respective departments, with the date on which each report was sent.

More detailed information—not in every report, but periodically, every four or six months, and so forth—on the more important aspects of local farming, results of surveys, the major measures adopted, and their verified results.

Exact information must be given at least twice a year on the number of collective farms (all types, *b-f*), classified according to the degree of organisation—good, fair and unsatisfactory. A typical farm in each of the three groups must be described in detail at least twice a year, with exact data on size, location, production performance, its assistance to peasant farming, etc.

10. Revival of Industry:

- a) Large-scale Industry Entirely Controlled by the Centre;
- b) Large-scale Industry Controlled Wholly or Partly by Local Bodies; c) Small, Handicraft, Domestic, etc., Industries

The answers should be on the same lines as those for the preceding section. As regards category *a* the local bodies, which have opportunities for making a close observation of the work of large national establishments, their influence on the neighbouring population, and the attitude of the population to them, must, in every report, give information on these establishments, the assistance given to them by local bodies, the results of this assistance, the assistance rendered to the local population by these establishments, their most urgent requirements, defects in their organisation, etc.

- #### 11. Fuel: a) Firewood; b) Coal; c) Oil; d) Shale; e) Other Types of Fuel (Waste Fuel, etc.)

The same as for the two preceding questions: the briefest summaries, giving the figures of the reports sent to the respective departments and dates on which they were sent.

Detailed information on major points, on what is outside the scope of the department, on local co-ordination of work, etc.

Special attention must be paid to economising fuel. What measures are being taken? What are the results?

12. Food Supplies

Summary of reports to the Commissariat for Food, following the same rules as above.

Market gardening and suburban farming (connected with industrial establishments). Results.

Local experience in organising school meals, the feeding of children, dining-rooms, public catering in general, etc.

Bi-monthly summaries in two figures are obligatory, that is, total number of persons receiving food, and total quantity of foodstuffs distributed.

In every large consuming centre (large or medium towns, military institutions in special settlements, etc.) we are feeding many extra people, former government officials who have crept into Soviet agencies, bourgeois lying low, profiteers, etc. There must be a determined drive to sift out these superfluous mouths who are breaking the fundamental law: He who does not work shall not eat. For this purpose, a responsible statistician must be appointed in all such places to study the returns of the census of August 28, 1920, and current statistical returns, and submit a signed report on the number of extra consumers every two months.

13. Building Industry

Answers must be on the same lines as the preceding. Local initiative and self-reliance are particularly important in this sphere and must be given particularly wide scope. Detailed information on the major measures and results is obligatory.

14. Model and Hopeless Enterprises and Establishments

A description of every enterprise, establishment and office connected with economic development and meriting the designation of model, or at least outstanding, or successful (in the event of there being none in the first two categories) is obligatory. Names of the members of the management boards of these establishments. Their methods. Results. Attitude of the workers and the population.

The same as regards hopeless and useless enterprises.

Of special importance is the question of closing down enterprises that are not absolutely essential (hopeless ones, such as might be closed down and their operations transferred to a smaller number of larger enterprises, etc.). Statistical summary of such superfluous establishments, their number and the order in which the Republic should gradually dispense with them.

15. Improvement in Economic Work

Enumerate major and model cases of improvements introduced by inventors and workers of exceptional ability. Give names; enumerate experiments which the local bodies regard as important, and so forth.

16. Bonuses in Kind

This is one of the most important factors in socialist development. The enlistment of labour is one of the most important and difficult problems of socialism.

Practical experience in this field must be systematically collected, recorded and studied.

Obligatory bi-monthly reports showing how many bonuses issued, what the bonuses consist of, what branch of industry (separately forestry and all other branches of work). A comparison of the results, output, with the number of bonuses in kind issued?

Have there been any cases of bonuses being converted into a wage reserve? Report each case separately.

Have bonuses been issued to conspicuously successful enterprises and individual workers? Give exact details of each case.

Investigate: can a local product be obtained (for export, or one particularly valuable for use in Russia) by increasing the bonuses in kind by a given quantity? This is highly important, because if this survey is properly conducted across the country we shall discover many valuable products which we could profitably export, even if we have to import a certain quantity of goods for the bonuses in kind.

17. The Trade Unions. Their Part in Production

The gubernia trade union councils and the uyezd trade union bodies must immediately appoint reporters and their deputies who must, on their own, and with the help of local statisticians, draw up bi-monthly reports on the subject.

As regards production propaganda, give exact facts and figures on lectures, meetings and demonstrations, with the names of organisers, etc.

But of even greater importance than production propaganda are the facts about the part the factory committees and the trade unions in general actually play in production. Forms of participation? Describe every typical case. Practical results. Compare establishments where the participation of the trade union in production is well, or fairly well, organised, with those where it is not.

The question of labour discipline is particularly important. Reports on the number of absentees are obligatory. Compare factories where labour discipline is bad with those where it is good.

Methods of improving labour discipline.

Comrades' disciplinary courts. How many, and when established? How many cases examined per month? Results?

18. Stealing

While some organisations are aware of this widespread evil and are fighting it, there are others which report that "in the department, office or factory in our charge, there

is no stealing", "everything is in order".

Precise bi-monthly reports are obligatory. How many offices, establishments, and so forth, send in information? How many do not?

Brief summary of this information.

The measures taken to combat stealing.

Are managers, management boards, or factory committees called to account (for laxity in combating stealing)?

Are people searched? Are other methods of control employed; if so, what are they?

Is the new law on commodity exchange, and on the permission given the workers to retain part of their output for this purpose, having the effect of reducing stealing? Give precise details.

Local warehouses, that is, warehouses located in the given district, and belonging to the state or to the local authorities. Brief summary of the reports on these warehouses, giving the date on which each was sent.

Reports by the local authorities on state warehouses. Methods of protection. Stealing. Number of persons employed, etc.

19. Profiteering

Extent of this according to local information. Predominating type of profiteer. Workers? Peasants? Railway employees? Other Soviet employees? And so forth.

State of the railways and waterways.

Measures to combat profiteering and results obtained.

What records are being kept of profiteers and profiteering?

20. Use of Army Units for Labour

Labour armies.* Composition, numerical strength, and performance. Methods of accounting? Attitude of the local population?

* *Labour armies* were regular Red Army units assigned to work for the rehabilitation of the national economy. They were set up at

Other forms of using army units—ditto universal military training units*—for labour purposes.

Numerical strength of local army units—ditto local universal military training administration, and number of youths undergoing training in the units.

Concrete cases of employment of youths undergoing universal military training and Red Army men for definite forms of control work, sanitary inspection, help to the local population, various economic operations. Give a detailed description of each case, or if there are a number of cases give two typical ones: the most and the least successful.

21. Labour Service and Labour Mobilisation

How are the local departments of the People's Commissariat for Labour organised? What are they doing?

Brief summaries of their reports sent to the People's Commissariat for Labour; give date on which each report was sent.

Describe, not less than once in four months, two typical cases of labour mobilisation; the most and the least successful.

Enumerate purposes for which labour service was enforced. Total figures of the number engaged and results of work done.

What part do the local departments of the Central Statistical Board play in organising labour service and labour mobilisation?

the beginning of 1920, a measure which was prompted by specific historical conditions—a threat of a new intervention against Soviet Russia and the necessity to use the breathing space at the beginning of 1920 for the rehabilitation of the ruined national economy. This was a temporary measure. The attack against Soviet Russia by Poland as well as the counter-revolutionary actions of general Wrangel in the south of Russia in 1920 compelled to switch over the Labour armies to war operations.—*Ed.*

* *Vsevobuch*—Universal Military Training of the population of the Soviet Republic organised under the April 22, 1918 decree ordering the conscription of all citizens from 18 to 40 who did not exploit the labour of others.—*Ed.*

Third Group of Questions

22. Regional and Local Economic Councils

When and how were the economic councils established in the localities at region, gubernia, uyezd and volost level? How is their work co-ordinated between themselves and with the village committees, the factory committees?

Economic councils of district Soviets in big towns. Their composition, work, how is the work organised, relations with the city Soviets?

Are there any district committees and district economic councils? Are they necessary? Is it necessary to set up the larger factory or industrial settlements, with their environs, as separate areas, and so forth?

23. Gosplan (the State General Planning Commission of the C.L.D.) and Its Relationships with Local Economic Bodies

Are there any regional bodies of Gosplan? Or special representatives of the latter? Or groups of experts acting in such a capacity?

Is the work of the local bodies co-ordinated with Gosplan's? If so, how? Is such co-ordination necessary?

24. Electrification

Have the gubernia and uyezd libraries copies of the Plan for the Electrification of the R.S.F.S.R., which was submitted as a report to the Eighth Congress of Soviets?* If so, how many copies? If not, it shows that the local delegates to the Eighth Congress of Soviets are dishonest and

* The reference is to the book *The Plan for the Electrification of the R.S.F.S.R. Report to the Eighth Congress of Soviets by the State Commission on the Electrification of Russia* (Moscow, 1920). This work compiled by leading scientists and specialists constituted the first state long-term plan for the creation of the material foundation of socialism.—Ed.

ought to be expelled from the Party and dismissed from their responsible posts, or else they are idlers who should be taught to do their duty by a term of imprisonment (at the Eighth Congress of Soviets, 1,500-2,000 copies were handed out for local libraries).

What measures have been taken to carry out the decision of the Eighth Congress of Soviets to conduct extensive propaganda of the electrification plan? How many articles on the subject have appeared in the local newspapers? How many lectures have been delivered? Number of persons attending these?

Have all local workers with theoretical or practical knowledge of electricity been mobilised for the purpose of delivering lectures on, or teaching, the subject? Number of such persons? How is their work being conducted? Are the local or nearest electric power stations utilised for lectures and purposes of instruction? Number of such stations?

How many educational establishments have included the electrification plan in their syllabus, in conformity with the decision of the Eighth Congress of Soviets?

Has anything practical been done towards carrying out this plan? Or any electrification work outside the plan? If so, what has been done?

Is there a local plan and schedule of work on electrification?

25. Commodity Exchange with Foreign Countries

It is absolutely obligatory for all border areas to answer this question, but not only for them. Uyezds and gubernias adjacent to border areas also have opportunities for engaging in such commodity exchange and observing how it is organised. Furthermore, as indicated above (Point 16: Bonuses in Kind), localities even very remote from the border have opportunities to engage in commodity exchange with foreign countries.

State of the ports? Protection of the border? Volume and forms of trade? Brief summaries of the reports on this sent

to the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade, giving the date on which each report was sent.

Supervision of the work of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade by the local economic councils? Their opinions on practical organisation and results?

26. Railway, Water and Local Transport

Brief summaries of the reports sent to the appropriate department, giving date on which each report was sent.

State of affairs appraised from the local standpoint.

Defects in the transport system. Measures taken to improve it and their results?

The state of local transport facilities, and measures taken to improve them.

27. Press Publicity for Economic Work

Local publications and *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*. How is economic work treated in the press? Participation of non-Party people? Verification and appraisal of practical experience?

Circulation of local publications and of *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*? Are they available at the libraries and accessible to the public?

Publication of pamphlets and books on economic development. Give list of the publications issued.

Demand for foreign literature: to what extent is it satisfied? Are the publications of the Bureau of Foreign Science and Technology delivered? If so, what opinion is expressed about them? Other foreign publications in Russian and other languages?

Fourth Group of Questions

This group should include questions chosen at the discretion of and suggested by the local bodies themselves,

and by individuals; moreover, these questions may have a direct or indirect, close or remote, connection with economic development.

These reports must be drawn up in co-operation with the members of the local staffs of the Central Statistical Board. Whether this is done by them, or any other persons, is up to the local economic council to decide, but the co-operation of the gubernia statistical bureau and uyezd statisticians is obligatory. Every report and every answer to a question, if written by different persons, must be signed by the author, giving his official position, if he holds one. Responsibility for the reports rests on the authors, and the local economic councils as a whole, and it shall be their duty to send in regular, punctual and truthful reports.

Wherever there is a shortage of local workers, courses of instruction in the compilation of reports must be organised under the supervision of statisticians and comrades, specially appointed for the purpose (from the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, and other bodies). The names of the persons responsible for these courses and the schedule of instruction must be published.

May 21, 1921

Lenin

Published as a pamphlet in
1921

Collected Works, Vol. 32,
pp. 375-98

**Speech on Local Economic Bodies Delivered
at the Third Sitting
of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee
May 30, 1921**

Comrades, I have very little to add to what Comrade Osinsky has said, for he has already explained the preliminary draft of the Instructions, copies of which you have,* and the main idea underlying it. As there are details in this matter which virtually determine the whole issue, it was decided not to limit its examination to the Council of Labour and Defence and the Council of People's Commissars, but to bring it before the Party conference, where the Instructions were approved in principle, and before the supreme legislative body—the Session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. Local workers must make a careful verification of the methods by which this law is to be implemented, and it may be necessary at first to lay down a number of supplementary rules.

Care must be taken that this measure is not, in any circumstances, converted into just another source of increased red tape. This would not be unlikely if we were to receive too many reports, or if the methods of compiling them did not guarantee that they could be checked. Comrades, we must give thought to the methods of compiling the reports, and you may find it appropriate to elect a special commission which, guided by the suggestions that will be made here and the instructions and directives you give it, will put the matter of the reports into final shape. We already have a fair amount of material on this question. Naturally, if reports are to be submitted, they must come not only from the various economic bodies, but also from the

* See present volume, pp. 285-308—*Ed.*

People's Commissariats, that is, including those which do not run branches of the economy but are nevertheless closely connected with economic work. One of the main objects of printing the reports is to bring them within reach of the non-Party masses, and of the population in general. We cannot use mass production methods and print these reports in large numbers, and so we must concentrate them in the libraries. That being the case, we must arrange for brief printed summaries of these reports, giving the gist of what is of most interest to the population. The technical facilities for this are available. Before coming here to speak I made inquiries of the representative of the Central Paper Board. He has sent me a precise report covering 339 uyezd centres, and showing that each of these has the printing facilities and the paper to print very brief reports. He has based his calculations on the assumption that the smallest of these uyezd centres would print 16 pages, in octavo, once a month, of course. But once a month is too often. Whether you decide on once in two months, or in four, or perhaps even a longer period, will evidently be determined by the reports we get from the localities. He has assumed that there would be 1,000 copies, and has accordingly estimated that the required quantity of paper is now available. A thousand copies would enable us to supply these reports at least to every uyezd library and so bring them within the reach of all who are interested in them, particularly the masses of non-Party people. Of course, this will initially have to be an experiment; no one can guarantee that it will be successful at once, and that there will be no defects.

To conclude my brief supplementary remarks I should like to emphasise one other thing. One of the most important tasks confronting us at present is that of massive enlistment of non-Party people for this work, ensuring that apart from Party members and in any case officials of the department concerned, the largest possible number of non-Party people should have an interest in the work and be enlisted in it. It appeared to us that this could not be achieved in any way except by publishing the reports, at any rate, the more essential part of them. Some establishments send in extremely full reports. All the information that we have had on this question up to now shows that

some local bodies are excellently organised. At all events, the work in the localities is constantly providing us with a great deal of very encouraging material. What we really lack is the ability to publicise the best examples—which are not many—and set them up as models which all should be obliged to emulate. Our press does not publicise these really exemplary local organisations which have practical experience. Printing these reports and bringing them within the reach of the broad masses of the population, by supplying copies to every library, if only on the uyezd level, should help—provided conferences of non-Party people are properly convened—to enlist far greater numbers in the economic drive. Any number of resolutions have been passed on this subject. In some places, something has been done, but taking the country as a whole, certainly far too little is being done. By this method, however, we shall improve the work of the establishments and make it possible for every local worker in every responsible economic post to provide the centre with signed reports containing precise and definite information on his practical experience, which could be used as a model. This seems to be what we lack most at the present time.

Let us leave it to practice to decide how these reports are subsequently to be summarised and studied, and utilised at conferences, congresses and by establishments. Considering the available experience of local workers, the main thing now is to approve this decree and put it to the test and be sure to obtain results by the forthcoming All-Russia Congress (some time next December) which would show just how this measure could be developed, improved, modified and enlarged on the basis of experience.

These are the brief supplementary remarks that I should like to confine myself to for the time being.

Brief newspaper reports
published May 31, 1921
in *Pravda* No. 117
and *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 117

First published in full
in *I-IV Sessions of the
Eighth All-Russia Central
Executive Committee. Verbatim
Report*, Moscow

Collected Works, Vol. 32,
pp. 438-40

To A. A. Korostelev

Comrade Korostelev,

The work of your commission* is exceptionally important, responsible and difficult.

You must strain all your energies to see that you have fewer reverses; and not lose heart because of the reverses, but insistently and patiently resume the work, again and again. In Moscow it is much more difficult to work than in the provinces—there is more bureaucracy, there are more corrupted and spoiled “top” people, etc.

But, in return, the work in Moscow will have tremendous demonstrative and *political* importance.

In my belief, your commission should try and adapt its work to the “Instructions of the Council of Labour and Defence”.

The main thing is not to scatter your forces. It is better to take *a few establishments*, not very big tasks, set yourselves, at first, modest aims—but pursue them stubbornly, not forgetting what you have begun, not dropping the work half-way, but going on with it to the end.

Gradually, but without fail, draw in *non-Party* people from amongst *workers* well known for their honesty, and respected in every district. Time and effort should not be spared in discovering them and getting to know them.

They should little by little, and carefully, be *introduced* to the work, and you must try to find an occupation *entirely suited* to each one, and appropriate to his capacities.

* This refers to the commission of aid for the economic management bodies set up under the Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection at Lenin's suggestion.—*Ed.*

The main thing is to get the workers and the population used to the commission, in the sense that they should *see help* coming from it; the main thing is to *win the confidence* of the masses, the non-Party people, the rank-and-file workers, the ordinary men in the street.

For you of all people, as chairman of the commission and as a man from the centre, a member of the collegium of the *unpopular* Workers' and Peasants' *Inspection*, this will not be easy. But this is the whole essence of the thing.

You must in every possible way, and in all possible respects, show that you are able to give, and actually give, *help*, real help, even if on a small scale. Only on this basis can you go on further.

Please write to me or, if you don't like writing, ring me up on the telephone—I can talk to you from my study, where it is quieter, so that we can exchange ideas on the work of your commission.

Show this letter to the other members of the commission, if you think it timely.

With communist greetings,

Lenin

July 26

P.S. The main task of the commission is to improve our economy, improve management, secure *real personal* responsibility. For this purpose a few more institutions should be selected: a canteen, baths, a laundry, a hostel, etc.

Written July 26, 1921

First published in 1924
in *Bolshevik* No. 1

Collected Works, Vol. 35,
pp. 511-12

Letter to D. I. Kursky and Instruction to a Secretary

Comrade Kursky, *People's Commissar of Justice*,
and his deputy,
and also all the members of the Collegium

Typed on headed
notepaper to

Copies to { 1) the addressee
2) me
3) Avanesov
4) Gorbunov and
Smolyaninov

September 3

I have sent you through the Office Manager of the Council of People's Commissars a statement from Professor Graftio with astonishing documents about red tape.

This red tape is just what is to be expected, especially in the Moscow and central institutions. But all the more attention should be given to fighting it.

My impression is that the People's Commissariat of Justice is purely formal, i.e., radically wrong, in its attitude to this question.

What is needed is:

- 1) to bring this matter before the courts;
- 2) to secure the disgrace of those guilty, both in the press and by strict punishment;
- 3) to stiffen up the judges through the Central Committee, so that they punish red tape more severely;

4) to arrange a conference of the Moscow People's Judges, members of tribunals, etc., to work out *effective* measures for fighting red tape;

5) without fail, this autumn and winter of 1921-22, to bring up for trial in Moscow 4-6 cases of Moscow red tape, selecting the more "vivid" cases, and making each trial a *political* affair;

6) to find some, if only 2-3, sensible "experts" on questions of red tape, among the more fierce and militant Communists (get hold of Sosnovsky), so as to train people to *hound out* red tape;

7) to publish a *good*, intelligent, non-bureaucratic *letter* (a circular of the People's Commissariat of Justice) on the struggle against red tape.

I impose this most important task on the People's Commissar and his deputy, on their *personal* responsibility, and request that I be given *regular* information as to its fulfilment.

Lenin

Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars

Written September 3, 1921

First published in *Pravda*
No. 30, February 6, 1927

Collected Works, Vol. 35,
pp. 521-22

Tasks of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and How They Are to Be Understood and Fulfilled

It is more the duty of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection to *be able to improve* things than to merely "detect" and "expose" (that is the function of the courts with which the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection is in close contact but with which it is not to be identified).

Timely and skilful rectification—this is the prime function of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.

To be able to correct it is necessary, first, to make a *complete* study of the methods by which the affairs of a given office, factory department, and so forth, are conducted: second, to *introduce* in good time the necessary practical changes and to see that they are actually put into effect.

There is much that is similar, basically similar, in the methods by which the affairs of different and diverse factories, institutions, departments, etc., are conducted. The function of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection is to train, on the basis of practical inspection work, a group of leading, experienced and well-informed persons, who would be capable of presenting problems (for the skilful and correct *presentation* of problems in itself predetermines the success of an investigation and makes it possible to rectify mistakes); to direct investigations or inspections; to see that improvements are introduced, and so forth.

The proper organisation of accounting and reporting, for example, is a fundamental function of all departments and offices of the most diverse types. The Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should study and make itself thoroughly familiar with this; it should be able to investigate at the

shortest notice (by sending a man to a given office for half an hour or an hour) whether a system of accounting exists and, if so, whether it is properly organised, what defects there are in the system, how these defects may be eliminated, etc.

The Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should study, analyse and summarise the methods of accounting, the penalties for inefficiency, the methods of "detecting" fraud, and the methods of executive control. It should have a *list* of offices, departments and gubernias where the system of accounting is tolerably well *organised*. There will be nothing tragic if these constitute one in a hundred, or even one in a thousand, as long as *systematic*, undeviating, persistent and unflagging efforts are made to enlarge the sphere where proper methods are employed. The Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should have a chronological table showing what *progress* is being made in these efforts, the successes and reverses.

Acquaintance with the preliminary draft of the report on the work of the fuel supply organisations and on the growing crisis (fuel) in the autumn of 1921, makes me feel that *basically* the work of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection is not organised on proper lines. This draft report contains *neither* evidence that the subject has been *studied*, *nor even a hint at suggestions for improvement*.

For example, a comparison is made between a three-week period in 1921 and a similar period in 1920. Bare totals are taken. It is wrong to make such a comparison, because allowances are not made for (1) the difference in the food supply (in the spring of 1921 and throughout the first half of that year *special* conditions prevailed as a consequence of the *transition* to the tax in kind), or for (2) the crop failure in 1921.

Danishesky states that the gubernias that were unaffected by the crop failure fulfilled their three-week programme in 1921 *over one hundred per cent*; the affected gubernias fell very short of fulfilment.

There is no evidence in the report that the subject has been *studied*.

The defects in accounting employed at the Central Timber Board are, evidently, correctly pointed out in the preliminary report of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. Danishevsky admits it. It has been proved. The methods of accounting are faulty.

But it is exactly on this *fundamental* question that the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection cannot, in its preliminary report, *confine* itself to the "thesis" that "accounting is faulty, that there is no accounting". What have the comrades of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection done to *improve* those methods? In the winter and spring of 1921 many prominent officials of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection *personally* took part in a *vast number* of conferences and commissions on the fuel crisis. In the spring of 1921 (I think it was in *March* 1921) a *new* chief was appointed to the Central Timber Board. Consequently, *new methods of accounting* should have been introduced in it in *March* 1921.

Danishevsky did that; but he did it *unsatisfactorily*. His methods of accounting are faulty. He is to blame, undoubtedly.

But to find the guilty party in the person of the chief is only a very minor part of the task.

Has the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection carried out its task and done its duty? *Does it properly understand its task?* That is the main question. The reply to this must be negative.

Knowing the critical fuel situation, knowing that firewood is the most important, knowing that under the former Director of the Central Timber Board (Lomov) accounting was bad, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection,

in *March* 1921, should have *officially advised* them in writing: organise your accounting in *such-and-such a way*;

in *April* 1921, it should have investigated how the new Director (Danishevsky) had *organised* accounting and should have *again* officially advised them in writing: introduce the following changes, otherwise things will not run smoothly;

in *May* 1921, it should have investigated again; and so forth, *month after month*, until accounting had been tolerably well organised.

In the spring of 1921, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should have appointed a definite inspector (*a single person is better than a "department"*, although in practice it is probable that the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection has a whole "department" for auditing and inspecting matters concerning firewood and fuel in general) to keep his eye on accounting at the Central Timber Board, to *study* it and to report every month to a definite member of the Collegium, or else submit a monthly return (giving a list of gubernias in which accounting is tolerably well organised, in which there is no accounting, and so on. What measures have been taken? by the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party? by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee? What results?).

Danishevsky is to blame for the bad organisation of accounting.

The Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, i.e., the *particular* responsible auditor or inspector, etc., whose name I do not know, is guilty of failing to perform his duty *as from March 1921*.

The practical, business-like, non-bureaucratic question is: How can accounting at the Central Timber Board be *improved*?

