

BOLSHEVISM AT A DEADLOCK

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BOLSHEVISM AT A DEADLOCK

by

KARL KAUTSKY

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P R E F A C E

When I began to write this book, the *Kolhosi* controversy was already causing great excitement in Soviet Russia.

Nothing has happened since to induce me to change my statements. The most important event in Soviet Russia since the publication of the original German edition of this book is undoubtedly the monstrous comedy of the Moscow trial which began on November 25, 1930. It was directed against eight engineers, who were most unusually anxious not only to denounce themselves as counter-revolutionaries and wreckers but also as unprincipled rascals.

This trial clearly proved to anybody who could see, and who wished to see, that Stalin and his associates expect the Five Year Plan to be a failure, and that they are already seeking for scapegoats on whom to put the blame.

This trial, however, has not helped the present rulers of Soviet Russia; it has made their position only more precarious. If anything, it drew attention to the deep abyss which yawns between them and the majority of the engineers and other intellectuals in the State. It also showed the hatred and mistrust of the rulers towards the best brains of Russia, and laid bare the system of spying, the policy of allowing no independence, and of making it impossible for the brainworkers to enjoy their work and use their own initiative. The trial itself has not increased the hatred and mistrust of the ruling classes, but has stirred up the working masses

against the intellectuals. It has, at the same time, deepened the anxiety and the sense of dependence felt by the intellectuals, and has thus rendered them unsuitable for any responsible posts in productive occupations. Without them, however, Russian economy cannot be raised to a higher level, it cannot even be maintained at its present level.

For the prosperity of a modern community many intellectuals of independent spirit and a high standard of efficiency who are prepared to serve the community loyally and devotedly are needed in addition to skilled manual workers. In Russia, Czarism has always tried to prevent such an intelligentsia from coming into being. In spite of all obstacles, it did spring up, even in those days, although it was numerically unimportant. Bolshevism classed intellectuals as "bourgeois", unless they adopted Communism, non-communistic intellectuals were either killed or rendered innocuous.

By this policy, the Bolsheviks are crippling the big industries of the country, no matter how many they may try to develop.

During the last few months the Communist Press has been giving the proudest figures regarding the progress that has occurred in Russian industry in accordance with the Five Year Plan.

This Plan is based, as is well known, on a reduction of the already scanty consumption of the Russian population to a quite insupportable minimum of food-stuffs and cultural necessities, leaving only just enough to keep body and soul together. The deficiency of goods produced as compared with goods consumed, which had led to the impoverishment of the State and the

populace, is to be remedied by curtailing consumption, in order to leave a surplus with which to pay for the construction of new factories, power stations, machinery and other means of production. At the end of the five years, a new and industrialised Russia is to arise, which will be highly productive. The recent misery is to change into happiness and luxury; the Russian nation is to tower above all other nations. The five years of utter poverty and depravity are nothing but a transition period, or Purgatory as the Catholics call it, leading to the everlasting bliss of Paradise.

The idea that it was possible to lead a nation from direst misery to abundance by making it undergo a drastic starvation cure seemed too naïve, and I did not consider it worth while to say much about it. Lately, however, I have noticed that men for whose knowledge of Economics I have the greatest respect have been taken in by Soviet statistics, and actually consider the Five Year Plan to be feasible. Hence the necessity for a few supplementary remarks.

It is unnecessary to say much about Soviet statistics, which are always unreliable when they are optimistic. Let us grant that the Five Year Plan has succeeded in squeezing out of the starving masses of Russia some surplus goods which can be sold abroad, the purchase money being used to acquire machinery and erect new buildings. This surplus has certainly not been as large as that promised in the Plan, for that is impossible. It has been realised to a certain degree, but this does not mean that it will be possible to increase production to such an extent that the bankruptcy threatening the whole Soviet economy can be averted.

The Bolsheviks claim to be the truest, or, rather, the only true disciples of Karl Marx. Their Marxism is unfortunately confined to regarding the works of Marx as Holy Writ, and searching for certain sentences which they interpret in their own way. They ignore the Marxism which applies critically the Marxian method based upon a strict and conscientious examination of present-day phenomena.

As true Marxists, they should feel quite at home in the second volume of *Das Kapital*, where Marx says that in order to prevent the disorganisation of the economic structure the different branches of production must always be in true proportion to one another in accordance with the existing technical and social conditions. Certain means of production must be used in producing goods for personal consumption. Of these, a certain percentage must be used in the production of foodstuffs, and another percentage in producing goods of cultural value. A second large group of means of production must be used for manufacturing new means of production and renewing worn-out equipment.

What is the essence of the Five Year Plan? Nothing but upsetting the balance between the various branches of production. The Plan curtails the production of many goods destined for home consumption. If a country grows corn in order to exchange it for machinery, it has not produced consumption goods for the country, but production goods as far as the home market is concerned. The output of consumption goods is reduced, and the output of production goods is expanded. Only when the expansion has attained a

high degree will the production of consumption goods be correspondingly increased.

The output of means of production has not been increased equally in all branches. Some branches are favourably treated while others are neglected. In erecting new industrial centres in Soviet Russia, particular attention has been paid to military needs rather than to the requirements of production. The main object of the Soviet Government when building up new industries has been to assure independence from foreign industry in time of war. This is one of the chief reasons why heavy industries are so much favoured. *Izvestia* says that many works which are used for peaceful purposes can easily be converted to the manufacture of guns, tanks, and similar instruments of war.

On the other hand, Soviet Russia seems to have forgotten that the means of transport are among the indispensable means of production. The process of production requires not only a transformation of the raw material, but also the moving of the materials.

It is surprising how the reports about the erection of new plant on a large scale go hand in hand with reports concerning the decline of the railway system. Only lately, on January 5, 1931, the Moscow *Ekonomicheskaya Zhisn*, a leading paper on Russian economic policy, published a long article dealing with the "malady" of the transport system, which is attributed to the insufficient feeding of the railwaymen.

"According to the reports of the Commissariat for Communications, the goods awaiting despatch amounted to around 50,000 wagons on January 9, as compared

with 3,514 wagons on the same day of the previous year." At the same time, the number of broken-down engines has increased, and repairs have always been defective. "In October and November, only 57 per cent. of the broken-down engines were repaired. Only 4 per cent. of the trucks provided for in the Plan to be built during October and November were actually produced in the shops of the Commissariat for Communication."

What is the use of enormous quantities of new means of production if the means of transport decline? How is it possible to provide industry with greater quantities of raw material and fuel, and to deliver the finished article to the consumer? According to reports of the *R.S.D.* (Bulletin of the Russian Social Democrats) of January 22, 1931, the production of textiles in Soviet Russia in 1930 was lower than in the previous year because there was a shortage of raw material, and a number of works had to shut down for six weeks. We shall not be far wrong if we ascribe this state of affairs mainly to the decline of the railway system.

Yet more serious results must arise out of the strict limitation of consumable goods which is enforced in order to provide money for the purchase of new and the extension of existing means of production. What the capitalists of Europe and America are doing under the pressure of the present crisis, i.e. reducing wages in order to increase profits and accumulate more capital, the Soviet rulers are doing systematically on the basis of their Five Year Plan, thanks to their excessive power over the workers. What the capitalists are doing in this direction is mere child's play compared with the

happenings in Soviet Russia. There, although wages are not coming down to the same extent, the prices of all consumable goods are rising to such fantastic heights that the masses are perishing of famine and squalor.

The reduction of consumption does not concern the consumer alone, it also affects production. All consumers are not necessarily producers, but all producers must also be consumers. Not only the sale of goods, but as well the productive capacity of the nation, varies according to the volume of goods consumed.

Labour is the most important agent of production, for it puts the productive machinery into motion and makes it function. Without labour, each machine would be so much old iron; each factory would be a mere mass of bricks and mortar. This fact is very often overlooked, but nowhere more so than in Soviet Russia, where they imagine that by trebling the number of the existing machines within five years, the output of industry can also be trebled in this short period. They do not ask how it is possible within the space of five years to treble the number of skilled workers, foremen, and engineers who are needed for tending the machinery. On the contrary, the Soviet leaders would think themselves very clever and economical if they found means of trebling the number of available machines by the adoption of methods which reduce the productive capacity, intelligence and independence of the existing industrial workers to a minimum. They have failed to realise that the vital problem is to raise the efficiency of labour, and that the products of labour would then yield a surplus automatically, while such a policy

would at the same time increase the capacity for turning out new and improved means of production.

The Bolsheviks would not profit by recognising this, for this method of increasing the productive capacity of the workers presupposes a high degree of freedom, and this requires a far-reaching democracy. I hope that this book will explain the reason why the Bolsheviks cannot allow such freedom without bringing about their own downfall.

A characteristic of the Russian autocracy was the contempt shown by its representatives for the people over whom they ruled, and whom they knew only as trembling slaves without any will of their own. For this reason the rulers continually imagined that they could equal or even surpass rich and powerful Western Europe, by adopting its technical methods without that freedom which alone made the success of the pioneers and organisers possible, and which alone encouraged the existence of those hard-working, efficient and highly skilled workers on whom the superior technique and economic organisation of the West are based. Not one of the autocrats who desired to give Russia a superior position in the world, from Peter the Great to Lenin and Stalin, has realised this.

What Napoleon I said of these autocrats is, then, still true to-day: "Scratch them, and you find the Tartar." They are utterly unable to build up a form of State and productive organisation equal, much less superior, to that prevalent in Europe. The greater their attempts in this direction, the greater the fall which must follow their failure.

The extent to which the dearth of skilled workers

who are more than mere common labourers limits the utilisation of the newly acquired means of production is shown by the following information, published in *Pravda* (Moscow), the official organ of the Communist Party in Soviet Russia. Three large factories for the production of tractors have been built in the Russian State, viz. at Leningrad, Stalingrad, and Charkoff. According to the Plan, these were to produce 2,370 tractors during the month of January. According to *Pravda* of January 12th, in the first five days of the month they only produced nine daily. That would mean not quite 300 per month, namely less than 13 per cent. of the number laid down in the Plan.

Thus, not even the *quantity* laid down in the Plan has been attained. I have given full particulars in the book itself as regards the *quality* of the goods produced in accordance with the Plan.

I do not point this out with triumph and malicious joy, but with deep distress, for the immediate effect of the bankruptcy of the Five Year Plan will be felt above all by the masses of the Russian people, by the peasants and workers, by the engineers, teachers, doctors, and scientists. The Communists are the last who will feel the effect of the evil. What separates us from them is not the goal which they wish to attain by means of the Five Year Plan, for this aims at raising Russia to a higher level and increasing the well-being of her people. What I particularly reproach them for, even more than for the revolting methods they are employing, is that they will not reach this goal, and that their Plan will achieve one thing only, i.e. the consolidation and strengthening of the foundation upon which it is built,

namely the wholesale pauperisation and degradation of the Russian people.

This is not the first time I have had to state with deep regret that the methods of Soviet Russian Communism must achieve exactly the opposite result from the one promised. I was in a similar position during the last few weeks of 1917 and the first weeks of the following year, at the time when the Bolsheviks promised to set up the dictatorship of the Soviets—meaning neither the dictatorship of the Communist Party nor that of the proletariat alone, but the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasants. It was anticipated that a Socialist community would spring up directly from this dictatorship.

At that time, almost all my political friends were filled with enthusiasm about what was happening. How willingly would I have joined them!

I said to myself: "If Lenin is right, then my whole life's work devoted to the propagation, application and further development of the ideas of my great masters, Marx and Engels, has been in vain." I knew, of course, that Lenin wanted to be the most orthodox of the Marxists. But if he succeeded in attaining his goal and fulfilling his promises, it would prove that social development does not progress in accordance with iron laws, and that it is wrong to believe a modern, powerful Socialism can only come into being where highly developed industrial capitalism has created an equally developed industrial proletariat.

The Marxists in Russia had vehemently maintained this opinion. In this they disagreed with the other Russian Socialists who held that the common ownership

of land, as it existed in the Russian village, although fast disappearing, facilitates the building up of a Socialist community in Russia more than in any other country.

The Marxists opposed this view as being Utopian. They were convinced that the revolution which they were expecting in Russia could do nothing but open up the way for a complete development of capitalism, and that only when the latter had attained a high degree of development would a Socialist community be possible. Thus the countries of industrialised Western Europe would have to precede the countries of Eastern Europe on the road towards Socialism.

Until the Revolution of 1917, Lenin himself was of the same opinion as the other Marxists. And then the unexpected happened. At one stroke, unforeseen circumstances delivered the complete control of the State into the hands of Lenin, who until then had been an outlawed refugee having to hide whenever he went to Russia. This dazzling turn of fortune went to his head and made him reverse his former theoretical convictions. He suddenly became of the opinion that the extremely small, backward stratum of the industrial workers of Russia was capable of plunging at once into Socialism and organising a Socialist State. This, he considered, was only possible if it allowed itself to be led by a small group of daring spirits like Lenin and his followers—the Bolsheviks.

