

Proletarians of All Countries, Unite!

ISKRA

(THE SPARK)

Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party

No. 4

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Translated from the Russian. This edition reproduces, in translation, the full text and article structure of the original four-page broadsheet (a digitised, OCR-scanned copy of which was supplied for translation). The masthead epigraph reads “From a spark a flame shall be kindled!—the

*Decembrists’ reply to Pushkin,” and the paper is described on this issue as organ of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. A small number of passages were illegible or badly garbled in the source scan (faded type, torn columns, pre-reform Cyrillic orthography); these were reconstructed from context rather than transcribed with confidence, and are bracketed in the text with the tags **[RECONSTRUCTED TEXT]** ... **[END RECONSTRUCTED TEXT]**. The lead article, Lenin’s “Where to Begin?,” was especially badly torn and damaged at several points in the source scan, leaving portions of it untranslatable from this copy; readers wanting a complete translation of this essay may wish to consult the version at the Marxists Internet Archive: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1901/may/04.htm>. The endnotes at the close of this issue are later scholarly annotations appended to a subsequent reprint edition (they refer to events of mid-1901 and cite a published volume of correspondence) rather than part of the original May 1901 issue; they are translated here but kept clearly separated under their own heading.*

WHERE TO BEGIN?

The question “What is to be done?” has, in recent years, presented itself with particular urgency before Russian Social-Democrats. It is not a question of the choice of path (as it was in the late 1880s and early 1890s), but of what practical steps we should now take on the path we have chosen, and how they should be taken. It is a question of the system and plan of practical activity. And it must be admitted that this fundamental question, for a practical party, of the character and methods of struggle, remains among us still unresolved, and gives rise to serious disagreement, revealing a regrettable instability and wavering of thought. On the one hand, the ‘Economist’ trend is still far from dead, still striving to narrow down the work of political organisation and agitation. On the other hand, the trend of unprincipled eclecticism still proudly holds up its head, adapting itself to every new ‘fashion,’ unable to distinguish the demands of the moment from the fundamental tasks and constant needs of the movement as a whole. As is well known, this trend has made its nest in *Rabocheye Dyelo*. Its latest ‘programmatic’ statement — a loud article under the loud title ‘A Historic Turn’ (Supplement No. 6 to *Listok Rabochego Dyela*) — confirms the characterisation given above with particular clarity. Only yesterday we were flirting with ‘Economism,’ indignant at the resolute condemnation of *Rabochaya Mysl*, ‘softening’ Plekhanov’s formulation of the question of the struggle against the autocracy — and today we already quote Liebknecht’s words: “If circumstances change in 24 hours, then tactics must change in 24 hours”; we already speak of a ‘strong fighting organisation’ for direct attack, for storming the autocracy, of ‘broad revolutionary political’ (how energetic indeed: both revolutionary *and* political!) ‘agitation among the masses,’ of the ‘unceasing call to street protest,’ of the ‘organisation of street demonstrations of a sharply (sic!) political character,’ and so on and so forth.

We might, perhaps, be pleased to see that *Rabocheye Dyelo* has so quickly assimilated the programme, already put forward by us in our very first issue of *Iskra*, of creating a strong, organised party aimed at winning, not only isolated concessions, but the very citadel of autocracy itself — but the absence, in those who have assimilated it, of any firm point of view is enough to spoil all the pleasure.

The name of Liebknecht, of course, is taken by *Rabocheye Dyelo* in vain. In 24 hours one can change the tactics of agitation on some particular question, the tactics of conducting some particular partial affair; but only people without any firm principles at all can change, not merely in 24 hours but even in 24 months, their views on whether a fighting organisation and political agitation among the masses are needed at all, always and unconditionally. It is ridiculous to refer to a difference of circumstances, to a change of periods: to work at creating a fighting organisation and at conducting political agitation is obligatory under any, even the most ‘grey,’ peaceful circumstances, precisely because under such circumstances this work is especially necessary, for in moments of explosion and outburst it is already too late to create an organisation; it must be ready in advance, so as to be able to unfold its activity at once — to ‘change tactics in 24 hours.’ But in order to change tactics, one must first have a tactic; and if there is no firm organisation, tempered in political struggle under all circumstances and at all times, then there can be no talk at all of a systematic plan of activity, sustained by firm principles and consistently carried out, which alone deserves the name of tactics. Look for yourselves at how, in the very words of this same ‘Historic Turn,’ this newly-fledged party presents as ‘entirely new’ a question already raised long before: yesterday it was the question of political organisation and agitation, today it is the question of terror. Is it not strange to hear people, so utterly forgetful of their own origins, argue

[RECONSTRUCTED TEXT] the OCR of this article is very badly damaged across several columns; the following paragraphs, on the objections to this view and on the general practical problem to be

solved, have been reconstructed in outline from the surviving fragments[END RECONSTRUCTED TEXT] against such a view. But what is required of us at the present moment is not a matter of principle, but a practical solution to the question. What is required is not merely to make clear to ourselves what kind of organisation, for what kind of work, is needed — what is required is to work out a definite plan of organisation, so that its building may be undertaken from every side at once. In view of the urgent importance of the question, we, for our part, venture to put before our comrades a sketch of a plan, to be developed in more detail in a pamphlet we are preparing for the press.

In our opinion, the starting point of activity, the first practical step toward creating the organisation we desire, and, finally, the main thread, holding on to which we could steadily develop, deepen and broaden this organisation — must be the establishment of an all-Russian political newspaper. We need, above all, a newspaper — without it that systematic conduct of principled, consistent and all-round propaganda and agitation is impossible which constitutes the constant and chief task of Social-Democracy in general, and the especially pressing task of the present moment, when interest in politics, in questions of socialism, has been awakened in the broadest strata of the population. And never has the need been felt with such force as now to supplement scattered agitation, by means of personal influence, local leaflets, pamphlets and so on, with that generalised and regular agitation which can be carried on only with the help of the periodical press. It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that the degree of frequency and regularity with which a newspaper appears (and is circulated) can serve as the most exact yardstick of just how solidly this most elementary and most pressing branch of our whole militant activity has been organised among us. Further, we need precisely an all-Russian newspaper. If we do not learn, and so long as we do not learn, to unite our influence on the people and on the government by means of the printed word, the dream of uniting other, more complex, more difficult, but also more decisive means of influence will remain a utopia. Our movement suffers, both in the ideological and in the practical, organisational sense, above all from its own fragmentation, from the fact that the overwhelming majority of Social-Democrats are almost entirely absorbed in local work, which narrows their horizon, narrows the scope of their activity and their skill in conspiracy and their preparedness.

[RECONSTRUCTED TEXT] the middle section of the article, developing this argument at length — including, in substance, the case for the newspaper as not merely a collective propagandist and agitator but also a collective organiser, uniting scattered local efforts, training a network of correspondent-agents across the country, and providing the material for a proper division of labour among the party’s workers — survives only in fragments too broken to translate with confidence[END RECONSTRUCTED TEXT]. It is precisely in this fragmentation that the deepest roots of the instability and wavering we spoke of above must be sought. The way out of this state of affairs, the merging of several local movements into a single all-Russian movement, must be the establishment of an all-Russian newspaper.

* It goes without saying that such agents could work successfully only on condition of their being in the closest touch with the local committees (groups, circles) of our party. And, in general, the whole plan we are outlining can, of course, be realised only with the most active support of the committees, which have more than once taken steps toward the unification of the party, and which, we are convinced, will achieve this unification, if not today then tomorrow, in this form or another.

Tomorrow there may arise the harder task of supporting an unemployment movement in some particular district; tomorrow we must be at our post to take a revolutionary part in a peasant uprising. We must make use of that intensification of the political situation which the government itself has created by its campaigns against the zemstvo. Tomorrow we must support the outrage of the population against this or that rampaging tsarist petty despot, and, by boycott, hounding,

demonstration and the like, teach him such a lesson that he is compelled into open retreat. Such a degree of fighting readiness can only be developed through constant activity, engaged in regular training. And if we unite our forces in the conduct of a common newspaper, then such work will bring forward and train, not only the most capable propagandists, but also the most skilful organisers, the most talented political leaders of the party, capable, at the needed moment, of giving the watchword for decisive battle and of leading it.

In conclusion, a few words to forestall misunderstanding. We have spoken throughout only of systematic preparation, but we by no means wished to say by this that the autocracy can fall only through siege or organised assault. Such a view would be absurd doctrinairism. On the contrary, it is entirely possible, and historically far more probable, that the autocracy will fall under the pressure of one of those spontaneous explosions or unexpected political complications which constantly threaten it from every side. But no political party, without lapsing into adventurism, can build its activity on the calculation of such explosions and complications. We must go our own way, steadily doing our systematic work, and the less we count on the unexpected, the greater the likelihood that no historic turn will catch us unawares.

AUTOCRACY AND FINANCE

[RECONSTRUCTED TEXT] the opening lines of this article are illegible in the source scan[END RECONSTRUCTED TEXT] ...floods the country, and undermines the very foundations of state finance.

Since 1897, when the state treasury bound itself to convert paper money into gold, gold has been steadily disappearing from the state bank. This 'flow of gold,' as it is called, cannot be stemmed. Starting from 1897 we issued 369 million roubles' worth of credit notes, and gold worth about 600 million roubles left the state bank — not counting gold acquired abroad during this period. The gold reserve, as of January 16, 1901, stood at only 738 million roubles, already nearly 70 million less than in the autumn of 1892, at the time of the famine. If we reckon by the old currency, we again find ourselves with a debt of 140 million roubles in credit notes — that is, that much paper money has been issued without gold backing. And all the while gold keeps leaving, carried off abroad in whole wagon-loads. It is understandable, then, that Witte himself has grown seriously alarmed, so much so that he even states this publicly. In his report on the state revenue and expenditure budget for 1901 he acknowledges this to be "an unfavourable fact deserving serious attention." To explain this phenomenon he refers to general causes of the constriction of the money market. But he does not explain the following: while, in other states, a decrease in the gold reserve of the issuing banks — that is, an increase in the amount of gold in circulation — corresponds to an increase in the circulation of bank notes, which is entirely understandable, since, if the overall need for money has grown, in our case the exact opposite happens: gold leaves, while credit notes are returned to the bank. Despite the fact that the quantity of credit notes has been reduced, against the former amount, by half a million, the stock of credit roubles accumulating in the State Bank's coffers is greater than ever before. At present, between 10 and 20 per cent of all credit roubles are held in the coffers of the State Bank — an unprecedented state of affairs since the monetary reform. This means the public is demanding, not simply money, but gold.

The purpose of the monetary reform was to secure the circulation of credit notes at a fixed rate of exchange; and yet it turns out that the convertibility of gold is, in general, driving credit notes out of circulation. Naturally, the bank tries to put the notes back into circulation, but they return again in exchange for gold — the public accumulates ever more gold, while the bank has ever less. If this process is not halted, gold will, obviously, disappear entirely from the bank. The government's whole calculation was that in Russia, as in other countries, a definite ratio would be established between the quantity of gold and the quantity of notes in circulation; the gold reserve would only be needed to cover temporary deviations from the norm. Why, then, does Russia produce an entirely different effect? Because, in the circulation of credit notes, the element of trust is essential; and since trust in the financial operations of the Russian government stands at zero, there arises a tendency to reduce to nothing the credit notes in circulation. Gold in one's hand is security; a credit note, on the other hand, is a promissory note issued to the government — and what is such a note worth? Today a rouble for a rouble, but tomorrow, by decree of His Imperial Majesty, whom no one trusts, it may be worth nothing. This is the meaning of a monetary reform carried out without popular representation.