Failing to find an answer to this (extremely important) question in the preliminary report of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection—whose *duty* it was to provide the answer—I am seeking for an answer myself; but I may easily go wrong, for I have not studied the subject. My proposals are the following, and I will gladly amend them if better ones are suggested:

(1) introduce a system of accounting (once a fortnight) not by post, as hitherto, but by wire;

(2) draw up for this purpose a sort of "code" consisting of seven to nine figures and letters so as to be able in a few lines to give total figures (of the amount of timber felled, in cubic sazhen; the amount carted; the amount of grain, fodder, etc., received and issued);

(3) give Danishevsky legal authority to arrest any person who fails to send in reports punctually

or (if that is impossible, if it does not go through for some reason) apply to the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee for a warrant to *arrest* any person who fails to send in reports; the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party to issue instructions accordingly; verify fulfilment;

(4) methods of personal and direct *inspection on the spot*: Is this being practised? How? What are the difficulties?

Danishevsky says that he has appointed *travelling* inspectors all over Russia, and that these have already visited *all* the gubernias; that they have delved down to the lowest units, are tightening things up, and in many gubernias have already succeeded in tightening things up.

Is that true? Is not Danishevsky being misled by his clerks?

Very probably he is.

But what about the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection? It should go into the matter and ascertain the facts. There is not a word about this in the preliminary report. When were the travelling inspectors appointed? How many? What is their standard of efficiency? What are the results of their activities? How can matters be improved if they are not satisfactory? These are the essentials; but it is just these essentials that the inspector of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection is silent about.

I repeat: the organisation of a system of accounting is the fundamental problem. It has not been studied by the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, which has not fulfilled—and evidently does *not understand*—its task, which is to investigate the methods of accounting and to strive for and secure an improvement.

W.P.I. must be able, through the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, through the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party, through every possible channel, to “bring the matter” before the highest bodies, Party and Soviet, and to secure an improvement in the system of accounting.

I have dealt at length with the most important (and simplest) question, viz., the system of accounting; but there

are other important and more complicated questions, as, for example, contract work (executive control, accounting, etc.), and so forth.

One particularly interesting question is *broached* in preliminary report, but only broached and not dealt with in a business-like fashion. Namely, the author of the preliminary report writes: "The responsible leaders are so overwhelmed with work that they are on the verge of exhaustion, while the technical staffs of the subordinate organisations" (organisations subordinated to the Central Fuel Board—the Central Coal Board, the Central Timber Board, etc.) "*are full of idle employees*".

I am sure that this is a valuable and absolutely correct observation, and that it applies not only to the Central Fuel Board, but to *all* or ninety-nine per cent of the offices and departments.

That evil is to be found everywhere.

In March, when the (new) organisation was being set up, or at the latest in April, when it had already been set up, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should have made the official proposal in writing:

improve matters in such-and-such a way.

That was not done.

How can the evil be eliminated?

I haven't the faintest idea. The Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should know, because it is its business to study the subject, compare different departments, make practical proposals, see how they work out in practice, etc.

When I say "Workers' and Peasants' Inspection" I mean primarily the author of this preliminary report; but I am perfectly well aware that it applies not only to this author.

Several absolutely conscientious, capable and experienced officials of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should be chosen, if only two or three (I am sure that that number can be found), and instructed to draw up a rational plan of work for inspectors, beginning at least with the system of accounting. It is better to start with a small job and finish it.

The author of the preliminary report touches upon a host of subjects, but not one of them has been studied; they have been hastily jumbled together and the whole

thing is pointless. This is simply playing at "parliamentary reports". It is of no use to us. What we need is *actual improvement*.

How inadequately the subjects have been studied can be seen, for example, from question 52 (39): make a special list of exemplary mines only. That is exactly the conclusion the commission of the Council of Labour and Defence (Smilga and Ramzin) arrived at after visiting the Donets Basin in September 1921. It is exactly the conclusion that the State Planning Commission arrived at.

Why do I know about the work of the State Planning Commission and of Smilga's commission, while the *special inspector* who sat down to draw up a report on the Central Fuel Board does not know about it?

Because the work is not properly organised.

To sum up, I make the following practical proposals:

- (1) make a special feature of at least the question of properly organising accounting and pursue it to the end;
- (2) appoint definite persons for this job and send me their names;
- (3) send me the name of the inspector in charge of Timber Board affairs.

Lenin

September 27, 1921

First published
February 6, 1927
in *Pravda* No. 30
and *Izvestia VTsIK* No. 30

Collected Works, Vol. 33,
pp. 42-48

***From Report on the New Economic Policy
and the Tasks of the Political Education
Departments Delivered at the Second
All-Russia Congress
of Political Education Departments*
October 17, 1921***

The Three Chief Enemies

In my opinion, three chief enemies now confront one, irrespective of one's departmental functions; these tasks confront the political educationalist, if he is a Communist—and most of the political educationalists are. The three chief enemies that confront him are the following: the first is communist conceit; the second—illiteracy, and the third—bribery.

The First Enemy—Communist Conceit

A member of the Communist Party, who has not yet been combed out, and who imagines he can solve all his problems by issuing communist decrees, is guilty of com-

* *NEP* (New Economic Policy)—the economic policy of the proletarian state begun in 1921. This policy was "new" in contrast to the economic policy which had been conducted in Soviet Russia in the period of foreign military intervention and the civil war, known as War Communism (1918-20). The latter was made necessary by war-time conditions, and its characteristic features were extreme centralisation of production and distribution of agricultural produce, prohibition of free trading and food requisitioning which compelled the peasants to turn in all surplus produce to the state.

NEP abolished the food requisitioning system, replaced it by a tax in kind, the peasants were able to dispose of their surplus produce as they chose, i.e., sell their surplus products in the market, and through the market obtain the industrial goods they required.

The New Economic Policy which allowed for a certain time and within limited bounds the existence of capitalist elements while preserving key economic positions in the hands of the proletarian state, was aimed at developing the productive forces of the Soviet land, advancing agriculture and laying the economic foundation for the transition to socialism.—*Ed.*

munist conceit. Because he is still a member of the ruling party and is employed in some government office, he imagines this entitles him to talk about the results of political education. Nothing of the sort! That is only communist conceit. The point is to learn to impart political knowledge; but that we have not yet learnt; we have not yet learnt how to approach the subject properly.

The Second Enemy—Illiteracy

As regards the second enemy, illiteracy, I can say that so long as there is such a thing as illiteracy in our country it is too much to talk about political education. This is not a political problem; it is a condition without which it is useless talking about politics. An illiterate person stands outside politics, he must first learn his ABC. Without that there can be no politics; without that there are rumours, gossip, fairy-tales and prejudices, but not politics.

The Third Enemy—Bribery

Lastly, if such a thing as bribery is possible it is no use talking about politics. Here we have not even an approach to politics; here it is impossible to pursue politics, because all measures are left hanging in the air and produce absolutely no results. A law applied in conditions which permit of widespread bribery can only make things worse. Under such conditions no politics whatever can be pursued; the fundamental condition for engaging in politics is lacking. To be able to outline our political tasks to the people, to be able to say to the masses what things we must strive for (and this is what we should be doing!), we must understand that a higher cultural level of the masses is what is required. This higher level we must achieve, otherwise it will be impossible really to solve our problems.

*Second All-Russia Congress
of Political Education
Departments.
Bulletin of the Congress No. 2,
October 19, 1921*

*Collected Works, Vol. 33,
pp. 77-78*

To the Heads of Central Soviet Establishments

Dear Comrades:

It is necessary that an end should be put once and for all to the scandalous red tape and delays in your establishment. Time and again, there is neither reply to nor execution of the important and urgent matters being directed to you by the C.P.C. office for the purpose of settling the numerous complaints and applications addressed to the C.P.C. and its Chairman.

My suggestion is that you pull yourself together at once. The machinery of Soviet administration must work accurately, smoothly and swiftly. Any slackness in it does damage not only to the interests of individuals but to the whole business of administration, which becomes illusory and imaginary.

Assuming the real measure of labour productivity in each given establishment to be above all the extent to which all business passing through it is actually executed without delay, I demand that henceforth you submit the quickest and most exhaustive replies to all the cases and inquiries directed to you. To confine yourself to formal replies and dispatch to other establishments also means breeding red tape and wasting paper.

I warn you that if this manner of action continues the C.P.C. office is authorised to start proceedings against the guilty persons without regard for "rank".

V. Ulyanov (*Lenin*)
Chairman, C.P.C.

Written in December 1921

First published in 1942
in *Lenin Miscellany XXXIV*

Collected Works, Vol. 45,
p. 423

Instructions Adopted by the Ninth All-Russia Congress of Soviets on Questions of Economic Activities December 28, 1921

The Ninth All-Russia Congress of Soviets, having examined the reports of the People's Commissariats on their economic activities during the year under review, supplements and summarises the decisions of the Congress of Soviets on individual economic questions with the following guiding points, which must be strictly adhered to by all Soviet bodies at the centre and in the localities:

1. The Congress of Soviets orders that the main and immediate task of all the economic bodies must be to effect, speedily and at all costs, stable practical improvements in supplying the peasantry with large quantities of the goods that are needed to raise the level of agriculture and improve the living conditions of the working peasantry.

2. This being the main object, it must be kept in mind by all industrial administrative bodies, allowing of course no relaxation in the supply of the Red Army with everything it needs, a task which must remain primary in order to maintain the Soviet Republic's defence potential.

3. The improvement of the conditions of the workers should also depend on the achievement of this object, which means that it is the duty of all workers' organisations (primarily the trade unions) to see to it that industry is so organised as to be able speedily and fully to satisfy the requirements of the peasantry; wage increases and improvement in the conditions of industrial workers should be directly determined by the degree to which success is achieved in this field.

4. This object must also be pursued by the People's Commissariat of Finance; and the Ninth Congress of Soviets

instructs it to make every effort to secure the speediest reduction of the issue of paper money, eventually put a stop to it and establish a sound currency backed by gold. The substitution of taxes for the issue of paper money must be pursued undeviatingly without any red tape.

5. The same object must be given priority by all bodies and organisations engaged in home and foreign trade, i.e., the Central Council of Co-operative Societies, the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade, etc. The Congress of Soviets will judge—and instructs the leading bodies of the Soviet government to judge—the success of these organisations only by the rapid and practical results they achieve in developing exchange between agriculture and industry. In particular, the Congress instructs the various organisations to use private enterprises more widely for supplying raw materials, transporting these materials and for promoting trade in every way, while the function of state bodies is to control and direct this exchange, and sternly punish all deadening red tape and bureaucracy.

6. The Ninth Congress of Soviets calls upon all organisations and departments engaged in economic activities to devote infinitely more attention and energy than hitherto to the task of enlisting the services of all capable non-Party workers and peasants in this field of state activity.

The Congress declares that in this respect we are a long way behind requirements, that not enough method and perseverance are being displayed in this matter, that it is absolutely and urgently necessary to recruit business and government officials from a wider circle than hitherto; and, in particular, that every success achieved in rebuilding industry and agriculture should be more regularly encouraged by awards of the Order of the Red Banner of Labour, as well as by cash bonuses.

The Congress of Soviets draws the attention of all economic bodies and all mass organisations of a non-governmental, class character to the fact that it is absolutely essential still more perseveringly to enlist the services of specialists in economic organisation, to employ scientists and technicians, and men who by their practical activities have acquired experience and knowledge of trade, of organising large enterprises, of supervising business transactions, etc.

The improvement of the material position of specialists and the training under their direction of a large number of workers and peasants must receive unflinching attention from the central and local government bodies of the R.S.F.S.R.

7. The Ninth Congress of Soviets calls upon the People's Commissariat of Justice to display far more energy than hitherto in two matters:

first, that the People's Courts of the Republic should keep close watch over the activities of private traders and manufacturers, and, while prohibiting the slightest restriction of their activities, should sternly punish the slightest attempt on their part to evade rigid compliance with the laws of the Republic. The People's Courts should encourage the masses of workers and peasants to take an independent, speedy and practical part in ensuring enforcement of the laws;

second, that the People's Courts should take more vigorous action against bureaucracy, red tape and mismanagement. Trials of such cases should be held not only for the purpose of increasing responsibility for the evil which it is so difficult to combat under present circumstances, but also for the purpose of focussing the attention of the masses of workers and peasants on this extremely important matter, and of securing a practical object, viz., greater success in the economic field.

The Ninth Congress is of the opinion that the task of the People's Commissariat of Education in this new period is to train, in the shortest possible period, specialists in all fields from among the peasants and workers; and it orders that school and extra-mural education should be more closely connected with the current economic tasks of the Republic as a whole, as well as of the given region and locality. In particular, the Ninth Congress of Soviets declares that far from enough has been done to fulfil the decision of the Eighth Congress of Soviets on the popularisation of the plan for the electrification of Russia, and requires that every electric power station mobilise all competent forces and arrange regular talks, lectures and practical studies to acquaint the workers and peasants with the importance of electricity and with the plan for electrification. In those

uyezdts where no power stations yet exist, at least small power stations should be built as speedily as possible and used as local centres for propoganda, education and the encouragement of every initiative in this field.

Written December 25-27, 1921

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No. 295, December 30, 1921

Collected Works, Vol. 33,
pp. 178-81

***From* Draft Theses on the Role and Functions of the Trade Unions under the New Economic Policy**

6. The Trade Unions and the Management of Industry

Following its seizure of political power, the principal and fundamental interest of the proletariat lies in securing an increase in output, an enormous increase in the productive forces of society. This task, which is clearly formulated in the Programme of the Russian Communist Party, is particularly urgent in our country today owing to post-war ruin, famine and economic dislocation. Hence, the speediest and most enduring success in restoring large-scale industry is a condition without which no success can be achieved in the general cause of emancipating labour from the yoke of capital and securing the victory of socialism. To achieve this success in Russia, in the conditions at present obtaining in that country, it is absolutely essential that all authority in the factories be concentrated in the hands of the management. The factory management, usually built up on the principle of one-man management, must have authority independently to fix and pay out wages, and also distribute rations, working clothes, and all other supplies; it must enjoy the utmost freedom to manoeuvre, exercise strict control of the actual successes achieved in increasing production, in making the factory pay its way and show a profit, and carefully select the most talented and capable administrative personnel, etc.

Under these circumstances, any direct interference by the trade unions in the management of the factories must be regarded as positively harmful and impermissible.

It would be absolutely wrong, however, to interpret this indisputable axiom to mean that the trade unions must

play no part in the socialist organisation of industry and in the management of state industry. Their participation in this is necessary in the following strictly defined forms.

7. The Role and Functions of the Trade Unions in the Business and Administrative Organisations of the Proletarian State

The proletariat is the class foundation of the state making the transition from capitalism to socialism. In a country where the small peasantry is overwhelmingly predominant the proletariat can successfully fulfil this function if it very skilfully, cautiously and gradually establishes an alliance with the vast majority of the peasantry. The trade unions must collaborate closely and constantly with the government, all the political and economic activities of which are guided by the class-conscious vanguard of the working class—the Communist Party. Being a school of communism in general, the trade unions must, in particular, be a school for training the whole mass of workers, and eventually all working people, in the art of managing socialist industry (and gradually also agriculture).

Proceeding from these principles, the trade unions' part in the activities connected with the business and administrative organisations of the proletarian state should take the following main forms:

(1) The trade unions should help to staff all the business and administrative bodies connected with economics by nominating their candidates for them and casting a consultative vote; the trade unions take part in these bodies too, not directly, but through the members of the higher state bodies, the members of business boards, members of the factory managements (where collegiate management is practised), managers, their assistants, etc., nominated by them and endorsed by the Communist Party and the Soviet government.

(2) One of the most important functions of the trade unions is to promote and train factory managers from among the workers and the masses of the working peo-

ple generally. At the present time we have scores of such factory managers who are quite satisfactory, and hundreds who are more or less satisfactory, but very soon, however, we must have hundreds of the former and thousands of the latter. The trade unions must much more carefully and persistently than hitherto keep a systematic register of all workers and peasants capable of holding posts of this kind, and thoroughly, efficiently and from every aspect verify the progress they make in learning the art of management.

(3) No less important is the participation of the trade unions in all the planning bodies of the proletarian state. In addition to participating in all cultural and educational activities and in production propaganda, the trade unions must also, on an increasing scale, enlist the working class and the masses of the working people generally for all branches of the work of building up the state economy; they must make them familiar with all aspects of economic life and with all details of industrial operations—from the procurement of raw materials to the marketing of the product; give them a more and more concrete understanding of the single state plan of socialist economy and the worker's and peasant's practical interest in its implementation.

(4) The drawing up of wage rates and scales of supplies, etc., is one of the essential functions of the trade unions in the building of socialism and in their participation in the management of industry. In particular, disciplinary courts should steadily improve labour discipline and proper ways of promoting it and achieving increased productivity; but they must not interfere with the functions of the People's Courts in general or with the functions of factory managements.

This list of the major functions of the trade unions in the work of building up socialist economy, should, of course, be drawn up in greater detail by the competent trade union and government bodies. The most important thing is that the trade unions should consciously and resolutely avoid direct, inexpert, incompetent and irresponsible interference in administrative matters, which has caused no little harm,

and should start persistent, practical activities calculated to extend over a long period of years and designed to give the workers and all the working people generally *practical training* in the art of *managing* the economy of the whole country.

8. Contact with the Masses—the Fundamental Condition for All Trade Union Activity

Contact with the masses, i.e., with the overwhelming majority of the workers (and eventually of all the working people), is the most important and most fundamental condition for the success of all trade union activity. In all the trade union organisations and their machinery, from bottom up, there should be instituted, and tested in practice over a period of many years, a system of responsible comrades—who must not all be Communists—who should live right among the workers, study their lives in every detail, and be able unerringly, on any question, and at any time, to judge the mood, the real needs, aspirations, and thoughts of the masses. They must be able without a shadow of false idealisation to define the degree of their class-consciousness and the extent to which they are influenced by various prejudices and survivals of the past; and they must be able to win the boundless confidence of the masses by a comradely attitude and concern for their needs. One of the greatest and most serious dangers that confront the numerically small Communist Party, which, as the vanguard of the working class, is guiding a vast country in the process of transition to socialism (for the time being without the direct support of the more advanced countries), is isolation from the masses, the danger that the vanguard may run too far ahead and fail to “straighten out the line”, fail to maintain firm contact with the whole army of labour, i.e., with the overwhelming majority of workers and peasants. Just as the very best factory, with the very best motors and first-class machines, will be forced to remain idle if the transmission belts from the motors to the machines are damaged, so our work of socialist construction must meet with inevitable disaster if the trade unions—the transmis-

sion belts from the Communist Party to the masses—are badly fitted or function badly. It is not sufficient to explain, to reiterate and corroborate this truth; it must be backed up organisationally by the whole structure of the trade unions and by their everyday activities.

Written December 30, 1921-
January 4, 1922

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1922

Collected Works, Vol. 42,
pp. 378-82

To D. I. Kursky

January 17, 1922

Comrade *Kursky*
People's Commissariat of Justice

I have received two communications from the People's Commissariat of Justice—of November 14 and December 20—on the “fulfilment” of my instruction to organise a systematic campaign against red tape.

In the first communication you write:

“It involves a great deal of labour to single out the processes in which this organisational defect (viz., the ponderousness and bureaucratic complexity of our apparatus, inter-departmental relations, friction, etc.) does not have such a decisive effect, and red tape is the result of the activity of persons, and not an objective consequence of the insufficiently smooth working of our apparatus.”

With such an approach, of course, nothing will come of the struggle against red tape. It is the responsible persons who are to blame for these “organisational defects”; these, and no others, are the ones we must learn to prosecute and punish with exemplary severity. You will never catch a saboteur engaged in red tape.

The second communication from the People's Commissariat of Justice, signed by Krasikov, and the attached reports of the investigators of “exceptionally important cases”—Vyukov, Roizman and Kedrov, a member of the staff of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection—truly discover America. These reports, in a pretty illiterate form, set

forth standard platitudes about bureaucracy, complexity of apparatus, etc., etc.

In a word, it is obvious that the struggle against red tape has not moved ahead one iota.

In essence, I have not received an exhaustive reply to a single one of the five tasks which I laid down.*

I suggest that you once again examine the question and organise the struggle against red tape in business-like fashion, according to all the rules of war.

I ask you by the 20th of each month, without any preliminary reminders, to send me a report on the course of the campaign.

V. Ulyanov (*Lenin*)

Chairman, Council of People's Commissars

Written January 17, 1922

First published in 1928
in *Lenin Miscellany VIII*

Collected Works, Vol. 35,
pp. 533-34

* In his letter to D. I. Kursky of November 4, 1921, Lenin asked for details on the fulfilment of the following tasks: "1) to oblige the judges through the channel of the Central Committee be more strict in cases of red tape; 2) to organise a meeting of the Moscow people's judges, members of tribunals and so forth to elaborate *effective* measures to fight red tape; 3) without fail to take to court 4 or 6 Moscow cases of red tape choosing the most "blatant" cases and turning each proceeding into a political affair; 4) to choose two or three clever "experts" on these matters from among the most stern and efficient Communists (enlist Sosnovsky) to learn methods for fighting red tape; 5) to publish a good, intelligible and not bureaucratic letter (circular of the People's Commissariat of Justice) on fighting red tape" (*Collected Works*, Vol. 54, 5th Russ. ed., p. 1).—*Ed.*

On the Reorganisation of Work of the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence and the Narrow Council of People's Commissars

Letters to A. D. Tsyurupa

1

January 24, 1922

Comrade Tsyurupa,

In connection with our telephone conversation yesterday, and your promise to observe a strict regime, we need to have a detailed talk on the whole system of work, and to think it over thoroughly.

The most radical defect of the C.P.C. and the C.L.D. is the absence of any checking-up on fulfilment. *We are being sucked down* by the rotten bureaucratic swamp into writing papers, jawing about decrees, drawing up decrees—and in this sea of paper live work is being drowned.

Clever saboteurs are deliberately luring us into this paper swamp. Most of the People's Commissars and other grandees are, quite unconsciously, "sticking their heads into the noose".

The strict medical regime laid down for you must be used *at all costs* to break away from turmoil and commotion, commissions, talking and writing of papers—to break away, to *think over* the system of work and *radically reform it*.

The centre of gravity of your activities must be just this refashioning of our disgustingly bureaucratic way of work, the struggle against bureaucracy and red tape, the *checking-up on fulfilment*.

The checking-up on fulfilment, the checking-up on what happens in practice—this is your main and principal task. You should set up for this a little staff (four-six persons) of particularly tried and tested assistants (an office manager, his assistants, a secretary and such like).

For this purpose, in my opinion, it is essential:

(1) to relieve the C.P.C. and the C.L.D. of unnecessary burdens, transferring all petty questions to the Narrow

Council of People's Commissars and the procedural meetings of the *C.L.D.*

This has begun. But it will "come apart" in two weeks, given our damned Oblomov ways,* if it is not followed up, chased up, checked up, flogged along with three knouts.

The office manager must be taught (just as the Secretariat of the *C.P.C.* and the *C.L.D.* should be) to watch very closely to see that petty questions are not brought before the *C.P.C.* and the *C.L.D.*, and that all questions in general first go through a triple filter (an inquiry to the appropriate People's Commissariats; their urgent reply; the same from the Codification Department, etc., etc.).

You and Gorbunov must together work out written regulations for the bringing forward and consideration of questions, and check *not less than* once a month, **you personally**, whether the regulations are being observed and whether they are achieving their object, i.e., reduction of paper work, red tape, more forethought, more sense of responsibility on the part of the People's Commissars, *replacement of half-baked decrees by careful, prolonged, business-like checking-up on fulfilment* and by *checking of experience*, establishment of personal responsibility (in effect, we have complete irresponsibility at the top, in the People's Commissariats and in their departments, and the saboteurs make magnificent use of this: as a result we have an Oblomov situation which wrecks all business).

I know that this is *extraordinarily* difficult. But just because it is difficult, you must devote yourself *entirely* to this matter.

Hence

2) a minimum of sessions. The standard should be once a week for the Council of People's Commissars—once a week for the Council of Labour and Defence, two hours each.

3) The Supreme Economic Commission. Close down *all* its subcommissions as rapidly as possible, and replace them by demanding of the People's Commissars that each of them should have *responsible* people to write drafts, that

* *Oblomov*—the name of the principal character of Goncharov's novel *Oblomov*—synonym of inertia, mental laziness and stagnation.—*Ed.*

the People's Commissar should endorse them, and that he himself should get them co-ordinated in the *briefest* possible time with all "interested" People's Commissars and at the C.L.D. or the C.P.C.

The Supreme Economic Commission should exist *only* for co-ordination (*codification*) and the most rapid checking (*stamping*) by yourself plus Kamenev.

Only for this.

Not for talk.

Not for discussion.

4) You are not to become a member of a single commission, not one, except the Supreme Economic Commission.

5) To fight the outrageous abundance of commissions, replacing them by a formal demand for a *written opinion* in the shortest possible time.

6) You must in this way set yourself free from commotion and turmoil, which are *killing all of us*, and make it possible for you to think calmly about the work *as a whole*—
—and particularly to concentrate on checking-up on fulfilment, on fighting bureaucracy and red tape.

I beg you to think over this whole question, and to write to me.