If they succeeded in realising their expectations and promises it would have meant a tremendous success for both themselves and the Russian people. The Marxist theory could no longer be supported. It was proved wrong, but it had, on the other hand, prepared a bril-

liant triumph for Socialism, viz. they had taken the road to the immediate removal of all distress and ignorance of the masses in Russia and showed it to the rest of the world.

I would have been only too glad to believe that it was possible! Too glad to have been convinced! The strongest and best founded theory must give way when it is refuted by deeds—real deeds—not merely by plans and promises.

Although doubtful, I still watched the first steps of Bolshevism with friendly eyes. I considered it impossible for them immediately to establish Socialism as they imagined they could. They were, however, sharp-witted, intelligent people and they had attained great power. I thought they might perhaps succeed in finding a new method for raising the working classes from which the peoples of Western Europe might be able to learn.

My hopes were soon shattered. Sadly I saw, ever more clearly, that the Bolsheviks completely misunderstood the situation; that they thoughtlessly set themselves a task for the fulfilment of which all the necessary conditions were lacking, and that in their endeavour to achieve the impossible by brute force they were employing means which, instead of improving the economic, intellectual and moral position of the working masses, were undermining it more than Czarism and the War had already done.

I considered it as my duty to warn the Bolsheviks emphatically not to continue this policy. I did so during the War, in the summer of 1918, in the pamphlet *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat* (Vienna). I considered that I was entitled to sound the note of warning, as

apart from my connections with German and Austrian Democracy, my closest connections were with Russian Social Democracy. I have been in close relationship with the Russian refugees since 1880, and have had the good fortune to count the founders of Russian Social Democracy amongst my friends; particularly Axelrod, Plechanoff, Vera Sassulich, and Leo Deutsch. The younger generation of Russian Social Democrats have done me the honour of counting me, together with Plechanoff and Axelrod, amongst their teachers.

Most of them also became my personal friends—on the one hand Martoff, Dan, Abramovich, etc., and on the other hand Lenin, Trotzky, Rakovsky, etc., with whom Parvus and Rosa Luxemburg were at times closely connected. This close and intimate relationship with my Russian friends and disciples, which has lasted for over half a century, was of the greatest advantage for me. It is to these friendships in particular that I owe my insight into Russian conditions.

The time had come for me to render thanks to my Russian friends for what I had learnt from them, and to participate in their heated discussions regarding the policy to be followed. I did so to ease my conscience, and not because I expected any practical results. How could a single German pamphlet published in Vienna, in the midst of the War, have any effect in Petrograd and Moscow? Most of the Bolsheviks heard nothing about it. Even if they had read my pamphlet, it could have had no effect. They could no longer go back, without abandoning their own cause. The logic of facts was always stronger than the logic of ideas.

Many of my political friends in Germany and

Austria also disapproved of my hostile attitude towards Bolshevism. They thought it possible that the Bolsheviks might carry out their programme, and asked that they should not be disturbed or discouraged in the attempt. Measures which I considered to be absolutely wrong, to be fatal mistakes, appeared to them to be mere black patches due either to the temporary effects of the War or to the price which must always be paid for buying experience; as children's ailments, in fact.

The ulterior policy pursued by the Bolsheviks, however, confirmed the opinion I had formed based on the events of the first six months and on my theoretical knowledge. I upheld this point of view in the summer of 1919 in my book, *Terrorism and Communism*. When Trotzky published in reply a pamphlet under the same title, in the following year, I replied in 1921 by a pamphlet entitled *From Democracy to State-Slavery*. This met with no opposition from my political friends, among whom the Bolsheviks were naturally no longer included after 1918. Only in one point these friends could not—and many of them still cannot—decide to agree with me, to wit, that the actual functions although not the actual intentions of the Bolsheviks have become counter-revolutionary.

Only my friend Axelrod, whom I mentioned before, has agreed with me from the very beginning. Independently of me, he had arrived at the same conclusions. Of all the Russian Social Democrats, he has always been the one nearest to my way of thinking. Occasionally I differed on one or another point from other Social Democrats, even from my best friends. That is natural. There was never any difference of opinion between Axelrod and me. Our conception of

Bolshevism was always the same. This dear friend passed away in 1928. I consider the writing of this book to be a legacy of his. It is only a continuation and completion of the publications already mentioned, which I wrote in the first three years of the Bolshevik régime. These were years of war for Bolshevism. The decade of peace that has since passed has not embellished its face. On the contrary. There are, however, some Socialists in Europe and America who believe that it is yet too soon to form a definite judgment. We should wait and see what this year will bring forth. The Bolsheviks themselves consider this as the most critical year of the Five Year Plan. If it proves a success, the road is open to the Millennium. If it proves to be a failure, collapse is inevitable.

When in the summer of 1929 an editor of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* (Feiler) was in Russia studying economic conditions, a leading Communist said to him:

“We must carry out the Five Year Plan, otherwise we shall be thrown out.”

That is the real position. This is the progress which has been made since the first years of Bolshevism. Then the Bolsheviks still believed in themselves and in their overwhelming force. Therefore, the Communist Party kept well together. To-day, the number of members guilty of “deviating” to the right or to the left is growing. These are people who recognise that it cannot go on any longer in this fashion and that this road leads to an abyss. But the mere recognition of this fact does not mean that they know of a better way. In the early years they were still confident that if it would not work

in this way, it would work in another way; but work it must. To-day, they are already saying that if it will not work with the Five Year Plan, it will not work at all.

Is it still necessary to wait and see what this year will bring forth in order to forecast the prospects of the Bolsheviks? Are the theoretical principles which Marx and Engels laid down, which were studied with constant diligence by them and their disciples for three generations, and the thirteen years' experience of Bolshevik rule not sufficient? Must we really wait this year, in order to foretell the outcome?

What kind of social structure is it, the vitality of which depends on the chance happenings of one year?

One would think that merely pointing out this one critical year of the Five Year Plan would suffice to show each politician, each Socialist, and each philanthropist that Russia's collapse is near, and that it is very necessary for each of them to consider what attitude he is going to adopt. Nobody can imagine that such a terrible event will happen without having a far-reaching effect on the rest of the world. It is in the most urgent interest of the whole civilised world that good care is taken that democracy rises victoriously from the chaos which will ensue if Bolshevism collapses. This democracy can only be evolved by the democratic elements of Russia itself. Foreign intervention can only do harm. Democracy in Russia, however, will grow the stronger if it enjoys the increased confidence of the workers and peasants, that is to say, if it increasingly represents their interests. Its strength will also increase as it becomes less split nationally and as

the warmer and more active sympathy of democratic elements in foreign countries becomes more evident.

The Labour parties of all countries, united in the Labour and Socialist International, have always been aware of the importance of events in Russia in connection with the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat all over the world.

However, the possible collapse of Russia, and the problems resulting from it, are not universally taken into consideration. If the following pages succeed in awakening greater interest in these problems they will have achieved their purpose.

K. KAUTSKY

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BOLSHEVISM AT A DEADLOCK

I

THE AGRARIAN REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA

(a) NEW METHODS

The outstanding feature of Bolshevism is its temerity, and the fascination which it has exercised and continues to exercise on such wide circles of those in sympathy with socialism is due to its very daring.

But there are various kinds of temerity, and these are not all of equal significance.

There is the admirable temerity of the man who is fully conscious of the difficulties and dangers which beset his way, and who yet stakes his very existence on the attainment of some high ideal.

Less admirable is the temerity of the gambler actuated by recklessness and sloth. He lacks the strength of mind to strive for success along the slow and arduous path of hard work, preferring to rely upon his luck whenever, by staking his all on the game, he sees a chance of winning something substantial at one throw.

The temerity born of ignorance is no higher. It merely induces a man unhesitatingly to follow a certain path because he is unaware of the lurking dangers and the abyss into which he may be plunged.

The lowest kind of temerity is the child of embarrassment and need. It precipitates a man into dangers

simply because he knows no other means of saving himself from the ruin which threatens him from all sides.

When Lenin started his struggle for supreme power in the autumn of 1917, he was mainly actuated by the first type of temerity, although certain of his associates were somewhat influenced by their gambling instincts. When once in possession of power, however, he used the Terror as a means of building up, at one stroke, on the foundations of the old, backward Russia, a community which should tower high above all other civilised states, and as an instrument for conjuring up overnight a fully developed socialistic system of production for a nation, the great majority of which (over one hundred million) consists of illiterates and primitive peasant cultivators. This was indeed temerity; but temerity of only the third type. It required a large degree of *naïveté* to allow oneself to be impressed.

This wild experiment can only end in a disastrous collapse. Even the greatest genius could not avoid it. Under the existing conditions and with the given means, the task admits of no solution. As bankruptcy approaches, the last type of temerity—the temerity of despair—comes to the fore. Whilst the toiling masses perish on all sides, the schemes devised to pull them out of the slough get steadily more impressive. At the same time, the nervous tension grows acuter as the situation becomes more desperate. The more gigantic the plan, the shorter the time allotted for its realisation, and the more violent the means employed to achieve results which only Aladdin's Magic Lamp could make possible.

Strangely enough, there are still people in Western Europe—extremely intelligent people and Social Democrats—who in other respects have held themselves aloof from communism, but whom the boldness of these schemes has nevertheless impressed. They have been impressed by nothing but its temerity, as if mere temerity could produce anything! Daring is a virtue in time of war, but it does not get one very far in the process of production.

I was very much surprised when some time ago a member of our Party expressed to me his enthusiasm regarding the socialisation of agriculture which is now being carried out in Russia. He claimed this to be one of the greatest events in history. Moreover, he thought that I ought to be especially jubilant over this revolution; I, who for years had advocated large-scale farming as the stepping-stone towards the socialisation of agriculture. I felt that I was to a certain extent compromised by these felicitations. This by itself would be quite immaterial, but the question as to whether there is clearness in our ranks about what can be said on principle, and from the Marxian standpoint, of the latest Bolshevik experiment, is important. As far as I can see, the Party Press has shown itself to be very sceptical in this connection. I do not think, however, that an examination of the basis upon which our scepticism is founded will be superfluous. The position is not that the experiment will probably fail; it can be said with full confidence that it will fail—that it must fail.

It is quite true that ideas which I had previously developed were used when Russian *Kolhosi* (collective farms) were introduced. Many other ideas of mine

have also been put into practice, but I am not always pleased about it.

In 1918, I published a book entitled *Sozialdemokratische Bemerkungen zur Uebergangswirtschaft*. It was finished as early as March of that year, but was only released by the Military Censor immediately before the Revolution. I therein examined the demands which we would have to make in order to ensure that the transition from war-time to peace-time administration would be effected with the minimum of suffering, and with the greatest possible advantages to the proletariat. Early in 1918, I was already reckoning with the possibility of the war ending in a convulsion "which might open up the pathway to power for the proletariat. In this event, the economic conditions would not only be due to the transition between a war-time and peace-time economy, but would also be the product of the transition from capitalism to socialism."

That is what I wrote in the preface, dated July 1918. I took too favourable a view of the situation in that I did not expect the Communists to be foolish enough, or to find sufficient support, radically to split the German proletariat at the moment of its seizing power, thus making it impossible for such power to be retained.

Amongst other questions dealt with in this book, I examined how the machinery of production, which had been disorganised by the war, could be put once again upon a productive basis. With this end in view, I recommended the introduction of the shift system (page 44). This was obviously no new proposal. The shift system has been applied since time immemorial, especially in the mining industry.

Under a system of capitalism, the shift system is detrimental to the workers, more particularly as regards night work. I tried to obviate these disadvantages by advocating an appreciable reduction in working hours, so that the prejudicial effects of night work on the health of the workers might be avoided by making the night shifts shorter than the day shifts.

“Let us suppose that in peace time the normal working day lasted ten hours, and that only one shift was worked. If three shifts of eight, six and four hours respectively were now substituted, the number of hours worked daily would be raised from ten to eighteen hours.”

As shorter hours would result in more intensive work, it would be possible to produce twice as much in the three shifts as was formerly produced in one day.

“The effect therefore would be the same as that of increasing the number of spindles from 6 to 12 millions.”

As is well known, the Bolsheviki have, in effect, introduced the three-shift system in order to utilise their worn-out productive machinery to the utmost. I do not think I was instrumental in this; the expedient was obvious. They have also shortened working hours. But they have not introduced the most important of all: the night shift has not been made shorter than the day shift, and this is imperative if night work is to be done without injuring the health of the workers.