The London stock exchange has long held itself aloof from Russian loans; the Berlin exchange closed itself off in the 1880s, though it still purchases, in modest amounts, Russian securities. But, in general, it has made use of conversions to shift Russian securities over to Paris. So where, then, is gold to be found?

And a loan is needed, oh how badly it is needed! Without a loan, instead of replenishing the bank's coffers, the treasury itself is now draining gold out of them. The current account of the treasury with the State Bank has fallen, compared with last year, by more than 250 million roubles. Ordinarily the treasury's bank account, at the start of the year — roughly until the end of February — increases, but this year it has already, since the middle of January, been declining: on January 8 it stood at 307½ million roubles, by the 16th only 291 — 266 million less than in the corresponding period last year. Customs revenue has fallen, and so has the sugar tax. And, most important of all, the revenue from the liquor trade and from the spirits monopoly finds itself in a very doubtful position. Although the distillation of spirits was, up to December 1, 1900, higher than the year before by only a million buckets, stocks of spirits were seven million buckets greater — meaning, sales of spirits have stagnated. And meanwhile, tavern revenue is the chief pillar of the Russian budget. But how can vodka consumption fail to fall, when there is famine in the villages? And yet, despite the famine, taxes have been squeezed from the peasants without mercy: from the appanage lands they collected, by November 1, more than the full annual assessment; from state peasants, more than nine-tenths of the assessment; and from those on former gentry estates, three-quarters. It is only by squeezing out the last drops from the peasant, by plying the people with drink, and by rapacious exploitation of the railways, that they still manage to fill the treasury's coffers.

And even the cash on hand has long since fallen short. Year after year, the appropriations of the ordinary budget go unfulfilled. From January 1 to November 1, 1900, 120 million roubles were spent from appropriations carried over from previous years, and 63 million from the extraordinary budget. And since, as of January 1, 1900, there were at least 300 million roubles' worth of arrears, it follows that, even after November 1, 1900, there remained 117 million roubles of unspent appropriations from 1899 and earlier years! How much of the 1900 budget remains unfulfilled is not known, but, judging by everything, certainly no small sum. On top of this there were sudden, unforeseen expenses. Witte sets aside 62 million roubles to cover expenditures incurred in the Far East. Yet he himself admits that this by no means exhausts the losses actually sustained. The sum has been kept small, so as not to burden the budget further — but it will have to be paid nonetheless! Meanwhile military expenditures have not ceased; they continue even now, and their sum grows by the day. And how much has been squandered and plundered owing to the halt in construction of the Siberian railway! In general, there is no more money for building this railway. Last year 70 million roubles were allotted for construction of the line and for the purchase of rolling stock; this year, only 10! And on top of this there is now famine in Siberia, and a dear price for bread! Famine, generally, demands expenditure from the government. Let the peasants die, and who

[RECONSTRUCTED TEXT] several lines are illegible here; the passage evidently continued to draw out the implication that the government would rather let the peasants starve than spend on relief**[END RECONSTRUCTED TEXT]**. The position of the Ministry of Finance is extremely difficult. Having adopted the gold standard, it took on obligations before Europe. To abolish the gold standard now would mean finally ruining our credit. But it does not know where to find gold. A foreign loan is needed. And since a new loan is now urgently necessary, Mr Witte, in his report, indulges in extraordinarily wordy and empty talk to the effect that no such loan is needed. Whom he thinks he is deceiving by this — perhaps Nicholas II — is unknown, but he certainly will not manage, this time, to deceive the European public.

Western-European newspapers, throughout the past summer, quietly reported on the unsuccessful attempts of the Russian Ministry of Finance to conclude a loan. It is known that Witte himself travelled twice to Paris for this very purpose, while his financial agent Rothstein

went, for the same reason, to New York — but in vain! The banks are setting impossible conditions. And now even the French money market has closed itself off before the tsarist government — so where, then, is it to turn?

This owes to the fact that Russia has no parliament, and therefore the government can act as it pleases, without reckoning with any opposition. But, not reckoning with a political opposition, the Russian government is all the more obliged to reckon with the mood of the stock exchange. What dependence is more humiliating, and more binding, than dependence on elected representatives of the people, or dependence on the firm of Rothschild or on the French banks? The signature of the autocratic tsar carries no force whatever on the money market, unless it is backed up by the signature of the descendants of Meyer Amschel Rothschild.

And it is precisely for this reason that the stock exchange treats the Russian government with such distrust, because it is subject to no parliamentary control whatsoever. The bourgeoisie of Western Europe knows, from its own long experience, that only accountability before parliament can shed full light on the financial position of a state; or, as, for example, with the German capitalists, who trust the publications of the Russian Ministry of Finance, knowing that Russian finances, alongside the published budgets, are filled with concealed items, from the very first ones on — whereas in a joint-stock company, even the smallest one, that which is required is a public account, so that a shareholder is assured that its management is subject to the control of an auditing committee, and so on. Since we, however, have no control at all over state finances, which operate without proper accounting, in which whole years' worth of the most important operations remain unknown — who is to trust it? And meanwhile precisely credit-worthiness is what our government now most urgently needs.

[RECONSTRUCTED TEXT] Several further paragraphs discussing the country's total debt burden and its reliance on Western capital markets are too fragmentary in the source to render with confidence**[END RECONSTRUCTED TEXT]**. Already, by the most conservative reckoning, nearly a third of state revenue goes toward interest payments on loans — 275 million roubles a year on loans alone! And before this whole plan, unfulfilled state needs remain. What, then, will come of all this?

To whom does the government owe? — Turkey. Parliamentarianism, or political disintegration and slavery before the stock exchange — such is the dilemma!

AUTOCRACY AND THE ZEMSTVO

In No. 2 of *Iskra* we already pointed out that the moving spirit behind the government's plans, aimed at the complete abolition of the zemstvo, is the Minister of Finance and Secretary of State, Witte. In 1899 he came out with an extensive memorandum in which, objecting to a proposal — put forward by the former Minister of the Interior, Goremykin — to introduce zemstvo institutions in the Western Region, he argues that the preservation of even the smallest degree of independent local self-government is incompatible with the maintenance of autocracy. The zemstvo, Mr Witte develops the argument, is inherently bound to strive to acquire political significance, to turn itself from an organ of local economic self-government into an organ of state power, independent of, and equal in rights with, the monarch. In other words, the zemstvo is the embryo of popular representation, of a constitution. This embryo is still very feeble, barely noticeable, but “within it lie hidden the seeds of a future dangerous to the autocracy,” and therefore the zemstvo is subject to political execution. Mr Witte leaves it unclear whether he wishes to cut off the zemstvo's head outright, or to prepare for it a slow death, but in any case the zemstvo must fall. It is clear why such representatives of autocratic bureaucracy as Witte find the zemstvo's independence so hateful. They hate its independence — now hidden, or manifesting itself only in matters harmless to the autocracy — but capable, at a critical moment, of bursting forth all at once and finding for itself an organised instrument.

It is curious, and in the highest degree significant, with what attention the supreme guardians of autocratic bureaucracy watch for every manifestation of zemstvo independence, how carefully they hunt for political meaning in every single step and statement, however timid, of zemstvo men. In this attentiveness there is expressed, in some, a clear consciousness, in others a vague, still barely articulate feeling, that the splendid edifice of bureaucratic arbitrary rule is rotten from within, that the autocratic bureaucracy has exhausted its strength and has fulfilled all its historical tasks; that, in order to preserve its position, it must be forever on its guard. The historical forces hostile to autocratic bureaucracy have grown so strong that its representatives need only grow careless for a moment for them to lose their balance and start rolling down the slope, at the bottom of which stands the ominous inscription: **constitution**.

To characterise this state of affairs, we shall quote some passages from Witte's memorandum, devoted to clarifying the political role of the zemstvo, as reformed under the statute of 1890. The constitutional aspirations of the zemstvo, as is well known, expressed themselves more or less clearly during the era of Narodovoltsy terror, at the end of the 1870s and beginning of the 1880s. Having characterised the zemstvo agitation of this era and clarified its significance, Mr Witte poses the question: “has the political tendency of the zemstvos, their striving to participate in legislative activity, ceased with the issuing of the statute of 1890?” In answering this question, Mr Witte recalls the “addresses submitted on the occasion of the accession to the throne of Our happily reigning Sovereign Emperor — addresses in which there was rather clearly expressed the zemstvo's former, but now concealed, striving to step outside the sphere of purely local affairs entrusted to it.” “All the addresses submitted by the zemstvos in 1894-95 were not the result of a chance surge of a momentary idea; they were the direct consequence of what seemed, in their view, a convenient moment for expressing that same old thought of the zemstvo men, of the necessity of achieving participation in legislation and central administration. This thought has undoubtedly not yet died out in the zemstvo milieu, even now, and, by the very nature of things, cannot die.” An eloquent indication of this, in Witte's own words, is found in the confidential reports of the governor of Tver, who pointed out that “the struggle with zemstvo opposition constitutes a difficult task for the local administration,” and that the

chairmen presiding over zemstvo assemblies, the marshals of the nobility, are sometimes required to display even “civic courage” (sic!) in carrying out confidential circulars of the Ministry of the Interior concerning matters that zemstvo institutions are not permitted to touch. Mr Witte resolutely rejects the Ministry of the Interior's assurances that, since the zemstvo statute of 1890, “even the ghost of political aspirations has disappeared.” “The political tendency,” says Mr Witte, “has, since the founding of zemstvo institutions right up to the present time, at times been suppressed, at times revived again, but it cannot be denied that it marks the entire twenty-year history of our zemstvo.” The Minister of Finance derides Mr Goremykin's assertion that “all the constitutional aspirations of the zemstvos boil down to the noisy pretensions of a few provincial troublemakers and politicians in a handful of districts.” This, he says, is spoken either insincerely, or out of unfamiliarity with the “diverse and rich secret material” held at the Ministry of the Interior. “Even if one simply counts up all those zemstvos which, directly or indirectly, expressed a wish to be admitted to participation in legislation, the result is not merely a few districts, but no less than half

[RECONSTRUCTED TEXT] the text breaks off here at the edge of the scanned page; the article evidently continued, but no further portion of it was included in the source material supplied[END RECONSTRUCTED TEXT].

QUESTIONS OF THE DAY

HOW SOME PEOPLE MANAGE TO BECOME ALARMED

According to *Rabocheye Dyelo*, the “historical moment” we are living through has posed before our party an “entirely new” (no joke!) question. The shots fired by Karpovich and Balmashev, and the sympathy they met with among the broadest circles and among all(?) revolutionary elements, clearly show that “the white terror of the tsarist government is once again, with the same inexorable force of a law of nature, creating the ground for the red terror of the revolutionaries.” *Rabocheye Dyelo*, in view of this, invites “our party organisations” to jointly decide the question of their attitude toward terror.

The question of terror, so ‘new’ for *Rabocheye Dyelo*, is far from new for Russian Social-Democracy.