With communist greetings,

Lenin

First published, but not in full,
in *Krasnaya Gazeta* No. 14,
January 16, 1927

First published in full
in 1928 in *Lenin Miscellany*
VIII

Collected Works, Vol. 35,
pp. 535-37

2

February 15, 1922

Comrade Tsyurupa,

I believe you are right.

We should get the Politbureau's consent and start "reducing".*

* This document was written in connection with Tsyurupa's letter in which he spoke of deficiencies in the work of the Narrow Council of People's Commissars and suggested reducing its membership to five: a chairman and four representatives of different Departments.—*Ed.*

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ly

- 1) composition: *five* men as indicated by you, plus 2 nondepartmental (Belov + ?) = 7.
- 2) appropriations under the state estimates, first, to the People's Commissariat for Finance and the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection; to the Narrow C.P.C. only by way of protest; the rest, as you have it.

Think over once again and set down in writing these *principles for reducing* the Narrow C.P.C., obtain the opinion of the Narrow C.P.C. Chairman, get these *principles* through the Politbureau, and then swiftly elaborate them into a new statute.

Perhaps the commissions should also be reduced? their role in actual verification enhanced? *all* the work subordinated directly to the deputies of the C.L.D. Chairman?

With communist greetings,

Lenin

First published in 1945
in *Lenin Miscellany XXXV*

Collected Works, Vol. 45,
pp. 471-72

3

February 20

Comrade Tsyurupa,

More on the subject of work on new lines.

I will try to formulate its programme in this way:

(1) the C.P.C. and the C.L.D. to be made ten times more compact, in the sense that the People's Commissars should not dare to bring trivial matters before them, but should decide them themselves and *answer* for them themselves;

(2) the staff of the Managing Department of the C.P.C. (at present three-quarters idle) should be made responsible for this, for putting this into effect;

(3) the same applies to the Narrow Council of People's Commissars, plus its *especial* reduction in size;

(4) some of the members of the Narrow Council and its staff, and also the staff of the Managing Department of the

C.P.C., to be taken by you under your personal command in order to *check up on effective fulfilment* (you instruct so-and-so: take a journey down there, look, read, check up, you will answer for any bungling through gullibility).

(5) You (and Rykov) must devote *first and foremost* one hour, or if your health permits, two, every day, to personal checking-up on the work: you summon to your office (or visit) not *grandees*, but members of collegium and lower, practical workers of the People's Commissariat of X, Y, Z—and check up on their work, get down to rock-bottom, school them, teach them, give them a proper trouncing. Study people, search for *able* workers. This is now the essence; all orders and decisions without this are dirty bits of paper.

Reply to me. We shall think it over, consult with members of the Central Committee, and as rapidly as possible *fix* such a (or some other) programme.

Yours,
Lenin

P.S.A. Bryukhanov is not suitable. Someone else must be found. For the time being you had better set up a "trio" there, something pretty strong.

Written February 20, 1922

First published in 1928
in *Lenin Miscellany VIII*

Collected Works, Vol. 35,
pp. 538-39

4

Comrade Tsyurupa,

I send you my addition. My advice is to get **brief** comments from *all* People's Commissars and *all* members of the Narrow Council of People's Commissars.

Yours,
Lenin

A special supplementary decision should lay down:

The principal task of the Narrow Council of People's Commissars must be strict watchfulness that the People's Commissariats (1) observe the laws, (2) do not evade res-

possibility by needlessly transferring a mass of unnecessary questions to the Narrow Council for decision, but should decide the questions themselves, on their own responsibility or by agreement between two or more People's Commissariats under ordinary procedure; (3) checking the legality, expediency and rapidity of individual instructions and acts of the People's Commissariats; the struggle against bureaucracy and red tape by such checking, and by persistent reduction of the number of officials.

Written February 20-21, 1922

First published in 1928
in *Lenin Miscellany VIII*

Collected Works, Vol. 35,
p. 540

5

Comrade Tsyurupa,

I think we are still radically at odds. The main thing, in my opinion, is to shift the centre of gravity from writing decrees and orders (our stupidities in this respect verge on idiocy) to *selection of people* and *checking fulfilment*. This is the essential point.

Is the Narrow Council unsuitable for this? Let's assume that. Then *you and Rykov* must devote 9/10ths of your time to it (it is *ridiculous* to expect the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and the Executive Secretary to do more than fulfil *simple* instructions). All of us are sunk in the rotten bureaucratic swamp of "departments". Great authority, common sense and strong will are necessary for the everyday struggle against this. The departments are shit; decrees are shit. To find men and check up on their work—that is the whole point. If you + Rykov set about this for 9/10ths of your time, and make the Executive Secretary (and sometimes also members of the Narrow Council of People's Commissars) your assistants, then perhaps we can get by.

Send me once again your draft about the Narrow Council of People's Commissars.

Lenin

Written February 21, 1922

First published in 1928
in *Lenin Miscellany VIII*

Collected Works, Vol. 36,
p. 566

The chief defect of these institutions is that they are overburdened with trivial matters. As a result, they are floundering in bureaucracy instead of fighting it.

The causes of this evil are: (1) the weakness of the Managing Department, (2) the inability of the People's Commissars to climb out of the mire of trivialities and bureaucratic details, (3) the desire of the People's Commissars (and still more that of their departmental bureaucrats who egg them on) to shift responsibility on to the C.P.C., (4) last and most important—the fact that responsible workers do not realise that the order of the day now is to fight the sea of paper and show distrust of it and of the eternal "reorganisations", that the first task of the moment is not decrees, not reorganisations but *selection of people; establishment of individual responsibility for what is being done; checking-up on work actually performed*. Otherwise we shall not climb out of the bureaucracy and red tape which are throttling us.

The Narrow Council of People's Commissars, the C.L.D. and the C.P.C. must go all out to get rid of trivialities, teaching the People's Commissariats to settle minor matters themselves and to answer for them more strictly.

The staff of the Managing Department of the C.P.C. must regard as its main task the practical realisation of the following: to reduce the number of matters coming before the Narrow C.P.C., the C.L.D. and the C.P.C., and to ensure that the People's Commissars (severally and jointly) should decide more themselves and answer for it; to shift the centre of gravity to checking up on effective fulfilment.

For the same purpose, the Deputy Chairmen of the C.P.C., Comrades Rykov and Tsyurupa, must go all out to free themselves of trivial matters and commissions, fight against attempts to drag them (the deputies) into matters which should be settled by the People's Commissars; devote two or three hours a day, as a minimum, to making the personal acquaintance of the responsible workers (not the grandees) of the most important (and later, all) People's Commissariats, in order to check up and select people; make use of the staff of the Managing Department of the

C.P.C. and some of the members of the Narrow Council, and also the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, to check up on the work actually done and what success it has had; in short, they should become practical instructors in administrative work, such as we lack most of all.

Distrust of decrees, of institutions, of "reorganisations" and of grandees, especially among Communists; struggle against the mire of bureaucracy and red tape by checking up on people and on the actual work done; merciless expulsion of unnecessary officials, reduction of staff, replacement of Communists who don't study the art of management seriously—such must be the line of the People's Commissars and the C.P.C., of its Chairman and his Deputy Chairmen.

February 27

Lenin

First published in 1928
in *Lenin Miscellany VIII*

Collected Works, Vol. 35,
pp. 541-42

On the Tasks of the People's Commissariat for Justice under the New Economic Policy

Letter to D. I. Kursky

Copies to: 1) Molotov for members of the Political Bureau
2) A. D. Tsyurupa
3) Rykov (when he returns)
4) Comrade Yenukidze for members of the
Presidium of the All-Russia Central Execu-
tive Committee

Special request: Please, do not duplicate; let read and sign;
prevent divulging; prevent blabbing out to
enemies.

February 20, 1922

Comrade Kursky,

The activity of the People's Commissariat for Justice is apparently not yet at all adapted to the New Economic Policy.

Previously, the militant organs of the Soviet power were chiefly the People's Commissariat for the Army and the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission. An *especially* militant role now falls to the People's Commissariat for Justice (P.C.J.); unfortunately, there is no evidence of any understanding of this on the part of the leadership and the senior members of the P.C.J.

Intensification of reprisals against the political enemies of the Soviet power and the agents of the bourgeoisie (*speci-
fically* the Mensheviks and S.R.s.); mounting of these reprisals by revolutionary tribunals and people's courts in the swiftest, most *revolutionary* and *expedient* manner; compulso-

ry staging of a number of *model* (as regards speed and force of repression, and *explanation* of their significance to the masses of people through the courts and the press) trials in Moscow, Petrograd, Kharkov and several other key centres; influence on the people's judges and members of revolutionary tribunals through the Party in the sense of improving the activity of the courts and intensifying the reprisals—all of this must be conducted systematically, persistently, with doggedness and mandatory reports (in the most concise, telegraphic style but business-like and exact, with obligatory statistics of how the P.C.J. chastises and learns to chastise the "communist" scoundrels who predominate among us and who know how to chatter and put on airs, but not how to work).

The fighting role of the P.C.J. is equally important in the sphere of *NEP*, and here the P.C.J.'s weakness and apathy is even more outrageous. There is no evidence of any understanding of the fact that we recognise and will continue to recognise only *state* capitalism, and it is we—we conscious workers, we Communists—who are the state. That is why we should brand as good-for-nothing Communists those who have failed to understand their task of restricting, curbing, checking and catching red-handed and inflicting exemplary chastisement on any kind of *capitalism that goes beyond the framework of state capitalism in our meaning of the concept and tasks of the state*.

It is the P.C.J., it is the people's courts that are here faced with an especially militant and especially responsible task. There is no sign that it has been grasped. The papers make noises about the abuse of *NEP*. These abuses are innumerable.

But where is the noise about *model trials* of the scoundrels abusing the New Economic Policy? There is no such noise, because there are no such trials. The P.C.J. has "forgotten" that that is its business, that it is its duty to pull up, shake up and rouse the people's courts and teach them to be *ruthless and swift* in chastising—with every means, including the firing squad—for abuse of the New Economic Policy. It is responsible for this. There is no evidence of any vibrant activity in this sphere on the part of the P.C.J., because there is no such activity.

The educational role of the courts is tremendous. How do we show concern for this? How do we take account of the real results? There is nothing of the sort, but that happens to be the ABC of juridical work.

It is just as elementary that triple penalties should be inflicted on Communists, as compared with non-Party people. There again the P.C.J. has shown little concern.

Under the tsar, the procurators were sacked or promoted on the strength of the percentage of cases they won. We managed to adopt the worst of tsarist Russia—red tape and sluggishness—and this is virtually stifling us, but we failed to adopt its *good* practices. Every member of the P.C.J. Collegium, every worker of this Commissariat should be assessed according to his record, on the strength of the following figures: how many Communists have you jailed with triple sentences, as compared with non-Party people, for the same offences? How many bureaucrats have you jailed for red tape and procrastination? How many merchants caught abusing *NEP* have you sentenced to be shot or to some other no-joke penalty (for ridiculous penalties are frequently imposed in Moscow, under the very nose of the P.C.J.)? You can't answer the question? This means that you are an idler who should be expelled from the Party for "communist chatter" and for "communist conceit".

The new civil legislation is being drafted. I find that the P.C.J. is "swimming with the tide". But its task is to swim *against* the tide. Its task is to create a new civil law, and not to adopt (rather, not to allow itself to be duped by the old and stupid bourgeois lawyers who adopt) the old, bourgeois concept of civil law. It should not give in to the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, which "ex officio" conducts the line of "adaptation to Europe", but *combat* this line and work out a new civil law, a *new* attitude to "private" contracts, etc. We do not recognise anything "private", and regard *everything* in the economic sphere as falling under *public* and not private law. We allow *only* state capitalism, and as has been said, it is we who are the state. Hence, the task is to extend the application of state intervention in "private legal" relations; to extend the right of the state to annul "private" contracts; to apply to "civil legal relations" not the *corpus juris romani* but *our* *revolutio-*

nary concept of law; to show systematically, persistently, with determination, through a series of model trials, *how* this should be done wisely and vigorously; to brand through the Party and expel those members of revolutionary tribunals and people's judges who fail to learn this or refuse to understand it.

Unless the P.C.J. rouses itself at once and vigorously starts working in a new, militant way, along new lines, it will be disgraced before Genoa* (and the whole world).

I propose to you that

1) you read my letter to all members of the P.C.J. Collegium;

2) ditto—at a meeting of 100-200 Communists exclusively, who practise in the sphere of civil, criminal and constitutional law;

3) prohibit, on pain of Party responsibility, to chatter about it (about this letter), for it is stupid to disclose our strategy to the enemy;

4) get a number of Communists, working in the courts and in the P.C.J., who are quite agreed with the spirit of this letter, to publish some articles in the press and give a number of public lectures on these topics;

5) allocate *responsibility* between all members of the Collegium (and if possible between other prominent Communists working in the P.C.J.):

a) for the sections in charge of the new *civil* legislation (*specifically* and *highly* important);

b) ditto criminal legislation;

* This refers to the international economic and financial conference which was to be held in Genoa (Italy). Soviet Russia was invited to the conference.

The Genoa Conference was held from April 10 to May 19, 1922. On behalf of the Soviet Government the Russian delegation declared at the conference that it deemed it necessary to establish economic co-operation between states representing different systems of ownership and also submitted proposals for general disarmament and annulment of all war debts.

Due to the uncompromising stand taken by France and Britain in relation to Soviet Russia the conference was interrupted and did not yield any results for the normalisation of relations between Soviet Russia and capitalist states.—*Ed.*

cific area of live revolutionary work. That is what the People's Commissar must achieve and prove that he is capable of achieving it.

V. Ulyanov (Lenin)
Chairman, Council of People's Commissars

P.S. There must not be the slightest mention of my letter in the press. Let anyone, who so wishes, write in his own name, without any mention of mine, and provide as many concrete data as possible.

First published in part in 1924
in the book *Fifth All-Russia
Congress of Soviet Judicial
Workers. Verbatim Report.*

The People's Commissariat of
Justice of the R.S.F.S.R.
Publishing House

Collected Works, Vol. 36,
pp. 560-65

To G. Y. Sokolnikov

February 22

Comrade Sokolnikov,

The question is not just of GUM alone. All the work of all our economic bodies suffers most of all from bureaucracy. Communists have become bureaucrats. If anything will destroy us, it is this. And for the State Bank it is most dangerous of all to be bureaucratic. We are still thinking in terms of decrees, of institutions. This is the mistake. The whole essence now is practical men and practice. To find people who are *men of business* (1 out of 100; 1 out of 1,000 Communists, and that only with God's help); to transform our decrees out of dirty paper (it's all the same whether they are bad or good decrees) into living practice—that is the *essence*.

Whether the State Bank itself should trade, or through subordinate firms, through its agents, or through its client debtors, etc.—I don't know. I don't take it upon myself to judge, because I am not sufficiently acquainted with the technique of currency circulation and banking business. But what I do know firmly is that the whole problem now is the rapid development of state trade (in all its varieties: co-operation, clients of the State Bank, mixed companies, factors, agents, etc., etc.).

February 28

On account of my illness I did not finish and send away this letter. You speak (in your interview) about replacing state trusts by mixed companies. There will be no practical

results. The clever capitalists will draw stupid (most honest and most virtuous) Communists into the mixed companies, and swindle us as they are swindling us now. The problem now is not one of institutions but of people, and of checking up on practical experience. *One by one* we must discover people who know how to trade, and step by step use their experience, their labour, to *clean out* the..., expelling the virtuous Communists from boards of management, shutting down sleepy (and strictly communist) enterprises, shutting them down, separating out the one per cent which are worth while. Either the People's Commissariat of Finance will prove *able* to go over to *such* work, or the entire People's Commissariat of Finance = 0.

Yours,

Lenin

Written February 22
and 28, 1922

First published in 1949
in *Bolshevik* No. 1

Collected Works, Vol. 35,
pp. 549-50

Remarks

On a Draft All-Russia C.E.C.

Decision on the People's Commissariat for Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and Letter to J. V. Stalin

Draft

Decision of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee

The All-Russia C.E.C. has resolved:

To entrust the People's Commissariat for Workers' and Peasants' Inspection with control and supervision over the activity of all public and private organisations, establishments and enterprises, without exception, from the standpoint of fulfilment of the obligations they have undertaken from state organs.

In pursuance of this, the P.C.W.P.I. shall have the power of:

1. Subsequent control over all monetary and material resources, allocated by the state to the said organisations, enterprises and establishments, by way of financing, subsidy and credits, extended to them, or made available to them on the strength of contracts concluded by them with the state, and verification of all acts flowing from these obligations....

To Comrade Stalin

That won't do.

1) Not to "entrust", but to *explain* the laws in force and their incompleteness in the given sense.

2) Not only from this standpoint. But also from the standpoint of legality. And from the standpoint of collecting material for new laws. And from many other standpoints.

3) Not only "allocated by the state".

This should be rewritten once again. Thought out three times more thoroughly. Many more

Very details given. Everything set out so that the whole **urgent!!** should not have the appearance of a new decree, but of an elucidation and summary of the *old* ones.

Pass through the *C.P.C.* and *confirm* by the *All-Russia C.E.C.* on someone's complaint.

This is urgent! **Very urgent!!**
Please let me have **both this** and the new draft after reworking.

Lenin

Written between February 28
and March 16, 1922

First published in 1959
in *Lenin Miscellany XXXVI*

Collected Works, Vol. 45,
pp. 493-94

The International and Domestic Situation of the Soviet Republic

*From Speech Delivered at a Meeting
of the Communist Group at the All-Russia Congress of
Metalworkers
March 6, 1922*

...Today the object of our activities has changed somewhat. That is exactly what I want to say a few words about, to supplement my already somewhat lengthy report.

In view of the fact that the Genoa situation is precarious and the end of the wavering is not in sight, and because we have made so many concessions in our domestic policy, we must now say: "*Enough! No more concessions!*" The capitalist gentlemen think that they can dally, and the longer they dally the more concessions they will get, but we must say, "*Enough! Tomorrow you will get nothing*". If they have not learned anything from the history of Soviet power and its victories, they can do as they please. For our part we have done all we could and have informed the whole world about it. I hope the Congress will confirm the fact that we shall not retreat any further. *The retreat has come to an end*, and, in consequence of that, the nature of our work is changing.

It must be stated that considerable nervousness, almost morbidness, is still observed in our ranks when this question is discussed. All sorts of plans are drawn up, and all sorts of decisions are adopted. In this connection I want to mention the following. Yesterday I happened to read in *Izvestia* a political poem by Mayakovsky.* I am not an admirer of his poetical talent, although I admit that I am not a competent judge. But I have not for a long time read anything on politics and administration with so much pleasure as I read this. In his poem he derides this meeting

* This refers to Mayakovsky's poem *Incessant Meeting Sitters*. — Ed.

habit, and taunts the Communists with incessantly sitting at meetings. I am not sure about the poetry; but as for the politics, I vouch for their absolute correctness. We are indeed in the position, and it must be said that it is a very absurd position, of people sitting endlessly at meetings, setting up commissions and drawing up plans without end. There was a character who typified Russian life—Oblov. He was always lolling on his bed and mentally drawing up schemes. That was a long time ago. Russia has experienced three revolutions, but the Oblomovs have survived, for there were Oblomovs not only among the landowners but also among the peasants; not only among the peasants, but among the intellectuals too; and not only among the intellectuals, but also among the workers and Communists. It is enough to watch us at our meetings, at our work on commissions, to be able to say that *old Oblov still lives; and it will be necessary to give him a good washing and cleaning, a good rubbing and scouring to make a man of him.* In this respect we must have no illusions about our position. We have not imitated any of those who write the word "revolution" with a capital R, as the Socialist-Revolutionaries do. But we can quote the words of Marx that many foolish things are done during a revolution, perhaps more than at any other time. We revolutionaries must learn to regard these foolish acts dispassionately and fearlessly.

In this revolution we have done so much that is ineradicable, that we have finally won; the whole world knows about it and we have no reason whatever to be embarrassed or nervous. On the basis of our reconnaissance we are now checking up on what we have done. This check is very important and should serve as the starting point for our further progress. And since we have to hold out in the struggle against the capitalists, we must pursue our new line with determination. *We must build up our whole organisation in such a way that our commercial enterprises are not headed by people who lack experience in that field.* Very often we find a Communist at the head of a government office who is admittedly a conscientious comrade, tried and tested in the struggle for communism, who suffered imprisonment for the cause, and for that reason has been put at the head

of a state trust. But he does not know how to trade. He has all the undoubted qualities of a Communist, but the merchant cheats him, and is quite right in doing so; it is a mistake to put a very worthy, excellent Communist, whose loyalty no one but a madman would doubt, in a place that should be occupied by a shrewd, conscientious salesman who could cope with his work ever so much better than the most devoted Communist. This is just where our Oblomovism makes itself felt.

We have given Communists, with all their splendid qualities, practical executive jobs for which they are totally unfitted. How many Communists are there in government offices? We have huge quantities of material, bulky works, that would cause the heart of the most methodical German scientist to rejoice; we have mountains of paper, and it would take Istpart* fifty times fifty years to go through it all; but if you tried to find anything practical in a state trust, you would fail; and you would never know who was responsible for what. The practical fulfilment of decrees—of which we have more than enough, and which we bake as fast as Mayakovsky describes—is never checked. Are the orders of the responsible Communist officials carried out? Can they get this done? No. They cannot; and that is why we are changing our domestic policy to the very core. Of what value are our meetings and commissions? Very often they are just make-believe. After we began to purge our Party and said to ourselves: "Out with the self-seekers who have crept into the Party, out with the thieves!" things improved.** We have expelled about a hundred thousand; that is splendid, but it is only a beginning. We shall discuss this question thoroughly at the Party Congress. And then, I think, the tens of thousands who now only organise commissions, and do not, and cannot, carry

* A commission to deal with the collection and study of materials on the history of the October Revolution and the history of the Russian Communist Party was set up under the People's Commissariat of Education by the C. P. C. decision on September 21, 1920.—*Ed.*

** The Party purge was carried out from August 15 to December 1921 on the basis of the Tenth Party Congress resolution. 159,355 members (who made up 24.1 per cent of the total membership) were expelled from or left the Party (data on the Bryansk and Astrakhan gubernias and the Communist Party of Turkestan were not included).—*Ed.*

on practical work, will meet with the same fate. And after we have completed the purge in this way, our Party will get down to real work and learn to understand it as it learnt to understand war work. This, of course, is not a matter of several months, or even a year. We must display rock-like firmness in this question. We are not afraid to say that the nature of our work has changed. Our worst internal enemy is the bureaucrat—the Communist who occupies a responsible (or not responsible) Soviet post and enjoys universal respect as a conscientious man. As the Russian saying goes, "Although he never touches a drop, he sings false". He is very conscientious, but he has not learnt to combat red tape, he is unable to combat it, he condones it. *We must rid ourselves of this enemy, and with the aid of all class-conscious workers and peasants we shall get at him. The whole mass of non-Party workers and peasants will follow the lead of the vanguard of the Communist Party in the fight against this enemy and this inefficiency and Oblo-movism. There must be no hesitation whatever in this matter.*

In conclusion, I will sum up briefly. The Genoa game, the game of leap-frog that is going on around it, will not compel us to waver in the least. They cannot catch us now. *We shall go to the merchants and agree to do business, continuing our policy of concessions; but the limits of these concessions are already defined.* What we have given the merchants in our agreements up to now has been a step backward in our legislation; but we shall not retreat any further.

In connection with this, our main tasks in our internal and, particularly, our economic policy are undergoing a change. We do not need new decrees, new institutions or new methods of struggle. *What we need is the testing of the fitness of our officials; we need executive control.* The next purge will affect the Communists who *imagine* that they are administrators. All those who run all these commissions and conferences and talk but do no practical work would do better to go into the field of propaganda, agitation and other useful work of that kind. All sorts of extraordinary and intricate things are invented on the plea that the New Economic Policy requires something new; but they do not do the work they are instructed to do. They make no effort to look after the kopeks entrusted to them; they make no

effort to make one kopek grow into two; but they draw up plans affecting billions and even trillions of Soviet rubles. It is this evil that we shall combat. *To test men and verify what has actually been done*—this, this again, this alone is now the main feature of all our activities, of our whole policy. This is not a matter of a few months or of a year, but of several years. We must say officially, on behalf of the Party, what the main feature of our activities is at the present time, and reorganise our ranks accordingly. If we do that we shall be as victorious in this new field as we have been up to now in all the fields of activity engaged in by Bolshevik, proletarian power, supported by the peasant masses. (*Applause.*)

Pravda No. 54,
March 8, 1922

Collected Works, Vol. 33,
pp. 222-26

Letter to the Politbureau of the C.C., R.C.P.(B.)*

Comrade Molotov for members of the Politbureau

This is not the first time that the Moscow Committee (and Comrade Zelensky too) is showing *indulgence* towards communist criminals, who deserve to be hanged.

This is done "by mistake". The danger of this "mistake", however, is enormous. *I move:*

1. That Comrade Divilkovsky's proposal *be adopted*.
2. That the Moscow Committee be severely reprimanded for being *indulgent* to Communists (the form of indulgence—a special commission).
3. That it be confirmed to all gubernia Party committees that for the slightest attempt to "influence" the courts in the sense of "mitigating" the responsibility of Communists, the C.C. will *expel* such persons *from the Party*.
4. That a circular be issued notifying the People's Commissariat of Justice (copies to the gubernia Party committees) to the effect that the courts are obliged to punish Communists *more severely* than non-Communists.