In my book I dealt at length with agriculture, and after the 1919 Revolution I published the part dealing with this question as a special paper entitled “The Socialisation of Agriculture”. In this paper I examined

how it would be possible to bring about the socialisation of agriculture in spite of the preponderance of peasant small-holders. I stressed the fact that in order to provide the urban population with food the towns would have to acquire and cultivate agricultural land more freely than they had formerly done. I insisted that in this connection the State should favour a form of agriculture in village communities whereby the peasants would pool their fields as they used to do at the time of the march-community (common land tenure).

“The final result would be that house, farm and garden would still be managed privately by the peasant, being still his absolute private property as at the time of the march-community; all the fields on the other hand would be cultivated collectively by the community” (“The Socialisation of Agriculture”, page 61).

Similarly, communal agriculture (*Kolhosi*, i.e. collective farms), organised by peasants working in co-operation, was recently being carried on in Soviet Russia side by side with large-scale farms (*Sovhosi*, i.e. Soviet farms). This was certainly a remarkable proceeding, but considering the sad condition of Russia with her poor, unemancipated, ignorant population, it was one from which little good could be expected. At any rate it could lead to no harm, provided it were carried out with the voluntary co-operation of the peasants. I laid particular stress upon *voluntary* co-operation. In my book *The Labour Revolution*, published in 1922 (the English edition was published by George Allen & Unwin Ltd. in 1925), I therefore

expressed myself as more sceptically minded than in 1919 about the prospects of the co-operative cultivation of village lands by the peasants. I had been more optimistic during the revolution of 1918. I expected then to see the proletariat in an exceedingly powerful position, and the organisation of agriculture shaken to its very base—events which would make the peasants more amenable to improvements. The political power of the proletariat would naturally help to further the latter by the passing of State measures.

This could no more be counted upon in 1922. For this reason I no longer expected a strong movement amongst the peasantry in favour of pooling their fields, however great the resultant technical advantages might be. The peasant clings too fast to his private property. I still hold that it would be highly advantageous for the peasant to own and manage his house, farm, and garden privately, while tilling the fields in common with the other villagers. In 1922 I expected big strides to be made in this direction by the rural proletariat. The Italian rural proletariat had made hopeful beginnings in this direction, but Fascism has since brutally destroyed them, along with so many other valuable achievements. I further recommended that when laying out new settlements, the houses, farm-yards, and gardens should be handed over to the settlers for private administration, whilst the fields should be worked communally. In new settlements of this kind there would be no existing private property to act as a stumbling-block for the introduction of these innovations. This suggestion, however, has not as yet been followed.

(b) LARGE-SCALE AGRICULTURAL UNDERTAKINGS

Is the large-scale undertaking superior and more productive in agriculture than it is in industry, and is this the type of organisation which should be aimed at in order to provide the population with cheap food and to ensure more leisure and greater wealth to the agricultural labourer with the same, or with an increased, volume of production?

A generation ago this question was hotly discussed in our ranks. Since then, however, interest has somewhat waned. Marx and Engels held that with modern agricultural methods and practice large holdings show the same advantages as big industry, this being the only type of organisation in which modern methods of production can be utilised to the full. They considered that the peasant small-holder was a relic of barbarian times, doomed to disappear, and that it was no task of ours to encourage his survival. This view was borne out by a series of events, and became particularly manifest during the great agricultural crisis in the two final decades of last century. Then other members of the Party came forward, the most famous being Eduard David, who declared that the rule with regard to the superiority of large-scale undertakings did not apply to agriculture in the same way as it did to industry, but that, on the contrary, small peasant holdings were preferable, the future being with them. In agriculture, unlike industry, the wage system cannot be dispensed with by socialising large-scale enterprises, but would result from their disintegration and division into small family holdings which can be worked by the husband, the wife and the younger children without the aid of hired labour.

This discussion induced me to deal with the matter thoroughly in my book *The Agrarian Question* (1899) and I am still of the same opinion to-day. The reason for not publishing a new edition since 1900 is not that I have altered the opinions therein expressed, but a marked change in the agrarian situation has taken place, as from a period of falling grain prices we entered upon a period of rising prices. I should, therefore, have been obliged to include a number of new phenomena in my investigations, and other work prevented me from undertaking this task.

The main conclusion which I formed in 1899 was that I had to agree in some points with David, and had to give up the view held by Marx and Engels, only, however, to cling to the essential points of the latter far more firmly. I had to agree that the progress of large-scale production in agriculture, noticed by Marx and Engels, had stopped, and that it had never really made much headway. On the other hand, I could not observe a progressive replacement of large-scale undertakings by small holdings, but noticed that the relative sizes of the undertakings remained stable. The one or the other gains ground in turn, but the movement is always very slow, and never continues for long in the same direction. Generally speaking, the relationship between the relative sizes of the holdings alters little, if only influenced by purely economic factors and not by external forces. It is difficult to define precisely the superiority of large-scale agriculture as compared with small holdings or vice versa; sometimes one, sometimes the other proves to be more profitable, all according to the social conditions prevailing.

Marx and Engels had already recognised this. They did not consider that every large holding was necessarily superior to the small, but only included those which had at their disposal all the appliances provided by modern technique and modern agrarian science, which are partly inaccessible and partly unapplicable to small holdings.

Where large and small holdings are worked with the same appliances and the same knowledge, the small holdings always prove to be superior, for the interest of the peasant in the output from his holding is far deeper than the interest of the hired labourer in the working of large holdings. Only the better appliances and greater knowledge used in the large holdings can counterbalance this superiority of the small holdings. Moreover, large-scale agricultural undertakings developed on lines which very strongly resisted the application of highly developed machinery and knowledge; this is an important difference between large-scale operations in agriculture and in industry. This is pointed out here, as little attention has been paid to it.

Big estates originated very differently from capitalistic big industry. The latter is of relatively recent date, being only a few centuries old, whereas big estates and large holdings are already found at the beginning of written history. Capitalistic big industry develops as a result of the economic and technical advantages which it offers over handicraft. The low prices which it makes possible are its irresistible weapons.

Landlordism, on the other hand, is the product of force, of conquest. Where it allows peasants to exist close to it, it later further extends its territory by force,

by expropriating the peasants and seizing the commons belonging to the peasant villages or march-communities. Where the large landholder is not satisfied with relegating peasants who were formerly free to the status of tributary tenants, and starts farming on his own, he also procures the necessary labour by force, for he either employs enslaved prisoners of war or compels the tributary peasants to render him certain services.

The newly created landlord did not, however, consider himself in the first place as a farmer. He had gained his possessions and his workers as a soldier and as such he meant to hold them. He is and remains first and foremost a soldier and not a farmer. And the agricultural holdings operating on a large scale feel the after effects of this origin to the present day. Higher technique and scientific production cannot develop on this basis. The forced labour of the slave or serf, as well as amateur management by a feudal lord—who only ceases to be a soldier when he becomes a courtier—these are the most inefficient of all the possible forms of production. The slave ill-treats his master's cattle, and can only be entrusted with the clumsiest of tools. The serf works for the manorial estate with his own tools and his own team of horses, but he uses them much less efficiently than on his own holding. He knows far more about the conditions of successful farming than his master, being more interested in applying this knowledge to his own farm than the hireling who administers the manorial estate in the capacity of bailiff or steward. Where such social conditions exist, the peasant holding is at any rate the more productive, and the superior.

There was no great change when forced labour was replaced by hired labour on the big estates. The educational facilities and possibilities of organising to obtain proper wages, housing, and hours and conditions of work are inferior in the country to those in the large town. It is, therefore, especially difficult for the farm labourer to attain that degree of intelligence, independence, and interest in his work without which the successful application of modern technique and science in agriculture is far less possible than in industry. The work is not always carried on under the same conditions requiring the same handling as in a factory, but is done in the open fields where conditions change very quickly, and where machinery and methods of modern agriculture must be adapted accordingly. Modern large-scale organisation, then, demands a higher degree of intelligence and independence from the paid worker than most branches of big industry. The social conditions under which the big estates have been managed hitherto make it more difficult than in the towns for the paid labourer to acquire more knowledge, to get accustomed to independent thinking and acting, to form big organisations and to influence the process of production through them. This is the main reason why large-scale agriculture has not yet attained that economic superiority which is due to it by virtue of modern technique and biological discoveries.

(c) CONDITIONS FOR LARGE-SCALE AGRICULTURE IN
RUSSIA

From the foregoing, it is easy to predict what the end of this "bold", grandiose, "world-historic" experi-

ment of the present "Agrarian Revolution" in Russia will be.

There again, the Bolsheviks based themselves upon Marx's conclusions, without having the slightest idea of Marx's methods.

In Marx's view nothing was absolute; there was no absolute superiority of socialism over capitalism, of large holdings over small. He always made any superiority dependent upon certain conditions. The Bolsheviks totally ignore these and must ignore them, for investigations as to whether conditions are favourable for the realisation of the plans they have in hand would cripple them from the outset. But such investigations must precede any of our actions if these are to be built upon a sound basis unexposed to the risks of fantastic dreams.

To make large-scale agriculture work properly, there must above all be an adequate available supply of the aids to modern agriculture. In order to utilise these to the purpose, a sufficient number of scientifically trained managers is necessary, involving numerous higher agricultural schools and biological and chemical research stations, and such like. But, above all, there must be agricultural labourers of a high standard, which presupposes a far-reaching state of democracy, not only with good elementary education, but with full freedom to combine and hold meetings and absolute freedom of the Press. The agricultural labourers and their organisations can only develop with the assistance of the town workers living under more favourable conditions. Close relations with the latter are necessary and, besides full democracy, a high

development of the means of communication is indispensable.

All these conditions must be existent if the technical superiority of large-scale agriculture is to be manifest. Even in Western Europe perfect conditions do not exist and intensive work is required in order to improve them. In Russia they are almost entirely lacking. However, an *élite* of workers is everywhere to be found, and if such an *élite* were to be found in Russia which would succeed in creating vital large-scale agricultural organisations economically and technically of a high standard, to serve as models having a stimulating and educational effect on the whole agricultural population, it would undoubtedly be a great help.

Such attempts have indeed been made and furthered by the state since the beginning of Bolshevik rule, but the results were such that they did not encourage imitation. The organisations were often dissolved after a short existence or merely vegetated miserably.

"In spite of all privileges and assistance they developed at a very slow pace. Their area under cultivation during the period 1922-27 has not only not increased, but it has decreased" (F. Roetter, *The Collectivisation of Agriculture in Russia*, Wirtschaftsdienst (Economic Report), May 16, 1930).

This bad result should have warned the dictators of Soviet Russia; but it had just the opposite effect. As the peasants were in no hurry to join the large-scale farms and hand over to them their land, it was concluded that they must be compelled to do so. Who will bother about details as to whether the conditions suitable for such organisations were existent or how they

could be created? They have the power and command, and that is the end of it. Anyone who dares to doubt the usefulness of such methods is a counter-revolutionary.

In the forties of last century an anecdote was told to ridicule the implicit faith of the average Russian of that time in the omnipotence of the authorities of his country. A Russian youth who was travelling and who happened to be in the company of Germans said that everything in Russia was gigantic, even the bees, which were as big as pigeons. "And the bee-hives?" he was asked. "Oh, just the same as here". "But how can the big bee get into the small hive?" "Ze bee must", replied the Russian with a superior air. This has become a household word. Now, after almost a century, it is used in earnest by Stalin and his followers. The bee must go—the peasant must go into the bee-hive, into the collective farm, without any consideration as to whether he fits in and settles down there. Unfortunately, Stalin is not the Russian of an invented anecdote, but a very real and autocratic ruler of the 150 million inhabitants of Soviet Russia.

Not one of all the conditions which must be fulfilled, if the large-scale agriculture is to be superior to the small holding, exists in Russia. Agricultural machinery? Yes, there is some, but in quite insufficient quantities. Russia is too poor to buy sufficient implements, industrially too backward to manufacture much herself. The Five Year Plan will not change much, as we shall see.

At the same time, the bureaucratic system which has to distribute the machinery is slovenly, incapable, and out of touch with the rest of the world, handi-

capped in its activities by a many-sided complicated system of control departmentalisation. In addition it is confused by a wealth of plans which follow, overlap and contradict one another. Thus the distribution of machinery, even of the simplest tools, is effected with delay, in insufficient quantities and without any method. There are numerous proofs of this. As illustration I will mention a few facts which I have found in the *Bulletin* of the Russian Social Democrats, of April 17, 1930. In an article in this excellent paper the following is said about the supply of ploughs for the farms:

“The bureaucratic disorganisation which is ruining Russia economically . . . has brought about a situation where ploughs which are ready for use are lying in store in numerous districts of the Union and that they never reach either the collective farms or the independent peasant holdings”.

This is confirmed by quotations from *Za Industrializatsiu*, a paper published in Russia and therefore a Communist paper. It reads:

“In the co-operative warehouses of the province of Smolensk are stored as dead stock 52,000 ploughs, 5,000 sowing machines, separating machines and triple-share ploughs, and, apparently, nobody has been able to attend to their distribution. . . . This is no isolated incident. In the district of Moscow there are also about 150,000 agricultural machines in store; in the Ukraine, taking ploughs alone, there are 78,000, and the number of machines held up in the Leningrad district, in Siberia, in the Volga area and in the Caucasus, is no smaller.”