In the early 1880s, the overwhelming majority of Russian revolutionaries were convinced that political struggle in Russia was possible only in the form of the terrorist struggle of a conspiratorial party. On what was this conviction based? On the failure of previous attempts by Russian revolutionaries to call forth, by means of propaganda and agitation in its midst, a broad revolutionary movement of the people. We now know what caused this failure. Those popular masses to whom the revolutionaries of the seventies appealed (the peasant masses) did not represent a force capable of a revolutionary struggle with the existing order. That very class which might have become such a force — the proletariat — was, at the time, still too immature, while the programme of the Russian revolutionaries of that day did not permit them to make use of that degree of revolutionary development which the proletariat had already, in fact, attained. On the other hand, the liberal strata of ‘society’ were then, as now, quite unable to represent any independent revolutionary force. The revolutionary party, therefore, naturally inclined toward the idea of accomplishing a political revolution by its own strength, with the aid of the only means accessible to a handful of conspirators — political terror. In the thinking of the revolutionaries of that time, systematic terror was to disorganise the government, weaken the prestige of its power in the eyes of discontented, but not yet capable of revolutionary movement, strata of the population, intimidate the government and force it into concessions. It stands to reason that this goal might be achieved the more easily, the more sharply discontent expressed itself in wide society, for which reason the Narodovoltsy set particularly great store by, and especially placed their hopes upon, the manifestations of society’s own sympathy;

[RECONSTRUCTED TEXT] several lines here are too fragmentary to render confidently; the sense is that the organisation itself was to serve only an auxiliary role, while the main blow was to be delivered by conspiratorial terror, which was to be the chief instrument[END RECONSTRUCTED TEXT].

But these hopes, as is well known, were not borne out, and the revolutionaries were forced to return to the idea of a popular movement, of the force alone capable of breaking the organised power of the state. But this was not simply a return to the pre-Narodovoltsy ideas of the 1870s. Having subjected all the foundations of Narodnik and Narodovolts programmes to fresh review, revolutionary thought, in the person of the ‘Emancipation of Labour’ group, found the main lever of revolutionary development in the process of the development of class contradictions and of the class struggle called forth by them, and found the fundamental force of the Russian revolution in the proletariat — in the sole class capable of creating a nationwide political movement and

of waging a successful struggle for political freedom and for socialism.

Russian Social-Democracy grew up and developed in struggle against that trend of Russian socialist-revolutionary thought for which all political struggle in Russia was reduced to terror. How surprised those Narodovoltsy of the 1880s and 1890s would be, who found themselves left behind, precisely on this question, in the struggle with the Russian Social-Democrats, to learn of the ‘novelty’ of the question of terror for Social-Democrats of *Rabocheye Dyelo*! How the Petersburg workers, who back in the early 1890s worked out their political world-view in struggle against the Narodovoltsy trend — a struggle whose practical meaning came down to the question: ‘terror or the political movement of the proletariat?’ — would laugh, on learning of this ‘novelty’!

While the Narodovoltsy saw in Russia no other means of active political struggle but terror, applied by a conspiratorial party, the Social-Democrats proved that, by developing and organising the class struggle of the proletariat, they were contributing to the formation, out of it, of just such a political force as could, at a given moment, by a series of active attacks upon the state order, shake it and force it, either through struggle, or in advance, to yield concessions to the demands of the people.

The first part of the task the Social-Democrats set themselves has been accomplished. A broad wave of the labour movement has spread across Russia, ideas of class struggle have penetrated every layer of the proletariat, Social-Democracy has become the sole strong revolutionary party, and of the old revolutionary trends almost no trace remains. And what then? At this very moment, when it seemed we were about to move on to organising a systematic, active political struggle against the existing order — at this very moment, within the ranks of the Russian Social-Democrats themselves, including even among the workers, sympathies for terror, as an instrument of political struggle, are once again arising, and for many Social-Democrats the question of terror floats up as an ‘entirely new’ question. Where does the cause of this strange phenomenon lie?

It is not hard to see. The growth of terrorist inclinations within the Russian revolutionary movement of recent years has proceeded exactly in parallel with the decline of the revolutionary mood of Russian Social-Democracy, a decline observable since 1894, as the ‘economic’ trend and ‘criticism of Marxism’ developed within it. The Social-Democratic movement, having already reached that height of development at which it attempted to form itself into a political party with a definite political task for the near future, has now visibly begun to falter, trading great things for small. In place of faith in the nearness of a decisive battle with the autocracy, there arises the conviction that, for a very long period, the activity of fighters in the labour movement must be reduced to the everyday struggle for the partial improvement of the position of the working class; in place of the conviction of the leading role that the Russian proletariat must play in the nationwide struggle against the autocracy, there appears, at best, a silent recognition that the proletariat can only, through its own purely economic struggle, shake the existing order, produce in it more or less significant ‘disorders,’ while it is for liberal ‘society’ to actively work at its transformation. This conviction lay at the basis of the programme of the well-known ‘group of criticism,’ a programme that is far from being the product of the thoughtlessness of individual persons, as *Rabocheye Dyelo* wished to depict it, but which expresses, most sharply, the logical conclusions from views that have become popular among very many comrades. **The exclusively economic practice of Social-Democrats brings about the transfer of the political tasks of the present time onto the liberal intelligentsia** (see Axelrod, Letter to the editors of *Rabocheye Dyelo*).

But not everyone is given to reduce his political world-view to a faith in the revolutionary capacities of Russian liberalism. Those who could not place all their revolutionary hopes on liberal society, those

revolutionaries who were incapable of complacently sinking into agitation about ‘a kopeck on the rouble’ but who, at the same time, became infected with the fashionable distrust of the political capacities of the growing working-class movement, sought a way out in a return to the old idea of terrorist struggle by a handful of intellectuals. This explains the odd spectacle whereby people who, only yesterday, were shying away from any ‘premature’ talk of political struggle, today, having lost faith in the workers’ own political maturity, precipitately arm themselves with the weapon of terror, forgetting all the lessons drawn by Russian Social-Democracy from the historical experience of the Narodovolsky.

Does this mean that we are always and in principle unconditional opponents of terror? Not at all. Even in the draft programme of the ‘Emancipation of Labour’ group (1884) it was said that, at the moment of the decisive struggle against the autocracy, the working-class party will resort to every suitable means, and, should the need arise, will not stop short even of terror. But that moment of decisive attack on the autocracy will be given by a whole series of coinciding conditions, of which the most decisive does not depend on the will of any organised force whatsoever. In 1897 P. B. Axelrod, speaking of terror in an ‘Answer’ to young comrades, expressed the following thoughts, to which we recommend our readers pay the most serious attention:

“One must not lose sight of the fact that the final blow to the hostile regime will be dealt by some great, elemental force and set of events, lying outside the power of the acting party. A cholera epidemic, a severe economic crisis, a foreign war and financial insolvency — this is what most often deals reaction its last blow. But in order that revolutionary elements might be able to make use of such a critical moment in the life of the autocratic state, their struggle against absolutism must, before all else, represent the process of forging general social forces capable, at that moment, consciously and energetically, of defending a democratic constitution. To prepare this force is possible only through energetic and unceasing propagandist and organisational-organising activity among the workers. Only in this way can there be formed a labour organisation which, thanks to its close union with the revolutionary intelligentsia on the one hand, and its deep roots in the peasant-labouring masses on the other, will quickly prove able to step forward as the leader of the latter, so as to secure for the people the broadest possible political rights.”

But, in order to be ready, by the time such a political crisis arrives, for a decisive attack upon tsarism, Social-Democracy must unceasingly develop the political activity of the working class, must exercise its political capacities in constant struggle with the existing order on the ground of every separate manifestation of arbitrariness and oppression; it must, not merely in its own imagination but in the consciousness of all discontented elements, become the vanguard detachment of the movement, from which not the working class alone, but all the other discontented strata too, await the signal for the decisive attack, and from which they all willingly accept the watchword of immediate demands given for this attack. And it is when Social-Democracy attains such significance, when, leading behind it the other discontented social elements, it gives the signal for such a general attack on tsarism, that it will, in the choice of means for this attack, be guided exclusively by considerations of expediency, and, should it find it necessary, will apply terror too, will perhaps even resort to armed uprising. But in order to be able to determine whether such a decisive moment has arrived, in order to have the right to take upon itself the responsibility of applying and propagandising such extreme revolutionary methods of struggle, Social-Democracy must possess a unified will, must know how to convey this will to all the social forces standing under its banner, must, in other words, be able to subordinate to its influence all the discontented social forces standing outside its own ranks. And all this presupposes the existence of a strong organisation, tempered through

constant political struggle, well knit together with those masses among whom it conducts its everyday agitation.

Under such conditions, systematic terror, applied at the moment of revolutionary crisis, would be a manifestation of the highest degree of tension of the revolutionary energy of that same systematic movement at whose head the Social-Democrats had succeeded in placing themselves.

But that is not what we see now. The joyful feeling with which many revolutionary and even oppositional elements greeted Karpovich’s shot has clearly demonstrated the general distrust of Social-Democracy — as the supposed representative of the working class — to stand now as the vanguard and advanced detachment of the contemporary social movement. And so, if Karpovich’s shot were to serve as the starting point for a new campaign of Russian revolutionaries, this campaign would itself be an acknowledgment of the absence, within the working class, of that degree of revolutionary spirit and consciousness that would make it capable of standing at the head of the social movement.

Rabocheye Dyelo is right in saying that the white terror of the government creates the soil for the red terror of revolutionaries. But this force which creates this terror is by no means ‘unavoidable,’ as *Rabocheye Dyelo* puts it; it can, on the contrary, be avoided, but avoided only through the active work of Social-Democrats in creating a genuinely revolutionary and consciously political movement of the proletariat. This latter, having taken its rightful place in the ranks of the active fighters against absolutism, will lend them precisely that strength which will cure them of the traditional faith in terror as the chief means of political struggle in Russia.

[RECONSTRUCTED TEXT] the concluding portion of this article, criticising a leaflet of the Union of Foreign Social-Democrats and its slogan of answering violence with violence, is heavily damaged in the source scan and has been reconstructed from the surviving fragments**[END RECONSTRUCTED TEXT]**. *Rabocheye Dyelo*, for its part, decides this question of how one is to organise a political force quite simply. It recommends ‘changing tactics in 24 hours,’ and to do so it throws overboard, in 24 hours, all the political wisdom it has preached throughout the whole of its existence. But, as was to be expected, in its new position it displays the very same frivolity and groundlessness that distinguished its former tactics. The watchword of the old tactic was: ‘slow steps, timid zigzags, quietly forward!’ — through separate ‘stages’ of struggle, first for small economic demands, then for separate political rights, and only upon obtaining these — for a constitution. Now all the ‘stages’ have been thrown overboard, and all Russian workers, whatever ‘stage’ they may be at, are advised to demand a Zemsky Sobor, and, in putting forward this demand, to carry out demonstrations no matter what. And to answer every act of government violence with violence, to free those arrested! Blood demands blood! (see the Leaflet of the Union of Foreign Social-Democrats, March 1901.) What a truly ‘historic turn’! When representatives of the so-called ‘old’ trend in Social-Democracy demanded that the demand for a democratic constitution be placed at the head of political agitation, they were complacently told in reply that this would be ‘impractical,’ and that this demand could only be put forward once the proletariat had passed through the school of struggle for particular political rights and had partly won them from the autocracy. When the May leaflet, published by the Central Committee of the Russian Party, put forward, among the May demands, a constitution based on universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage, this leaflet, as containing ‘utopian’ demands, was subjected to attack by the ‘Economists,’ and *Rabocheye Dyelo* played into their hands, systematically assuring the public that there was no struggle at all between two trends in Russian Social-Democracy, that the whole matter was one of ‘stages’ of struggle, which did not contradict one another. When P. Axelrod pointed to the necessity of drawing into the circle of practical agitation those questions on which the interests of the proletariat coincide with the interests of other discontented classes of

society, when he invited Social-Democracy to master the working masses through the struggle of these classes against tsarism, *Rabocheye Dyelo* laughed at his hopes for 'liberal landowners.' When *Yuzhny Rabochy* openly set itself the task of preparing workers for a decisive revolutionary clash with tsarism, the 'young comrades' defended by *Rabocheye Dyelo* against attacks from 'old-timers' declared *Yuzhny Rabochy* a rebellious organ, and the sourly-sweet review by *Rabocheye Dyelo* of this organ said neither yes nor no to that editorial programme with which the new newspaper threw down its challenge to the propagandists of walking at a 'slow pace.'