* Lenin's letter was written in connection with the following circumstances: the work of the Central Housing Department under the Moscow Soviet was subjected to an investigation which was prompted by numerous letters about abuses on the part of the workers of this department. The investigation disclosed abuses on the part of the leading workers of the Central Housing Commission. The Bureau of the Moscow Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) at the joint meeting with the Presidium of the Moscow Soviet on March 14 considered these conclusions to be groundless and decided to transfer the case for reconsideration to a new Party commission.—*Ed.*

People's judges and members of the Board of the Commissariat of Justice who fail to observe this are to be *dismissed from office*.

5. That the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee be asked to *inflict* a reprimand on the Presidium of the Moscow Soviet in the press.

Lenin

18/III

P.S. It is a crying shame, disgraceful—the ruling Party defends “its own” scoundrels!!

Written March 18, 1922

First published
in *Pravda* No. 324,
November 20, 1962

Collected Works, Vol. 42,
pp. 408-09

Letter to J. V. Stalin on the Functions of the Deputy Chairmen of the Council of People's Commissars and of the Council of Labour and Defence

March 21, 1922

I have had a talk with Tsyurupa and Rykov. I hope the work will proceed smoothly. Incidentally, one of the questions concerns your Commissariat.* Tsyurupa's and Rykov's main job is (must be now) to verify fulfilment and select personnel.

Assistants are needed. The Executive Secretary's staff at the Council of People's Commissars is much too small to handle the work, but it would be irrational to enlarge it. I expressed the idea that the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should be used for the purpose (of directly helping Tsyurupa and Rykov verify fulfilment and supervise the *lower echelons* of the People's Commissariats). I should like to know if you approve of this; if you do, a written agreement is necessary between you and the deputies, and I should like to participate in drawing up that agreement.

The purpose is to train (by having them tested by you and the two deputies on *practical* assignments) specially and unquestionably reliable people, from among the best workers of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, whom Tsyurupa and Rykov select by agreement with you, who would be able quickly and unconditionally a) to *secure* fulfilment; b) to verify fulfilment; c) to check the correctness of the *apparatus* in the various People's Commissariats, departments, the Moscow Soviet or the Petrograd Soviet, etc.; d) to issue instructions on *how* the work should be organised.

* The reference is to the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection headed by Stalin.—*Ed.*

These people are to carry on their work in such a way as to *personally* report on the course and results of it to the deputies and you. They must be selected *very* gradually so that only after repeated tests they are made, so to say, inspectors and instructors "with special authority"; their number must be *gradually* brought up to several dozen. In their turn, they will (*actually*) enlist non-Party workers and peasants into the work of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.

If you approve of the above, send a copy of this to Tsyurupa and Rykov with your postscript. If you have objections, write me a note (and telephone) immediately. I should like to speak of this in the report to the Congress.

Lenin

First published in *Pravda*
No. 21, January 21, 1930

Collected Works, Vol. 33,
pp. 247-48

***From* Political Report of the Central
Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) Delivered
at the Eleventh Congress of the R.C.P.(B.)
March 27, 1922**

And here we must squarely put the question: Wherein lies our strength and what do we lack? We have quite enough political power. I hardly think there is anyone here who will assert that on such-and-such a practical question, in such-and-such a business institution, the Communists, the Communist Party, lack sufficient power. There are people who think only of this, but these people are hopelessly looking backward and cannot understand that one must look ahead. The main economic power is in our hands. All the vital large enterprises, the railways, etc., are in our hands. The number of leased enterprises, although considerable in places, is on the whole insignificant; altogether it is infinitesimal compared with the rest. The economic power in the hands of the proletarian state of Russia is quite adequate to ensure the transition to communism. What then is lacking? Obviously, what is lacking is culture among the stratum of the Communists who perform administrative functions. If we take Moscow with its 4,700 Communists in responsible positions, and if we take that huge bureaucratic machine, that gigantic heap, we must ask: who is directing whom? I doubt very much whether it can truthfully be said that the Communists are directing that heap. To tell the truth, they are not directing, they are being directed. Something analogous happened here to what we were told in our history lessons when we were children: sometimes one nation conquers another, the nation that

conquers is the conqueror and the nation that is vanquished is the conquered nation. This is simple and intelligible to all. But what happens to the culture of these nations? Here things are not so simple. If the conquering nation is more cultured than the vanquished nation, the former imposes its culture upon the latter; but if the opposite is the case, the vanquished nation imposes its culture upon the conqueror. Has not something like this happened in the capital of the R.S.F.S.R.? Have the 4,700 Communists (nearly a whole army division, and all of them the very best) come under the influence of an alien culture? True, there may be the impression that the vanquished have a high level of culture. But that is not the case at all. Their culture is miserable, insignificant, but it is still at a higher level than ours. Miserable and low as it is, it is higher than that of our responsible communist administrators, for the latter lack administrative ability. Communists who are put at the head of departments—and sometimes artful saboteurs deliberately put them in these positions in order to use them as a shield—are often fooled. This is a very unpleasant admission to make, or, at any rate, not a very pleasant one; but I think we must admit it, for at present this is the salient problem. I think that this is the political lesson of the past year; and it is around this that the struggle will rage in 1922.

Will the responsible Communists of the R.S.F.S.R. and of the Russian Communist Party realise that they cannot administer; that they only imagine they are directing, but are, actually, being directed? If they realise this they will learn, of course; for this business can be learnt. But one must study hard to learn it, and our people are not doing this. They scatter orders and decrees right and left, but the result is quite different from what they want.

The competition and rivalry that we have placed on the order of the day by proclaiming NEP is a serious business. It appears to be going on in all government offices; but as a matter of fact it is one more form of the struggle between two irreconcilably hostile classes. It is another form of the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. It is a struggle that has not yet been brought to a head, and culturally it has not yet been resolved even in the central

government departments in Moscow. Very often the bourgeois officials know the business better than our best Communists, who are invested with authority and have every opportunity, but who cannot make the slightest use of their rights and authority.

I should like to quote a passage from a pamphlet by Alexander Todorsky. It was published in Vesjegonsk (there is an uyezd town of that name in Tver Gubernia) on the first anniversary of the Soviet revolution in Russia, on November 7, 1918, a long, long time ago. Evidently this Vesjegonsk comrade is a member of the Party—I read the pamphlet a long time ago and cannot say for certain. He describes how he set to work to equip two Soviet factories, and for this purpose enlisted the services of two bourgeois. He did this in the way these things were done at that time—threatened to imprison them and to confiscate all their property. They were enlisted for the task of restoring the factories. We know how the services of the bourgeoisie were enlisted in 1918 (*laughter*); so there is no need for me to go into details. The methods we are now using to enlist the bourgeoisie are different. But here is the conclusion he arrived at: "This is only half the job. It is not enough to defeat the bourgeoisie, to overpower them; they must be compelled to work for us."

Now these are remarkable words. They are remarkable for they show that even in the town of Vesjegonsk, even in 1918, there were people who had a correct understanding of the relationship between the victorious proletariat and the vanquished bourgeoisie.

When we rap the exploiters' knuckles, render them innocuous, overpower them, it is only half the job. In Moscow, however, ninety out of a hundred responsible officials imagine that all we have to do is to overpower, render innocuous and rap knuckles. What I have said about the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and whiteguards is very often interpreted solely as rendering innocuous, rapping knuckles (and, perhaps, not only the knuckles, but some other place) and overpowering. But that is only half the job. It was only half the job even in 1918, when this was written by the Vesjegonsk comrade; now it is even less than one-fourth. We must make these hands work

for us, and not have responsible Communists at the head of departments, enjoying rank and title, but actually swimming with the stream together with the bourgeoisie. That is the whole point.

The idea of building communist society exclusively with the hands of the Communists is childish, absolutely childish. We Communists are but a drop in the ocean, a drop in the ocean of the people. We shall be able to lead the people along the road we have chosen only if we correctly determine it not only from the standpoint of its direction in world history. From that point of view we have determined the road quite correctly, and this is corroborated by the situation in every country. We must also determine it correctly for our own native land, for our country. But the direction in world history is not the only factor. Other factors are whether there will be intervention or not, and whether we shall be able to supply the peasants with goods in exchange for their grain. The peasants will say: "You are splendid fellows; you defended our country. That is why we obeyed you. But if you cannot run the show, get out!" Yes, that is what the peasants will say.

We Communists shall be able to direct our economy if we succeed in utilising the hands of the bourgeoisie in building up this economy of ours and in the meantime learn from these bourgeoisie and guide them along the road we want them to travel. But when a Communist imagines that he knows everything, when he says: "I am a responsible Communist, I have beaten enemies far more formidable than any salesman. We have fought at the front and have beaten far more formidable enemies"—it is this prevailing mood that is doing us great harm.

Rendering the exploiters innocuous, rapping them over the knuckles, clipping their wings is the least important part of the job. That must be done; and our State Political Administration and our courts must do it more vigorously than they have up to now. They must remember that they are proletarian courts surrounded by enemies the world over. This is not difficult; and in the main we have learned to do it. Here a certain amount of pressure must be exercised; but that is easy.

To win the second part of the victory, i.e., to build communism with the hands of non-Communists, to acquire the practical ability to do what is economically necessary, we must establish a link with peasant farming; we must satisfy the peasant, so that he will say: "Hard, bitter and painful as starvation is, I see a government that is an unusual one, is no ordinary one, but is doing something practically useful, something tangible." We must see to it that the numerous elements with whom we are co-operating, and who far exceed us in number, work in such a way as to enable us to supervise them; we must learn to understand this work, and direct their hands so that they do something useful for communism. This is the key point of the present situation; for although individual Communists have understood and realised that it is necessary to enlist the non-Party people for this work, the rank-and-file of our Party have not. Many circulars have been written, much has been said about this, but has anything been accomplished during the past year? Nothing. Not five Party committees out of a hundred can show practical results. This shows how much we lag behind the requirements of the present time; how much we are still living in the traditions of 1918 and 1919. Those were great years; a great historical task was then accomplished. But if we only look back on those years and do not see the task that now confronts us, we shall be doomed, certainly and absolutely. And the whole point is that we refuse to admit it.

I should now like to give two practical examples to illustrate how we administer. I have said already that it would be more correct to take one of the state trusts as an example, but I must ask you to excuse me for not being able to apply this proper method, for to do so it would have been necessary to study the concrete material concerning at least one state trust. Unfortunately, I have been unable to do that, and so I will take two small examples. One example is the accusation of bureaucracy levelled at the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade by the Moscow Consumers' Co-operative Society. The other example I will take from the Donets Basin.

The first example is not quite relevant—I am unable to

find a better—but it will serve to illustrate my main point. As you know from the newspapers, I have been unable to deal with affairs directly during these past few months. I have not been attending the Council of People's Commissars, or the Central Committee. During the short and rare visits I made to Moscow I was struck by the desperate and terrible complaints levelled at the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade. I have never doubted for a moment that the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade functions badly and that it is tied up with red tape. But when the complaints became particularly bitter I tried to investigate the matter, to take a concrete example and for once get to the bottom of it; to ascertain the cause, to ascertain why the machine was not working properly.

The M.C.C.S. wanted to purchase a quantity of canned goods. A French citizen appeared and offered some. I do not know whether he did it in the interests of the international policy and with the knowledge of the leadership of the Entente countries, or with the approval of Poincaré and the other enemies of the Soviet government (I think our historians will investigate and make this clear after the Genoa Conference), but the fact is that the French bourgeoisie took not only a theoretical, but also a practical interest in this business, as a French bourgeois turned up in Moscow with an offer of canned goods. Moscow is starving; in the summer the situation will be worse; no meat has been delivered, and knowing the merits of our People's Commissariat of Railways, probably none will be delivered.

An offer is made to sell canned meat for Soviet currency (whether the meat is entirely bad or not will be established by a future investigation). What could be simpler? But if the matter is approached in the Soviet way, it turns out to be not so simple after all. I was unable to go into the matter personally, but I ordered an investigation and I have before me the report which shows how this celebrated case developed. It started with the decision adopted on February 11 by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party on the report of Comrade Kamenev concerning the desirability of purchasing food abroad. Of course, how could a Russian citizen

decide such a question without the consent of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party! Think of it! How could 4,700 responsible officials (and this is only according to the census*) decide a matter like purchasing food abroad without the consent of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee? This would be something supernatural, of course. Evidently, Comrade Kamenev understands our policy and the realities of our position perfectly well, and therefore, he did not place too much reliance on the numerous responsible officials. He started by taking the bull by the horns—if not the bull, at all events the Political Bureau—and without any difficulty (I did not hear that there was any discussion over the matter) obtained a resolution stating: “To call the attention of the People’s Commissariat of Foreign Trade to the desirability of importing food from abroad; the import duties...”, etc. The attention of the People’s Commissariat of Foreign Trade was drawn to this. Things started moving. This was on February 11. I remember that I had occasion to be in Moscow at the very end of February, or about that time, and what did I find? The complaints, the despairing complaints of the Moscow comrades. “What’s the matter?” I ask. “There is no way we can buy these provisions.” “Why?” “Because of the red tape of the People’s Commissariat of Foreign Trade.” I had not been taking part in affairs for a long time and I did not know that the Political Bureau had adopted a decision on the matter. I merely ordered the Executive Secretary of our Council to investigate, procure the relevant documents and show them to me. The matter was settled when Krasin arrived. Kamenev discussed the matter with him; the transaction was arranged, and the canned meat was purchased. All’s well that ends well.

I have not the least doubt that Kamenev and Krasin can come to an understanding and correctly determine the political line desired by the Political Bureau of the Central

* This refers to the census of Party functionaries carried out in June 1921 to ascertain the number and abilities of the leading Party functionaries in gubernia and uyezd centres, their territorial distribution and whether or not they were efficiently employed.—*Ed.*

Committee of the Russian Communist Party. If the political line on commercial matters were decided by Kamenev and Krasin, ours would be the best Soviet Republic in the world. But Kamenev, a member of the Political Bureau, and Krasin—the latter is busy with diplomatic affairs connected with Genoa, affairs which have entailed an enormous, an excessive amount of labour—cannot be dragged into every transaction, dragged into the business of buying canned goods from a French citizen. That is not the way to work. This is not new, not economic, and not a policy, but sheer mockery. Now I have the report of the investigation into this matter. In fact, I have two reports: one, the report of the investigation made by Gorbunov, the Executive Secretary of the Council of People's Commissars, and his assistant, Miroshnikov; and the other, the report of the investigation made by the State Political Administration. I do not know why the latter interested itself in the matter, and I am not quite sure whether it was proper for it to do so; but I will not go into that now, because I am afraid this might entail another investigation. The important thing is that material on the matter has been collected and I now have it before me.

On arriving in Moscow at the end of February I heard bitter complaints, "We cannot buy the canned goods", although in Libau there was a ship with a cargo of canned goods, and the owners were prepared to take Soviet currency for real canned goods! (*Laughter.*) If these canned goods are not entirely bad (and I now emphasise the "if", because I am not sure that I shall not call for another investigation, the results of which, however, we shall have to report at the next Congress), if, I say, these goods are not entirely bad and they have been purchased, I ask: why could not this matter have been settled without Kamenev and Krasin? From the report I have before me I gather that one responsible Communist sent another responsible Communist to the devil. I also gather from this report that one responsible Communist said to another responsible Communist: "From now on I shall not talk to you except in the presence of a lawyer." Reading this report I recalled the time when I was in exile in Siberia, twenty-five years ago, and had occasion to act in the capacity of a lawyer.

I was not a certified lawyer, because, being summarily exiled, I was not allowed to practise; but as there was no other lawyer in the region, people came and confided their troubles to me. But sometimes I had the greatest difficulty in understanding what the trouble was. A woman would come and, of course, start telling me a long story about her relatives, and it was incredibly difficult to get from her what she really wanted. I said to her: "Bring me a copy." She went on with her endless and pointless story. When I repeated, "Bring me a copy", she left, complaining: "He won't hear what I have to say unless I bring a copy." In our colony we had a hearty laugh over this copy. I was able, however, to make some progress. People came to me, brought copies of the necessary documents, and I was able to gather what their trouble was, what they complained of, what ailed them. This was twenty-five years ago, in Siberia, in a place many hundreds of versts from the nearest railway station.

But why was it necessary, three years after the revolution, in the capital of the Soviet Republic, to have two investigations, the intervention of Kamenev and Krasin and the instructions of the Political Bureau to purchase canned goods? What was lacking? Political power? No. The money was forthcoming, so they had economic as well as political power. All the necessary institutions were available. What was lacking, then? Culture. Ninety-nine out of every hundred officials of the M.C.C.S.—against whom I have no complaint to make whatever, and whom I regard as excellent Communists—and of the Commissariat of Foreign Trade lack culture. They were unable to approach the matter in a cultured manner.

When I first heard of the matter I sent the following written proposal to the Central Committee: "All the officials concerned of the Moscow government departments—except the members of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, who, as you know, enjoy immunity—should be put in the worst prison in Moscow for six hours, and those of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade for thirty-six hours." And then it turned out that no one could say who the culprits were (*laughter*), and from what I have told you it is evident that the culprits will never be discov-

ered. It is simply the usual inability of the Russian intellectuals to get things done—inefficiency and slovenliness. First they rush at a job, do a little bit, and then think about it, and when nothing comes of it, they run to complain to Kamenev and want the matter to be brought before the Political Bureau. Of course, all difficult state problems should be brought before the Political Bureau—I shall have to say something about that later on—but one should think first and then act. If you want to bring up a case, submit the appropriate documents. First send a telegram, and in Moscow we also have telephones; send a telephone message to the competent department and a copy to Tsyurupa saying: "I regard the transaction as urgent and will take proceedings against anyone guilty of red tape." One must think of this elementary culture, one must approach things in a thoughtful manner. If the business is not settled in the course of a few minutes, by telephone, collect the documents and say: "If you start any of your red tape I shall have you clapped in gaol." But not a moment's thought is given to the matter, there is no preparation, the usual hustle, several commissions, everybody is tired out, exhausted, run down, and things begin to move only when Kamenev is put in touch with Krasin. All this is typical of what goes on not only in the capital, Moscow, but also in the other capitals, in the capitals of all independent republics and regions. And the same thing, even a hundred times worse, constantly goes on in the provincial towns.

In our struggle we must remember that Communists must be able to reason. They may be perfectly familiar with the revolutionary struggle and with the state of the revolutionary movement all over the world; but if we are to extricate ourselves from desperate poverty and want we need culture, integrity and an ability to reason. Many lack these qualities. It would be unfair to say that the responsible Communists do not fulfil their functions conscientiously. The overwhelming majority of them, ninety-nine out of a hundred, are not only conscientious—they proved their devotion to the revolution under the most difficult conditions before the fall of tsarism and after the revolution; they were ready to lay down their lives. Therefore, it would

be radically wrong to attribute the trouble to lack of conscientiousness. We need a cultured approach to the simplest affairs of state. We must all understand that this is a matter of state, a business matter; and if obstacles arise we must be able to overcome them and take proceedings against those who are guilty of red tape. We have proletarian courts in Moscow; they must bring to account the persons who are to blame for the failure to effect the purchase of several tens of thousands of poods of canned food. I think the proletarian courts will be able to punish the guilty; but in order to punish, the culprits must be found. I assure you that in this case no culprits will be found. I want you all to look into this business: no one is guilty; all we see is a lot of fuss and bustle and nonsense. Nobody has the ability to approach the business properly; nobody understands that affairs of state must not be tackled in this way. And all the whiteguards and saboteurs take advantage of this. At one time we waged a fierce struggle against the saboteurs; that struggle confronts us even now. There are saboteurs today, of course, and they must be fought. But can we fight them when the position is as I have just described it? This is worse than any sabotage. The saboteur could wish for nothing better than that two Communists should argue over the question of when to appeal to the Political Bureau for instructions on principles in buying food; and of course he would soon slip in between them and egg them on. If any intelligent saboteur were to stand behind these Communists, or behind each of them in turn, and encourage them, that would be the end. The matter would be doomed for ever. Who is to blame? Nobody, because two responsible Communists, devoted revolutionaries, are arguing over last year's snow; are arguing over the question of when to appeal to the Political Bureau for instructions on principles in buying food.

That is how the matter stands and that is the difficulty that confronts us. Any salesman trained in a large capitalist enterprise knows how to settle a matter like that; but ninety-nine responsible Communists out of a hundred do not. And they refuse to understand that they do not know how and that they must learn the ABC of this business. Unless we realise this, unless we sit down in the preparatory

class again, we shall never be able to solve the economic problem that now lies at the basis of our entire policy.

Newspaper reports
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No. 70, March 28, 1922;
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March 28 and 29

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Nos. 1 and 2

Collected Works, Vol. 33,
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Decree on the Functions of the Deputy Chairmen of the Council of People's Commissars and of the Council of Labour and Defence

1. The General and Main Functions of the Deputy Chairmen

1) The main functions of the Deputy Chairmen, for which they are particularly responsible and to which all their other functions must be subordinated, are to exercise executive control over the fulfilment of decrees, laws and decisions; to reduce the staffs of Soviet government offices and supervise the reorganisation of their business on proper and rational lines, and to combat bureaucratic methods and red tape.

The ensuing gives these main functions in detail or supplements them in minor particulars.

It is the duty of the Deputy Chairmen:

2. To ensure that no question concerning Soviet affairs is discussed by other bodies, government or Party (Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, Political Bureau and Organising Bureau of the Central Committee of the R.C.P., and so forth, without exception), without the knowledge and participation of the Deputy Chairmen.

3. To relieve the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence as far as possible of minor matters, part (and most) of which should be settled by the departmental administrations and part (in urgent and exceptionally important cases) by the Deputy Chairmen themselves.

4. To ensure by strict supervision that the executive sessions of the *Council of Labour and Defence* and particularly of the *Narrow Council of People's Commissars* shall not assume more functions than are absolutely necessary, shall not complicate their duties and functions, nor permit their functions to become bureaucratically inflated and hypertrophied;

they must demand more self-reliance and more responsibility from every People's Commissar and every government department.

5. To compel the People's Commissars and independent government departments to administer their affairs on their own responsibility in accordance with their prescribed rights and duties.

6. To see to it that the degree of responsibility, primarily of members of collegiums and of the most important Soviet officials, and then of all Soviet officials, shall be precisely and individually defined; to combat relentlessly the prevailing haziness and vagueness concerning each individual's duties and the complete lack of responsibility resulting from this.

7. To become personally acquainted with a certain number of Soviet officials not only of the highest rank, but primarily the medium and lower officials, by summoning them to the centre and, wherever possible, by visiting government offices in Moscow and the provinces, so as to test and choose men, and also to really improve the machinery of Soviet government.

8. To give priority to those People's Commissariats, their departments and offices which for a specific period acquire exceptional importance, and to render them the maximum of assistance in the way of personnel, resources, the personal direction of the Deputy Chairmen, etc.

II. Specific Questions Concerning the Work of the Deputy Chairmen

9. The Deputy Chairmen should devote about nine-tenths of their efforts to the People's Commissariats concerned with economic affairs and one-tenth to the rest.

10. Financial questions are in the forefront for the immediate future and the Deputy Chairmen should devote most attention to them.

11. A particularly vital matter is the introduction of a system of bonuses to be paid to Soviet employees in proportion to the turnover and profits of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade, the co-operative societies and other trading organisations.

Systematic efforts must be made to study the bonus system of payment to all Soviet employees in general and devise measures for applying it.

12. All work now proceeding for the purpose of forming a separate People's Commissariat of Internal Trade, or of turning these functions over to the People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade or the Supreme Economic Council, should be stopped. The *Council of Labour and Defence* should set up a special *Internal Trade Commission* which shall be furnished with the smallest possible secretarial staff, and the only local organs of which shall be the gubernia economic conferences.

13. It is extremely important to supervise the activities of the state trusts with a view of seeking those that are tolerably well organised among the bulk of badly organised ones, and steadily closing down the latter; to investigate the role played (actually) by the Communists on the management boards of the state trusts; to ascertain who is really responsible for the conduct of affairs and for efficiency in conducting affairs.

14. Each Deputy Chairman should undertake to organise one or two exemplary departments, or offices, of any given People's Commissariat to enable him to arrive at a standard size of staffs, verify the correctness of this standard and establish the best methods of conducting and supervising affairs.

The methods of work, methods of improving efficiency, and the methods of supervision employed in these few really exemplary offices should later be gradually introduced into all Soviet offices.

In view of the exceptional importance of this question, and in view of the stubborn resistance of the Soviet bureaucrats, who want to cling to the old bureaucratic methods, there will have to be a persistent struggle to create a few exemplary offices as a means of tightening up and testing the rest. By agreement with the bodies concerned (the Central Committee of the Soviet Office Employees' Union, the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions, the Labour Institute, etc., etc.) and under the supervision of the Deputy Chairmen the best of the latest literature of the organisation of labour and on management, especially the American and German, should be translated and published.