Even a Communist paper calls this situation "almost catastrophic" in view of the spring sowing. The above applies mostly to ploughs and other simple implements. The non-arrival of complicated machines would be of less importance, because the ordinary agricultural labourer understands so little about them that he spoils them very quickly, in which event they are placed in some corner to get rusty, for spare parts and skilled mechanics for repairs are as a rule not to be had.

There is also a shortage of manure and of stations for cattle-breeding and the varieties of plants.

But above all, the most important agent of production is lacking: suitable labour.

The lack of trained agriculturists was felt already under czarist rule. The Soviet Republic has driven the majority of the intellectuals out of the country, has demoralised and degraded those who remained, has brought up the new generation on Communist phrases instead of on suitable training. In addition, it has mistrusted every specialist, and has deprived him of all liberty of movement, so that it has been impossible for him to achieve anything of importance with the limited means at his disposal.

The working masses are in no better a position. They lack all the preliminary conditions without which a higher agricultural economy is impossible. This is the chief reason why the collective farms have up to now shown such poor results, and why they have had little attraction for the peasant. An eyewitness describes in detail in the *Socialistitsheskoie Semledelie* of May 23, 1930 (mentioned in the *Bulletin* of the Russian Social Democrats of May 29th) what the management of

one of those large farms or *Kolhos* is like. He writes as follows :

“After having become acquainted with the *Kolhosi*, I was convinced that the *Kolhos* members were right on many points in complaining about the management. The work in the *Kolhosi* is badly organised. The duties of each member are not clearly defined. Nobody is responsible for the work done; consequently there are many deficiencies. Thus, for instance, the seed was strewn over the soil without taking into consideration the nature of the ground. Equal quantities were used on heavy and light soils, although the heavier soil requires more seed. The tractors and sowing machines were worked at speed II and the corn was therefore sown too thinly. The seed drills were contaminated, nobody exercised any control, and finally the seed was sown to no purpose all over the fields. There were also cases in which some sowing machines of 80 kg. per hectare and others of 112 kg. per hectare capacity were used on the same fields. Hence, the seed was in part sown densely and in part sparsely, so that the corn will shoot up unequally. By this criminally negligent method of working, the ‘*Kolhos*’ succeeded in ‘economising’ 50 cwt. of wheat by sowing too thinly. This enormous balance of seed surprised the management; they think the supply was probably excessive.

“The tractor drivers often work up to 22 hours per day without any consideration of time, and often without being suitably clad. They spend the night just where they happen to be on the bare ground without any bedding. The tractors often have to stop because there is a shortage of petrol. Petrol is distributed by

the bottle. Working discipline exists only on the paper. . . .

“The feeding of the agricultural labourer is not organised, the food being bad—soup and potatoes, potatoes and soup. In addition, they receive bad bread. Fats are not to be had. Fodder is not to be had. The cattle waste away and die. It is impossible to procure forage.”

This appears grotesque, but it turned into a real tragedy when as a feature of Stalin's policy it was decided that the number of collective farms was to be increased at “hurricane” and at “lightning” speed, so that within a short period they would embrace the whole of agricultural organisation. But the Bolsheviks are in urgent need of such a tempo.

(d) THE RAPID COLLECTIVISATION

The attempt, by means of centralised bureaucratic and police intimidation, to evolve a socialist system of production superior to that of the capitalist system in a most backward people was, from the outset, doomed to end in bankruptcy. The latter is approaching with sinister speed. In order to avoid it the Bolsheviks are seeking avenues of escape or, at least, ways of hiding its approach from what supporters and admirers are still left. Hence the Five Year Plan which is to raise industry with the utmost speed from the lowest position to a higher standard than that attained by the American industries, the richest and most advanced in the world. Actually, the Bolsheviks have few other means of rapidly increasing output at their disposal than those employed by every incapable and impoverished

manufacturer—incessantly driving the workers to exert themselves to the full, while simultaneously reducing their wages, the latter being accomplished in the least noticeable way under the Soviet régime by a system of forced loans imposed on the wage-earners and deducted direct from their money wages.

This ruthless driving has, in fact, led to certain increase in Soviet Russia's industrial output, but it seems questionable whether further expansion is possible. What has already been achieved in this direction is deceptive, for even in the land of the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" the result of unduly driving the workers is noticeable, and the quality of the goods produced declines faster than the quantity increases.

Although the Soviet authorities make a parade of their statistics of production abroad, amongst themselves they groan under the rapid falling off in quality, which has never been conspicuously good. *Trud* (the Soviet Trade Union newspaper) of February 1, 1930, makes the following complaint (printed in the *R.S.D.* of February 13th):

"During 1928-29 there was a radical decline in the quality of production both as regards the output of productive appliances and of goods for mass consumption. The People's Commissariat of the U.S.S.R. for Supervision by Workers and Peasants held an enquiry into the quality of goods produced for mass consumption. This enquiry showed that defective goods have been marketed in large quantities as sound goods. In a number of industries defective goods amount to 50 % or more. This is true of nearly all the branches of industry covered by the enquiry."

The figures resulting from this enquiry and quoted by *Trud* are startling and confirm what I said above. The production of unusable goods naturally represents a waste of labour and material. This wasteful system is now being practised to the utmost in Soviet industries, ostensibly to save them from bankruptcy, which is, however, being hastened by it.

Trud ends the article quoted with these words:

"All the facts mentioned refer to the year 1928-29. During the present year there has been no economic improvement. In a number of branches of industry (paper, tobacco, chemicals, etc.) the quality of the manufactures has declined even further."

I had already written the above before I received the *R.S.D.* of April 9th, in which a number of telegrams from *Pravda* were reproduced. In the first of these telegrams, dated March 10th, there was great rejoicing over the Red Putilov Works, which had not only attained, but had actually surpassed, the production quota for tractors allotted to it by the State. The great enthusiasm of the workers of the Putilov Works was reported on April 1st, but as early as April 9th a telegram from Kharkov reads:

"From reports on goods received, it appears that the new tractors from the Putilov Works which have arrived in the Uman and Proskurov districts have defects which make it impossible to use them. The radiators leak; the pistons have no rings; the caterpillars are concave; the cylinder blocks are broken as a result of the parts having been put together carelessly, and the trucks are full of dirt and scrap metal."

This telegram not only shows the effect of over-

burdening the worker, but also shows the type of machinery which is being sent to the *Kolkhosi* (collective farms).

Experience, as the economists of the Soviet Union should know, has shown of old that an undertaking of which the economic foundations have been absolutely undermined cannot be saved by merely driving the workers.

The deplorable failure of Russian industry has also caused a set-back in agricultural production, partly because the renewal of agricultural implements gradually became more difficult, and also because the peasant curtailed his output when his surplus production could only be exchanged for useless goods or for no goods at all. As the amount of goods which the peasant takes to market decreases, so the attempt grows to take from him by force what the towns need, either by taxing him or simply by confiscating what he will not give up voluntarily. This naturally discourages the peasant from producing over and above what he needs for his own consumption and makes him more hostile.

There is only one way out of this threatening situation if the Soviet régime is to be maintained—the substitution of large-scale State farms for individual peasant enterprise, the output of which shall belong to the State and the workpeople employed therein being absolutely dependent upon the State. And as the rulers of the Soviet Republic are already nearly up to their necks in water, this must be done at once, and with the utmost speed. Peasants who will not voluntarily merge their holdings with the land belonging to the State and who will not voluntarily work for the State under-

takings as wage-earners must be forced to do it. The bee must!

The socialisation of agriculture in Soviet Russia is naturally being carried through with the same lying subterfuges as everything else in this Workers' Paradise.

Forcing the peasants? Who would dare to think of such a thing in the Workers' and Peasants' State? Of course not—it is only a matter of removing the stumbling-block which is in the way of the peasants, who are streaming into the collective farms as fast as they can, and who gladly give up their former holdings. This stumbling-block is the *kulak*.

The Soviet despots know a simple means of palliating every deed of violence. They stick a repulsive label on everyone who does not suit them, and then any ill-treatment meted out to such persons becomes justified. A workman who holds as strong Social Democratic views as Lenin still held in 1916 is simply a renegade, a social Fascist, a social traitor—a rascal, therefore—against whom any means may be employed. An engineer or manager in Soviet industry who cannot obtain good results in the general state of poverty is accused of sabotaging the work of the Proletarian State and of being a counter-revolutionary; up against the wall with him!

Now every peasant who does not join the new collective farm is a *kulak*, the worst of all the peasants' enemies. The term *kulaki* was formerly applied to those well-to-do peasants who exploited the miserable condition of the poorer peasants by making them advances in times of need at high rates of interest or for repayment by services. These usurers who used to keep the

peasants in a subjection of debt under the Czarist régime are, then, still perpetrating their crimes in Russia on a large scale twelve years after the glorious Revolution which gave land and a higher standard of living to all the peasants! To-day, then, there is such dire need in the peasant communities that they are forced to allow themselves to be exploited by usurers, and the number of such usurers is seemingly so large that they rule the villages and "shock brigades" of town workers are necessary in order to eliminate them.

If this were really so, it would be hard to find a more destructive criticism of the Bolshevik agrarian policy. Actually, however, things are quite different. They are certainly not better. There are poor peasants enough in the villages, and the Soviet policy is ever ruining more peasants. But whence shall the usurer come to-day? The presence of millions of starving peasants is compatible with the existence of the Soviet State, but the well-to-do, not to mention the rich, peasant is quite incompatible with it. Wealthy peasants are outlawed, not on account of their deeds, but on account of their possessions. The designation *kulak* is to-day nothing more than a forged signboard which is hung on every peasant who will not give up his bit of land and risk the uncertain experiment of the change-over to collective farms, because his former private holding has not yet been completely ruined.

It is incredible, almost impossible to believe, what sort of people are being branded *kulaks* in Russia to-day. I will only give two examples which have come to my notice in a number of the *R.S.D.*, dated April 17th, from which I have already given extracts. Not only peasants,

but also railway workers who own a small piece of land are termed *kulaks*, and as such are expelled from their unions and despoiled. *Trud* of April 9th reports two cases: A workman called Sidorenko of Beresouka, who had been at work for seventeen years and had a family of nine, owned 14.5 hectares of land. He was wise enough to cede this piece of ground to the village Soviet as long as two years ago. But he had once owned land. Perhaps he had even on occasion regretted having given it up. He was, therefore, "a partisan of the *kulak* elements", and, as such, expelled from the union, while a "shock brigade" was sent to his home, which, as it found nothing else to expropriate, confiscated the flour which he had bought at the co-operative store. A railway official of Karpovo showed himself to be even more criminally a *kulak* and was expelled from the union as a "householder" and a "speculator" and was punished by having all his possessions confiscated. He owned 4.35 hectares of land and, in addition, a cow. He also owned a house, although not a finished one, for he had been building it for years with his own hands, and in the meantime lodged with his wife and child in one room. And he was also a speculator, for he had harvested more potatoes than he needed, and had sold a few of them.

We hear of these two cases because the Higher Trade Union Court of Appeal looked into them and found them to be absurd. But, says *Trud* itself, there are innumerable similar cases which are not investigated by a higher Court. This is what happens to workmen. In the villages the despotism that reigns is yet more arbitrary. Here is just one example from a village,

reprinted in *La Russie Opprimée* (Paris) of April 12th from *Pravda* of March 25th:

"A poor peasant in Ekaterinovo was 'dekulakised'; a horse, seven hens, nine boxes of matches and a few other trifles were taken from him."

Peasants have been classed as *kulaks* and have been deprived of their possessions by hundreds of thousands. In addition to having their land and farm stocks taken from them, they have also been despoiled of their food, clothes, and furniture. They have been reduced to beggary, or deported to the North for forced labour, where, as wood-cutters, they freeze, starve and perish in misery. Sometimes, particularly when means of transport failed, the troublesome *kulak* has been simply shot. This fate threatened every peasant who refused to go into the collective farms. It is no wonder that the Soviet Press was able to report triumphantly that the peasants were vying with one another for the honour of giving up their private holdings and enrolling themselves in the collective farms. In many districts nearly all the peasants did this, sometimes within the space of a few weeks.

In a notable article on "Stalin's Agrarian Policy", P. Garvy wrote:

"In 1927 there were 15,000 *Kolhosi* in the whole Soviet Union; on October 1, 1928, the number increased to 38,000. It was soon increasing at a galloping speed."

As early as January 20, 1930, there were actually more than 59,000 and a few weeks later—on March 1st—there were over 110,000 *Kolhosi*. The number of farms which had been collectivised increased in those

weeks from a round four million to fourteen millions—more than half of all the peasant farms in Russia.