And now, when the whirlwind of events has caught our badly organised movement unawares, when before local practitioners there has arisen, in all its magnitude, the difficult task of, with meagre available forces, mastering the movement and giving it form — at this very moment *Rabocheye Dyelo*, fearlessly forgetting its own past, has, for the first time, repeated after others: forward! forward! for the Zemsky Sobor! and to this has added, quite inappropriately: 'answer violence with violence!'

But, gentlemen, if it turns out in practice that our working masses have not sufficiently absorbed the consciousness of the importance of a Zemsky Sobor and will not rally energetically beneath the raised banner — upon whom will the responsibility for this failure fall? If the call you are making meets with the resistance of those very comrades who learned, from you yourselves, the theory of the notorious 'stages' of political struggle, and they refuse to support this demand 'all at once,' and instead of full unanimity your call meets with bewildered questions and provokes fresh discord — what then? If it turns out that those very tendencies which you yourselves have until now taken under your protection have deeply penetrated the consciousness of many activists, and, in answer to the call to fight together with the intelligentsia, you hear in reply: 'our business is to stand aside, long live the labour movement!' — in what position will you then find yourselves?

The importance of our forces demands, at the present moment, the greatest caution in inviting the masses to mobilise at any cost, precisely at a time when our enemies have organised and marshalled all their forces; under such circumstances, a thoughtless call from abroad — 'free the arrested!', 'answer violence with violence!' and every kind of 'bloody' rhetoric — can only have the consequence of compromising Social-Democracy, of laying upon it responsibility for a massacre of workers that may yet occur.

No! Such hysterical nervousness, reinforced by an ill-timed lack of firmness in the understanding of the party's tasks, can only harm the development of our cause, and it is our duty to draw comrades' attention to the fact that all these 'speeches' are sheltering under the firm of the 'Foreign Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party.' Our own answer to the question 'what is to be done' (see a special article in this same issue) leads to one conclusion only. To achieve a union of all socialist-revolutionary forces around the labour movement and its vanguard — Social-Democracy — we must fight against that very disorganisation of revolutionary forces to which a new upsurge of terrorist moods threatens to lead. And for this our party must prove in practice the vitality of the Social-Democratic labour movement, as a genuine political force capable of crushing the autocracy.

Whatever position the events now sweeping over us may find us in, however poorly organised we may be, we must do everything possible so that the working class and Social-Democracy fulfil, at this moment, their political duty. But in order to fulfil this duty, one must not intoxicate oneself with loud phrases, must not close one's eyes to past mistakes, and must not compound the harm they have caused with fresh, contradictory mistakes. And let the 'historic about-turn' of 180 degrees, made by *Rabocheye Dyelo* amid a clatter of cymbals, prove to the unbelieving that a political party without a firm programme and a

consistently sustained tactic is condemned to complete helplessness at every decisive moment.

FROM OUR PUBLIC LIFE

Student Unrest: The Appointment of Vannovsky

After Karpovich's shot and the street demonstrations, the government has begun speaking to the students in a new tone. The application of the 'Provisional Rules' has been suspended, and General Vannovsky has been invited to take the place of the murdered Bogolepov. In the rescript given in his name, the frightened Tsar speaks of the need to bring 'heartfelt solicitude' to the work of educating the young. Heartfelt solicitude — why, of course! answers the well-drilled general, and at once issues an 'order' to his department: that within 24 hours everyone should be filled with heartfelt solicitude!

The Russian newspapers lost no time in rejoicing over these 'heartfelt' phrases. Both the liberal papers and the organs of obscurantism rejoiced at once. The former rejoice and explain that heartfelt solicitude means a relaxation of the barracks-like regime at the universities, the repeal of the 'Provisional Rules,' the granting to students and professors of freedom of self-government. The reactionary papers rejoice and object: 'heartfelt solicitude' means protecting the students from the corrupting influence of various false teachings and 'self-indulgent' passions, strengthening paternal oversight of the students, educating youth in the spirit of Orthodoxy and autocracy, ridding the university of the *raznochinet*s poverty that sows, among well-brought-up young people, the seeds of coarse feelings of discontent... And both sides accuse each other of misinterpreting the fine words of 'the beloved monarch.'

Which side is right, and what may we expect from General Vannovsky's 'heartfelt solicitude'?

In his time General Vannovsky, as Minister of War, replaced the 'liberal' Milyutin and carried out a decisive and radical change of tactics... **[RECONSTRUCTED TEXT]** the passage on Vannovsky's earlier career as Minister of War, and the opening of his inquiry into the causes of the March disorders, is badly damaged in the source**[END RECONSTRUCTED TEXT]**. Among the 'general causes of the disorders' the General noted 'the disunion of students among themselves,' that is, the absence of the right of assembly and unions, noted the 'shortcomings of the university statute of 1884,' but at the same time also noted the 'overcrowding of the universities,' about which *Moskovskiy*e *Vedomosti* cries so much (still not enough!), and the 'insufficient care in the choice of professors, among whom there occur people of a falsely liberal orientation.' The government lost no time in taking into account those conclusions of General Vannovsky's report which coincided with its own views, and at once intensified inspection, removed dozens of professors, and took measures to halt the 'overcrowding.'

To assist Vannovsky, senator Meshchaninov has been appointed, who had, until now, been the chief administrator of the prison administration. This is as fitting as could be: if a military general is called upon to restore 'order' in education, then the most suitable assistant for him is a prison-keeper!

The new 'pacifiers' began with an attempt to win over the students with fine words. Following the example of Witte and Kovalevsky, who by this method managed to hold back, for a time, the course of disturbances at the educational institutions under their charge, they convened an 'official' meeting to decide the question: to strike or not to strike? The calculation was simple: at such a meeting all the cowards and the golden youth, who had stayed away from the 'secret' meetings, would appear, and their votes would tip the balance in favour of a 'sensible' resolution. But after the battle of March 4, even this manoeuvre could not help. The students resolved not to sit examinations

before autumn, so as to wait for the return of their comrades sent into the army. To this resolution, dictated by a feeling of comradely solidarity, Vannovsky's 'heartfelt solicitude' responded by refusing to postpone the examinations. The students resolved not to sit them at all. The new ministry has landed itself in a fine mess. Nor have the vile articles in the newspapers (*SPB Vedomosti*), which tried to sow discord within the student body by urging them not to hinder the ministry in the reform it was undertaking, not to make its position more difficult by radical and ill-considered decisions, been of any help.

We very, very much fear that this policy of 'heartfelt solicitude' will bring nothing but fresh disgrace upon the Russian government.

Western Siberia

The Petersburg massacre, the Provisional Rules, exiles and every kind of repression by the government, the whip and the *nagaika*, have called forth indignation and protest even in the remote towns of Siberia. In Ekaterinburg, a strike began at the women's paramedic school and the mining school; meetings continue without a break, and indignation grows. In Irkutsk, the seminary has been closed. In Tomsk, in May 1900, forbidden little books were found on two gymnasium students; under questioning, they said the books had been obtained from a former student. As punishment, this student has now been sent to prison for a month. — In November or December 1900, seminary students, tormented by clerical oppression, a terrible regime, the constant expulsion of comrades from the institution — expulsion for reading books unpopular with the rector, or for suspicious acquaintances, and so on — plastered the town with proclamations appealing to society for help, for deliverance from the priest-spies. The frightened priests, headed by the local feeble-minded bishop Makary, sent word to St Petersburg. An inquiry was sent from St Petersburg and an investigation carried out. The guilty were not found — but the severity of the regime only increased. — In the last days of February, searches were carried out on workers, chiefly typesetters. Some twelve to nineteen persons were searched, two arrested, and many workers taken in for questioning, in an attempt to establish links with the intelligentsia. The reason for the searches, it is said, lies in a strong recent spread of illegal workers' literature among the workers. — For some time now, at the local university and the Technological Institute, ferment has begun among the students, following news of the disturbances in Kiev. There have been meetings, but the students standing for a strike were in a minority. After the government announcement of March 4, **[RECONSTRUCTED TEXT]** the closing sentences of this report, describing a technologists' meeting on March 7, are illegible**[END RECONSTRUCTED TEXT]**.

Death of P. Morozov

At the beginning of January, in Sychyovka, Smolensk province, the St Petersburg agitator Pyotr Morozov (a weaver) died of an illness contracted in prison. In 1894 Morozov was arrested in St Petersburg and, after a year and a half's confinement in a provincial prison, was exiled in 1896 to Vologda province for three years. On completing his exile Morozov went to Ekaterinoslav and, despite his thoroughly broken health and the exhausting labour he had to take up (he worked as a stoker at a factory), at once threw himself into revolutionary work. By some chance, he was arrested again very soon (shortly before April 19, 1899) with several hundred proclamations in his possession. His stay in the Ekaterinoslav prison finished him off completely. In summer 1900 Morozov, already hopelessly ill, was released and sent to the town of Sychyovka. The deceased was among the best agitators of our movement.

From Ivanovo-Voznesensk

Reports reach us testifying to the extremely difficult position of the workers, brought on by the industrial crisis. At the spinning mill of the

Ivanovo-Voznesensk Manufacturing Company (which employs 5,000 workers), starting from October 9, almost every shift sees half the spinning frames (141 in all) standing idle, while the workers are paid only for half the idle time. This means a loss of pay equivalent to four whole days a month. At the weaving mill of the same company, they have begun supplying poor-quality material, which has lowered earnings from 11 roubles to 9 roubles a month on average; for some workers pay has fallen as low as six roubles. The workers' demand for better material was not met, and when the matter was raised, the owner, A. Lubkov, declared: "When we have to work at a loss! To hell with the mill, and with the whole business, when our goods aren't selling."

Complaints about poor material are also heard from the Burylin mill (900 workers). For lack of warp, the machines often stand idle, and the workers are not paid for this idle time. To lengthen the working day, clocks are moved forward at the owner's discretion. For some workers the working day has been lengthened to 11½ hours. At the railway workshops (about 300 workers), clocks are likewise arbitrarily altered, unjust fines are imposed, and pension payments are made incorrectly. On February 2 a worker was dismissed for having dozed off at his work. And he had dozed off because he had gone two days and nights without sleep.

In the last third of March, a leaflet of the local party committee was distributed in Ivanovo-Voznesensk concerning the disturbances at the Bakulin mill, described in No. 3 of Iskra.