15. It is necessary—if at first only in a very few government offices—to supervise the redistribution of Communists in Soviet offices and to see to it that Communists occupy only such posts (at the very top as well as the very bottom of the hierarchy) as enable them really to watch the progress of work, really to combat bureaucracy and red tape, really to secure an immediate amelioration of the conditions and improvement in the lot of those unfortunate citizens who are compelled to have dealings with our utterly inefficient Soviet machinery of administration.

Special attention must be paid to the Communists who occupy posts at the lower levels of the hierarchy, for often they are actually more important than those at the top.

16. The reports of the gubernia economic conferences must be read regularly, firstly, by the members of the State Planning Commission, the officials of the Central Statistical Board and the staff of *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*; and every one of these should write a very brief review for the press or for his respective department, and be responsible for giving the necessary timely directions and conclusions. Secondly, they must be read by a group of several dozen Communists (not less), as far as possible not Soviet officials, who can read reports from the *purely* Communist and not from the departmental point of view.

The group headed by Comrade Milyutin in Petrograd should have charge of the distribution of the reports of the gubernia economic conferences for reading, and as material for newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, etc.

Constant efforts must be made gradually to extend the obligatory printing of reports to an ever increasing number of business organisations (uyezd economic conferences, state trusts, "mixed companies", etc., etc.), for unless an increasing number of the population grow accustomed to reading these reports in the libraries, it is useless talking about transforming this semi-barbarous country into a cultured and socialistic one.

17. *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn* must actually become the organ of the *Council of Labour and Defence*, an organ of business administration. Both Deputy Chairmen should read it regularly and relentlessly combat the prevailing efforts of all writers and of all Soviet officials to reduce this new-

paper to the level of an ordinary "semi-independent", intellectualist bourgeois organ of "opinion", views and wrangling and to keep out of its columns summaries of reports, control of regular receipt of these reports, serious analysis of the business operations of *particular organisations*, serious criticism of efficient and inefficient offices, *persons*, methods of work, etc.

It will take years to convert *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn* into a real *business management* paper, into a real organ of socialist construction; all the more necessary is it, therefore, to strive steadily and systematically to achieve this.

18. The same applies to the Central Statistical Board. It must not be an "academic" and "independent" organisation—as it mostly is today, owing to old bourgeois habits—but an organ of socialist construction, verification, control and of registration of what the socialist state must primarily know now, immediately. Here, too, the tenacity of old habits will inevitably be very great, and all the more strenuous, therefore, must be the efforts to combat them. (I request that the Deputy Chairmen read my correspondence on this subject in the summer of 1921 with the editor of *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn* and with the Central Statistical Board.)

III. The Deputy Chairmen's Methods of Work. Their Staffs

19. The Deputy Chairmen must free themselves as much as possible from minor details and from unnecessary interviews with People's Commissars and members of collegiums, which usually take up a great deal of their time and prevent them from exercising executive control.

20. The Deputy Chairmen must free themselves as much as possible from the need to attend all sorts of commissions.

21. The Deputy Chairmen must make every effort to dissolve existing commissions (nine-tenths of which are superfluous and show a tendency to revive in a slightly different guise very soon after they have been dissolved) and to prevent the formation of new ones.

22. In those cases where commission work is unavoidable, the Deputy Chairmen must do all they can to avoid

taking part in it themselves, and should, as far as possible, confine themselves to finally endorsing the decisions of such commissions, or to expediting their proceedings and sending their decisions for endorsement in the prescribed order.

23. The staff of the Deputy Chairmen shall consist of, firstly, the staffs of the Executive Secretary of the *Council of People's Commissars* and of the *Council of Labour and Defence*, their assistants and secretaries. This absolutely necessary minimum staff, whose size (not too large) is such that the Deputy Chairmen can exercise *personal* supervision, must under no circumstances be enlarged. Secondly, the Deputy Chairmen are to entrust individual members of the Narrow Council of People's Commissars with various commissions. Thirdly, the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection must serve as the main staff of the Deputy Chairmen.

The Deputy Chairmen should personally select assistants and executives from the staff of this People's Commissariat, train them and supervise their work, and make special efforts to enlist non-Party workers and peasants for this work (this is an exceptionally difficult matter, but if it is not steadily developed Soviet power will be doomed).

24. The Deputy Chairmen must to a greater extent than hitherto exercise their powers to impose penalties (expedite the drafting of the law on this subject undertaken by Comrade Tsyurupa) for bureaucratic methods, red tape, inefficiency, neglect, etc. The penalties for the worst offences must be dismissal, legal prosecution, and the People's Commissariat of Justice must organise trials of such cases, to which great publicity must be given.

IV. Co-ordinating the Work of the Two Deputy Chairmen

25. To co-ordinate their work, the two Deputy Chairmen should send each other copies of their most important instructions, and make a practice of keeping a verbatim record of the oral instructions, directions and so forth given by them during personal interviews (in the briefest terms and the most important points, of course). The number of stenographers

on the Executive Secretary's staff of the Council of People's Commissars should therefore be increased sufficiently to enable the Deputy Chairmen to have two stenographers constantly at their service during business hours. If necessary, a couple of dictaphones of the best type should be ordered from abroad.

26. The same applies to the most important reports, written and oral.

27. In necessary and important cases the Deputy Chairmen should confer in order to reach a common understanding regarding objects and activities and to avoid duplication and running at cross purposes in the course of their work.

In the event of disagreement arising between the Deputy Chairmen the issue should be settled by the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, or, if he is absent, by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, or by a comrade especially appointed by it for the purpose.

V. Distribution of Functions Between the Deputy Chairmen

28. During the next few months, until further notice, the functions of the Deputy Chairmen shall be distributed as follows.

29. Comrade Tsyurupa shall preside at the meetings of the Full Council of People's Commissars (after he has presided for two hours he should be relieved by Comrade Rykov). The presence of the non-presiding Deputy Chairman is obligatory at sessions of the Full Council of People's Commissars and at (plenary) sessions of the Council of Labour and Defence.

Comrade Tsyurupa shall sign for publication in the press the decisions of the Full Council of People's Commissars and its telegraphic orders, and also supervise the work of the commissions of the Full and Narrow Councils of People's Commissars and the work of the Narrow Council of People's Commissars. He shall closely supervise the work of the Executive Secretary and Secretariat of the Full Council of People's Commissars and at the same time be responsible for co-ordinating the activities of this staff with those of

the staff of the Council of Labour and Defence and see that there is complete contact and harmony between them.

30. Comrade Rykov shall preside at the plenary sessions of the Council of Labour and Defence, sign its decisions for publication in the press and also its telegraphic orders, and closely supervise the work of the Executive Secretary and Secretariat of the Council of Labour and Defence (with the aforementioned proviso that there is complete co-ordination between the work of this staff and that of the staff of the Full Council of People's Commissars).

31. For the purpose of executive control, supervising the reduction of staffs and improving the machinery of administration, and also for the settlement of minor current questions that do not need the decision of the Full Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence, the People's Commissariats are to be divided between the two Deputy Chairmen as follows:

Under Comrade Tsyurupa's supervision:

- People's Commissariat of Agriculture
- People's Commissariat of Railways
- Supreme Economic Council
- People's Commissariat of Post and Telegraph
- People's Commissariat of Justice
- People's Commissariat of the Interior
- People's Commissariat of Nationalities
- People's Commissariat of Education.

Under Comrade Rykov's supervision:

- People's Commissariat of Finance
- People's Commissariat of Foreign Trade
- Internal Trade Commission
- Central Council of Co-operative Societies
- People's Commissariat of Labour (and in part the
All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions)
- People's Commissariat of Public Maintenance
- People's Commissariat of Food
- People's Commissariat of the Army and Navy
- People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs
- People's Commissariat of Public Health

Central Statistical Board
Regional Economic Conferences
Concessions Committee
State Planning Commission.

V. Ulyanov (Lenin)

Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars

April 11, 1922

First published in 1928
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Collected Works, Vol. 33,
pp. 335-43

To N. Osinsky

Copies to 1) The Editorial Board of *Pravda*
 2) Comrade Steklov
 3) Rykov and Tsyurupa

April 12, 1922

Comrade Osinsky,

I very much welcome your article in today's *Pravda*: "New Data from Local Experience". It is just such articles that we need most of all, and I think that every People's Commissariat ought to "provide itself" with a publicist (very closely connected with the work of the People's Commissariat and the People's Commissar) to make such reviews.

The worst of our features is an excess of general disquisitions in the press, and political prattle with an extreme lack of *study* of local experience. Both in the provinces and in the centre, powerful tendencies resist its truthful publicity and truthful evaluation. They are afraid of washing dirty linen in public, afraid of the naked truth, and brush it aside with a meaningful glance, taking a superficial attitude, as Comrade Trotsky correctly said.

We need more and more concreteness in studying local experience, details, the little things, practice, businesslike experience, going deeply into real life—*uyezd*, *volost* and village; examination of what, where, by whom and why (by what means) success is achieved, in spite of the abyss of poverty and ruin, in reaching genuine improvement, even if on a small scale, and courage to unmask mistakes and incapacity, popularising and *advertising* with all our strength every local worker who is in any way outstanding, and ma-

king him a model. The more such work is done, the deeper we go into living practice, distracting the attention of both ourselves and our readers from the stinking bureaucratic and stinking intellectual Moscow (and, in general, Soviet bourgeois) atmosphere, the greater will be our success in improving both our press and all our constructive work.

Once again I welcome your initiative, and very much wish that you should continue it further, on a wider scale and more *deeply* in the same direction.

With communist greetings,

Lenin

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Collected Works, Vol. 36,
pp. 578-79

Reply to Remarks Concerning the Functions of the Deputy Chairmen of the Council of People's Commissars

To Comrade Stalin with the request to pass it on (do not duplicate it—to do so would give publicity to polemics) to members of the Political Bureau and Comrade Tsyurupa (asking them to sign it and give the date when they have read it).

I am sorry for replying belatedly, but the delay was caused by the removal of the bullet.*

Comrade Rykov's remarks are "critical", but not concrete and do not require an answer.

I consider Comrade Tomsky's remarks on the bonus system incorrect. The collapse of the trade union bonus system, which, according to Comrade Tomsky, has degenerated into "robbery of the state", must force us to be more persevering in studying and improving the methods of applying the bonus system, but we must not reject it.

Some of Comrade Trotsky's remarks are likewise vague (for example, the "apprehensions" in Paragraph 4) and do not require an answer; other remarks made by him renew old disagreements, that we have repeatedly observed in the Political Bureau. I shall reply to these on two main points: a) the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and b) the State Planning Commission.

a) As regards the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, Comrade Trotsky is fundamentally wrong. In view of the hide-

* On April 23, 1922 Lenin underwent an operation in Soldatenkovskaya hospital (now Botkin hospital) when a bullet fired during the attempt made on his life on August 30, 1918, was extracted.—*Ed.*

bound "departmentalism" that prevails even among the best Communists, the low standard of efficiency of the employees and the internal intrigues in the departments (worse than any Workers' and Peasants' Inspection intrigues), we cannot at the moment dispense with the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. A lot of hard and systematic work has to be put in to convert it into an apparatus for investigating and improving all government work. We have no other practical means of investigating, improving and giving instruction in this work. If the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection now has an inefficient and underpaid staff of 12,000, that staff should be reduced and improved; for example, reduce it to one-sixth and the payroll by half, i.e., raise salaries three-fold; at first select a few dozen and later hundreds of the best, absolutely honest and most efficient employees, who are now available but not registered, not selected, not put in any group and not organized. This can and must be done; if not, it will be impossible to combat departmentalism and red tape, it will be impossible to teach non-Party workers and peasants the art of administration, which is a task that at the present time we cannot shirk either in principle or in practice.

b) As regards the State Planning Commission, Comrade Trotsky is not only absolutely wrong but is judging something on which he is amazingly ill-informed. The State Planning Commission does not suffer from academic methods. On the contrary, it suffers from an overload of much too much petty, routine "vermicelli". Comrade Krzhizhanovsky, because he is soft-hearted, gives way much too easily to those who ask him for urgent assistance. Pyatakov, the new Deputy Chairman of the State Planning Commission, will, I hope, be "stricter" and help to rid the State Planning Commission of its shortcoming, which is quite the opposite of "academic methods".

Since I know full well the real shortcomings of the State Planning Commission, and in order to provide the members of the Political Bureau with factual, objective material and not with figments of the imagination, I asked Comrade Krzhizhanovsky if his work suffered from "abstractness" and what the exact facts about it were. Comrade Krzhizhanovsky sent me a list of the questions that have piled up before the

Presidium of the State Planning Commission in the course of two months: February and March 1922. Result: aa) questions concerning planning—17 per cent; bb) questions of an important economic nature—37 per cent; cc) “vermicelli”—46 per cent. I can send this material to any member of the Political Bureau who would like to see it.

The second paper from Comrade Trotsky, dated April 23, 1922, and addressed to the Deputy Chairmen with a copy to the Secretariat of the Political Bureau (the copy was evidently posted to me by mistake), contains, first, an extremely excited but profoundly erroneous “criticism” of the Political Bureau decree on setting up a financial triumvirate (Sokolnikov and two deputies) as of a brake between the Narrow and Full Councils of People’s Commissars. The sending of this criticism to the Deputy Chairmen is not in conformity either with planned or, in general, with any organised state activity.

Secondly, this paper flings the same fundamentally wrong and intrinsically untrue accusations of academic method at the State Planning Commission, accusations which lead up to the next incredibly uninformed statement by Comrade Trotsky. “At present,” he writes, “there neither is nor can be an economic plan without establishing the quantity of money issued and without distributing cash funds between the departments. Yet, *as far as I can judge*, the State Planning Commission *has nothing whatever to do* with these basic questions.”

The underscored words only make me want to ask the question: Why “judge” something about which you are uninformed? Any member of the C.C. or the Council of Labour and Defence could easily get the information he needs, and if he tried he would learn that the State Planning Commission has a financial and economic section, which deals precisely with the above questions. There are shortcomings in this work, of course, but they must not be sought in academic methods but in exactly the opposite direction.

Lenin

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"Dual" Subordination and Legality

To Comrade Stalin for the Political Bureau

The question of the procuratorship has given rise to disagreement on the commission appointed by the Central Committee to direct the proceedings of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee session. If these disagreements do not cause this question to be brought before the Political Bureau automatically, I propose, in view of its extreme importance, that it be brought up in any case.

In substance, the point at issue is the following: On the question of the procuratorship, the majority of the commission elected by the All-Russia Central Executive Committee expressed opposition to the proposal that local procurators should be appointed solely by the central authority and be subordinate solely to the latter. The majority demands what is called "dual" subordination, the system that applies to all local officials, i. e., subordination to the central authority in the shape of the respective People's Commissariat, and also to the Gubernia Executive Committee.

The same majority of the commission of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee denies the right of local procurators to challenge the legality of decisions passed by gubernia executive committees, and by local authorities generally.

I cannot imagine on what grounds this obviously fallacious decision of the majority of the commission of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee can be justified. The only argument I have heard in support of it is that defence of "dual" subordination in this case means legitimate opposition to bureaucratic centralism, defending the necessary independence of the local authorities, and protecting the

officials of the gubernia executive committees from high-handed conduct by the central authorities. Is there anything high-handed in the view that law cannot be Kaluga law or Kazan law, but that it must be uniform all-Russia law, and even uniform for the entire Federation of Soviet Republics? The underlying fallacy of the view which has prevailed among the majority of the commission of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee is that they wrongly apply the principle of "dual" subordination. "Dual" subordination is needed where it is necessary to allow for a really inevitable difference. Agriculture in Kaluga Gubernia differs from that in Kazan Gubernia. The same thing can be said about industry; and it can be said about administration, or management, as a whole. Failure to make allowances for local differences in all these matters would mean slipping into bureaucratic centralism, and so forth. It would mean preventing the local authorities from giving proper consideration to specific local features, which is the basis of all rational administration. Nevertheless, the law must be uniform, and the root evil of our social life, and of our lack of culture, is our pandering to the ancient Russian view and semi-savage habit of mind, which wishes to preserve Kaluga law as distinct from Kazan law. In must be borne in mind that, unlike the administration authorities, the procurator has no administrative powers, and has no power to decide any question of administration. His rights and duties are reduced to one function, viz., to see that the law is really uniformly interpreted throughout the Republic, notwithstanding differences in local conditions, and in spite of all local influences. The only right and duty of the procurator is to take the matter before the court. What sort of court? Our courts are local courts. Our judges are elected by the local Soviets. Hence, the authority to which the procurator submits a case of infringement of the law is a local authority which, on the one hand, must strictly abide by the laws uniformly established for the whole Federation and, on the other hand, in determining the penalty, must take all local circumstances into consideration. And it has the right to say that although there has been a definite infringement of the law in a given case, nevertheless, certain circumstances, with which local people are closely familiar, and which come to light in the local

court, compel the court to mitigate the penalty to which the culprit is liable, or even acquit him. Unless we strictly adhere to this most elementary condition for maintaining the uniformity of the law for the whole Federation, it will be utterly impossible to protect the law, or to develop any kind of culture.

Similarly, it is wrong in principle to argue that procurators should not have the right to challenge the decisions of gubernia executive committees, or of other local authorities; that legally the latter come under the jurisdiction of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.

The Workers' and Peasants' Inspection judges not only from the viewpoint of the law, but also from the viewpoint of expediency. The procurator must see to it that not a single decision passed by any local authority runs counter to the law, and only from this aspect is it his duty to challenge every illegal decision. He has no right to suspend such a decision; he must only take measures to secure that the interpretation of the law is absolutely uniform throughout the Republic. Hence, the decision of the majority of the commission of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee is not only utterly wrong in principle, it not only applies the principle of "dual" subordination in an utterly fallacious manner, but it also hinders all efforts to establish uniformity of the law and develop at least the minimum of culture.

Further, in deciding this question, it is necessary to take into account the weight of local influence. Undoubtedly, we are living amidst an ocean of illegality, and local influence is one of the greatest, if not the greatest obstacle to the establishment of law and culture. There is scarcely anyone who has not heard that the purging of the Party revealed the prevalence, in the majority of local purging committees, of personal spite and local strife in the process of purging the Party. This fact is incontrovertible, and significant. Scarcely anyone will dare deny that it is easier for the Party to find half a score of reliable Communists who possess an adequate legal education and are capable of resisting all purely local influences than to find hundreds of them. And this is precisely what the question boils down to in discussing whether procurators should be subject to "dual" subordination, or to subordination solely to the cent-

ral authorities. At the centre we must find about half a score of men to exercise the functions of the central procurator authority represented by the Procurator General, the Supreme Tribunal, and the Collegium of the People's Commissariat of Justice (I leave aside the question as to whether the Procurator General should be the sole authority, or whether he should share his authority with the Supreme Tribunal and the Collegium of the People's Commissariat of Justice, for this is purely a secondary question, and can be settled, one way or another, in accordance with whether the Party will delegate vast authority to one person, or divide that authority among the three aforesaid bodies). These ten should work at the centre, under the closest supervision of and in closest contact with the three Party bodies which provide the most reliable barrier against local and personal influences, viz., the Organising Bureau of the Central Committee, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee, and the Central Control Commission. The latter body, i.e., the Central Control Commission, is responsible only to the Party Congress, and is constructed in such a way that no member of it can hold a position in any People's Commissariat, government department, or any organ of the Soviet government. It is clear that under these circumstances we have the greatest guarantee so far devised that the Party will set up a small central collegium that will be really capable of resisting local influences and local, and all other, bureaucracy, and which will establish real uniformity in the application of the laws throughout the Republic, and throughout the Federation. Hence, any mistake that this central legal collegium may make can be at once rectified on the spot by the Party bodies, which determine all the fundamental concepts and lay down all the fundamental rules for all our Party and Soviet activities throughout the Republic.

To depart from this would mean dragging in on the sly a view which nobody can defend openly and frankly, viz., that culture and law, which is its necessary concomitant, are so highly developed in our country that we can guarantee to find hundreds of absolutely irreproachable procurators capable of resisting all local influences, and of establishing uniformity of the law throughout the Republic by their own efforts.

To sum up, I draw the conclusion that to defend the "dual" subordination of procurators, and to deprive them of the right to challenge any decision passed by the local authorities, is not only wrong in principle, not only hinders our fundamental task of constantly introducing respect for the law, but is also an expression of the interests and prejudices of local bureaucrats and local influences, i.e., the most pernicious wall that stands between the working people and the local and central Soviet authorities, as well as the central authority of the Russian Communist Party.

I therefore propose that the Central Committee should reject "dual" subordination in this matter, establish the subordination of local procurators solely to the *central authority*, and allow the procurator to retain the right and duty to challenge the legality of any decision or order passed by the local authorities with the proviso, however, that he shall have no right to suspend such decisions; he shall only have the right to bring them before the courts.

Lenin

Dictated by telephone
on May 20, 1922

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***From* Speech at the Fourth Session
of the All-Russia Central
Executive Committee, Ninth Convocation
October 31, 1922**

...We must bear in mind that compared with all the countries where fierce capitalist competition is raging, where there are millions and tens of millions of unemployed, and where the capitalists are forming vast combinations and are launching an offensive against the working class—if we compare ourselves with those countries, we are the least cultured, our productivity of labour is the lowest, and we are the least efficient. This is, I would say, a very unpleasant thing to have to admit. I think, however, that precisely because we do not disguise such things with platitudes and stereotyped catchwords, but candidly admit them, precisely because we all admit, and are not afraid to proclaim from this rostrum, that we are exerting more efforts than any other country to rectify all this, we shall succeed in catching up with these countries faster than they ever dreamed possible.

This will not be done at a fantastic speed, of course, it will naturally take us several years of laborious effort to achieve it. It goes without saying that nothing can be done overnight. We have been in existence for five years, we have seen at what speed social relations change, and have learned to appreciate what time means; and we must go on learning what it means. Nobody believes that any important change can be achieved at a fantastic speed; but we do believe in real speed, speed compared with the rate of development in any period in history you like to take—especially if progress is guided by a genuinely revolutionary party; and this speed we shall achieve at all costs.

I will now touch upon the Land Code that you have passed. You are aware that in the very first days after the famous 25th of October, 1917, our laws, unlike any other laws, propounded a land principle which, though very imperfect from the technical and perhaps also from the juridical point of view, nevertheless, provided the peasants with all that was vital and essential for them, and ensured their alliance with the workers. From that time onwards, difficult as it has been for us to pull through these five years of continuous war, we have never relaxed our efforts to satisfy to the utmost the peasants' desire for land. And if it turns out that the law which you have just passed also needs amending in some way or other, we shall adopt such amendments and improvements as readily as you have just adopted amendments and improvements of our Criminal Code. We regard the land question, the question of improving the living conditions of the peasants, who constitute the overwhelming majority of the population, as one of fundamental importance. In this respect we have already succeeded in convincing the Russian peasants that in our supreme legislative body every proposal to change the old laws will always meet, not with opposition, but with the most favourable consideration and support.

You have also had before you for your consideration the Civil Code and the Law on the Judicial System. You know that in the light of the policy which we have firmly adopted, and concerning which there can be no wavering in our ranks, this is a most important question for the vast masses of the population. You know also that here, too, we have tried to maintain the dividing line between what can satisfy the ordinary citizen's legitimate needs in present-day economic conditions, and what is abuse of the New Economic Policy—the things that are legal in all other countries, but which we do not want to legalise. The future will show to what extent the amendments you have approved of and adopted specifically for this purpose are effective. We shall leave ourselves a perfectly free hand in this matter. If everyday experience reveals abuses which we have not foreseen, we shall forthwith introduce the necessary amendments. As far as this is concerned, you are all well aware, of course, that, unfortunately, no other country can as yet vie with us in the

speed with which we legislate. We shall see whether events in the near future will not compel them to try to catch up with Soviet Russia a little in this matter.

Further, I must speak about another important matter that you have finally settled here, and that is the question of the local congresses of Soviets and of the gubernia executive committees. This is a question that was always kept in the background under all previous legislative systems and in all constitutions. It was regarded as a matter of no importance; the opinion was that the local government bodies could continue to follow the old rut. We are of a contrary opinion. We are convinced that the successes our revolution has achieved are due to our having always devoted most of our attention to the local government bodies and to local experiences. The revolution of October 1917 at one stroke achieved such successes that it seemed to us in the spring of 1918 that the war had drawn to a close—actually, it had only just started in its worst form, the form of civil war; actually, peace with the Germans meant that they assisted the worst elements in the civil war; actually, the peace treaty we then signed with the Germans and which collapsed in the autumn, in many cases meant that assistance was given to these worst elements by the Allied Powers who blamed us for concluding peace with the Germans*—and, I say, our revolution accomplished its task so quickly in a few months, a few weeks even, because we relied entirely on the forces in the localities, we gave them full scope for their activities, and we looked to the localities for the enthusiasm that made our revolution swift and invincible. I am aware that since then our localities have undergone many different perturbations, so to say. The problem of the relations between the localities and the centre has been one of no little difficulty, and I do not want to suggest that we have always found the ideal solution for it. Considering our general level of culture, it was useless dreaming of an ideal solution. But we may confidently say that we have solved it more sincerely, justly and durably than it has been solved in any other country.