Quite frequently, however, the threatened *kulaks* revolted in such numbers and with the whole population behind them—in places the troops of the Red Army actually refused to attack them—that Stalin became scared and, in his famous circular of March 15, 1930, forbade the use of force in the socialisation process. But decrees are not always carried out; pogroms are easier to incite than to stem and the situation is so strained that the fury against the *kulaks*, that is to say, against all those peasants who have not yet been completely ruined and who still have something to lose, may break out again any day. The system of plundering the producers does, it is true, bring the process of production to a standstill, but its immediate result is to provide the plunderers with some of the commodities which they may require.

At the last (the sixteenth) Congress of the Russian Communist Party, Stalin painted an enchantingly beautiful picture of the future of Russian agriculture, but he himself had to admit that the number of live-stock had at the time declined alarmingly. He nevertheless announced that the "liquidation of the *kulak* class" and the collectivisation of agricultural holdings would be completely effected within two years. What next may we expect?

We have seen that under the conditions at present ruling in Russia large-scale agricultural undertakings are from the outset less profitable than small-scale production. The shortage of machinery, of well-instructed agriculturists, and of trained agricultural

labourers with initiative must greatly narrow the scope of large-scale production. The way in which the creation of large-scale production has been overdone lately has still further greatly increased the disadvantages of large-scale undertakings. Where they have been started, they are now mainly run with forced labour, and are not an advance towards a higher form of economic organisation but a return to the old serfdom and plantation system, with the exception that the Soviet manors are not in the possession of families of war lords, but are owned by a clique of Communist civil-war lords.

Forced labour is the most unprofitable kind of labour possible, and is the kind which, as far as results go, compares the least favourably with free labour. Only the destitute and entirely ruined peasants enter the collective farms willingly, and they are precisely the persons who have proved themselves to be the most unskilled and incapable of work. They fly to the *Kolhosi* in order to become State pensioners. Such people will not help to make the large-scale undertakings flourishing concerns.

The outstanding feature is the rapidity with which the new reform has been introduced without any previous preparation and the brutal violence, without which no change is carried through in Soviet Russia. The municipal "shock brigades", which have been entrusted with the task of inculcating a love for large-scale enterprise into the peasants, have not only dispossessed the better situated peasants but have ruined many of their implements and killed much of their live-stock. In other cases, many peasants who soon realised that refusal to enter the collective farms would

be of no avail, killed their own live-stock and either ate it or sold it, thinking that they would no longer need it in the collective farms. Thus on the Russian farms, already so inadequately stocked both with animals and implements, many of the means of production which were urgently needed were destroyed.

And, finally, to all this frightful damage was added the fearful uncertainty which hangs over the whole of agriculture, the future of which does not depend upon the will and knowledge of that section of the agricultural population which best knows the conditions of work, but upon the whims and momentary needs of the often appallingly ignorant persons in the Kremlin. What initiative and interest in their work remained in the rural population is being completely stifled by this paralysing uncertainty.

Under these conditions it is clear to what end Stalin's experiment must lead.

In no circumstances will Soviet Russia be able to create agricultural large-scale production capable of survival. The attempt to conjure up thousands of big holdings over-night has merely resulted, and will continue to result, in the destruction of the soundest and most productive section of the peasant population. This will be the only permanent effect of the agrarian revolution. The whole of Russian agriculture cannot be collectivised with the "lightning speed" upon which Stalin insisted without the process of production coming completely to a standstill.

In industry it is possible to build up large factories alongside of small shops without ruining the latter. Where ruin results, it is the outcome and not a pre-

requisite, of the rise of large-scale undertakings. On the other hand, in a country where the whole cultivable land has been worked, new large agricultural holdings can only be started after a number of peasant holdings have been swept out of the way. This means that if a total disorganisation of the process of agricultural production is to be avoided, the change over from small-scale to large-scale production must be gradual, not rapid, and can only be effected locally and not everywhere. This is one of the reasons for the stability of the different sizes of agricultural undertakings. Conditions of tenure can be changed over-night, but not working conditions.

In history, wherever we find the wholesale eviction of tenants in favour of a rapidly growing number of big land-owners, it is effected simultaneously with a change from arable to pastoral farming, as was, for example, made profitable for a time in both England and North-East Germany by the growing demand for sheep's wool. Things in Russia to-day are quite different, for increased, not decreased, agricultural production is necessary if the growing population is to be kept from starvation. In my opinion, this need could be best met by rational farming on a large scale. But even if the necessary preliminary conditions for this were present in Russia, which is by no means the case, the creation of such farms would have to proceed slowly, step by step, after careful consideration and with the fullest consent of the rural population, unless the whole productive machinery of agriculture is to come to a standstill. I have already described the methods of gradual procedure in my book *The Sociali-*

sation of Farming, where I expressly condemned the kind of methods which are now being used in Soviet Russia:

“The victorious proletariat has every reason to see to it that the production of foodstuffs should continue undisturbed. Any expropriation of the peasants would bring the whole of this branch of production into the wildest disorder and threaten the new régime with famine. The peasants may, therefore, remain free from anxiety. Quite apart from the fact that it would be against the simplest rules of common sense to antagonise such a large section of the community, their economic indispensability will guarantee them against any expropriation” (page 71).

At that time I overestimated the intelligence of the Communists. The more the latter dispossess the peasants, the clearer become the dictates of common sense which impel the Social Democrat categorically to break away from Soviet methods and to expose the monstrous lunacy which lurks behind their so much admired “wise”, “gigantic” experiments.

The consequences for the whole Russian people will be terrible. The colossal deficits of Soviet industry have hitherto been made good at the expense of the peasantry, who have had to pay for them in the form of enormous prices for the products of industry or else in the shape of high taxation. If farming should now fail and begin to show a loss, who remains to make good this deficit?

Economic collapse now becomes inevitable. The failure of agriculture is perceptible very much quicker than the failure of industry, for a nation can withstand the decline of industry for a long time without perishing. If the necessity arises, it is possible to get along for

a considerable period without new clothes, and in a larger degree still without new furniture, new utensils and new houses to replace old and worn-out ones, but this is not the case with food. The decay of agriculture means actual hunger, and finally starvation. And in the process, the opposition of the large majority of the population—the peasantry—to the Communist Party grows.

(c) THE AGRARIAN REVOLUTION OF 1918

Although for many years the Communist régime in Russia seemed unshakable, the creaking of the framework is now definitely audible, even abroad. It was not without reason that the Executive of the Labour and Socialist International at its session in May this year felt compelled to issue a manifesto to the Russian workers summoning them to save the Revolution in the coming crisis.

This will certainly be very necessary. But it is not so simple to decide which manifestations in Russia we are to-day to regard as revolutionary and which as counter-revolutionary. This applies, for example, even to the *Kolhosi* experiment if we consider it by itself. It holds good in a much larger degree if we compare this experiment with the agrarian revolution with which the Bolsheviks began their governing activities. The agrarian revolution of 1930 is the exact opposite of the one which they engineered or allowed to be engineered in 1918, in which the partition of the estates of the large landed proprietors amongst the peasantry took place.

The Bolsheviks cannot take special credit for this measure. The great majority of the National Consti-

tuent Assembly which was elected at the end of 1917 was composed of parties which demanded the same thing, only they wanted to know that it would be carried through in such a way that above all the neediest peasants would receive consideration.

The Bolsheviks anticipated the National Assembly with their Decree of November 1917 regarding landed property. The contrast between them and the other revolutionary parties was that they brought about the partition of the land in a haphazard fashion, with pillage and rapine, which, however, should not be scored too heavily against them. The administration of the commonwealth was in a state of chaos and the peasants, the masters of the countryside, would have done what they wanted in any case whatever the socialists might have wished. Lenin attained power because he gave way to the peasants. In a small country like Georgia, which was under Menshevik rule, the expropriation of the large estates and the partition of the land was accomplished in accordance with definite principles, whereas in the vast area of Russia it would have been scarcely possible. Revolutions seldom end according to desire.

The expropriation of the landowners and the partition of the land should in nowise be looked upon as a very glorious feather in the cap of Bolshevism. Still, whatever its share in the revolution of 1917 and 1918 may be, the historical importance of this revolution cannot be too highly estimated. A. Yugoff is perfectly right when he says in his important work *Economic Trends in Soviet Russia*, page 111:

“The revolution gave the peasants rights as a class,

and freed them from their semi-feudal dependence upon the great landlords. Thus did the revolution fulfil its main historical task, and therein must be discerned its greatest achievement."

This greatest achievement of the social revolution was a bourgeois, not a socialistic, measure. As far as the countryside was concerned, the revolution worked along the same lines as the French Revolution of 1789, although in a different way and under different historical conditions.

Do the Bolsheviks wish it to be regarded as their especial revolutionary achievement? In essentials, as regards the land question, they only did what the other revolutionary parties would also have done. But what did they do of their own part in the matter?

The partition of the landlords' estates amongst the peasants had become inevitable, but the peasant population had grown to such an extent that this measure no longer sufficed to assure their subsistence. It had become much too large to produce by the old methods of cultivation on the existing area of land all the products they needed to feed themselves and to supply the necessary means of exchange for obtaining the manufactured goods which they required. All the land of Russia was not sufficient to put every country producer in possession of a large enough holding so long as primitive methods of farming remained in use. In spite of the partition of the landlords' estates, many of the peasants would have to remain landless, or else the holdings would have to be made so small that it would be impossible to make a living on them with the old methods of cultivation.

The introduction of intensive methods of husbandry in the countryside was indispensable for the completion of the social revolution. This demanded a higher standard of education as well as a high development of industry in order to provide the peasants with cheap improved implements and similar means of production, such as, for example, artificial manures, and last but not least, it demanded absolute security of tenure to ensure technical progress. No one will put up large, costly buildings or provide machinery unless he can expect to reap the obvious advantages. That is one of the reasons why the system of confiscating the means of production in order to convert them into communally-owned property is economically so damaging and wasteful. Security of tenure is necessary even with farming in a very primitive state, for the peasant does not immediately harvest what he has sown. It is many months before he reaps the fruit of his labour, and the benefits to be derived from improvements are often not visible for years. Unless he is certain that his farm and crops will remain his property, he will avoid all improvements and will reduce his sowing to a minimum. It was for this reason that agriculture never flourished in Turkey, as a result of the Pasha despotism.

The great French Revolution not only gave more land to the peasants, but also fulfilled to a large degree most of the conditions necessary for the introduction of intensive methods of cultivation. In this respect the Bolshevik revolution remains far behind the bourgeois revolution. The Bolsheviks themselves recognised the necessity for progress along at least one of these lines, but they were unable to bring it about owing to lack of

means caused by their throttling of industry and the industrial population. The constant insecurity of tenure proceeded from their autocratic, not from their revolutionary, character, but to this we shall return later.

The educational system in the country districts is almost as miserable as it was under the Czars, and has in many cases sunk below the pre-war level owing to the poverty of the State. Then too the schools, just like those of Czarist days, are not organised to turn out thinking men and women but submissive subjects and uncritical believers, the only difference being that they have changed master and articles of faith. The schools are no longer aids to the domination of the Czar and the Orthodox Church but of the Communist Party.

Several facts regarding the supply of machinery, tools, and manures have already been given, but here just one more example:

“According to the results of an enquiry made by the People’s Commissariat for Agriculture, there were only nine million ploughs and eight million harrows for twenty-four million farms” (Yugoff, *Economic Trends in Soviet Russia*, p. 116).

The crops in Russia per unit of area were regularly far behind those of Western Europe, and during the reign of the Soviet Republic they have sunk still further. The yield of milling corn per desyatina was 62·2 poods in 1913 and only 49·5 poods in 1923.

Under the old methods of agriculture crop failures also are very frequent:

“During the ten years of Soviet rule, there have been 2 famine years, 5 years with poor harvests, and only 3 years with good harvests. But whereas, elsewhere in

Europe the gross yield in years with a bad harvest only falls behind the average by the amount of from 7 to 10 per cent., the falling-off in Russia is from 20 to 30 per cent. in years of bad harvest, and as much as 50 per cent. in famine years" (Yugoff, *ibid.*, p. 115).

To the uncertainty and the shortage of tools, manures, and cattle, must be added the capriciousness of the Soviet rulers, whom nothing restrains, or, rather, whom the growing need forces into making the maddest and most contradictory experiments, into reducing the peasant's interest in his work to a minimum, and into completely crushing his endeavours to improve his farm, for everyone who harvested more than he positively needed was punished as a *kulak*. Hence the area under cultivation diminished.

Thus the partition of the big landlords' estates amongst the peasants in Russia since 1918 could in no wise bring about those favourable results which followed the overthrow of feudalism in France after 1789. On the contrary, peasant farming declined steadily; that was the most important reason for the mad *Kolhosi* experiment, with the consideration of which we started, which dispossessed the peasants in favour of the collective farms.