Crisis and Its Consequences

In St Petersburg, Moscow, Tula and the Ivanovo-Voznesensk district, industrial work continues to shrink. In recent times, stagnation has also spread to the Baku oil fields, and the Baku governor telegraphed the Astrakhan governor about the need to hold back the movement of unemployed people to Baku. And in Astrakhan itself, the accumulation of unemployed men has for some time now caused disquiet among the authorities.

The first disorders occurred on March 9 in the settlement of Gorlovka, in Ekaterinoslav province, where several hundred miners demanded that they be paid their wages for travel back to their home villages, and, having received a refusal, wrecked shops and attacked the police station. From the testimony of local eyewitnesses, the disorders here were so serious that the authorities published an order prohibiting street demonstrations (under the regulation on Protection) in Ekaterinoslav, Nikolayev, Sevastopol and the Don Cossack region, not to mention those places where a state of Protection was already in force before March. Beyond this, the Ministry of the Interior has forbidden the arranging of festive amusements (fairs and booths), since street disorders often arise in such gatherings of a festive public. However, in Kishinev this very prohibition brought about disorder, ending in the pillage of Jewish shops. In Kiev, very stormy disturbances occurred, provoked by the zealotry of one of the soldiers assigned to guard the police; during the disorders, several soldiers were wounded with knives. Similar attacks on Jewish shops occurred in Ekaterinoslav as well. In Astrakhan there were clashes between workers who had come from the villages and Cossacks. In Taganrog, disorders with attacks on the police occurred twice during Easter. In Baku the disorders took the shape of an Armenian-Tatar conflict. In Odessa, for the same reason, the administration arrested up to two thousand people, and held the town under martial-law conditions for a time. The same was true in Kishinev, which likewise saw serious unrest.

Thus does the very beginning of the new century mark itself in Russia by the 'disorders' of the wretched and homeless poor. This inexhaustible source of dissatisfaction, always ready to erupt against the propertied classes, will still cause the existing order no small amount of trouble and grief. No draconian measures will pacify this element. The

'respectable' public must convince itself that only two conditions can protect it from the consequences of these violent outbursts of the wretched: an economic order in which such outbursts caused by unemployment are impossible and are not persecuted by law, and a political system under which the starving pauper will not, at every turn, be exasperated by police arbitrariness.

New Serfdom, or Why the Peasants Are Starving

We have received a letter from a soldier in starving Bessarabia province. Our correspondent reports that a copy of this letter has also been sent to other editorial offices. Nonetheless, in view of the letter's extraordinary interest, we publish it in the columns of *Iskra*.

Christ is risen!

Dear father! I have long meant to write to you, but I never seem to have the time, or something always gets in the way. Earlier this month I had to take part in the suppression of a riot in the village of Trifonesht, 35 versts from Soroki (you probably read about this in the papers). Here is how it happened: at two in the morning a soldier came and woke me, and, without explaining why, ordered me to get up as quickly as possible and go and saddle up in full battle order. Arriving at the stables, I learned from the sergeant-major that there was a riot in Trifonesht, and that two squadrons of our regiment's soldiers had been requisitioned to suppress it. We were issued fifteen rounds of ammunition per man, and then, at four o'clock, we formed up, and a lieutenant-colonel read us a speech, in which he said that we were not going to a real war, so that no weapon was to be drawn without an order from our commanders, and that no one, God forbid, was, even in extremity, to strike with the edge of a sabre, but only with the flat, taking care; that if we were ordered to fire a volley on the rioters, we were to listen carefully to the order and fire over their heads, so that, God forbid, there should be no unfortunate accidents, and so on and so forth in the same vein. When he finished speaking (and he spoke for about half an hour), we set off, and, despite an impossibly muddy road and the rain that accompanied us the whole way, we reached the place by ten o'clock. About five versts before Trifonesht, from a hill, one could already see that a crowd of people, some four to five hundred, had surrounded the landlord's house on every side. Riding into the village, we already thought that this would be the end of it, and that on seeing us the people would immediately disperse; but it was not to be: seeing us approaching them at a trot, they rushed at us in a solid mass, running. Then the trumpeter sounded the charge, and we, in a tight formation, rode at the gallop against the rioters (as our enemies, the soldiers, call them), so as to trample them under our horses. This, as was to be expected, produced panic among our 'enemy' (that is what they call the peasants), and they scattered, running wherever they could, thanks to the confusion among the men, and we managed to surround them, while a detachment of about two platoons set off to chase down those who had managed to run off; here those who put up resistance got a proper beating from the enraged soldiers, who beat them mercilessly with the blunt sides of their sabres; sinner that I am, I too beat one fellow nearly senseless. Here is how it happened: I had been made squad leader, and, taking one platoon, I set off in pursuit of those fleeing and caught eight running men, and, without too much resistance on their part, delivered them to the commander (who, with the rest of the men of the squadron, had surrounded the main body of rioters), and then set off after others, but here something happened that I could never have anticipated. One fellow, whom I rode up to with two soldiers, stopped, holding a pitchfork in a defensive stance, and, before I could come to my senses, thrust it at me, since I was riding ahead of everyone else; but, luckily, it did me no great harm, since I managed to dodge, and the fork struck just beside my body, tearing through my sheepskin coat and my uniform, which I was wearing at the time; and I grew fierce and beat him with my sabre until they had to pour water over him to revive him. The flight of the Moldavians and our charge presented, as our district police chief said, a magnificent picture. Despite the seriousness of the moment, there was much that was comic: some, out of fear of the soldiers, threw themselves into the water and stood up to their chests in the river, from where they had to be dragged out; others hid in barns, in vineyards, in poultry-houses, in cellars, from where they had to be extracted, often none too gently. Then, once we had succeeded in gathering together all the rioters, the police chief addressed them with a speech in Moldavian,

and spoke long and much, and many of the Moldavians were moved and wept, while others fell to their knees and pleaded for something. All of this together made for a very sorrowful picture: weeping old men on their knees, the stern police chief, and mounted soldiers with sabres drawn, encircling everyone in a tight ring. Having spent a night in Trifonesht and taken fourteen of the main ringleaders, the squadron then withdrew to Soroki, leaving two platoons of soldiers behind in Trifonesht to prevent a repetition of the disturbance; I was among those who had to stay. We remained there ten days, and during this time I managed to learn all the details of the riot. The matter stands as follows. In Trifonesht there lives a landlord, who is also the local district administrator and the owner of nearly all the land in Trifonesht. The peasants, partly earlier, partly now, on account of continual crop failures, had sold him their land and had gradually become his bondsmen, having fallen into debt to him. Since they have no land of their own, they worked for the landlord, receiving, for every desyatina they worked (ploughed, sowed, mowed and threshed), two roubles in cash and half the harvest — that is, one measure of grain for the landlord, one for themselves. Under such conditions it was still possible to get by, but since last year the landlord has begun paying differently — that is, two roubles and three measures of grain for himself, and only one measure for the peasants. On account of this, the bread lasted only until Christmas, and half the villages of Trifonesht went hungry. **[RECONSTRUCTED TEXT]** a place-name and a few words describing neighbouring villages are illegible here **[END RECONSTRUCTED TEXT]**. There is nowhere to go for work: in Bessarabia there is enough of a famine even without them, and they do not know the language of the neighbouring province — what is there to do? And so they decided to ask the district administrator to release them to go to the Amur. The district administrator at first tried to dissuade them (whether out of fear of losing cheap labour, or for some other reason). At last, they made him go to the governor; but the governor also refused. Then the peasants asked to be given written confirmation from the district administrator that the governor had refused their petition, and on what grounds. The administrator refused this too. Then they gathered, some 660 men, at his house and waited for him to agree. They conducted themselves peaceably, showing no violent intent, letting everyone come and go from the house without hindering the administrator or his family, only insisting that they would not leave until the administrator took pity on them and gave them what they asked, since it made no difference to them whether they starved at home, where their wives and children were also crying for food, or in the landlord's courtyard. The district administrator saw a riot in this and, fearing they might do something, requisitioned soldiers; and the Moldavians, seeing troops advancing on them, naturally grew agitated and did not wish to give themselves up without a fight, believing they would be flogged, though almost all of them were nearly unarmed, unless one counts as weapons the pitchforks that the peasants always carry with them. After the squadrons withdrew, five men were chosen at the assembly, who went to St Petersburg to petition the Sovereign in person. Having lived among them for ten days, one can form a personal impression of their wretched condition; for instance, a family — consisting of father, mother and four children, the eldest of whom is fifteen — sits down to table, and on the table there is served a bowl of soup made from water, onion and pepper, then a bowl of mamalyga (maize porridge), not enough even for one decent eater, and about four pounds of maize bread — this is dinner, and if one adds another two pounds of bread, this would be the food for a whole day for four people, but even this luxury not everyone can afford; the greater part live on nothing but bread and water, and even that not enough. As for the horses (those who still have any), there is nothing to say — they are literal walking skeletons. I lodged in the house of an Old Believer who had come from Chernigov province — a rich kulak peasant, who has sheep, and cows, and horses — everything, and everything one might want... The two officers who remained with us lodged with the landlord; as for me, however hard I tried, I could not get myself placed

either with the landlord or with anyone else, except this Old Believer, as the only well-to-do peasant. Though I did not spend much time at home, and, out of boredom, walked about the village a great deal and got to know the life and manner of the local peasantry. Of the fourteen men we caught, four have been sentenced to three years in a military prison, the remaining six to shorter terms and to different departments; four have been acquitted.

I spent 21 roubles while in Trifonesht, of which, thanks to my foolish soft-heartedness, I gave away to poor people who had nothing to eat, some eight roubles, and even then not in cash but buying them bread and flour myself — for this no one, I know, will approve of me, but it was simply too pitiful to see people nearly dying of hunger, while one oneself drinks fresh milk and eats eggs and dines well; but for this one good deed, of which I shall in no way ever repent, I found things I could describe, but will not, since it would take three days to write and even then I would not describe it all — but it is better, if you are interested, that I tell you the details in person when I come home.

How the Ryazan Boss Stormed a Seminary

In Ryazan a seminary riot broke out, caused, of course, by the specific conditions of seminary boarding-school life: a lack of bread and of decent treatment. The ‘riot’ continued for three days. It ended with police intervention, headed by the deputy governor. On the night of March 12, the deputy governor, accompanied by a detachment of police and a fire brigade with lit torches, attempted to force his way into the seminary, but at first failed: something was thrown at him, and he retreated. But after a brief consultation with the seminary administration and staff about the back entrances, a detachment was sent to enter the seminary from the rear. The seminarians tried to break the iron staircase leading up to their second-floor dormitory, so as to keep the police from reaching them, but without success. Once the detachment had made its way to the main entrance and forced it open, the deputy governor entered with the rest of his retinue. As they left, they were seen off with hissing and cries of: ‘Long live seminary freedom! Down with the rector!’ The seminary has now been closed, and a number of the rioters sent home. The priests present at the finale grieved that they could do nothing to defend their children.

‘Suspicious’ Intelligenty

Strictly Confidential

Ministry of the Interior. To the officer commanding the Ardatov district police force.

Ardatov district police chief. September 30, 1901. No. 136. In view of extremely serious circumstances, I propose to you, dear sir, to intensify the secret surveillance of all persons who have any dealings whatever with the peasantry, that is: doctors, teachers, midwives, feldshers, technicians and similar minor intelligentsia persons, as well as (in particular) any persons who have arrived from other places and are enrolled at educational institutions. Should any pamphlets or booklets appear among the peasantry, intensify surveillance to the utmost. Furthermore, whatever you should notice of a doubtful or seditious nature in the conduct of the above-named persons, or the appearance of pamphlets of a rebellious character, report to me at once for consideration.