* Lenin is referring here to the peace treaty between Soviet Russia and the countries of the Quadruple Alliance (Germany, Austro-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey) signed on March 3, 1918 in Brest-Litovsk. The peace terms were extremely harsh for Soviet Russia.—*Ed.*

In conclusion I shall touch only upon one other question that particularly interests me, and which, I think, should interest you, although officially it does not appear either on your agenda or in the list of questions. This is the question of our machinery of state; an old and eternally new question.

In August 1918 we took a census of public officials in Moscow. We obtained a total of 231,000 state and Soviet employees; this figure covered the number employed both in central government offices and in the local, Moscow municipal offices. Recently, in October 1922, we took another census in the belief that we had cut down these inflated staffs and that they would certainly be smaller. The figure obtained, however, was 243,000. This, then, was the result of all the reductions of staffs that we carried through. A great deal of effort will still have to be spent on investigating and comparing these figures. When we took the first census in 1918, in the first flush of reforms, we, to put it bluntly, could make next to nothing of the returns. We had no time for that sort of thing. The civil war did not leave us a minute to spare. Now, however, we hope that this work will be done. We are convinced that our machinery of state, which suffers from many defects, is inflated to far more than twice the size we need, and often works not for us, but against us—we need not be afraid to admit this truth even from the rostrum of the supreme legislative body of our Republic—we are convinced that this machinery of state will be improved. Much effort and skill will be required to improve it. We have made a beginning in the serious study of the problem of how to improve it, but this is only a beginning—a few essays and material from local research. If we all leave this session determined to devote more attention to this problem than we have done up to now, determined to spend less time on bustle and fuss—and all too often we spend a vast amount of time on this—if we really make a thorough study of our machinery of state and work for a number of years to improve it, that will be a great asset and a guarantee of success. We must have the courage to say that up to now we have built up our machinery of state spontaneously. Our best workers undertook the most arduous duties in both the civil and military fields, and very often they went about them in the wrong

way, but they learned to rectify their mistakes and get things done. The proportion of these, perhaps, scores of courageous men and women, relative to the hundreds of those who sabotaged—or half-sabotaged, floundering among their voluminous papers—this proportion was very often such that our vital affairs became submerged in a deluge of paper. We have not been able to study this question up to now, but henceforth we must study it in the most comprehensive manner. This will take years and years; we shall have to study hard for years, for the cultural standard of our workers is low, they find it difficult to undertake the new tasks of production, but it is only on their sincerity and enthusiasm that we can rely. It will take us years and years to secure an improvement in our machinery of state, to raise it—not merely individuals, but as a whole—to a higher cultural level. I am sure that if we continue to devote our efforts to such work, we shall certainly and inevitably achieve better and better results. (*Prolonged applause.*)

Pravda No. 247,
November 1, 1922

Collected Works, Vol. 33,
pp. 391-95

Proposals Concerning the Work Routine of the Deputy Chairmen and the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars

Routine of the Deputy Chairmen and the Chairman of the C.P.C.

1. Working hours: 11-2, 6-9; together with the C.P.C. chairman on *Monday and Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.*

2. Special meetings of all the deputies and the chairman of the C.L.D. (minus the Politbureau, C.P.C. and C.L.D.) on these days and at these hours whenever there is need, but *generally not less than twice a week for one hour.* This hour to be fixed on the eve not later than 9 p.m.

3. All the work of the deputies is divided into:

(a) close supervision over the work of the Narrow C.P.C.;

(b) similar supervision over the work of the business meetings of the *C.L.D.*

(it is necessary to resume the business meetings of the *C.L.D.* in order to disengage the deputies for other more important work. The business meetings are *not* chaired by the deputies but *their signatures alone* endorse the decisions of these meetings);

(c) chairmanship at those parts of the *C.P.C.* and *C.L.D.* meetings where the chairman of the C.P.C. does not preside;

(d) participation in the Financial Committee (plus Sokolnikov and his deputy and the chairman of the Narrow C.P.C.; the latter need not attend all meetings of the Financial Committee).

(Perhaps arrange a meeting of the Financial Committee once a week for one hour chaired by the *C.P.C.* chairman? Think this over.);

(e) determining the agenda of all bodies, including the Narrow C.P.C., and the order of priority, the most important questions being chosen by all four under the chairmanship of the C.P.C. chairman;

(f) close supervision of the various People's Commissariats and their apparatus both by means of instructions to the People's Commissars and their deputies personally and by means of studying their apparatus top and bottom;

(g) the commissariats, for this purpose (Point f), are allocated among the deputies, such allocation to be endorsed by the chairman of the C.P.C.

4. All the above-mentioned work is distributed among the deputies in such a way that each of the three (and if need be their assistants from among the business managers) handles a definite job *for two months* and afterwards *changes it* for another.

(This is necessary in order that all the deputies may acquaint themselves with the *entire* apparatus and in order to achieve real unity of management.)

5. The draft of such a distribution among the three deputies is to be drawn up by them immediately and approved by all four.

6. Since the work of improving and correcting the whole apparatus is far more important than the work of chairmanship and the chatting with Deputy People's Commissars and People's Commissars, which has up till now fully occupied all the deputies' time, it is necessary to arrange and strictly carry out a practice under which each deputy, *for not less than two hours* a week, "goes down to the bottom", makes a personal study of all the various parts of the apparatus, top and bottom, and the most unexpected ones at that. The official record of such a study, made, confirmed and communicated (in certain cases) to *all* government departments, should lead to a *reduction* in staff and tighten up discipline throughout our state machinery.

Lenin

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Granting Legislative Functions to the State Planning Commission

This idea was suggested by Comrade Trotsky, it seems, quite a long time ago. I was against it at the time, because I thought that there would then be a fundamental lack of co-ordination in the system of our legislative institutions. But after closer consideration of the matter I find that in substance there is a sound idea in it, namely: the State Planning Commission stands somewhat apart from our legislative institutions, although, as a body of experienced people, experts, representatives of science and technology, it is actually in a better position to form a correct judgement of affairs.

However, we have so far proceeded from the principle that the State Planning Commission must provide the state with critically analysed material and the state institutions must decide state matters. I think that in the present situation, when affairs of state have become unusually complicated, when it is necessary time and again to settle questions of which some require the expert opinion of the members of the State Planning Commission and some do not, and, what is more, to settle matters which need the expert opinion of the State Planning Commission on some points but not on others—I think that we must now take a step towards extending the competence of the State Planning Commission.

I imagine that step to be such that the decisions of the State Planning Commission could not be rejected by ordinary procedure in Soviet bodies, but would need a special procedure to be reconsidered. For example, the question should be submitted to a session of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, prepared for reconsideration according to a special instruction, involving the drawing up, under special rules, of memoranda to examine whether the State Planning Commission decision is subject to reversal. Lastly,

special time-limits should be set for the reconsideration of State Planning Commission decisions, etc.

In this respect I think we can and must accede to the wishes of Comrade Trotsky, but not in the sense that specifically any one of our political leaders, or the Chairman of the Supreme Economic Council, etc., should be Chairman of the State Planning Commission. I think that personal matters are at present too closely interwoven with the question of principle. I think that the attacks which are now made against the Chairman of the State Planning Commission, Comrade Krzhizhanovsky, and Comrade Pyatakov, his Deputy, and which proceed along two lines, so that, on the one hand, we hear charges of extreme leniency, lack of independent judgement and lack of backbone, and, on the other, charges of excessive coarseness, drill-sergeant methods, lack of solid scientific background, etc.—I think these attacks express two sides of the question, exaggerating them to the extreme, and that in actual fact we need a skilful combination in the State Planning Commission of two types of character, of which one may be exemplified by Comrade Pyatakov and the other by Comrade Krzhizhanovsky.

I think that the State Planning Commission must be headed by a man who, on the one hand, has scientific education, namely, either technical or agronomic, with decades of experience in practical work in the field of technology or of agronomics. I think this man must possess not so much the qualities of an administrator as broad experience and the ability to enlist the services of other men.

Lenin

December 27, 1922
Taken down by M. V.

Continuation of the letter
on the legislative nature of
State Planning Commission
decisions.

December 28, 1922

I have noticed that some of our comrades who are able to exercise a decisive influence on the direction of state affairs, exaggerate the administrative side, which, of course,

is necessary in its time and place, but which should not be confused with the scientific side, with a grasp of the broad facts, the ability to recruit men, etc.

In every state institution, especially in the State Planning Commission, the combination of these two qualities is essential; and when Comrade Krzhizhanovsky told me that he had enlisted the services of Comrade Pyatakov for the Commission and had come to terms with him about the work, I, in consenting to this, on the one hand, entertained certain doubts and, on the other, sometimes hoped that we would thus get the combination of the two types of statesmen. To see whether those hopes are justified, we must now wait and consider the matter on the strength of somewhat longer experience, but in principle, I think, there can be no doubt that such a combination of temperaments and types (of men and qualities) is absolutely necessary for the correct functioning of state institutions. I think that here it is just as harmful to exaggerate "administrating" as it is to exaggerate anything at all. The chief of a state institution must possess a high degree of personal appeal and sufficiently solid scientific and technical knowledge to be able to check people's work. That much is basic. Without it the work cannot be done properly. On the other hand, it is very important that he should be capable of administering and should have a worthy assistant, or assistants, in the matter. The combination of these two qualities in one person will hardly be found, and it is hardly necessary.

Lenin

Taken down by L. F.
December 28, 1922

Continuation of the notes
on the State Planning Commission,
December 29, 1922

The State Planning Commission is apparently developing in all respects into a commission of experts. Such an institution cannot be headed by anybody except a man with great experience and an all-round scientific education in technology. The administrative element must in essence be subsidiary. A certain independence and autonomy of the

State Planning Commission is essential for the prestige of this scientific institution and depends on one thing, namely, the conscientiousness of its workers and their conscientious desire to turn our plan of economic and social development into reality.

This last quality may, of course, be found now only as an exception, for the overwhelming majority of scientists, who naturally make up the Commission, are inevitably infected with bourgeois ideas and bourgeois prejudices. The check on them from this standpoint must be the job of several persons who can form the Presidium of the Commission. These must be Communists to keep a day-to-day check on the extent of the bourgeois scientists' devotion to our cause displayed in the whole course of the work and see that they abandon bourgeois prejudices and gradually adopt the socialist standpoint. This work along the twin lines of scientific checking and pure administration should be the ideal of those who run the State Planning Commission in our Republic.

Lenin

Taken down by M. V.
December 29, 1922

Is it rational to divide the work of the State Planning Commission into separate jobs? Should we not, on the contrary, try to build up a group of permanent specialists who would be systematically checked by the Presidium of the Commission and could solve the whole range of problems within its ambit? I think that the latter would be the more reasonable and that we must try to cut down the number of temporary and urgent tasks.

Lenin

December 29, 1922
Taken down by M. V.

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How We Should Reorganise the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection

(Recommendation to the Twelfth Party Congress)

It is beyond question that the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection is an enormous difficulty for us, and that so far this difficulty has not been overcome. I think that the comrades who try to overcome the difficulty by denying that the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection is useful and necessary are wrong. But I do not deny that the problem presented by our state apparatus and the task of improving it is very difficult, that it is far from being solved, and is an extremely urgent one.

With the exception of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, our state apparatus is to a considerable extent a survival of the past and has undergone hardly any serious change. It has only been slightly touched up on the surface, but in all other respects it is a most typical relic of our old state machine. And so, to find a method of really renovating it, I think we ought to turn for experience to our civil war.

How did we act in the more critical moments of the Civil War?

We concentrated our best Party forces in the Red Army; we mobilised the best of our workers; we looked for new forces at the deepest roots of our dictatorship.

I am convinced that we must go to the same source to find the means of reorganising the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. I recommend that our Twelfth Party Congress adopt the following plan of reorganisation, based on some enlargement of our Central Control Commission.

The Plenary Meetings of the Central Committee of our Party are already revealing a tendency to develop into a kind of supreme Party conference. They take place, on the

average, not more than once in two months, while the routine work is conducted, as we know, on behalf of the Central Committee by our Political Bureau, our Organising Bureau, our Secretariat, and so forth. I think we ought to follow the road we have thus taken to the end and definitely transform the Plenary Meetings of the Central Committee into supreme Party conferences convened once in two months jointly with the Central Control Commission. The Central Control Commission should be amalgamated with the main body of the reorganised Workers' and Peasants' Inspection on the following lines.

I propose that the Congress should elect 75 to 100 new members to the Central Control Commission. They should be workers and peasants, and should go through the same Party screening as ordinary members of the Central Committee, because they are to enjoy the same rights as the members of the Central Committee.

On the other hand, the staff of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should be reduced to three or four hundred persons, specially screened for conscientiousness and knowledge of our state apparatus. They must also undergo a special test as regards their knowledge of the principles of scientific organisation of labour in general, and of administrative work, office work, and so forth, in particular.

In my opinion, such an amalgamation of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection with the Central Control Commission will be beneficial to both these institutions. On the one hand, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will thus obtain such high authority that it will certainly not be inferior to the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs. On the other hand, our Central Committee, together with the Central Control Commission, will definitely take the road of becoming a supreme Party conference, which in fact it has already taken, and along which it should proceed to the end so as to be able to fulfil its functions properly in two respects: in respect to *its own* methodical, expedient and systematic organisation and work, and in respect to maintaining contacts with the broad masses through the medium of the best of our workers and peasants.

I foresee an objection that, directly or indirectly, may come from those spheres which make our state apparatus

antiquated, i. e., from those who urge that its present utterly impossible, indecently pre-revolutionary form be preserved (incidentally, we now have an opportunity which rarely occurs in history of ascertaining the period necessary for bringing about radical social changes; we now see clearly *what* can be done in five years, and what requires much more time).

The objection I foresee is that the change I propose will lead to nothing but chaos. The members of the Central Control Commission will wander around all the institutions, not knowing where, why or to whom to apply, causing disorganisation everywhere and distracting employees from their routine work, etc., etc.

I think that the malicious source of this objection is so obvious that it does not warrant a reply. It goes without saying that the Presidium of the Central Control Commission, the People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and his collegium (and also, in the proper cases, the Secretariat of our Central Committee) will have to put in years of persistent effort to get the Commissariat properly organised, and to get it to function smoothly in conjunction with the Central Control Commission. In my opinion, the People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, as well as the whole collegium, can (and should) remain and guide the work of the entire Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, including the work of all the members of the Central Control Commission who will be "placed under his command". The three or four hundred employees of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection that are to remain, according to my plan, should, on the one hand, perform purely secretarial functions for the other members of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and for the supplementary members of the Central Control Commission; and, on the other hand, they should be highly skilled, specially screened, particularly reliable, and highly paid, so that they may be relieved of their present truly unhappy (to say the least) position of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection officials.

I am sure that the reduction of the staff to the number I have indicated will greatly enhance the efficiency of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection personnel and the quality of all its work, enabling the People's Commissar and

the members of the collegium to concentrate their efforts entirely on organising work and on systematically and steadily improving its efficiency, which is so absolutely essential for our workers' and peasants' government, and for our Soviet system.

On the other hand, I also think that the People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should work on partly amalgamating and partly co-ordinating those higher institutions for the organisation of labour (the Central Institute of Labour, the Institute for the Scientific Organisation of Labour etc.), of which there are now no fewer than twelve in our Republic. Excessive uniformity and a consequent desire to amalgamate will be harmful. On the contrary, what is needed here is a reasonable and expedient mean between amalgamating all these institutions and properly delimiting them, allowing for a certain independence for each of them.

Our own Central Committee will undoubtedly gain no less from this reorganisation than the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. It will gain because its contacts with the masses will be greater and because the regularity and effectiveness of its work will improve. It will then be possible (and necessary) to institute a stricter and more responsible procedure of preparing for the meetings of the Political Bureau, which should be attended by a definite number of members of the Central Control Commission determined either for a definite period or by some organisational plan.

In distributing work to the members of the Central Control Commission, the People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, in conjunction with the Presidium of the Central Control Commission, should impose on them the duty either of attending the meetings of the Political Bureau for the purpose of examining all the documents appertaining to matters that come before it in one way or another; or of devoting their working time to theoretical study, to the study of scientific methods of organising labour; or of taking a practical part in the work of supervising and improving our machinery of state, from the higher state institutions to the lower local bodies, etc.

I also think that in addition to the political advantages accruing from the fact that the members of the Central Com-

mittee and the Central Control Commission will, as a consequence of this reform, be much better informed and better prepared for the meetings of the Political Bureau (all the documents relevant to the business to be discussed at these meetings should be sent to all the members of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission not later than the day before the meeting of the Political Bureau, except in absolutely urgent cases, for which special methods of informing the members of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission and of settling these matters must be devised), there will also be the advantage that the influence of purely personal and incidental factors in our Central Committee will diminish, and this will reduce the danger of a split.

Our Central Committee has grown into a strictly centralised and highly authoritative group, but the conditions under which this group is working are not commensurate with its authority. The reform I recommend should help to remove this defect, and the members of the Central Control Commission, whose duty it will be to attend all meetings of the Political Bureau in a definite number, will have to form a compact group which should not allow anybody's authority without exception, neither that of the General Secretary nor of any other member of the Central Committee, to prevent them from putting questions, verifying documents, and, in general, from keeping themselves fully informed of all things and from exercising the strictest control over the proper conduct of affairs.

Of course, in our Soviet Republic, the social order is based on the collaboration of two classes: the workers and peasants, in which the "Nepmen", i.e., the bourgeoisie, are now permitted to participate on certain terms. If serious class disagreements arise between these classes, a split will be inevitable. But the grounds for such a split are not inevitable in our social system, and it is the principal task of our Central Committee and Central Control Commission, as well as of our Party as a whole, to watch very closely over such circumstances as may cause a split, and to forestall them, for in the final analysis the fate of our Republic will depend on whether the peasant masses will stand by the working class, loyal to their alliance, or whether they

will permit the "Nepmen", i.e., the new bourgeoisie, to drive a wedge between them and the working class, to split them off from the working class. The more clearly we see this alternative, the more clearly all our workers and peasants understand it, the greater are the chances that we shall avoid a split, which would be fatal for the Soviet Republic.

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Signed: *N. Lentn*

Better Fewer, but Better

In the matter of improving our state apparatus, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection should not, in my opinion, either strive after quantity or hurry. We have so far been able to devote so little thought and attention to the efficiency of our state apparatus that it would now be quite legitimate if we took special care to secure its thorough organisation, and concentrated in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection a staff of workers really abreast of the times, i.e., not inferior to the best West-European standards. For a socialist republic this condition is, of course, too modest. But our experience of the first five years has fairly crammed our heads with mistrust and scepticism. These qualities assert themselves involuntarily when, for example, we hear people dilating at too great length and too flippantly on "proletarian" culture. For a start, we should be satisfied with real bourgeois culture; for a start, we should be glad to dispense with the cruder types of pre-bourgeois culture, i.e., bureaucratic culture or serf culture, etc. In matters of culture, haste and sweeping measures are most harmful. Many of our young writers and Communists should get this well into their heads.

Thus, in the matter of our state apparatus we should now draw the conclusion from our past experience that it would be better to proceed more slowly.

Our state apparatus is so deplorable, not to say wretched, that we must first think very carefully how to combat its defects, bearing in mind that these defects are rooted in the past, which, although it has been overthrown, has not yet been overcome, has not yet reached the stage of a cul-

ture that has receded into the distant past. I say culture deliberately, because in these matters we can only regard as achieved what has become part and parcel of our culture, of our social life, our habits. We might say that the good in our social system has not been properly studied, understood, and taken to heart; it has been hastily grasped at; it has not been verified or tested, corroborated by experience, and not made durable, etc. Of course, it could not be otherwise in a revolutionary epoch, when development proceeded at such break-neck speed that in a matter of five years we passed from tsarism to the Soviet system.

It is time we did something about it. We must show sound scepticism for too rapid progress, for boastfulness, etc. We must give thought to testing the steps forward we proclaim every hour, take every minute and then prove every second that they are flimsy, superficial and misunderstood. The most harmful thing here would be haste. The most harmful thing would be to rely on the assumption that we know at least something, or that we have any considerable number of elements necessary for the building of a really new state apparatus, one really worthy to be called socialist, Soviet, etc.

No, we are ridiculously deficient of such an apparatus, and even of the elements of it, and we must remember that we should not stint time on building it, and that it will take many, many years.

What elements have we for building this apparatus? Only two. First, the workers who are absorbed in the struggle for socialism. These elements are not sufficiently educated. They would like to build a better apparatus for us, but they do not know how. They cannot build one. They have not yet developed the culture required for this; and it is culture that is required. Nothing will be achieved in this by doing things in a rush, by assault, by vim or vigour, or in general, by any of the best human qualities. Secondly, we have elements of knowledge, education and training, but they are ridiculously inadequate compared with all other countries.

Here we must not forget that we are too prone to compensate (or imagine that we can compensate) our lack of knowledge by zeal, haste, etc.

In order to renovate our state apparatus we must at all costs set out, first, to learn, secondly, to learn, and thirdly, to learn, and then see to it that learning shall not remain a dead letter, or a fashionable catch-phrase (and we should admit in all frankness that this happens very often with us), that learning shall really become part of our very being, that it shall actually and fully become a constituent element of our social life. In short, we must not make the demands that are made by bourgeois Western Europe, but demands that are fit and proper for a country which has set out to develop into a socialist country.

The conclusions to be drawn from the above are the following: we must make the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection a really exemplary institution, an instrument to improve our state apparatus.

In order that it may attain the desired high level, we must follow the rule: "Measure your cloth seven times before you cut."

For this purpose, we must utilise the very best of what there is in our social system, and utilise it with the greatest caution, thoughtfulness and knowledge, to build up the new People's Commissariat.

For this purpose, the best elements that we have in our social system—such as, first, the advanced workers, and, second, the really enlightened elements for whom we can vouch that they will not take the word for the deed, and will not utter a single word that goes against their conscience—should not shrink from admitting any difficulty and should not shrink from any struggle in order to achieve the object they have seriously set themselves.

We have been bustling for five years trying to improve our state apparatus, but it has been mere bustle, which has proved useless in these five years, or even futile, or even harmful. This bustle created the impression that we were doing something, but in effect it was only clogging up our institutions and our brains.

It is high time things were changed.

We must follow the rule: Better fewer, but better. We must follow the rule: Better get good human material in two or even three years than work in haste without hope of getting any at all.

I know that it will be hard to keep to this rule and apply it under our conditions. I know that the opposite rule will force its way through a thousand loopholes. I know that enormous resistance will have to be put up, that devilish persistence will be required, that in the first few years at least work in this field will be hellishly hard. Nevertheless, I am convinced that only by such effort shall we be able to achieve our aim; and that only by achieving this aim shall we create a republic that is really worthy of the name of Soviet, socialist, and so on, and so forth.

Many readers probably thought that the figures I quoted by way of illustration in my first article* were too small. I am sure that many calculations may be made to prove that they are. But I think that we must put one thing above all such and other calculations, i.e., our desire to obtain really exemplary quality.

I think that the time has at last come when we must work in real earnest to improve our state apparatus and in this there can scarcely be anything more harmful than haste. That is why I would sound a strong warning against inflating the figures. In my opinion, we should, on the contrary, be especially sparing with figures in this matter. Let us say frankly that the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection does not at present enjoy the slightest authority. Everybody knows that no other institutions are worse organised than those of our Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, and that under present conditions nothing can be expected from this People's Commissariat. We must have this firmly fixed in our minds if we really want to create within a few years an institution that will, first, be an exemplary institution, secondly, win everybody's absolute confidence, and, thirdly, prove to all and sundry that we have really justified the work of such a highly placed institution as the Central Control Commission. In my opinion, we must immediately and irrevocably reject all general figures for the size of office staffs. We must select employees for the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection with particular care and only on the basis of the strictest test. Indeed, what is the use of establishing a People's Commissa-

* See present volume, pp. 406-11—*Ed.*

riat which carries on anyhow, which does not enjoy the slightest confidence, and whose word carries scarcely any weight? I think that our main object in launching the work of reconstruction that we now have in mind is to avoid all this.

The workers whom we are enlisting as members of the Central Control Commission must be irreproachable Communists, and I think that a great deal has yet to be done to teach them the methods and objects of their work. Furthermore, there must be a definite number of secretaries to assist in this work, who must be put to a triple test before they are appointed to their posts. Lastly, the officials whom in exceptional cases we shall accept directly as employees of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection must conform to the following requirements:

first, they must be recommended by several Communists;

second, they must pass a test for knowledge of our state apparatus;

third, they must pass a test in the fundamentals of the theory of our state apparatus, in the fundamentals of management, office routine, etc.;

fourth, they must work in such close harmony with the members of the Central Control Commission and with their own secretariat that we could vouch for the work of the whole apparatus.

I know that these requirements are extraordinarily strict, and I am very much afraid that the majority of the "practical" workers in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will say that these requirements are impracticable, or will scoff at them. But I ask any of the present chiefs of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, or anyone associated with that body, whether they can honestly tell me the practical purpose of a People's Commissariat like the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. I think this question will help them recover their sense of proportion. Either it is not worth while having another of the numerous reorganisations that we have had of this hopeless affair, the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, or we must really set to work, by slow, difficult and unusual methods, and by testing these methods over and over again, to create something really exemplary, something that will win the respect of all and sundry for its merits, and not only because of its rank and title.