And now arises from the foregoing the question of what is to be understood as the revolution which must be saved from the counter-revolution.

The partition of the land amongst the peasants has not been carried out by the best methods, but the spontaneous rising of unorganised masses of people is not accomplished methodically and in order. The final result was undoubtedly a great step forward, and we

have before us a really important social revolution. Should any class or party in Russia set out to destroy this achievement and to restore the conditions existing before the revolution, the whole international social-democratic movement would most decidedly have to fight against it, but where is this counter-revolutionary factor to be found? Certainly not amongst the actual peasantry. It is true that the opposition of the latter to the Soviet régime steadily increases, but not on account of the partition of the landlords' estates amongst the peasants. Where division of the land was advocated by the Bolsheviks, the latter could be assured of the enthusiastic support of the peasants, to whom they owed, in a large measure, their political power at the beginning of their rule.

Everything that the Soviet State has subsequently added to the social revolution of 1918 tends to the wholesale expropriation and enslavement of the peasants. In conjunction with the checking of industry and the deforming of the educational system, it is done with a view either to stem or actually to abolish the revolution in the countryside and turn it in an opposite direction. If the beginnings of the Soviet régime in the countryside signify a revolution, its further acts must more and more be looked upon as a direct counter-revolution.

It is against this counter-revolution that the peasants are rising.

Which side must we take if we want to ward off the counter-revolution and save the threatened revolution in Russia?

II

THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION IN INDUSTRY

(a) LABOUR LEGISLATION

We have just been able to show that the Russian Revolution of 1918, in contrast to the French Revolution of 1789, marked not an advance but a progressive decline in peasant farming, which led to the *Kolhos* folly.

The real salvation of agriculture in Russia lies in increasing the industrial capacity of the country, as this alone can provide the means for more intensive cultivation of the soil.

The root of the evil is here. How can it be extirpated?

Let us examine the industrial peculiarities of Soviet Russia.

Not only did the World War lead to the collapse of Czarism, but also of the three large military monarchies in Eastern Europe. It ended everywhere in a political revolution which placed proletarian parties at the helm of State. Through them the wage-earners obtained very great improvements in their position, viz., the eight-hour day, the beginning of factory democracy by the appointment of Works Committees, as well as unemployment insurance. Each of these reforms strengthened the Trade Unions, and, moreover, necessitated powerful Unions to carry it through.

There are some proletarians, namely the Communists, to whom these achievements seem too trifling to be counted as revolutionary. They are, nevertheless,

revolutionary, firstly because they were the work of a political revolution, and secondly because they did not come gradually, step by step, like ordinary social reforms, but were achieved all at once. If they are compared, not with the ideal picture of the Future State for which we are striving, but with the conditions which existed previously, the significance of these achievements of the revolution cannot possibly be undervalued. They improved the condition of the working classes in perhaps no less a degree than the French Revolution had done by releasing them from all obligations to join guilds.

The revolution in Russia brought the workers the same advantages with which we are dealing here. If a political upheaval there enabled a Party desirous of depriving the workers of these fruits of the revolution to get possession of the helm, that would certainly represent a counter-revolution which we should have to strive against. At the moment, however, there does not appear to be anyone desirous of worsening the conditions of the workers, except, of course, the Soviet hierarchy, which has been working at it for a long time.

But is this not malevolent slander? Have they not, rather, replaced the eight-hour by the seven-hour day? Is this not a very great advance over the level attained in the capitalist States?

It certainly would be if the hours of work had really been reduced by this measure, but this is in no wise the case.

I have already pointed out the questionable wisdom of the seven-hour night shift as a permanent institution, and that is not the worst of the innovations which

have been introduced in Russia. One might have expected that this would have had a beneficial effect upon unemployment; actually, there is no question of this. The Naro-Fomin spinning and weaving mill is only one example of how it has been done:

“Before the transition to the seven-hour day, the works employed 6,577 workpeople, and after the introduction of the seven-hour day, 1,169 new workmen were taken on, and on October 8, 1928, the total number of workers employed amounted to 8,046 persons. But on October 1, 1929, it was only 7,363 workmen, and in November only 6,558, or somewhat less than the number at the time the seven-hour day was introduced.”

This and similar cases are reported in the organ of the People's Economic Council, *Za Industrialisaziu* (January 31, 1930, reprinted in the *R.S.D.* of February 6, 1930).

It was, therefore, found that no more men were needed with the seven-hour day than before, and the new ones who had been taken on were discharged. As a result of this experience, factories which subsequently introduced the seven-hour day took on no new workpeople at the outset. There are also other methods of more intensive speeding-up by which a longer working day can be squeezed out of the worker, but the presentation of further details would take us too far.

The seven-hour shift was greeted as a means of doing away with the terrible unemployment, whereas it has not checked it in the least degree. Lack of work is a scourge of the proletariat in the Soviet State as well as in the capitalist countries. Are the latter, however, not

put to shame by the system of Unemployment Insurance in Russia? Let us look into it.

In the last year for which figures are available, the average monthly unemployment benefit was given as 14.84 roubles (including benefit for family) and the average earnings of an industrial worker as 74.33 roubles. The unemployed worker, then, received benefit amounting to 20 per cent of the average wage (cf. the article on this subject by S. Schwarz, "The Komintern, the Soviet Union, and the Struggle against Unemployment", in the *R.S.D.* of February 13, 1930).

A sum of fifteen roubles is nominally equal to thirty shillings, but actually it is much less, because the purchasing power of the rouble has sunk considerably in Russia owing to the inflation policy of the last few years. The unemployed worker, then, received less for a month than the unemployed in Germany received in a week.

The unemployed cannot make such sums go far. And yet he who is in receipt of them may count himself lucky, for by no means all the unemployed have a right to receive benefit. It is estimated that 713,500 unemployed were assisted in 1928-29.

The figure given officially was higher, viz., 853,700, but S. Schwarz points out in the article quoted that it was much less. Still, even the official number of persons in receipt of relief is very much smaller than that of the registered number of unemployed, for the official average number of unemployed for 1928-29 was given as 1,223,700, so that, according to the official figures, only 70 per cent (in reality much less) received relief.

For the current year, however, this figure will be

decreased still further. Only 541,600 unemployed can be helped with the sums of money set aside for this purpose. At the same time, by no means all the unemployed are registered. A very large number are turned away from the employment exchanges, and, as their names are not on the books, are simply left out of the social policy of Soviet Russia.

“Without a Trade Union membership card nobody can get work here (in Soviet Russia). On the other hand, it is almost impossible for the unemployed worker to become a member of a Union. The Union has the power to give the unemployed worker a membership book or work, or to let him die of starvation” (Th. Dán: *Soviet Russia as it is*, Prague, 1926, page 81).

In an article in the *Oekonomisches Bulletin*, which is published in Prague, in Russian (reprinted in *La Russie Opprimée*, May 24, 1930), on unemployment, the number of unemployed in Russia during the year 1928-29 was given as 2,912,800—almost three million, therefore, in a wage-earning population of twelve million, according to this nearly one-quarter was out of work. During the last year the number of unemployed is said to have considerably decreased. For how long?

Desperate as the condition of the unemployed in present-day Russia may be (much worse, even, than in many of the capitalist States of Europe), and however much worse it may get from year to year, are not, at least, those who are in work much better off? Certainly

¹ Since the time of writing this book unemployment is said to have almost entirely ceased, due to the famine in the towns, which drives many workers to the land, where, in spite of scarcity, it is easier to obtain food from relatives than it is to get it in the towns. Simultaneously, labour insurance has been totally abolished.

not, as far as hours of work go; this we have already seen. But do not the Works Committees control the process of production, and are not the Trade Unions in Russia more powerful than anywhere else in the world?

As a matter of fact almost every worker is a member of his Trade Union, because, as already explained, his only means of getting work is through such membership, but the Soviet Russian Trade Union has only its name in common with the Unions of other countries.

The revolution of March 1917 brought full democracy to the workers of Soviet Russia, and with it the possibility of developing large Trade Unions. Simultaneously, the Works Committees came into being, both as political and as economic forces. They arose through the *democratic* revolution and existed as such before the advent of Bolshevism. They have not got the latter to thank for their power; rather the reverse, for it was their power, as well as the power of the soldiers and sailors in Petrograd (it had not yet been named Leningrad), which in the first place helped Bolshevism into the saddle.

As soon as the Bolsheviks felt secure in their new position, they looked askance at every free organization in the State which they could not manage bureaucratically. The organizations which they could not use, or which set themselves up in opposition, were, therefore, wrecked; they attempted to accommodate themselves to those which had served as stepping-stones and which they needed. If they were successful, they allowed them to continue in existence.

This applies to the Trade Unions, the co-operative

societies, and the Works Committees. They still exist and continue to function and play an important part in the life of Russia, yet anyone who does not allow himself to be led astray by the survival of the name, and who looks a little closer, will find that to-day all their functions are the exact opposite of what they were at the time of their introduction. They are no longer independent organisations for the protection of the interests of free workers, but submissive instruments of the State Bureaucracy and of the ruling Communist Party which puts in those in control and dictates the results of their negotiations. Anybody who speaks against the ruling system at any of the meetings, or even comes forward as an opposition candidate at any election, ceases to be a free man. The next day the political police have him by the collar and he can count himself lucky if he is only sent to the Solovietzky Islands in the Arctic and is not put up against a wall.

At the present time the Trade Unions and Works Committees are only pliable subordinates of the Government. Their functions are no longer to see that in the running of the factories, the workers' interests shall, as far as possible, be taken into consideration; on the contrary, they have more and more disputes with the workers about every falling off in factory conditions and every reduction in wages, and they force the workpeople to accept longer hours and to work more intensively.

This is the outcome of the labour legislation of the revolution. And here again in this sphere we may well ask where are we to find the revolution and where the counter-revolution? by what counter-revolution is the

revolution threatened, and from what have we to save the latter?

(b) ABOLITION OF PRIVATE OWNERSHIP OF THE MEANS OF PRODUCTION

Who would bother about labour legislation? It only means miserable reforms. Soviet Russia did not compete with the capitalist States in this sphere, no, but only in the sphere of a real social revolution, and here it has to show achievements which no other State dared to attempt. Even the "bourgeois" Russian Revolution of 1917 was afraid of them. They are entirely the work of Bolshevism.

It is true a democratic revolution would have expropriated the big landlords just as the Bolshevik revolution has done, but expropriation of capital, of any capital, at a few blows, such a deed only the victorious Communist Party dared to do. The democratic revolution gave the workers the liberty to organise in powerful Trade Unions and Workers' Committees, but only victorious Bolshevism gave them omnipotence. That is the real social revolution which it accomplished. It is this revolution which is threatened by the counter-revolution, when Bolshevism falls. So the Bolsheviks say.

The question arises now whether that is the revolution which we, the social-democrats, also have to defend against the counter-revolution.

The Manifesto of the L.S.I. (Labour Socialist International) declares:

"The victory of the counter-revolution would be a formidable catastrophe not only for the people of the

Soviet Union, who would be cheated of the fruits of the great revolution, not only for the working class of the Soviet Union, whose heroic struggle would have been in vain, but also for the labour movement, democracy, and world peace."

Have we finally arrived at that stage of reaping "the fruits of the great revolution" which is so highly valuable that their abolition by a counter-revolution would be a formidable catastrophe even for democracy and world peace?

There is no doubt that the matters now in question are particular characteristics of the Bolshevik State, and what has been created there is threatened if the omnipotence of communism ceases.

It pretends to carry out the programme laid down by Marx and Engels, which demands the conquest of political power by the proletariat and the socialisation of the means of production, or at least those which are to-day capitalistic private property.

Both demands are also the aim of Social Democracy.

With the method which the Bolsheviks applied, we certainly could not agree. At a few strokes they transferred all Russia's industrial enterprises, except the quite small ones, to the State.

It is certainly possible to carry out a mere change of ownership at one stroke, but only if nothing is altered in the working of the enterprise, and if everything remains as it was. If socialisation does not alter anything, except that the former owner loses his title in favour of the State, the change could certainly be carried out in all factories at once without any difficulties. But difficulties immediately arise where the former

owner is also the manager of the enterprise, as used to be the case before limited companies came into being. The transformation of a private enterprise into a company is not always an advantage; it must always depend on certain conditions, and must always be carefully arranged.

The same applies to the nationalisation of enterprises. Ownership can be altered at one blow, but not working conditions. Unprepared, extensive, rough, and sudden changes produce at the very least far-reaching disturbances, and may often ruin the organisation.

This applies particularly to those changes of working methods which are involved by socialisation. The enterprise no longer functions, as under capitalistic management, to make profits, but only to meet the needs of the consumer as far as possible, having at the same time the welfare of its workers in view. The results have no longer to satisfy only the capitalist but the consumers and the workers too. That means far-reaching changes in the position of the workers, and their interest in the management and the market policy of the enterprise.