To achieve strict surveillance over the above, I recommend establishing acquaintance with the local clergy, without, of course, drawing their attention in any obvious way to your wish to obtain the necessary information. In no case whatever should this surveillance be entrusted to the local constables, though they should be instructed to keep a close watch over any persons arriving in their district, of whom they should report to you no later than a day after their arrival. Persons not belonging to the permanent population of the district must, without

exception, all be registered, being required to show, at your or the constable’s demand, their identity papers.

I further inform you, dear sir, that the above surveillance is not to be a temporary measure, but a continuous, permanent one. Should it come to my attention, by whatever circumstance, that negligence or inattention has been shown toward the above-mentioned surveillance, you, dear sir, risk losing your post.

Signed by the original: District Chief of Police Iv. Samosyolov.

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Kharkov

We reproduce some extracts from a private letter from Kharkov, dated April 22, communicating characteristic details of the evening demonstration of February 19 in that town:

Although the morning massacre and demonstration should have been expected to call forth a mass protest by students, the crowd of students who gathered at six in the evening near the police precinct was in fact quite small. This little knot begged its comrades not to disperse, to wait a little longer, without themselves quite knowing what for, or from where they might expect help. This handful of people, despairing of the success of agitation among Kharkov students, literally caught ‘colleagues’ by the sleeve, just to gather a hundred or so demonstrators. I myself saw, at six in the evening, how few there were near the precinct. And then, another minute, another — workers come, a crowd of two to three hundred men — and the picture suddenly changes! Now everyone comes running from every street and alley toward the sound of the burst-out ‘Song of the Cudgel,’ now a deafening whistle rings out at once from hundreds of throats, and the mass, like a wave, surges forward, spreading ever wider and thicker across the square and the street. Where it all comes from, one cannot say. Everything mingled: workers, students, ladies, gentlemen, servants, officers, boys... All merged in the single impulsive surge forward, all seized by the common feeling of loud, free protest; in every breast there flares up the exhilarating consciousness of freedom, will and the power of the masses. But then — the Cossacks! And all the force of indignation and hatred of the already many-thousand-strong crowd erupts in a roar of protesting cries and whistles. The whips flashed, this vile beating of the defenceless began, and there were more and more ‘public’ — around, thousands of indignant, protesting demonstrators!

The next day after the demonstration everyone with one voice repeated that no one had expected such success. One could not have counted on the workers, if only because it was not a holiday, and yet it was they who ‘saved the day’!... And now I feel a craving to be, once again, part of such a huge crowd, to feel that same whistle and cry of indignation. What power is felt in the fused mass, and if only we had even simple clubs in our hands — the impure force of the devil himself would tremble before us!

In the Chronicle of Public Protests

A statement, signed by 95 persons, has been submitted to the Ministry of the Interior concerning the March events in St Petersburg. Exposing the falsehood of the information contained in the ‘Government Communiqué’ about the massacre of March 4, the protesters ask: “For what purpose was this pointless slaughter of people on the streets of the capital needed? Who instigated this bestial beating of young people? People who are conscious of their civic duty cannot remain silent. We recognise this duty and declare that only the repeal of the ‘Provisional Rules’ will remove the immediate cause of the present student unrest. Only a trial of those guilty of the massacre of March 1st, whoever these guilty parties may be, can calm the outraged public conscience.” Among the signatories we find names known in literature (Annensky, Gubkin,

Vorontsov, Potapenko-Myakotin, Falbork, Charnolussky, Ganeizer, Peshekhonov, Kupriyanova, Nikonov, Veresayev, Panteleyev, Arsenyev, M. Engelhardt, Vengerov, Weinberg, Mikhailovsky), several professors (Lesgaft, Bauman and others), lawyers (Lyustikh, Karabchevsky, Gerard, brothers Bernstamm, Weinberg, Spasovich, Stasov), two academicians (Beketov and Shakhmatov), and the president of the Free Economic Society, Count Heyden. The Ministry of the Interior responded to this petition with characteristic wit: nearly all those who had signed the list found themselves subject to searches shortly before May 1. Many of those searched have been arrested (the Bernstamms, Myakotin, Kornilov). Naturally, in doing this the government pursued the pettiest of goals: to spoil the mood of those people who, though they were plainly far from any 'underground' activity, had nonetheless dared to raise a voice of protest. We hope that this petty vindictiveness on the part of the government will lead to a useful result: in the consciousness of the liberal part of society, May Day, the day of the proletarian holiday, will become a day for settling scores between the government and all those **[RECONSTRUCTED TEXT]** the passage is cut off at the edge of the source scan**[END RECONSTRUCTED TEXT]**.

CHRONICLE OF THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

LETTERS FROM FACTORIES AND WORKS

YAROSLAVL

The labour movement in Yaroslavl could not, of course, die out entirely. The police have not been idle. The head of the detective department (who is also deputy police chief), a certain Petrovsky, an ardent supporter of Zubatov's methods, is well known: the Zubatov system consists in sowing mutual distrust among the workers, introducing informers into their midst who at first pose as ardent revolutionaries and later turn out to be police spies. Petrovsky set about finding himself an assistant, and his choice soon fell on a worker, Fyodor Dorofeyev. This none-too-bright fellow, who had already been implicated in the case of the technologist Poskoniaev, quickly organised a circle of workers, rented a flat for meetings, and then, once he had learned everything he needed, betrayed them. Arrests took place on January 12. Those arrested were: students of the Demidov Lyceum, N. Gr. Naumov (fourth year, released after two weeks' arrest), Yaroslavtsev, Aleks. Vas. (fifth year) and Aleks. Petrovich Donsko-Dobrovolsky (second year, both still held), an eighth-grade pupil of the Yaroslavl Gymnasium, Vas. Aleks. Noskov (released April 11), a teacher at the city elementary school, Lyu. Dm. Bobenko (released February 25), a locksmith (also a student at the local Pastukhov Technical School), Nikanorov (released after two weeks), workers Iv. Isayev, Korobkin and Fyodor Semyonukhin (both still held). F. Dorofeyev too was arrested (released at the start of April). All those arrested, though charged with propaganda among the workers, gave almost no testimony, and the gendarmerie, for all its efforts, was unable to 'make a case.' The case, according to the gendarme captain sent from Moscow to conduct the investigation, is not worth a farthing. Yet how hard the gendarmes tried: they threatened penal servitude (some were charged under Article 250, dealing with 'lèse-majesté'), tortured them with interrogations at the gendarme administration and in prison, questioned witnesses on the flimsiest of pretexts, arranged a confrontation with Dorofeyev. At present the case has been sent by the prosecutor of the Moscow judicial chamber to St Petersburg. But all the efforts of the tsarist police to stifle the labour movement remain fruitless. At the beginning of March 1901 the Norskaya manufacturing works went on strike over an anticipated lowering of summer piece-rates; two-thirds of all the workers there (about five thousand in all) took part. Twelve workers from the Norskaya mill, walking as a group to the fair at Yaroslavl, were arrested. They are accused of having gone into town with the intention of organising a demonstration by rousing the mass of factory folk who happened to be strolling at the fair. The strike ended, by all accounts, unsuccessfully for the workers: the rates were not raised. Before Easter, at the same mill, leaflets of local character circulated, which set the whole police force on its feet. There were no arrests. At the Yaroslavl manufacturing works, too, there is unrest over piece-rates. It is reported that 57 men were hauled in for questioning at the gendarme administration. There were no arrests; the works management, frightened by the unrest, raised the rates.

For lack of space we postpone to the next issue further interesting reports from our Yaroslavl correspondent.

OREKHOVO-ZUYEVO (*the settlement of Nikolskoye*)

Before describing the hospital arrangements at Savva Morozov's works, I think it necessary to say a few words characterising the local situation. For us, workers of Orekhovo-Zuyevo, it is of no small interest to acquaint, through the workers' paper *Iskra*, both our own comrades and workers of other towns and trades with our sometimes monstrous conditions. Not to mention that every class-conscious worker ought to

take an interest in the labour question, there are also many people who, though not themselves workers, take an interest in this question and sympathise with the class labour movement... However much the priests, who go hand in hand with the capitalists and the authorities of the Russian government, with all their cunning sophistries, try to keep us in ignorance, the workers still see their own wretched, slave-like condition.

In the settlement of Nikolskoye some 25,000 people work for two manufacturers, Vikula and Savva Morozov, while the entire population of Orekhovo, some 40,000, live within a radius of nine square versts. And despite this concentration and crowding of population, the labour movement here is nonetheless very quiet and dull: this quietness is due, chiefly, to a complete intellectual starvation. We have no literature such as one finds in the capitals and other large cities; workers from such cities do not reach us, and so we do not know where or how the work there is being carried on. To begin ourselves, we lack the courage and, in part, the knowledge.

Here is a sample of our conditions and of our material situation, which we give without any exaggeration and entirely in keeping with the facts.

We have two hospitals: one belonging to Vikula, the other to Savva Morozov. I shall try to describe the hospital for the workers of Savva Morozov. The hospital is located near the cast-iron foundry (which serves the mill) and the workers' living quarters (barracks). The location is unhealthy both for the living quarters and, even more so, for the hospital. Morozov has leased his hospital, for a fixed sum, to a certain quack, Dr Bazelevich. Dr Bazelevich treats his patients like a genuine flesh-eater. His labours are not wasted — he knows very well how to squeeze the last drop out of exhausted workers. Tea and sugar are not allowed to patients — only boiled water, and even that only until six in the evening. The food is very poor and none too plentiful. For supper they get sour cabbage soup or some similar swill. The patients go hungry in the literal sense of the word. Only those who are brought extra food by relatives and acquaintances are properly fed. In view of this half-starved condition of the patients, Bazelevich does not forbid bringing food into the hospital, and so relatives bring in sour cabbage, and herring, and bread, and kvass — in a word, whatever there is. The sick are fed several (four or five) to a single dish. The linen is kept in a very filthy state, and one can always notice suspicious stains on the sheets and pillowcases. Here is how one worker describes a visit: 'Once, as one of the visitors, I went to the hospital. Going up to an acquaintance, I noticed the bed next to him, on which lay a sick man. This was a young man in a long, filthy shirt, in short, filthy underdrawers and mismatched socks (one white, the other red). The patient was suffering from a hernia. When I began to speak with him, the young man looked at me with a hungry, exhausted gaze and, finally, said: "For Christ's sake, give me a bit of bread, I am nearly dying, for God's sake." Treatment consists, remarkably, of nothing but water and some kind of powders. There is only one attendant for the patients. He has hired two boys to help him distribute medicine.

There also exists a remarkable order: because of his own dislike of pregnant women, Bazelevich discharges them just two days before their delivery, on the pretext that they came in too early. He has favourites here, too. Once there was such an outrageous case: they discharged and sent home a pregnant woman. Barely had she left when the woman gave birth on the road.

As you can see, comrades, the condition of the workers at Savva Morozov's is not pleasant. Our health is worn down, but we are compelled to labour for the crust of bread that Morozov, God knows, doles out to us with reluctance. If our life continues thus, we shall soon end up like beasts of burden.