If we do not arm ourselves with patience, if we do not devote several years to this task, we had better not tackle it at all.

In my opinion we ought to select a minimum number of the higher labour research institutes, etc., which we have baked so hastily, see whether they are organised properly, and allow them to continue working, but only in a way that conforms to the high standards of modern science and gives us all its benefits. If we do that it will not be utopian to hope that within a few years we shall have an institution that will be able to perform its functions, to work systematically and steadily on improving our state apparatus, an institution backed by the trust of the working class, of the Russian Communist Party, and the whole population of our Republic.

The spade work for this could be begun at once. If the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants Inspection accepted the present plan of reorganisation, it could now take preparatory steps and work methodically until the task is completed, without haste, and not hesitating to alter what has already been done.

Any half-hearted solution would be extremely harmful in this matter. A measure for the size of the staff of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection based on any other consideration would, in fact, be based on the old bureaucratic considerations, on old prejudices, on what has already been condemned, universally ridiculed, etc.

In substance, the matter is as follows:

Either we prove now that we have really learned something about state organisation (we ought to have learned something in five years), or we prove that we are not sufficiently mature for it. If the latter is the case, we had better not tackle the task.

I think that with the available human material it will not be immodest to assume that we have learned enough to be able systematically to rebuild at least one People's Commissariat. True, this one People's Commissariat will have to be the model for our entire state apparatus.

We ought at once to announce a contest in the compilation of two or more textbooks on the organisation of labour in general, and on management in particular. We can take

as a basis the book already published by Yermansky, although it should be said in parentheses that he obviously sympathises with Menshevism and is unfit to compile textbooks for the Soviet system. We can also take as a basis the recent book by Kerzhentsev,* and some of the other partial textbooks available may be useful too.

We ought to send several qualified and conscientious people to Germany, or to Britain, to collect literature and to study this question. I mention Britain in case it is found impossible to send people to the U.S.A. or Canada.

We ought to appoint a commission to draw up the preliminary programme of examinations for prospective employees of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection; ditto for candidates to the Central Control Commission.

These and similar measures will not, of course, cause any difficulties for the People's Commissar or the collegium of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, or for the Presidium of the Central Control Commission.

Simultaneously, a preparatory commission should be appointed to select candidates for membership of the Central Control Commission. I hope that we shall now be able to find more than enough candidates for this post among the experienced workers in all departments, as well as among the students of our Soviet higher schools. It would hardly be right to exclude one or another category beforehand. Probably preference will have to be given to a mixed composition for this institution, which should combine many qualities, and dissimilar merits. Consequently, the task of drawing up the list of candidates will entail a considerable amount of work. For example, it would be least desirable for the staff of the new People's Commissariat to consist of people of one type, only of officials, say, or for it to exclude people of the propagandist type, or people whose principal quality is sociability or the ability to penetrate into circles that are not altogether customary for officials in this field, etc.

* This refers to O. A. Yermansky's book *The Taylor System and the Scientific Organisation of Labour*, Moscow 1922 and P. M. Kerzhentsev's book *Organisational Principles*. (Illustrated, Petrograd, 1922).—Ed.

* * *

I think I shall be able to express my idea best if I compare my plan with that of academic institutions. Under the guidance of their Presidium, the members of the Central Control Commission should systematically examine all the papers and documents of the Political Bureau. Moreover, they should divide their time correctly between various jobs in investigating the routine in our institutions, from the very small and privately-owned offices to the highest state institutions. And lastly, their functions should include the study of theory, i.e., the theory of organisation of the work they intend to devote themselves to, and practical work under the guidance either of older comrades or of teachers in the higher institutes for the organisation of labour.

I do not think, however, that they will be able to confine themselves to this sort of academic work. In addition, they will have to prepare themselves for work which I would not hesitate to call training to catch, I will not say rogues, but something like that, and working out special ruses to screen their movements, their approach, etc.

If such proposals were made in West-European government institutions they would rouse frightful resentment, a feeling of moral indignation, etc.; but I trust that we have not become so bureaucratic as to be capable of that. NEP has not yet succeeded in gaining such respect as to cause any of us to be shocked at the idea that somebody may be caught. Our Soviet Republic is of such recent construction, and there are such heaps of the old lumber still lying around that it would hardly occur to anyone to be shocked at the idea that we should delve into them by means of ruses, by means of investigations sometimes directed to rather remote sources or in a roundabout way. And even if it did occur to anyone to be shocked by this, we may be sure that such a person would make himself a laughing-stock.

Let us hope that our new Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will abandon what the French call *pruderie*, which we may call ridiculous primness, or ridiculous swank, and which plays entirely into the hands of our Soviet and Party bureaucracy. Let it be said in parentheses that we have bureaucrats in our Party offices as well as in Soviet offices.

When I said above that we must study and study hard in institutes for the higher organisation of labour, etc., I did not by any means imply "studying" in the schoolroom way, nor did I confine myself to the idea of studying only in the schoolroom way. I hope that not a single genuine revolutionary will suspect me of refusing, in this case, to understand "studies" to include resorting to some semi-humorous trick, cunning device, piece of trickery or something of that sort. I know that in the staid and earnest states of Western Europe such an idea would horrify people and that not a single decent official would even entertain it. I hope, however, that we have not yet become as bureaucratic as all that and that in our midst the discussion of this idea will give rise to nothing more than amusement.

Indeed, why not combine pleasure with utility? Why not resort to some humorous or semi-humorous trick to expose something ridiculous, something harmful, something semi-ridiculous, semi-harmful, etc.?

It seems to me that our Workers' and Peasants' Inspection will gain a great deal if it undertakes to examine these ideas, and that the list of cases in which our Central Control Commission and its colleagues in the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection achieved a few of their most brilliant victories will be enriched by not a few exploits of our future Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and Central Control Commission members in places not quite mentionable in prim and staid textbooks.

* * *

How can a Party institution be amalgamated with a Soviet institution? Is there not something improper in this suggestion?

I do not ask these questions on my own behalf, but on behalf of those I hinted at above when I said that we have bureaucrats in our Party institutions as well as in the Soviet institutions.

But why, indeed, should we not amalgamate the two if this is in the interests of our work? Do we not all see that such an amalgamation has been very beneficial in the case

of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, where it was brought about at the very beginning? Does not the Political Bureau discuss from the Party point of view many questions, both minor and important, concerning the "moves" we should make in reply to the "moves" of foreign powers in order to forestall their, say, cunning, if we are not to use a less respectable term? Is not this flexible amalgamation of a Soviet institution with a Party institution a source of great strength in our politics? I think that what has proved its usefulness, what has been definitely adopted in our foreign politics and has become so customary that it no longer calls forth any doubt in this field, will be at least as appropriate (in fact, I think it will be much more appropriate) for our state apparatus as a whole. The functions of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection cover our state apparatus as a whole, and its activities should affect all and every state institution without exception: local, central, commercial, purely administrative, educational, archive, theatrical, etc.—in short, all without any exception.

Why then should not an institution, whose activities have such wide scope, and which moreover requires such extraordinary flexibility of forms, be permitted to adopt this peculiar amalgamation of a Party control institution with a Soviet control institution?

I see no obstacles to this. What is more, I think that such an amalgamation is the only guarantee of success in our work. I think that all doubts on this score arise in the dustiest corners of our government offices, and that they deserve to be treated with nothing but ridicule.

* * *

Another doubt: is it expedient to combine educational activities with official activities? I think that it is not only expedient, but necessary. Generally speaking, in spite of our revolutionary attitude towards the West-European form of state, we have allowed ourselves to become infected with a number of its most harmful and ridiculous prejudices; to some extent we have been deliberately infected with them by our dear bureaucrats, who counted on being able again

and again to fish in the muddy waters of these prejudices. And they did fish in these muddy waters to so great an extent that only the blind among us failed to see how extensively this fishing was practised.

In all spheres of social, economic and political relationships we are "frightfully" revolutionary. But as regards precedence, the observance of the forms and rites of office management, our "revolutionariness" often gives way to the mustiest routine. On more than one occasion, we have witnessed the very interesting phenomenon of a great leap forward in social life being accompanied by amazing timidity whenever the slightest changes are proposed.

This is natural, for the boldest steps forward were taken in a field which was long reserved for theoretical study, which was promoted mainly, and even almost exclusively, in theory. The Russian, when away from work, found solace from bleak bureaucratic realities in unusually bold theoretical constructions, and that is why in our country these unusually bold theoretical constructions assumed an unusually lopsided character. Theoretical audacity in general constructions went hand in hand with amazing timidity as regards certain very minor reforms in office routine. Some great universal agrarian revolution was worked out with an audacity unexampled in any other country, and at the same time the imagination failed when it came to working out a tenth-rate reform in office routine; the imagination, or patience, was lacking to apply to this reform the general propositions that produced such brilliant results when applied to general problems.

That is why in our present life reckless audacity goes hand in hand, to an astonishing degree, with timidity of thought even when it comes to very minor changes.

I think that this has happened in all really great revolutions, for really great revolutions grow out of the contradictions between the old, between what is directed towards developing the old, and the very abstract striving for the new, which must be so new as not to contain the tiniest particle of the old.

And the more abrupt the revolution, the longer will many of these contradictions last.

* * *

The general feature of our present life is the following: we have destroyed capitalist industry and have done our best to raze to the ground the medieval institutions and landed proprietorship, and thus created a small and very small peasantry, which is following the lead of the proletariat because it believes in the results of its revolutionary work. It is not easy for us, however, to keep going until the socialist revolution is victorious in more developed countries merely with the aid of this confidence, because economic necessity, especially under NEP, keeps the productivity of labour of the small and very small peasants at an extremely low level. Moreover, the international situation, too, threw Russia back and, by and large, reduced the labour productivity of the people to a level considerably below pre-war. The West-European capitalist powers, partly deliberately and partly unconsciously, did everything they could to throw us back, to utilise the elements of the civil war in Russia in order to spread as much ruin in the country as possible. It was precisely this way out of the imperialist war that seemed to have many advantages. They argued somewhat as follows: "If we fail to overthrow the revolutionary system in Russia, we shall, at all events, hinder its progress towards socialism." And from their point of view they could argue in no other way. In the end, their problem was half-solved. They failed to overthrow the new system created by the revolution, but they did prevent it from at once taking the step forward that would have justified the forecasts of the socialists, that would have enabled the latter to develop the productive forces with enormous speed, to develop all the potentialities which, taken together, would have produced socialism; socialists would thus have proved to all and sundry that socialism contains within itself gigantic forces and that mankind had now entered into a new stage of development of extraordinarily brilliant prospects.

The system of international relationships which has now taken shape is one in which a European state, Germany, is enslaved by the victor countries. Furthermore, owing to their victory, a number of states, the oldest states in the West,

are in a position to make some insignificant concessions to their oppressed classes—concessions which, insignificant though they are, nevertheless retard the revolutionary movement in those countries and create some semblance of “class truce”.

At the same time, as a result of the last imperialist war, a number of countries of the East, India, China, etc., have been completely jolted out of the rut. Their development has definitely shifted to general European capitalist lines. The general European ferment has begun to affect them, and it is now clear to the whole world that they have been drawn into a process of development that must lead to a crisis in the whole of world capitalism.

Thus, at the present time we are confronted with the question—shall we be able to hold on with our small and very small peasant production, and in our present state of ruin, until the West-European capitalist countries consummate their development towards socialism? But they are consummating it not as we formerly expected. They are not consummating it through the gradual “maturing” of socialism, but through the exploitation of some countries by others, through the exploitation of the first of the countries vanquished in the imperialist war combined with the exploitation of the whole of the East. On the other hand, precisely as a result of the first imperialist war, the East has been definitely drawn into the revolutionary movement, has been definitely drawn into the general maelstrom of the world revolutionary movement.

What tactics does this situation prescribe for our country? Obviously the following. We must display extreme caution so as to preserve our workers’ government and to retain our small and very small peasantry under its leadership and authority. We have the advantage that the whole world is now passing to a movement that must give rise to a world socialist revolution. But we are labouring under the disadvantage that the imperialists have succeeded in splitting the world into two camps; and this split is made more complicated by the fact that it is extremely difficult for Germany, which is really a land of advanced, cultured, capitalist development, to rise to her feet. All the capitalist powers of what is called the West are pecking at her and pre-

venting her from rising. On the other hand, the entire East, with its hundreds of millions of exploited working people, reduced to the last degree of human suffering, has been forced into a position where its physical and material strength cannot possibly be compared with the physical, material and military strength of any of the much smaller West-European states.

Can we save ourselves from the impending conflict with these imperialist countries? May we hope that the internal antagonisms and conflicts between the thriving imperialist countries of the West and the thriving imperialist countries of the East will give us a second respite as they did the first time, when the campaign of the West-European counter-revolution in support of the Russian counter-revolution broke down owing to the antagonisms in the camp of the counter-revolutionaries of the West and the East, in the camp of the Eastern and Western exploiters, in the camp of Japan and the U.S.A.?

I think the reply to this question should be that the issue depends upon too many factors, and that the outcome of the struggle as a whole can be forecast only because in the long run capitalism itself is educating and training the vast majority of the population of the globe for the struggle.

In the last analysis, the outcome of the struggle will be determined by the fact that Russia, India, China, etc., account for the overwhelming majority of the population of the globe. And during the past few years it is this majority that has been drawn into the struggle for emancipation with extraordinary rapidity, so that in this respect there cannot be the slightest doubt what the final outcome of the world struggle will be. In this sense, the complete victory of socialism is fully and absolutely assured.

But what interests us is not the inevitability of this complete victory of socialism, but the tactics which we, the Russian Communist Party, we, the Russian Soviet Government, should pursue to prevent the West-European counter-revolutionary states from crushing us. To ensure our existence until the next military conflict between the counter-revolutionary imperialist West and the revolutionary and nationalist East, between the most civilised countries of the world and the Orientally backward countries which, how-

ever, comprise the majority, this majority must become civilised. We, too, lack enough civilisation to enable us to pass straight on to socialism, although we do have the political requisites for it. We should adopt the following tactics, or pursue the following policy, to save ourselves.

We must strive to build up a state in which the workers retain the leadership over the peasants, in which they retain the confidence of the peasants, and by exercising the greatest economy remove every trace of extravagance from our social relations.

We must reduce our state apparatus to the utmost degree of economy. We must banish from it all traces of extravagance, of which so much has been left over from tsarist Russia, from its bureaucratic capitalist state machine.

Will not this be a reign of peasant limitations?

No. If we see to it that the working class retains its leadership over the peasantry, we shall be able, by exercising the greatest possible thrift in the economic life of our state, to use every saving we make to develop our large-scale machine industry, to develop electrification, the hydraulic extraction of peat, to complete the Volkhov Power Project, etc.

In this, and in this alone, lies our hope. Only when we have done this shall we, speaking figuratively, be able to change horses, to change from the peasant, muzhik horse of poverty, from the horse of an economy designed for a ruined peasant country, to the horse which the proletariat is seeking and must seek—the horse of large-scale machine industry, of electrification, of the Volkhov Power Station, etc.

That is how I link up in my mind the general plan of our work, of our policy, of our tactics, of our strategy, with the functions of the reorganised Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. This is what, in my opinion, justifies the exceptional care, the exceptional attention that we must devote to the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection in raising it to an exceptionally high level, in giving it a leadership with Central Committee rights, etc., etc.

And this justification is that only by thoroughly purging our government machine, by reducing to the utmost everything that is not absolutely essential in it, shall we be cer-

tain of being able to keep going. Moreover, we shall be able to keep going not on the level of a small-peasant country, not on the level of universal limitation, but on a level steadily advancing to large-scale machine industry.

These are the lofty tasks that I dream of for our Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. That is why I am planning for it the amalgamation of the most authoritative Party body with an "ordinary" People's Commissariat.

March 2, 1923

Pravda No. 49

March 4, 1923

Signed: *N. Lenin*

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AVANESOV, Varlaam Alexandrovich (1884-1930)—joined the Bolshevik Party in 1903. In 1919-20 he was a member of the Collegium of the State Control Commission. From 1920 to 1924 he was Deputy People's Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and a member of the All-Russia Extraordinary Commission to Combat Sabotage and Counter-Revolution (Cheka). In 1924-

25 he was Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Trade—211, 234, 235, 236, 314

AVKSENTYEV, Nikolai Dmitriyevich (1878-1943)—one of the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party and a member of its Central Committee. During the First World War he took up a social-chauvinist stand. After the February bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1917 he held the post of Minister for Internal Affairs in Kerensky's second coalition government. Following the October Socialist Revolution he became one of the organisers of counter-revolutionary revolts. He later emigrated and waged an active struggle against Soviet power—24, 62

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- BERKENHEIM**, *Alexander Moiseyevitch* (1880-1932)—a Socialist-Revolutionary, leader of the co-operative movement. After the October Socialist Revolution when sent abroad as representative of the *Centrosoyuz* (Central Union of Consumers' Societies) he started to conduct activi-

- ties against the Soviet state. In 1922 he emigrated—52
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- BISSOLATI, Leonida** (1857-1920)—one of the founders of the Socialist Party of Italy and leader of its extreme Right reformist wing. In 1912 he was expelled from the Italian Socialist Party and formed the "Social-Reformist Party". During the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand. Between 1916 and 1918 he was Minister without Portfolio—23
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- BRESHKO-BRESHKOVSKAYA, Yekaterina Konstantinovna** (1844-1934)—one of the organisers of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, and leader of its Right wing. After the February revolution of 1917 she supported the bourgeois Provisional Government and advocated the continuation of war to the "victorious conclusion". After the October Socialist Revolution she opposed Soviet power. In 1919 she emigrated and while living abroad conducted a campaign of slander against Soviet Russia calling for the preparation of a new intervention; she contributed to the whiteguard organ *Dni* in Paris—59, 60, 73, 87, 88, 89
- BRIAND, Aristide** (1862-1932)—a French statesman and diplomat. For a short while he associated with the Left-wing socialists, but in 1902 entered parliament and became a reactionary bourgeois politician hostile towards the working class. When he was expelled from the Socialist Party he joined the "independent socialists" group,

which in 1911 adopted the name of "Republican Socialist Party". He was Prime Minister (1913, 1915, 1917, 1921-22) and Minister for Foreign Affairs (1926-31)—66

BRYUKHANOV, Nikolai Pavlovich (1878-1943)—joined the Communist Party in 1902. In 1918 he became a member of the Collegium of the People's Food Commissariat (Narkomprod), later Deputy People's Commissar, in 1921 Commissar for Food and subsequently People's Commissar of Finance—341

BULYGIN, Alexander Grigoryevich (1851-1919)—a statesman of tsarist Russia, Minister of the Interior in 1905. On the tsar's instructions he drafted a bill to convene a consultative State Duma—56, 81, 82, 88

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CHAIKOVSKY, Nikolai Vasilyevich (1850-1926)—Narodnik, subsequently a Socialist-Revolutionary, then a Popular Socialist. After the February 1917 revolution he was on the Executive Committees of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies and the All-Russia Soviet of Peasants' Deputies. After the October Socialist Revolution he was one of the organisers of anti-Soviet revolts and supported the military intervention against Soviet Russia. In 1919 he emigrated to Paris—52

CHERNOV, Victor Mikhailovich (1876-1952)—a Socialist-Revolutionary leader. From May to August 1917 he was Minister of Agriculture in the bourgeois Provisional Government. After the October Socialist Revolution he was one of the organisers of anti-Soviet revolts. In 1920 he emigrated and continued his anti-Soviet activities abroad—24, 25, 37, 44, 45, 60, 64, 82, 87, 140, 230, 277

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D

DAN (Gurvich), Fyodor Ivanovich (1871-1947)—one of the Menshevik leaders. After the February revolution of 1917 he became a member of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet and the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee, First Convocation; he supported the bourgeois Provisional Government. After the October Socialist Revolution he opposed Soviet power. In 1922 he was banished from the country as an enemy of the Soviet state—64, 82

DANISHEVSKY, Karl Khristianovich (1884-1941)—joined the Communist Party in 1900; a Bolshevik and a prominent leader of the revo-

lutionary movement in Latvia. In 1921 he headed the Central Forestry Committee—317, 318, 319, 320

DAVID, Eduard (1863-1930)—an economist, one of the leaders of the Right wing of the German Social-Democrats and a revisionist. In 1919 he entered the first coalition government of the German Republic and was Minister of the Interior in 1919-20—23

DENIKIN, Anton Ivanovich (1872-1947)—a tsarist general; during the foreign military intervention and civil war in Russia (1918-20) henchman of the British, French and American imperialists; commander-in-chief of the counter-revolutionary armed forces in the south of Russia. He fled abroad—226, 243, 244, 245, 251

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DUBASOV, Fyodor Vasilyevich (1845-1912)—an adjutant-general, admiral, one of the ringleaders of the tsarist reac-

tion, who ruthlessly quelled the Russian revolution of 1905-07. In November 1905 he became Moscow Governor-General and directed the suppression of the December armed uprising in Moscow—16

DURNOVO, Pyotr Nikolayevich (1844-1915)—a reactionary statesman of tsarist Russia. In October 1905 he was appointed Minister of the Interior. He brutally crushed the first Russian Revolution and encouraged Black Hundreds' pogroms—16

E

ENGELS, Frederick (1820-1895) one of the founders of scientific communism, leader and teacher of the international proletariat and Karl Marx's friend and associate—34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 86, 146, 289

G

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GOGOL, N. V. (1809-1852)—a great Russian writer—113

GORBUNOV, Nikolai Petrovich (1892-1938)—joined the Communist Party in 1917. After the October Socialist Revolution he was appointed Secretary of the Council of the People's Commissars and V. I. Lenin's private secretary; from 1920 he was office manager of the Council of People's Commissars of the R.S.F.S.R. and of the Council of Labour and Defence of the U.S.S.R. Subsequently he was a member of the State Planning Commission of the U.S.S.R.—314, 338, 371

GRAFTIO, Genrikh Osipovich (1869-1949)—a Soviet power engineer. He took part in the work of the State Commission for the Electrification of Russia (GOELRO). During 1921-27 he was chief engineer of the Volkhov and the Nizhne-Svir projects—314

H

HENDERSON, Arthur (1863-1935)—one of the leaders of the Labour Party and the trade union movement in England. In 1919 he was one of the organisers of the Berne International and in 1923 he was elected Chairman of the Executive Committee of the so-called Socialist Labour International. He held various ministerial posts in the British Government—23

J

JORDANIA, Noi Nikolayevich (1870-1953)—a Social-

Democrat and one of the leaders of the Caucasian Mensheviks. During the First World War he adopted a social-chauvinist stand. During 1918-21 he headed the counter-revolutionary Menshevik Government in Georgia; in 1921 he emigrated—60

K

KALEDIN, Alezei Maximovich (1861-1918)—a tsarist general and the commander of the Don Cossacks. He played an active part in the Kornilov revolt—45

KAMENEV (Rosenfeld), Lev Borisovich (1883-1936)—joined the Bolshevik Party in 1901. After the October Socialist Revolution he was Chairman of the Moscow Soviet, Deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, and was elected to the Politbureau of the C.C. R.C.P.(B.). He repeatedly opposed Leninist Party policy. In 1934 he was expelled from the Party for his anti-Party activities—339, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373

KAUTSKY, Karl (1854-1938)—one of the leaders of the German Social-Democrats and the Second International. At the outset of his political career he was a Marxist, later a renegade to Marxism and ideologist of opportunism. He began to be active in the socialist movement in 1874. In the nineties under Marx's and Engels's influence he sided with Marxism, but even at that time he was deviat-

ing towards opportunism. In the 1880s and 1890s he wrote a number of works on questions of Marxist theory: "Karl Marx's Economic Theory", "The Agrarian Question" and others, which, in spite of his mistakes and errors, played a positive role in disseminating Marxism. During the First World War (1914-18) he was an ideologist of Centrism (disguised social-chauvinism). He opposed the October Socialist Revolution and the dictatorship of the working class—23, 30, 37, 38, 39, 179, 181, 182, 230

KEDROV, Stepan Nikolayevich (b. 1863)—worked as head of the Financial Department of the Industrial-Technical and Fuel Inspection of the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection—335

KERENSKY, Alexander Fyodorovich (b. 1881)—one of the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. In 1917 he headed the bourgeois Provisional Government. After the October Socialist Revolution he opposed Soviet power and in 1918 fled abroad—45, 46, 58, 60, 65, 80, 81, 82, 83, 89, 95, 140, 172, 277

KERZHENTSEV (Lebedev), Platon Mikhailovich (1881-1940)—joined the Communist Party in 1904; a historian and publicist. From 1918 to 1923 he worked as assistant editor of the newspaper *Izvestia VTsIK*, then as director of the Russian Telegraph Agency and was Ambassador of the R.S.F.S.R. in Sweden—418

KIESEWETTER, Alexander Alexandrovich (1866-1933)—a Russian liberal-bourgeois historian and publicist and one of the leaders of the Constitutional-Democratic Party. After the October Socialist Revolution he waged an active struggle against Soviet power for which he was banished from Soviet Russia in 1922; he was an active contributor to the whiteguard press—12, 13, 14, 16