Everything must be carefully prepared. And not every change of this kind is possible for each class of production, each organisation, each class of workers. Though part of the enterprises can immediately be socialised, others must for the time being continue to produce capitalistically. Their owners will, however, not continue to do so if they run the risk that their enterprises will one fine day be confiscated.

To make it possible for the process of production to be carried on without any disturbances, in spite of

the introduction of socialisation, it is expedient to prepare carefully, to go to work gradually, and to compensate the expropriated capitalists deprived of their means of production. Not for their own sakes, but because an entire cessation of the process of production would bring about appalling misery, as a rule worse for the worker than for the capitalist.

The leaders of Bolshevism proved so lacking in any economic insight that they were blind to this. They dare not say that we Social Democrats only recognised this subsequently, on the basis of their experience. I dealt with this subject about thirty years ago, in 1902, in my pamphlet on *The Social Revolution*, in the chapter on "Confiscation or Compensation" (pp. 75-78).

It is possible that the method of immediate general confiscation of all factories during the first months of the Bolshevik régime was as inevitable as the corresponding procedure applied to large estates after the collapse of Czarism; the liberated workers were perhaps really so undisciplined and ignorant that they were not to be won over to more appropriate forms of socialisation. It is certain that the rise to power of the Bolsheviks was due to the fact that they said "Yes" and "Amen" to everything the masses demanded, whether it was reasonable or not, but from Lenin's works one can see that he, too, was absolutely unconscious of the greatness of the task which faced him and that he believed the most difficult problems could easily be solved. And thus the nationalisation of all workshops outside agriculture was brought about.

The methods were barbaric and primitive, and showed that the conditions were not ready. The

methods might have been unavoidable, but the results which the Bolsheviks obtained from them and of which they boasted were by no means unavoidable. For them they alone are responsible.

However strongly more highly developed socialism must disapprove of these methods, it need not necessarily disapprove of the results. The nationalisation of the entire industrial means of production—with a few exceptions—has been completed in Russia. Has she not by this advanced beyond all other countries towards socialism? Is this not that revolution which the entire socialist proletariat with all its organisations, to whatever school they may belong, has to defend against any counter-revolution?

There is a great misunderstanding which Engels already exposed in 1878 (more than half a century ago) and which nevertheless slips in where men of superficial knowledge are concerned; the opinion that every nationalisation of an industry is the same as socialism.

In his book on *Herrn Eugen Duehring's Unwaelzung der Wissenschaft* (*Eugen Duehring's Revolution of Science*) he says (3rd edition, p. 299):

“Since Bismarck has started nationalising, a certain false socialism has arisen which has led now and then to the delusion that every nationalisation, even that of Bismarck, is directly socialistic. If the nationalisation of the tobacco trade were a socialistic measure, then Napoleon and Metternich would have to be counted among the founders of Socialism. If the Belgian State builds its railways itself, for very simple political and financial reasons; if Bismarck without any economic

necessity nationalised the main railway lines in Prussia simply in order to adapt them better for the event of war, to make the railway officials a herd of government voters, and above all to provide himself with a new source of revenue independent of Parliamentary control, these were by no means socialist steps, either direct or indirect, conscious or unconscious."

It is the management of the State enterprises which alone decides whether the nationalisation has been carried out socialistically or not. Socialism desires well-being and liberty for the working class. Where this aim is favoured by nationalisation we must be in favour of it, but nationalisation which has not this aim in view we must not support.

The acts of nationalisation of Soviet Russia were indeed fundamentally different from those of Bismarck and were from the beginning socialistic, because they were carried out by the working class and with its welfare and freedom as their object. There is only the question whether they have succeeded in realising this intention and what in fact the results were.

At the beginning the workmen of the nationalised enterprises did not lack liberty. Lenin and his adherents had called to the workers:

"Seize the factories and mines! Work them at your pleasure. You have enough brain in your heads to know what to do. It is not at all difficult!"

That was indeed a true Bakunin idea. The little touch of Marxism that Lenin added did not improve matters. In accordance with anarchist ideas the factories were to belong to those workers who worked in them. Lenin did not want this. They were to be State

property worked by the workers. That is to say, the latter hoped that in addition to full anarchistic freedom, the State would pay their wages. That was still more beautiful than anarchism under which there would not be a State to look after wages.

"The Putilov Works received for a certain time 96 million roubles as a State subsidy; of this amount 66 millions were used as wages, whilst the total value of production did not amount to 15 millions" (Dr. Gawronsky: *Die Bilanz des russischen Bolschewismus*, Berlin, 1919, p. 68).

The workmen, in fact, found the task of keeping a factory going to be the simplest thing in the world. The Bolshevik propaganda was exceedingly primitive and crude in order to make it very popular, and was the gospel of the toiling masses, which appealed to the backward Russian workers who formed the great majority. Not only the capitalists, but the technical and administrative staffs also were considered as irksome "masters" and superfluous drones and were chased away, if not immediately killed.

The masses of the Russian workers lacked all knowledge as well as the voluntary discipline which is absolutely necessary if a large enterprise is to go on producing without capitalist pressure. The best means for teaching the masses of the workers this discipline and for educating them are the Trade Unions, which generally have the advantage over the socialist parties, at least on the Continent, that the latter do not succeed in reaching the masses of the workers to the same extent. The task of the Trade Unions is not only a temporary one, for an intensive trade union movement

for some decades is the necessary basis for the education of the human material which alone will be able to do its duty in the process of production by observing a voluntary discipline.

Czarism prevented a strong trade union movement in Russia, and therefore the greatest number of wage-workers there lacked this preliminary basis without which successful, free, large-scale production is impossible. But even the greatest trade union discipline will never eliminate the necessity for management in the factory. This management is still more necessary for purposes of the circulation of goods than for the process of production. If necessary, the worker can manage the technical part of the enterprise, but he cannot go on producing without a continuous supply of raw material and subsidiary material and also of new tools and machinery for replacements. Moreover, the workers of a large-scale enterprise cannot live on its products; they must dispose of them in exchange for food, which they need, or against money in order to buy food.

There was much talk of economic planning to regulate all these processes, but as the nationalisation was carried out chaotically, without any preparation, without any plan, and as just those elements which might have brought some order into supply and sale were driven away, the whole working machine was soon in the greatest disorder. It threatened to break down altogether.

Yugoff, in his work, already quoted several times, on the *Economic Trends in Soviet Russia*, in accordance with official statements, gives the following figures

regarding the gross production of Russian large-scale industry (in pre-war prices) :

	Roubles	Percentage in 1913
1913	5,621,000,000	100
1916	6,831,000,000	121
1917	4,344,000,000	77
1920-21	981,000,000	17

Yugoff adds :

“In some branches of industry production had been completely arrested. The smelting of copper had fallen to 0·001 per cent, the mining of ores to 1·7 per cent, the production of cast iron to 2·4 per cent, the production of building materials to 2 to 3 per cent, and so on” (p. 45).

The causes of this disorganisation are, according to Yugoff, “the War, the Revolution, the civil war, and compulsory nationalisation”. The figures do not show a catastrophic reduction of production caused by the War.

A revolution, naturally, always brings about a dislocation of production, but the democratic revolution—if the figures are reliable—did not yet show a catastrophic decline of industry. That only happened during the period of civil war and the “compulsory”, i.e. the precipitate, chaotic, anarchic nationalisation. Industry threatened to come to an absolute standstill and that very shortly, if the anarchic conditions were not brought to an end.

By the forcible dissolution of the Constituent

National Assembly the Bolsheviks brought about civil war and remained the victors. Previous to that they had partly succeeded in seizing the political power by completely dissolving and dispersing the army, which was already shaken to its foundations by the long and unsuccessful war. Now, however, during the civil war, they succeeded in creating a new army with iron discipline which finished off the bands of the counter-revolutionary "White Guard" generals. The masses of the peasants and workers were on the side of the Bolsheviks, because the ranks of the White Guards contained elements which wanted to do away not only with Bolshevism, but with the entire revolution since March 1917.

The building up of this army is one of the most astounding achievements in world history, so much more surprising as the driving spirit was not a military specialist but a civilian, and not even one who in his profession had to carry out practical organisation work, but a bookworm—Trotzky. He was, however, assisted by Czarist generals, as Garvy states in his pamphlet on red militarism.

Bolshevism was from the very beginning a conspiracy after the Blanquist model, built up on the blind obedience of the members towards their autocratic leaders. In this point Bolshevism and militarism meet. All its successes, therefore, are in spheres where military methods can be applied.

After having overcome the military anarchy by creating an army with an iron discipline, Bolshevism attempted to overcome the anarchy in the nationalised industries by the same means.

Just as it had done previously on several occasions and has since done very often, Bolshevism jumped quite suddenly from one extreme to the other, without any intermediate stage. From unlimited freedom in the factory it passed over to the most strict discipline, in many cases to formal militarisation.

Lenin probably did not go quite as far as Trotzky would have liked. Nevertheless, a far-reaching discipline was imposed on the workers, namely, and this is the main point, submission to officials who were not chosen by the workers or even under their influence, but who were appointed from above, by the wielders of State power.

As this procedure continues, the men of trust chosen by the workmen, who might have had a word to say in the factory, are more and more replaced by persons in leading positions directly appointed by the State power or imposed upon the workers. That this system was even applied to Trade Unions and Co-operatives we have seen.

State officials now control production. They are, however, in many cases, people who do not enjoy the confidence of the State power. The former officials had been too harshly treated by the revolution and could not be expected to be full of enthusiasm for it. And even those who accepted the inevitable were looked upon with mistrust. But there was no choice. It was not possible to produce without them. They had to be given leading positions.

Beside these elements taken over from the old régime, it was attempted to entrust Communists, as far as possible, with management. But would they remain

free from corruption and conceit to which their functions might lead?

A strong democracy in industry and in political life could prevent this, could ensure that no misdemeanour remained hidden, that each was punished; but Bolshevism became more and more a contradiction of democracy. It strove for power in all spheres of public life. This was inconsistent with democracy; it called for the same means which the monarchical autocracy had already created: an army and a bureaucracy which were subjected to the most rigid discipline. By these two means the whole population is being subjected and led by a string.

The enforced complete silence of the people makes it very difficult to disclose possible neglect by leaders. Instead of control through publicity, an automatic régime is, therefore, forced to create special control organs which themselves must again be checked. This results in everlasting mistrust and constant spying, directed by a political police which shares with God the quality of being omnipresent and almighty, but not the quality of being all-merciful and all-wise.

The Soviet system, which transfers the methods of monarchical autocracy from politics to industry, gradually increases the rights of the factory directors over the workers, but at the same time puts these directors under continuous control and restriction by political and economic judicatures, which does not leave them any initiative and prevents them doing anything on their own. The slightest alterations in the works require an endless exchange of correspondence with the supervising bodies. An enormous bureau-

cratic apparatus is built up in order to control the people entrusted with the management of production, which only results in paralysing them and the entire apparatus of production.

This new system of bureaucratic autocracy of the State power in industry does not show its ill effects so quickly as does anarchy. It yields better results than anarchy in the present state of the proletarian "soul" of Russia. But the better results are merely less bad, not good. The destructive effect is not so quick, yet none the less, slowly and in other ways, these methods ruin Russian industry not less certainly. They do not disorganise it, they suffocate it in an iron embrace.

Whilst all capitalist countries have long ago made good the devastations of the war, and their productivity and industry have increased, Soviet Russia has only lately surpassed the pre-war level of production, although war and civil war have ceased and she has enjoyed ten years of peace. And if she has succeeded by strenuous efforts, as in the case of the Five Year Plan, to increase her production in figures, this has mostly been done at the expense of quality, as we have already seen. It is, of course, difficult to prove by statistics how far the increase of the quantity produced is discounted by the deterioration of quality. But one thing is certain—the increase in production is only reached by methods which lower more and more the will of the worker and his working capacity, and which, therefore, ruin the most important factor of production, the working power. The dazzling figures of Stalin's statistics in no wise alter this fact.

In view of the rapid growth of the population this

means an increasing incapacity of Russian industry to satisfy the needs of the country. It means her increasing impoverishment.

It is due to this impoverishment and not to the lack of good will if nothing that the Soviet rulers promised has been carried out. They started with stupendous plans when they unexpectedly came into power in 1917. They were imbued with the whole Social-Democratic programme, which they held in common with us. That the Social-Democrats of Western Europe had not yet fulfilled it, the Bolsheviks ascribed to their treachery and cowardice, if not even to their obsequiousness towards the bourgeoisie. They themselves now wished to show to the world what a social revolution means, what miracles it might effect.