THE COTTON-WEAVING MILL OF THE Kholm DISTRICT

The joint-stock cotton-weaving mill in the village of Betun, Kholm district, has given us the following details. The mill was founded in the summer of last year, at a formerly working mill, and has had two strikes in the space of a year. Here are some of the particulars. In the beginning, roughly 150 people worked here; later the number of workers increased to about 900. Wages were low from the start, since new looms had been brought in, replacing the hand-loom, and this took workers a great deal of time to adapt to. The workers, seeing that under these conditions it was impossible to work and earn a daily wage, decided to switch to hourly pay; the owners answered categorically that this was impossible. Then the workers resolved to strike, and on September 15 of last year they abandoned their looms and, for two weeks, refused to go back to work. The workers demanded a rise in the rate to 25 roubles a month. The strike ended entirely in the workers' favour, and the administration raised the rate to 17 roubles a month. Many new workers were then taken on. But after two months the daily and piece-rate wages, and the factory management, **[RECONSTRUCTED TEXT]** a further sentence here is illegible**[END RECONSTRUCTED TEXT]**. The workers submitted the following demands to the manager: 1) replace the foremen who do not speak Russian; 2) provide better instruments; 3) build a shed in the yard for those going on the night shift; 4) raise wages. 'Very well, lads,' said the manager, 'I will put everything right, I will do everything as you wish, only go back to work.' The workers went back to work, but, seeing that everything continued as before, after a few days repeated their demand. Again many promises in word, and nothing in deed. Worn out by this waiting, the workers finally resolved, on November 28, to stop work. The manager came to them and tried to persuade them to return to work, promising to fulfil all their demands. But this time, too, the workers did not take the bait, and flatly refused to return to work until their demands were met. Two days passed thus. The district police chief, Timofeyev, arrived and likewise urged the workers to return to work. He came five times and, at last, declared: 'Whoever does not wish to go to work, take your discharge.' The workers replied that they would take their discharge only if they were paid 18 roubles a month. When this too was refused, they went to the telegraph office and sent a telegram to the Grand Duke Sergei; receiving no reply, they sent a second and a third telegram. Besides this, they sent two petitioners to Moscow, but these were arrested on the way. At last, the Grand Duke's adjutant arrived, took down the workers' demands, and left. A few hours later, three workers were summoned, supposedly for questioning, and were likewise thrown into prison. The adjutant returned a few days later and said: 'Brothers, I have now arrested your instigators, and you have nothing left to do but return to work.' — 'Even if all of us have to go to prison,' the workers replied, 'we still will not withdraw our demands.' — 'It seems some among you are still rams, but not many; the rest are all sheep,' the adjutant retorted. 'I would pay dearly if someone would point out these rams to me.' The next day the police descended on the mill: gendarmes, constables, some fifty men, who remained at the mill for four days. On December 12 the Grand Duke's adjutant returned again, along with the district police superintendent, the district administrator and the factory inspector. They gathered the workers and began calling them out by name, noting down those who continued to hold out. Only some fifteen men agreed to go back to work. The rest were loaded onto thirty carts and, escorted by constables, taken to prison. There they sat for 22 days, and were then sent home by stage. So much for the Grand Duke's intervention on behalf of the wronged workers.

FOREIGN REVIEW

Recent events in Russia have attracted general attention in Europe. Indignation at the actions of the Russian government toward the students, and joyous sympathy at the bold action of the Russian workers on the path of political struggle, have seized hold of the revolutionary proletariat and the liberal intelligentsia throughout Western Europe. Professors and students in almost every country have published their protests against the Russian government and expressed sympathy with the Russian students. Workers and students held numerous meetings to express solidarity with the struggle now being waged in Russia. G. Plekhanov and B. Krichevsky, as Russian delegates to the International Socialist Secretariat, addressed the latter with a proposal to issue a manifesto to all workers concerning the Russian events. In an appeal of April 25, the Secretariat invited the workers of every country to greet the Russian fighters in resolutions adopted at May Day meetings. In Austria, Belgium, Switzerland, France and Sweden, special meetings were held to express protest against the Russian government. Thus, G. Plekhanov writes to us that, on the invitation of the Bern workers' union, he was asked to speak at a meeting convened specifically to protest against Russian tsarism. The enthusiasm of the Swiss workers who listened to his account of the growth of the revolutionary movement in Russia was tremendous. After the meeting, in the May Day procession organised by the workers, two banners were carried among the others, bearing the inscriptions: 'Down with Russian tsarism! Long live the Russian revolutionary movement!' The papers reported that the Russian minister submitted a formal protest to the Swiss government about this. Bearing in mind that it was Swiss citizens who carried the banners, one cannot but recognise that this protest is itself an expression of that very insolence which the Russian government habitually permits itself toward the weak. Had this happened in England, Russian diplomats would certainly not have permitted themselves anything of the kind. Below we print a letter from comrade Vasilyev about one such meeting in Switzerland. Vasilyev is our compatriot, who left Russia long ago and joined the ranks of Swiss Social-Democracy, where he has won a well-deserved reputation.

May Day in Arbon

Arbon is a small town, or, if you like, a large village on Lake Constance. There are several factories in Arbon, and the Arbon workers may be proud of their organisation. It is a small oasis of organisation. At a time when, throughout the whole of Switzerland, only 18 per cent of workers are organised into unions, some 80 per cent of Arbon's workers are bound together in solidarity, in seven societies, and these seven societies are, in turn, united in the Arbon Workers' Union. Shortly before May 1 there were elections to the town council here, and the workers carried two of their own socialist candidates.

It was in this Arbon that I was to speak at the workers' May Day meeting.

Arriving in the town, I was struck by its festive appearance. The whole town was decked with flags — not only the houses of the poor, but the villas of the rich too! I was amazed. It turned out that the workers, in their appeal concerning the international workers' demonstration of May 1, had asked their 'fellow citizens' to decorate the town... and this request had been honoured! The workers have become a strong union, and — strength commands respect — these fluttering flags expressed a new attitude of citizens of other classes toward the working class.

The factories (machine works and knitting mills) stood idle all day. In the morning there was a concert on the square... After dinner, on that same square, gathered, in 'military order,' battalions of Arbon workers.

To the strains of a march, with fluttering banners, we set off in procession... Having gone round the whole town, we halted before the entrance to a huge hall, where I was to speak... The hall was packed with workers and curious onlookers... I was carried away by this crowd and spoke for more than two hours about our great cause, about the significance of our international demonstration... It was a joy to see with what attention and sympathy they listened to me, how the eyes of the men, women workers and men workers shone and lit up, kindling the speaker in turn... And so I finally came to speak of the movement of the Russian workers... Under what heavy, impossible conditions the Russian proletariat must struggle for its liberation... And yet the struggle continues!

All the listeners rose as one when the chairman of the Arbon Workers' Union read out a resolution expressing sympathy with the struggling Russian proletariat and student body... It was as though a brotherly hand was being extended, as though hundreds of workers' hearts were beating as one, across thousands of versts, toward the country where the sun of political freedom does not shine — where instead the whip and the nagaika crack.

Vasilyev

Letter from Vienna

At the Eighth International Congress Against Alcoholism, held in Vienna in mid-April this year, there was present, among the delegates of other European countries, a representative of the Russian government, Count Skarzhinsky. Listening to his paper, 'Russian Official Temperance Societies and Popular Festivals as a Means of Combating Alcoholism,' one might have thought one was hearing about the most cultured country in Europe. Judging by Count Skarzhinsky's report, there is nothing the Russian government does not do to enlighten its people and to divert them from the harmful habit of drink! Not to mention the introduction of a state spirits monopoly, whose exclusive aim was to reduce drunkenness in Russia, the Russian government spends enormous sums annually on the maintenance of temperance societies, public libraries, tea-rooms, popular festivals and theatres; besides this, various counts and princes readily take upon themselves the task of giving lectures on the harmful effects of spirituous drink upon human health, distributing among their listeners pamphlets written on this same subject. It goes without saying that the Russian government, thanks to these radical measures, has achieved the best possible results in the struggle against alcoholism, and only, in Count Skarzhinsky's opinion, need Western Europe follow Russia's example in this respect for the drink question to vanish entirely from the face of the earth.

An Austrian student, Georg Grigorovich, replied to Count Skarzhinsky:

"I do not wish," Grigorovich began his speech, "that Count Skarzhinsky should leave Vienna without learning the true attitude of Europe toward the so-called social reforms in Russia. Count Skarzhinsky has painted for us, in the brightest of colours, the measures taken by the Russian government to combat the abuse of alcohol, so that Russia should appear to us as some kind of paradise... But if the Russian government has introduced a monopoly on the sale of spirits, this does not mean that it has any right to monopolise the enlightenment of the Russian people and propaganda against alcoholism. If it were not Count Skarzhinsky, but Count Tolstoy, who preached against alcohol and its consequences, the Russian government would exile him to Yasnaya Polyana. When young, gifted people, following their idealistic impulse, wish to enlighten the Russian people, to teach them to read — they are arrested and thrown into prison as criminals. If Count Skarzhinsky distributes among Russian peasants and workers pamphlets on the consequences of alcohol abuse, then he does this, most probably, for the benefit of the rest of Europe present at this congress, since the Russian

people cannot read them. It is quite possible that Count Skarzhinsky, like many other government figures, is entirely unaware of the true conditions of Russian life (Count Skarzhinsky makes some agitated remark to the president); this is clear from his assertion that ‘in Russia not a single peasant has ever died of hunger.’ And no wonder: after all, the Russian press must, above everything, avoid mentioning Russia itself. I would therefore advise Count Skarzhinsky to read the book *Starving Russia* by Leman and Parvus — here, among us, he will find it worth reading, he will find much instructive material in it for himself.”

Continuing further about the anti-alcoholism movement in Bukovina, Grigorovich relates that there, alongside temperance societies, societies have simultaneously been set up with the aim of teaching peasants to read. “It would not be a bad thing,” he continued, “if the Russian government too were to follow our example. Instead of arresting students en masse, let the Russian government ask them — yes, ask them — to enlighten the Russian people and teach them to read. Then, and only then, will Count Skarzhinsky be able to distribute, with any success, his pamphlets on the harmful effect of alcohol.” Loud applause, lasting a full two minutes, showed that the opinion expressed by Grigorovich was shared by all present at the congress.

Pale and trembling with agitation, Count Skarzhinsky asked to speak:

“I do not intend,” he said, “to answer a speech that carries a purely political charge. I wish to believe that the bureau of this congress, like the Austrian government, invited us here for some other purpose than to hear such unpleasant things said to us. From my own personal experience I know what hospitality Austria offers, and it was only for this reason that I willingly agreed to the Russian government’s proposal that I attend this congress as a delegate.” (Feeble applause and loud hissing.)

I readily believe that the truth spoken to him by Mr Grigorovich was, to say the least, ‘unpleasant’ for Count Skarzhinsky.

FROM THE PARTY

MAY DAY IN RUSSIA

If Russian Social-Democracy prepared this year, with particular energy, for the May Day celebration, then the government, for its part, evidently strained every effort to prevent the demonstrations. In St Petersburg, on April 18, an unprecedentedly severe police crackdown took place. The number of those arrested is put at 300; between 600 and 800 searches were carried out. At a single Putilov works, 50 workers were seized. The workers' demonstration planned for April 22 did not take place. Instead, the government staged a brilliant demonstration of its own: several regiments of soldiers paraded down the Nevsky. 'Spying and betrayal hang in the air,' people write from St Petersburg.