KISELYOV, Alexei Semyonovich (1879-1938)—joined the Communist Party in 1898. After the October Socialist Revolution he occupied leading posts in Soviet, economic and trade union bodies. In 1920 he was elected Chairman of the Miners' Union; was a member of the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee; in 1921—was appointed Chairman of the Narrow Council of People's Commissars—235

KISHKIN, Nikolai Mikhailovich (1864-1930)—one of the leaders of the Constitutional-Democratic Party and Minister of the State Public Welfare in the last bourgeois Provisional Government. On the eve of the October Socialist Revolution he was appointed "dictator" of Petrograd. In 1919 he was one of the active participants in the counter-revolutionary whiteguard organisation in Moscow ("Tactical Centre"). Subsequently he worked in the People's Commissariat of Public Health—51, 60, 82, 140

- KLEMBOVSKY, Vladimir Napoleonovich** (1860-1921)—a tsarist general and an active participant of the Kornilov revolt. After the October Socialist Revolution he served in the Red Army but was later shot for treachery—45
- KOLCHAK, Alexander Vasilyevich** (1873-1920)—an admiral of the tsarist navy and a monarchist. He was one of the chief leaders of the counter-revolution in Russia—244, 245, 277
- KONOVALOV, Alexander Ivanovich** (b. 1875)—one of the leaders of the bourgeois Progressist Party. In 1917 he held the post of Minister of Trade and Industry in the bourgeois Provisional Government—51
- KORNILOV, Lavr Georgievich** (1870-1918)—a tsarist general. In August 1917 he headed the counter-revolutionary revolt which aimed at introducing a military dictatorship and restoring monarchy in Russia—44, 45, 47, 65, 81, 83, 89, 142, 277
- KOROSTELEV, Alexander Alezevich** (1887-1937)—joined the Communist Party in 1905. From May 1921 to April 1922 he was a member of the Collegium of the People's Commissariat of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection and later worked as head of the Commission for the Promotion of Economic Bodies. Since 1922 he held leading posts in the trade union movement and state administration—312
- KRASIKOV, Pyotr Ananyevich** (1870-1939)—joined the Bolshevik Party in 1892. After the October Socialist Revolution he became Chairman of the Investigation Commission to Combat Counter-Revolution and later a member of the Collegium of the People's Commissariat of Justice—335
- KRASIN, Leonid Borisovich** (1870-1926)—joined the Bolshevik Party in 1890 and was a prominent Soviet statesman. After the October Socialist Revolution he headed the Extraordinary Supply Commission of the Red Army and worked as a member of the Presidium of the Supreme Economic Council; was People's Commissar for Trade and Industry and People's Commissar of Railways. In 1919 he joined the diplomatic service. From 1920 to 1925 he was People's Commissar for Foreign Trade—211, 370, 371, 372, 373
- KRITSMAN, Lev Natanovich** (1890-1938)—an economist, joined the Bolshevik Party in 1918. After the October Socialist Revolution he was engaged in economic work, chaired a number of commissions attached to the Supreme Economic Council and the Council of Labour and Defence. In 1921 he became a member of the Presidium of the State Planning Commission and Chairman of the Commission for the Utilisation of Material Resources of the R.S.F.S.R. under the Council of Labour and Defence—263

KRZHIZHANOVSKY, Gleb Maximilianovich (1872-1959)—a well-known Soviet scientist, power engineer and academician; he joined the Bolshevik Party in 1893. After the October Socialist Revolution he was engaged in restoring and developing Moscow's power economy. In 1920 he headed the State Commission for the Electrification of Russia (GOELRO). During 1920-30 he headed the State Planning Commission (GOSPLAN)—388, 403, 404

KURSKY, Dmitry Ivanovich (1874-1932)—a prominent Soviet state and Party functionary and lawyer; he joined the Bolshevik Party in 1904. From 1918 to 1928 he was People's Commissar of Justice and helped to compile the Civil and Criminal Codes. In 1921 he became a member of the Presidium of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee—314, 335, 345

KUSKOVA, Yekaterina Dmitriyevna (1869-1958)—a bourgeois public figure, publicist. In the mid-nineties she associated herself with the Emancipation of Labour group but soon afterwards under the influence of Bernstein, she sided with the revisionists. In 1906, together with S. N. Prokopovich, she edited *Bez Zaglavii* (Without a Title), a Cum-Cadet, Cum-Menshevik magazine and contributed to the Left Cadet newspaper *Tovarishch* (Comrade). After the October Socialist Revolution she opposed Soviet power and in

1922 was exiled after which she was active among the white émigrés—52

L

LARIN, Yu. (Luriye, Mikhail Alexandrovich) (1882-1932)—joined the Party in August 1917. After the October Socialist Revolution he worked in Government and economic organisations. From November 1921 to 1922 he was a member of the Presidium of the State Planning Commission—263

LATSIS, Martyn Ivanovich (Sudrabs, Yan Fridrikhovich) (1888-1938)—joined the Bolshevik Party in 1905, Party and state functionary. After the October Socialist Revolution he was elected to the Collegium of the Cheka (All-Russia Extraordinary Commission to Combat Sabotage and Counter-Revolution) and the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, Chairman of the Extraordinary Commission and Military Tribunal of the 5th Army at the Eastern front; later he was engaged in economic work—190

LEGIEN, Karl (1861-1920)—German Right-wing Social-Democrat, one of the trade union leaders and a revisionist. In 1890 he became chairman of the General Commission of the German Trade Unions, in 1903 the secretary of the International Secretariat of Trade Unions and in 1913 its chairman. He opposed the proletarian revolutionary movement—23, 26

LIEBER (*Goldman*), *Mikhail Isaakovich* (1880-1937)—one of the leaders of the Bund. After the February 1917 revolution he became a member of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies and the Presidium of the All-Russia Executive Committee, First Convocation; he took up a Menshevik stand and supported the coalition government. He opposed the October Socialist Revolution. Subsequently he was engaged in economic work—64

LIEBKNECHT, *Karl* (1871-1919)—an outstanding figure of the German and international working-class movement, one of the leaders of the German Left-wing Social-Democrats. He was one of the founders of the German Communist Party and a leader of the workers' uprising in Berlin in January 1919. After the uprising was suppressed, he was brutally murdered by the counter-revolutionaries—171

LOMOV, *A. (Oppokov, Georgy Ippolitovich)* (1888-1938)—joined the Party in 1903. In 1918 he became a "Left Communist". He was a member of the Presidium, a Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Economic Council and a Deputy Chairman of the U.S.S.R. State Planning Commission—318

M

MARTOV, *Lev (Tsederbaum, Yuli Ostipovich)* (1873-1923)

—a Social-Democrat. In 1900 he became a member of the *Iskra* Editorial Board. After the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. (1903) he became one of the Menshevik leaders. During the First World War he took up a Centrist stand. After the February 1917 revolution he headed the group of the so-called Menshevik internationalists. After the October Socialist Revolution he opposed Soviet power and emigrated in 1920—62, 147, 230, 277

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MAYAKOVSKY, *Vladimir Vladimirovich* (1893-1930)—a Soviet poet—355, 357

MELNICHANSKY, *Grigory Natanovich* (1886-1937)—joined the Party in 1902. After the October Revolution he was Chairman of the Moscow Gubernia Trade Union Council. From 1913 to 1920 he represented the All-Russia Central Council of Trade Unions in the Council of Workers' and Peasants' Defence—233

MILYUTIN, *Vladimir Pavlovich* (1884-1938)—joined the Party in 1910. From 1918 to 1921 he was a Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Economic Council and later held responsible posts in

Government and economic bodies—263, 379

MIN, Georgy Alexandrovich (1855-1906)—a colonel and a commander of the Semyonovsky Guards Regiment. He distinguished himself by extreme brutality during the suppression of the armed uprising in Moscow in December 1905, and was promoted by the tsar to the rank of Major-General. He was later killed by a Socialist-Revolutionary—16

MIROSHNIKOV, Ivan Ivanovich (1894-1939)—joined the Bolshevik Party in 1917. From 1921 to 1937 he was deputy office manager, and later office manager of the Council of People's Commissars—371

MOLOTOV (Skryabin), Vyacheslav Mikhailovich (b. 1890)—joined the Party in 1906. After the Tenth Party Congress he became secretary of the Central Committee of the R.C.P.(B.) and alternate member of the Political Bureau. In accordance with a decision of the Plenary Meeting of the C.C., C.P.S.U. of June 1957 he was withdrawn from the Presidium of the C.C. and the C.C. of the C.P.S.U. for his factional activities. In 1962 he was expelled from the Party—345, 360

MONTESQUIEU, Charles Louis (1689-1755)—an outstanding French bourgeois sociologist, economist and writer, a theoretician of constitutional monarchy—31

N

NAPOLEON I (Bonaparte) (1769-1821)—French Emperor from 1804 to 1814 and 1815—34

NIKITIN, A. M. (b. 1876)—a Social-Democrat and Menshevik; after the July events in 1917 he became Minister for Post and Telegraph, and in the last bourgeois Provisional Government he held the post of Minister of the Interior—65, 82

O

OSINSKY, N. (Obolensky, Valeryan Valeryanovich) (1887-1938)—joined the Bolshevik Party in 1907. From 1921 to 1923 he was Deputy People's Commissar for Agriculture, and was later engaged in administrative and economic work—309, 385

P

PALCHINSKY, Pyotr Ioakimovich (d. 1930)—an engineer who participated in the organisation of the Prodrugol syndicate. After the February 1917 revolution he was Deputy Minister for Trade and Industry in the bourgeois Provisional Government. After the October Socialist Revolution he was one of the organisers of subversive acts in Soviet industry—45, 46

PESHEKHONOV, Alexei Vasilyevich (1867-1933)—in 1906 he became one of the leaders of the petty-bourgeois party of Popular Socialists (P.S.s).

In 1917 he became Minister for Food in the bourgeois Provisional Government. After the October Socialist Revolution he opposed Soviet power and in 1922 he emigrated—45, 46, 47, 67, 88, 89

PLEKHANOV, Georgy Valentinovich (1856-1918)—an outstanding figure in the Russian and international working-class movement and the first propagator of Marxism in Russia. In 1883 he founded in Geneva the Emancipation of Labour group, the first Russian Marxist organisation. Plekhanov opposed Narodism and revisionism in the international working-class movement. At the beginning of the century he was on the editorial board of the newspaper *Iskra* (Spark) and the magazine *Zarya* (Dawn).

Plekhanov was the author of a number of works which greatly contributed to the dissemination of Marxism and the materialist world outlook. After the Second Party Congress (1903) Plekhanov took up a conciliatory stand in regard to opportunism and then joined the Mensheviks. Later he opposed the Machist revision of Marxism and the liquidators. During the First World War he sided with the social-chauvinists. After the February 1917 bourgeois-democratic revolution he returned to Russia and headed the extreme Right-wing *Yedinstvo* group of Menshevik defencists, opposed the Bolsheviks and socialist revolution, asserting that Russia was not yet ripe for the transition to socialism. He did

not participate in the opposition to Soviet power.

Lenin had a high opinion of Plekhanov's theoretical works and valued his role in the dissemination of Marxism in Russia; at the same time he sharply criticised him for his deviations from Marxism and political errors—23, 26, 30, 41, 46, 59, 60, 87, 88, 89

POINCARÉ, Raymond (1860-1934)—a lawyer and French bourgeois statesman. From 1893 onwards he held numerous posts in the French Government. In 1912 he became Prime Minister, and from 1913 to 1920 he was President of France. He was one of the instigators of the First World War and people in France said, "Poincaré c'est la guerre" ("Poincaré means War"). After the October Socialist Revolution he was an initiator of foreign military intervention against Soviet Russia—369

POTRESOV, Alexander Nikolaevich (1869-1934)—a Menshevik leader. In 1917 he edited the newspaper *Dyen* (Day) which waged a campaign against the Bolsheviks; after the October Socialist Revolution he emigrated—41, 46

PRILEZHAYEV, I. A.—a Socialist-Revolutionary and contributor to the newspaper *Dyelo Naroda* (People's Cause): in December 1917 he became a member of the C.C. of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party—47

PROKOPOVICH, Sergei Nikolayevich (1871-1955)—a bourgeois economist and publicist. In 1906 he became a member of the C.C. of the Cadet Party; he edited and published *Bez Zaglavia* (Without a Title), a magazine of Cadet and Menshevik leanings. In 1917 he held the post of Minister for Food in the bourgeois Provisional Government. After the Great October Socialist Revolution he opposed Soviet power and was banished from the U.S.S.R. for his anti-Soviet activities—65

PROUDHON, Pierre-Joseph (1809-1865)—French publicist, economist and sociologist, an ideologist of the petty bourgeoisie and one of the founders of anarchism—29, 30

PYATAKOV, Georgy Leonidovich (1890-1937)—he joined the Bolshevik Party in 1910. After the October Socialist Revolution he was engaged in economic and government work; from 1920 to 1923 he worked as Chairman of the Central Board of the Coal Industry in the Donets Basin, Deputy Chairman of the State Planning Commission and Chairman of the Chief Concession Committee. He frequently opposed Leninist Party policy and in 1936 was expelled from the Party—388, 403, 404

R

RAMZIN, Leonid Konstantinovich (1887-1948)—a prominent scientist in the field of heat engineering. In 1920

he became professor at the Moscow Higher Technical School. In 1921 and 1922 he worked as a member of the State Planning Commission—322

RENAUDEL, Pierre (1871-1939)—a reformist leader of the French Socialist Party—23

ROIZMAN, Pavel Isaakovich (b. 1887)—a lawyer. In 1922 he was investigator of the People's Commissariat of Justice, and then Jurisconsult of the People's Commissariat of Post and Telegraph—335

ROY, Manabendra Nath (1892-1948)—an Indian politician and the delegate to the Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth congresses of the Communist International, who later abandoned the Communist Party—257

RUSANOV, Nikolai Sergeevich (b. 1859)—a publicist, a member of the Narodnaya Volya (People's Will) organisation and subsequently a Socialist-Revolutionary. After the October Socialist Revolution he emigrated—25

RYKOV, Alexei Ivanovich (1881-1938)—he joined the Bolshevik Party in 1899. After the October Socialist Revolution he became People's Commissar of Internal Affairs, Chairman of the Supreme Economic Council, Deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence, Chairman of the U.S.S.R. and R.S.F.S.R. Councils of People's Commissars and a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee. He repeated-

ly opposed Leninist Party policy and was expelled from the Party in 1937 for his anti-Party activities—341, 342, 343, 345, 362, 363, 382, 383, 385, 387

S

SCHEIDEMANN, Philipp (1865-1939)—one of the leaders of the extreme Right, opportunist wing of the German Social-Democrats. In the period 1918-21 he organised brutal suppression of the working-class movement in Germany—23, 26, 147

SEMBAT, Marcel (1862-1922)—a reformist leader of the French Socialist Party, a social-chauvinist. From August 1914 to September 1917 he was Minister of Public Works in the imperialist Government of National Defence of France—23, 26

SHINGARYOV, Andrei Ivanovich (1869-1918)—one of the Cadet leaders. After the February bourgeois-democratic revolution he held the post of Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Finance in the bourgeois Provisional Government—67

SKOBELEV, Matvei Ivanovich (1885-1939)—in 1903 he participated in the Social-Democratic movement alongside with the Mensheviks. After the February 1917 revolution he was Deputy Chairman of the Petrograd Soviet and Deputy Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the First Convocation; from May to August 1917 he worked as Minister of Labour in the bourgeois Provisional

Government. After the October Socialist Revolution he abandoned the Mensheviks and in 1922 joined the R.S.P.(B.) and took on responsible economic work—24

SMILGA, Ivar Tenisovich (1892-1938)—joined the Bolshevik Party in 1907. After the October Socialist Revolution he was engaged in military and economic work. From 1921 to 1923 he was a Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Economic Council and head of the Central Fuel Board; an active participant in the Trotskyist opposition, he was later expelled from the Party for his anti-Party activities—322

SMOLYANINOV, Vadim Alexandrovich (1890-1962)—joined the Bolshevik Party in 1908. After the October Socialist Revolution he was engaged in government and economic work. From 1921 to 1924 he worked in the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence as an assistant and later as a deputy office manager—314

SOKOLNIKOV (Brilliant), Grigory Yakovlevich (1888-1939)—joined the Bolshevik Party in 1905. After the October Socialist Revolution he was engaged in diplomatic and military work. In 1921 he was elected to the Collegium of the People's Commissariat of Finance, and in 1922 he started to work as People's Commissar of Finance. In 1926 he became a Deputy Chairman of the U.S.S.R.

State Planning Commission, and later Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs. He repeatedly opposed the Party's Leninist policy and in 1936 was expelled from the Party for his anti-Party activities—351, 389, 400

SOKOLOV, Mikhail Fyodorovich (b. 1893)—a member of the Bolshevik Party from 1920 to 1922 and from 1932 to 1936. In 1920 and 1921 he was Secretary of the Department of Agitation and Education on the Military and Political Board of the Far Eastern Republic. From March to July 1921 he was secretary of the Board for the Evacuation from Poland of the Property and Archives of the R.S.F.S.R. People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs—282

SOSNOVSKY, Lev Semyonovich (1886-1937)—became a member of the Bolshevik Party in 1904. From 1918 to 1924 (with intervals) he edited the newspaper *Bednota* (The Poor). He was an active participant in the Trotskyist opposition. In 1936 he was expelled from the Party for his anti-Party activities—188, 315

SPIRIDONOVA, Maria Alexandrovna (1884-1941)—one of the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. After the February 1917 revolution she was one of the organisers of the Left wing of the S.R. Party. When the Party of Left Socialist-Revolutionaries was formed, she became

a member of its Central Committee. She opposed the conclusion of the Brest Peace and took an active part in the counter-revolutionary Left S.R. revolt in July 1918. After its suppression she continued her anti-Soviet activities but later abandoned politics—14, 15, 16, 17

STALIN (Jugashvili), Josef Vissarionovich (1879-1953)—195, 235, 236, 353, 362, 387, 390

STAUNING, Thorwald August Martinus (1873-1942)—one of the Right-wing leaders of the Dutch Social-Democrats and the Second International. During the world imperialist war he adopted a social-chauvinist stand, headed the Social-Democratic government and the coalition governments of the bourgeois radicals and Right-wing Social-Democrats—23

STEKLOV, Yuri Mikhailovich (1873-1941)—associated himself with the Social-Democratic movement in 1893. After the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. he joined the Bolsheviks. After the February 1917 revolution he took up a "revolutionary defencist" stand and subsequently sided with the Bolsheviks. After the October Socialist Revolution he edited the newspaper *Izvestia VTsIK* and wrote a number of works on the history of the revolutionary movement—385

STOLYPIN, Pyotr Arkadyevich (1862-1911)—a statesman in tsarist Russia; from 1906 to 1911 he was Chairman of the

Council of Ministers. To suppress the 1905-07 revolution he organised brutal repressive measures and mass executions of workers and peasants. In 1906 he introduced an agrarian reform which was to undermine the village commune and thus enable the kulaks (rich peasants) to set up separate farms and make them the bulwark of the autocracy in the countryside—82, 83

STRUVE, Pyotr Berngardovich (1870-1944)—a bourgeois economist and publicist, leader of the Cadet Party and an ideologist of Russian imperialism. After the October Socialist Revolution he became a rabid enemy of Soviet power and later emigrated—64

SVERDLOV, Yakov Mikhailovich (1885-1919)—joined the Bolshevik Party in 1904; in 1912 he became a member of the Party Central Committee. From 1917 to 1919 he headed the Secretariat of the C.C. In November 1917 he was elected Chairman of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee. Lenin characterised Sverdlov as a talented organiser of the masses and an outstanding proletarian revolutionary—171

T

TAYLOR, Frederick Winslow (1856-1915)—an American engineer who introduced a system of labour organisation which made maximum use of labour time and rational employment of the means

and implements of production. Under capitalism this system serves to intensify the exploitation of the working people—151

TODORSKY, Alexander Ivanovich (1894-1965)—became a member of the Party in 1918. In 1918 and 1919 he was a member of the Executive Committee of the Vesyegonsk district of the Tver Gubernia; he edited the newspaper *Soviet Vesyegonsk* and the newspaper *Krasny Vesyegonsk* (Red Vesyegonsk) and wrote a book *A Year with a Rifle and a Plough*, which was highly appraised by Lenin. He took an active part in the civil war—188, 366

TOLSTOI, Lev Nikolaevich (1828-1910)—a great Russian writer—15

TOMSKY, Mikhail Pavlovich (1880-1936)—became a member of the Bolshevik Party in 1904. After the October Socialist Revolution he was Chairman of the Moscow Council of Trade Unions. In 1919 he became Chairman of the Presidium of the All-Russia Council of Trade Unions; a member of the C.C. of the R.C.P.(B.) and a member of the Political Bureau of the C.C. of the R.C.P.(B.). He repeatedly opposed the Party's Leninist policy and in 1928 and 1929 was one of the leaders of the Right-wing opportunist deviation in the R.C.P.(B.)—233, 235, 387

TROTSKY (Bronstein), Lev Davidovich (1878-1940)—join-

ned the R.S.D.L.P. in 1897, a Menshevik; in the years of reaction and the new revolutionary upsurge, disguising his ideas as "non-factionalist", he actually sided with the liquidators. In 1912 he organised the anti-Party August bloc. At the Sixth Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in 1917, together with the members of the Inter-District Organisation, he was admitted to the Bolshevik Party. After the October Socialist Revolution he held several responsible posts: People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, People's Commissar for Army and Naval Affairs, People's Commissar of Railways, Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic. In 1918 he opposed the conclusion of the Brest Peace, and from 1920 to 1921 he headed the opposition in the trade union controversy. In 1923 he started to wage a bitter factional struggle against the Party's general line and Lenin's programme for the building of socialism. The Communist Party exposed Trotskyism as a petty-bourgeois deviation in the Party and defeated it on both an ideological and an organisational front. In 1927 Trotsky was expelled from the Party, in 1929 he was banished from the U.S.S.R. for his anti-Soviet activities and in 1932 deprived of his Soviet citizenship—81, 385, 387, 388, 389, 402, 403

TSERETELI, Irakly Georgiyevich (1882-1959)—a Menshevik leader. During the First World War he took up a

Centrist stand. After the February bourgeois-democratic revolution he was a member of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet and in May 1917 he entered the bourgeois Provisional Government, and subsequently became one of the inspirers of the rabid persecution of the Bolsheviks. After the October Socialist Revolution he emigrated—24, 26, 37, 44, 49, 56, 64, 65, 73, 81, 82, 87, 140

TSYURUPA, Alexander Dmitriyevich (1870-1928)—became a member of the Bolshevik Party in 1898. In November 1917 he became Deputy People's Commissar for Food, and at the beginning of 1918—People's Commissar for Food; at the end of 1921—he was appointed Deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and the Council of Labour and Defence. In 1922 and 1923 he was People's Commissar of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, from 1923 to 1925—Chairman of the U.S.S.R. State Planning Commission and in 1925—People's Commissar for Home and Foreign Trade—337, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 345, 362, 363, 373, 381, 382, 383, 385, 387

TURGENEV, Ivan Sergeevich (1818-1883)—a great Russian writer—147

V

VANDERVELDE, Emile (1866-1938)—leader of the Belgian Workers' Party, Chairman of

the International Socialist Bureau of the Second International. He adopted an extreme opportunist stand. He was hostile towards the October Socialist Revolution in Russia and actively assisted the armed intervention against Soviet Russia; from 1925 to 1927 he was Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Belgian Government—23, 26

YVUKOV, Alexander Alexandrovich (b. 1884)—a lawyer. From 1920 to 1924 he was an investigator in the People's Commissariat of Justice—335

Y

YENUKIDZE, Avel Safronovich (1877-1937)—joined the Communist Party in 1898; a Bolshevik. From 1918 to 1922 he was a member of the Presidium and Secretary of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee (VTsIK); from 1923 to March 1935 he held the post of Secretary of the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R.—345

YERMANSKY, A. (Kogan, Osip Arkadyevich) (1866-1941)—a Social-Democrat and Menshevik. In 1918 he was elected to the Menshevik Central Committee. In 1921 he left the Menshevik Party and worked as a scientist in Moscow—418

YUDENICH, Nikolai Nikolayevich (1862-1933)—a tsarist general. After the October Socialist Revolution he was appointed a member of the

counter-revolutionary North-Western Government and Commander-in-Chief of the whiteguard armies in the north-west. After being defeated by the Red Army in November 1919 at Petrograd he retreated to Estonia and from there fled to England—243, 244, 245, 251

Z

ZELENSKY, Isaac Abramovich (1890-1938)—joined the Communist Party in 1906. From 1920 to 1924 he worked as Deputy Chairman of the Moscow Soviet and Secretary of the Moscow Party Committee—360

ZENZINOV, Vladimir Mikhailovich (b. 1881)—one of the leaders of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party and a member of its Central Committee. In 1917 he became a member of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet and advocated a bloc with the bourgeoisie. After the October Socialist Revolution he opposed Soviet power and later emigrated—25

ZINOVIEV (Radomyslsky), Gregory Evseyevich (1883-1936)—joined the Bolshevik Party in 1901. After the October Revolution he became Chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, a member of the Politbureau of the C.C. R.C.P.(B.) and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. He repeatedly opposed Leninist Party policy and in 1934 was expelled for his anti-Party activities—176

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