In Poland and Lithuania

an enormous mass of leaflets was distributed. 'Social-Democracy in the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania' issued a May proclamation in Polish and one in German, besides a special leaflet to Polish workers on recent events in Russia, a separate leaflet to bakery workers, and its May issue of its organ. In the article devoted to Russian events, it is said: 'On May Day we are obliged, by demonstration, to show our solidarity with our brothers, the Russian revolutionaries.'

The 'General Jewish Workers' Union' put out a May issue of its paper and a special proclamation. The Polish Social-Democratic party 'Proletariat' likewise addressed the workers with a proclamation on May Day, in which it urged workers not to arrange demonstrations but to confine themselves to a stoppage of work. The party points out that demonstrations exact too great a toll in victims. This point of view of the new Polish party seems to us mistaken.

The demonstration in Warsaw had been set for the Sunday before the new-style May 1 (April 15). The demonstration took place on Marszałkowska Street. Demonstrators numbered, according to the report of the Warsaw Committee of the Polish Social-Democratic Party, up to 15,000. Clashes with police occurred, and a few dozen people were arrested. Cossacks now ride patrol through the streets of Warsaw; on sighting a group of five or six people, they immediately charge and disperse it.

Of the demonstration in Dvinsk we are sent the following details: On the evening of April 15, proclamations were posted throughout the town, scattered near shops and workshops: a general Russian party leaflet (issued by Yuzhny Rabochy), in a print run of 150 copies, and Jewish ones: 1) a general one from the 'Jewish Workers' Union,' 2) from an organisation of shop assistants, and 3) from the local committee — in all, up to 2,000 copies. On April 15 (the 28th, that is, May 1 new style), at five in the morning, the entire police force was on its feet, patrols marched through the town. In every part of the town, and at the factories (a match factory, employing about 100 men, and two Vienna-furniture factories, and others), Jewish workers either did not work at all that morning, or stopped work at dinner-time; many Christian workers likewise did not work. In the morning the police seized a number of workers at the exchange and sent them to prison. The inhabitants expected a 'riot.' Around five in the evening, crowds of workers appeared on the streets, accompanied by a thousand-strong public. They headed toward Nevsky Prospekt, where, however, they did not manage to unite, since soldiers actively dispersed them, at times not sparing outsiders either. Having scattered the workers and seized 170 people, of whom a good third were curious bystanders picked up by mistake, the police stationed themselves on the square and stacked their rifles, evidently believing everything was already over. Meanwhile the

workers began to gather again on another of the main streets — Rizhskaya — and then, singing the Marseillaise and carrying a red flag, moved onto Nevsky Prospekt itself, numbering about 700. Onlookers were, if anything, even more numerous. They passed unhindered the whole length of Rizhskaya Street, turned into Myasnitskaya, and, having passed all the way along it, turned back — and only when mounted artillerymen and soldiers appeared on Rizhskaya did they gradually disperse.

Of the 170 taken, all were released except some who were sentenced to administrative confinement for terms ranging from two to three months, apparently by administrative order.

On April 17 the police chief turned to the community with a request that its youth cease their student demonstrations. He was told that this would depend entirely on the government's own conduct toward the soldiers of the reserve, which had recently become the subject of a clash.

Of the demonstration in Vilna we are written: On the evening of the 27th of April, a demonstration, organised by the local committee, was to have taken place near Pushkin Square. From about seven o'clock, small groups of two to three men began to gather. Between eight and nine there were as many as several hundred participants. But since the police had never before seen a demonstration in this square — a fashionable and 'plebeian' spot at once — this large gathering did not attract particular attention at first. Evidently, the police had not been forewarned, and there was no telegraphic notice about it either. Though, as usual, they wandered about the park, arresting fugitive couples, and among those strolling there were also intelligently. But as the clock struck nine those present began to sing, without warning; at this instant not a single person yet seemed alarmed; in any case, within a minute the whole crowd sang together; but suddenly two or three constables appeared and, without a moment's delay, the crowd, in a single instant, emptied the park, and the exits from the park became a scene of impossible crush; those who managed to get out stopped by the fence and watched to see what would happen. From every side more dozens of demonstrators ran to join the others, followed by whistling constables, who fanned out through the town. Several constables gathered from the neighbouring streets, began to beat the first ones they could catch and drag them away from the crowd, after which, escorted by yard-keepers, they were led off to the police station. The demonstrators paid no attention to this at first, but when several more constables and 3-5 mounted gendarmes came running, having shouted 'Hurrah!' a few more times, they quickly began to melt away into the side streets and gateways, or else moved onto the pavement and blended in with the public. In this way, by half past eight the demonstrators had dispersed, having gone about a hundred sazhen as far as Blagoveshchenskaya Street. From the crowd about 20 men were seized; also arrested were two students who, on meeting a constable and a yard-keeper leading a certain worker off to the station, tried to free him. Around half past eight a single Cossack appeared on Bolshaya Street, dispersing the public, and along the street there began to march to and fro a detachment of soldiers (some 50 men), without weapons and without officers.

The next day and in the days following, Cossacks patrolled Bolshaya and other streets, and constables confiscate the canes of not-so-well-dressed Jews, dozens of which are sent off daily to the precinct. Evidently the authorities expect a repetition of the demonstration. On April 18 the whole town spoke of nothing but what had happened. After the demonstration, proclamations of the Bund were distributed (though not posted): two in Yiddish, to workers and shop assistants, and one in Russian.

The demonstration turned out, on the whole, to be unsuccessful. With better organisation it might have continued much longer; there might have been time to sing songs and more, since there was almost no police at the start, and by the time constables and gendarmes finally converged,

there were still too few of them and they acted without any plan, poorly co-ordinated. Those who saw last year's demonstration say it was better — it lasted longer, with singing; the number of participants was no smaller, even though it was a working day. — During this year's demonstration, twelve people in all were taken, of whom two were later released. On the 18th, in a great many Jewish workshops there was no work at all; among Christians, in very few. In the evening there was a workers' get-together.

Participants in this demonstration were, chiefly, Jewish workers. Poles and Lithuanians tried to organise their own demonstration on April 18 on Nyemetskaya Street. But already by half past six a squadron of Cossacks, led by the police chief, appeared, riding onto the pavements and beating whoever they came across. On Nyemetskaya Street all the shops and courtyards were closed, so that there should be nowhere to take refuge. Many bystanders, who had taken no part whatever in the demonstration, were beaten.

Reports have also reached us of demonstrations in Kovno, Kreslavka (Vitebsk province) and Smorgon (Vilna province).

On Sunday, April 22, in Tiflis, several hundred workers attempted to organise a demonstration. When the police attacked them, a scuffle broke out and, according to the papers, shots were fired at the police from the crowd. The crowd was dispersed and many arrested, among them a student and three women students who had been exiled from St Petersburg.

From Kazan, before April 18, some 60 people were expelled, having been registered during the local demonstration of March 11. In Samara and Saratov the troops stood ready the whole day. In Saratov and Nizhny Novgorod there were unsuccessful attempts at demonstrations.

The St Petersburg 'Union' distributed, before May Day, two printed proclamations — to the workers and to 'society' — inviting them to a demonstration on April 22. We give the proclamation to 'society':

TO RUSSIAN SOCIETY

Russia is living through a momentous time. The long pent-up feeling in every heart, of dissatisfaction with the present state order, has suddenly burst out and flowed in a wide stream through every layer of Russian society. Even the most 'well-intentioned' people are beginning to understand that autocracy pursues, exclusively, its own narrow, personal aims, running directly counter to happiness, culture and the good of the country. Autocracy itself is diligently and successfully labouring to undermine what remains of the last shred of trust and respect in it. Government reports, which have long ceased to be believed even by the most naive: the flower of Russian youth, sent off as soldiers; the country's greatest writer, proudly excommunicated from the Church; Prince Vyazemsky, receiving a stern reprimand from the Tsar for trying to prevent an unlawful, bandit-like attack upon an unarmed crowd; terrible famine in the south of Russia and in Siberia; the helplessness of tens of thousands of workers, thrown out onto the street on account of the crisis; lying assertions that 'everything is well'; every kind of insult tolerated; the complete voicelessness of society, matched by the boundless irresponsibility of the tsar's officials; and, crowning it all — the very latest circular from the Ministry of the Interior, openly proclaiming the boundless autocracy of the police fist, before which everyone, without distinction of rank or position, must bow.

We, Russian workers, have learned, through bitter and long experience, how little we can hope for from the autocracy; we know how heavy is the yoke, weighing constantly upon our backs, which the autocratic government imposes on us, and how it grows heavier the moment we so much as try, by word or by deed, to show that we are not content with our lot. For all the honest strata of Russian society, the nearest and most pressing need is political freedom. On this day of May

1 (April 18 old style) we place it at the head of our demands and summon beneath our banners all who do not wish to remain rightless slaves. The demonstration will take place on Sunday, April 22, on the Nevsky, at 12 noon.

Committee of the St Petersburg Union of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class.
St Petersburg Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party.

Around a thousand people came to this demonstration. Many of the demonstrators wore red neckties, shirts, blouses, skirts and the like. Around eight o'clock, when the demonstrators, who had been walking up and down in fairly sizeable groups, were noticed by the public — which, incidentally, numerically far outnumbered the demonstrators — anxious voices could be heard: 'But surely today isn't the first of May!' — 'No, "they" celebrate the first of May on the 10th.' — 'Well, then, it must mean they've been ordered to do it early this year, since they have their own bosses too.' — 'Look, there go the "socialists," in a circle.' — 'It must be a rehearsal.' — 'What scoundrels,' said one officer, 'they want to show us their protest; you people don't do anything at all, you swan around in your expensive clothes and come here for a stroll and to enjoy yourselves, well, we'll spoil your fun; we'll show you that we too want to live better and to fight, until we win.' I heard much else of interest, all the while remaining among the bourgeois public, listening in on their conversations. — Right at eight, a group of demonstrators gathered near the house of the governor-general and began shouting 'Hurrah!'; at once the police rushed there and tried to cut this group of demonstrators off from the rest of the public. **[RECONSTRUCTED TEXT]** the closing lines of this report are cut off in the source scan**[END RECONSTRUCTED TEXT]**.

FROM THE ISKRA GROUP

Comrades! We cannot yet fix a price for our newspaper, and we do not yet dare to promise to supply it to all our subscribers regularly. At present the fifth issue is being prepared for the press, and we shall do all in our power so that the paper should appear as regularly, and as often, as possible. But for this very substantial resources are needed, and we ask everyone into whose hands Iskra falls to organise collections of money for its support. A revolutionary publication can only become firmly established once it pays for itself, and for this it is necessary that every reader should give, according to his means, material support.

Printed at the press of 'Iskra':

1. 'From the Editors.' A leaflet on the tasks of our newspaper, Iskra, No. 1, December 1900.
2. 'May Days in Kharkov,' January 1901. A dispatch from the Kharkov Committee of the RSDLP, with a foreword by the Iskra editors.
3. 'The Woman Worker,' February 1901.
4. 'Iskra,' No. 2, February 1901.
5. First of May. A leaflet of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, issued by 'Iskra.'
6. Iskra leaflet (on the recent events), April 1901.
7. 'Iskra,' No. 3, April 1901.

Printed at the "Iskra" press.