They had the best intentions, they had grand plans, but all failed owing to the incapacity of nationalised industry. This is the main cause not only of the miserable reality in Russia, but also of the restless zig-zag policy of her rulers, who are always introducing sudden political and economic changes at the shortest intervals, who declare the previous policy to be wrong and steer in the opposite direction, without ever improving matters, but always sinking deeper. Soviet Russia is like an invalid suffering from fever, who turns in unbearable pain from one side to the other. Whatever position he occupies, whether he lies on the right side or the left, the illness is not relieved. It continues to destroy him. But which of the various Bolshevik methods of operating the nationalised industries is the real revolutionary one, the one which will free the proletariat and raise its standard?

None of these methods has anything in common with our social democratic aim. The latter does not unconditionally demand nationalisation, but, as Marx and Engels said, the socialisation of industry, which can be effected not by nationalisation only but also by municipalisation and co-operation. But our programme further demands socialisation by democratic means. The democratic State with full democratic control and under full political freedom of movement of all its citizens should plan out the socialisation in advance, and also carry it out on a democratic basis in production as well as in politics, which means the democratic control of production by the workers on the one hand and the consumers on the other.

This aim is entirely different both from the irregular and undisciplined procedure of the anarchical beginnings of Soviet industry and from the bureaucratic strangulation of industry, which is characteristic of the second stage of their State operations.

Are we to consider these Bolshevik methods of nationalisation as social revolution, although we are convinced that they ruin and must ruin the cause of the proletariat and its revolution? If we come to this preposterous conclusion, it must at least be decided when the real social revolution started in Russia. Was it the anarchical licence or the bureaucratic compulsion? The two cannot be combined, the one is the opposite of the other. Which of the two is the genuine revolution and which the counter-revolution?

Or shall we assume that all the Bolsheviks do must be considered by us as revolution, and that it must be saved, as long as the Bolsheviks cling to it, whether it

go to the right or to the left, merely because the Bolsheviks carry it out in the name of the revolution?

It is clear that the question of what is revolution and what is counter-revolution has become very involved in Soviet Russia.

(c) THE RAISING OF THE PROLETARIAT TO THE RULING CLASS

The Bolsheviks believe that they will achieve the programme of Marxism as much through the general nationalisation of the means of production as by the position which they assign to the proletariat—the working class—in the State, in industry, and in society. They raise it to the status of the ruling class, and speak of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

What was it that interested Marx and Engels in the proletariat? Like other Socialists they also were brought to their socialistic views by the misery which they saw around them and which aroused their indignation. They were revolted by the misery and slavery, not merely by the pitiful circumstances of the working class, which were manifest in the first half of last century and drew general attention to themselves on account of their very newness.

Yet it was not only the conditions of the working men which occupied Marx and Engels. The first important issue which Marx openly fought in 1843 was the crisis among the peasant vine-growers of the Moselle. The first manifesto of the "International", which Marx wrote after the inaugural address in 1864, was a felicitation to Lincoln on the occasion of the freeing of the Negro slaves.

If the interest of our masters was nevertheless predominantly directed to the wage workers, it was because they became aware of the important rôle this class played in history.

In no other exploited, enslaved, outlawed class which they observed could they find the capacity to free itself by a social upheaval. Neither the paupers nor the slaves are fitted for such a revolution. Even to the serfs and other enslaved peasants freedom had to be brought from the towns. All peasant rebellions have failed.

The industrial working class of the cities is of quite another stamp. It not only develops much more quickly than other strata of the working classes under capitalist production, but it also has better conditions to organise and educate itself. It is uprooted by capitalism from the conditions in which its forefathers lived, it is less ruled by tradition, is freer from prejudices, is better fitted to adopt new ideas.

Already nine decades ago, Marx and Engels recognised in the industrial proletariat not only its present misery but also its future greatness. They saw then the capacity and the strength which it would acquire in the course of its class struggles, thanks to the continual growth of the leading industries, which would be a means to rule the State and with the help of State power to adapt the whole process of production to the requirements of the working class.

Our masters discovered yet more in the industrial proletariat. Several classes had already risen out of subjection and slavery to freedom and State power. This, however, did not mean a lessening of social

distress, but only a change of the individuals who suffered under it. The proletariat is the lowest of all classes. Marx and Engels thought that it would use political power not to raise itself as a new ruling class over others and to oppress them, but only for the purpose of putting an end to all class-rule and slavery.

This great historical task is what makes the industrial proletariat especially valuable to the Marxists. It is this also which, intellectually and morally, raises it above all other working classes, and especially above the exploiting classes morally. Sometimes it surpasses these so-called intellectuals in its capacity to grasp new ideas. Man grows with his own higher aims.

But he grows only so far as he sets himself, or has been set, great aims. In the beginning, the proletariat as the lowest of the working classes is crushed into such ignominious conditions that it forms the most illiterate and most uncouth part of the population.

Only in the course of its class struggles, and, above all, by its lofty ideal for the emancipation of all mankind, does it raise itself out of the mire into which it has fallen, to climb the highest pinnacle of human idealism.

Marx and Engels were no blind admirers of the proletariat as such. No one has described more movingly than they the abject degradation into which its members have been dragged by capitalist exploitation, nor has anyone seen more clearly the greatness to which the proletariat can raise itself as the only class which in a capitalist community is imbued with great ideas.

They were interested in the proletariat that was deeply degraded and brutalised, but at the same time

uplifted by socialist ideals. They were, however, indifferent to industrial workers who had succeeded in working their way out of subjection, thinking only of themselves; not striving to employ the power they had won to uplift their inferiors, but to ensure for themselves as a privileged aristocracy of labour a better position at the cost of the less fortunate. They were still less interested in the proletarian who thought merely of his immediate personal gains, indifferent to the means he adopted to achieve them, whether by purchasing the favour of individuals of the propertied class or by plundering them.

All such self-seeking manifestations must deflect the proletariat from its exalted ideal which freed it from its original rude apathy, must degrade it intellectually and morally, must transform some members of it from tools of universal emancipation to tools of oppression, and thereby produce a situation which anew renders possible the oppression of the proletariat, even of the whole class, including the aristocracy of labour.

Although Marx and Engels had from the very beginning, before all other socialists, attached great importance to the Trade Unions, yet they were dissatisfied when some of them in England began to isolate themselves and to impede the admittance of new members in order to create an aristocracy of the working class.

We must also to-day criticise the policy of a few Trade Unions in America for not admitting negroes and for limiting immigration; or the policy of the white workers in South Africa for withholding from the coloured workers equal political and economic rights.

On the other hand, our sympathies cannot be shown to those workers, unfortunately still very numerous, who join yellow Trade Unions or sell themselves to Fascist organisations.

Not for the proletariat as such, but for the "class-conscious", that is to say, for the proletariat which has awoken to the realisation of its great task in history, do we aspire towards political mastership. We strive after it by the weight of the majority of the democracy. This majority must accrue to it, partly through the economic development which makes big-scale production more and more the chief form of production, and on the other hand through the confidence which is placed in the party of the class-conscious proletariat by all the oppressed of the various classes, because with its own class interests it ensures the interests of the whole of the exploited and enslaved peoples.

How does the policy of the Bolsheviks agree with the Marxist idea in regard to the proletariat?

First they eliminated all private exploitation, which was carried on by capitalists and big landlords, by their radical expropriation. However faulty may have been the methods which were employed, the result seems to be the same as that after which Western European Socialism is striving. Indeed, not a few comrades have affirmed that only in our methods and not in our aims do we differ from the Communists.

That this does not hold good for nationalisation, we have already seen. It does not, however, apply either to the abolition of class differences, if one considers the matter more closely.

From the beginning, the expropriation was carried

too far. Thus, for example, the abolition of class distinction on the land in small peasant holdings necessitated that every one should receive enough land to carry on peasant production. This principle was acted upon in Georgia. There great landlords were reduced to peasants. No family was allowed to have more than 15 desyatins of arable land (a desyatin equals about 2·7 acres). It was different in Russia. There the great landlords were simply deprived of everything, all their land and their plant, so that it was made impossible for them to work even the smallest of peasant holdings; and, moreover, even of their dwellings, all money, even the barest necessities of life, clothes, linen. They were reduced not to peasants, but to beggars, being in a lower position than the peasantry itself.

This did not correspond precisely to the Marxist programme, which only demanded the abolition of private property so far as the means of production were concerned, and did not apply to goods consumed by the public.

The capitalists were expropriated in a similar manner to the landlords, not only their means of production but also their means of consumption being confiscated.

It may well be urged that in times of revolution, when the mob is let loose, a programme cannot be followed to the letter. Against this it can be asserted that during the nineteenth century no pillage took place in any revolutionary movement of the industrial proletariat in Western Europe. On the contrary, it is precisely the proletarians who hold such action to be

unworthy of them. They not only reject it, but also prevent the mob from taking advantage in this manner. If the Russian proletariat behaves otherwise, it proves that it has not yet attained the height which the French had reached a hundred years ago, or else that the Bolshevik party stifled its scruples and placed its unrestrained elements to the fore.

This has gone on until to-day. The "Storm troops" who were sent by the Bolsheviks into the countryside to *de-kulakise* it are pillaging the peasants to-day, ten years after the civil war, in the same way as the great landlords and the capitalists were plundered during the time of "War Communism". This does not mean, however, that a "bourgeois" standard of life is nowhere existent in Russia to-day. It is simply restricted to the Communist Party.

As far as the "bourgeois" are concerned, the Bolsheviks did not stop at depriving them of their rights over means of production, and at despoiling them of all luxury. This, at any rate, if brought about rationally and without undue severity, might have attained a revolutionary tendency. The Bolsheviks were not even satisfied with confiscating or destroying all the means of culture—such as books, musical instruments, and works of art—which belonged to the former well-to-do classes. Very often the latter were divested of the barest necessities, or were simply killed outright.

Even this crushing down to the most necessitous of the mob was insufficient. The emancipation of the proletariat obviously required more. The former bourgeoisie was not only thrust into the utmost misery but was also deprived of all legal, political, and civil

rights, and was delivered over defenceless to arbitrary power. This was not inflicted only as a punishment on oppressors of the people, not merely capitalists and landlords were thus stricken, but also those who were considered "bourgeois", middle class.

The bourgeoisie, however, is a social stratum, not an economic category. The capitalist and the landlord are definitely characterised phenomena, with determined economic functions. The conception of the bourgeoisie is much less defined. It is occasionally restricted to the capitalist as opposed to the landlord, if the latter is a noble. On the other hand, those persons are included who enjoy a middle-class standard of life however their income is derived, whether from possession of capital or land, or from their individual work as intellectuals, as doctors, engineers, professors, artists, officials, or employees. In this sense every one is reckoned in Soviet Russia as a "bourgeois" who does not take pride in the horny hands of a labourer.

All "bourgeois" of this category were deprived of their civil rights and ill-treated, as a punishment for their former position in life which raised them above the proletariat even if they had done and were doing useful work for the community. Not only property but education were crimes—if they were discovered in non-Communists; and they were reckoned as crimes not only in the unsettled days of the civil war. No, they are crimes which are never obsolete and which to-day can cause deprivation of civil rights.

Should forced labour for repugnant work be required, which often happens, only those formerly of the bourgeoisie are sought out for this purpose, even if they

are old, weak, and sick. Should there be a food shortage, the food supplies are rationed and only distributed by means of ration-cards, the labourers being indeed provided with them, but not the former "bourgeois", who are allowed to perish from hunger. Who would trouble about such criminals?

All these individuals thrust out from the Soviet community are born criminals, from whom, one infers, their criminal nature will be further inherited. The children of capitalists or intellectuals remain as much outlawed as their parents.

Should there be lack of room in a school, which often happens, for the number of schools is quite inadequate, then the children of "bourgeois" parents must be sent away, if indeed they had succeeded in obtaining admittance.

Yet, does not the fault lie with the "bourgeoisie" themselves? Why do they not go as wage workers in factories? That work of this kind is not lightly undertaken by an educated person or a writer is easily understood, yet many of them would joyfully undertake it if they were only allowed to do so.

Wage labour has become a privileged calling in Soviet Russia, which protects its privileges, as in every favoured caste, by preventing accessions to its ranks. Whoever wishes to become a wage worker must be admitted into a Trade Union. Who would admit a bourgeois? He may wish to become a worker, but he can only be an unemployed worker, without all proletarian rights and excluded from every unemployment scheme!

The raising of the proletariat was effected by creating

a stratum of pariahs or helots—which in the towns is not very small. And this stratum is now increasing in the villages also, since the “kulaks” were dispossessed in the same way as the “bourgeoisie” was destroyed in the towns a decade previously.

Is there any real socialist, whose indignation is not roused to the uttermost at the existence of such a stratum of deep misery and utter despair? And must he not turn in utter disgust against a régime that deliberately and with forethought produces such misery and despair? Shall we approve of this insolent mockery of every socialist sentiment because wage workers receive favoured positions under it?

Even this favoured position of the proletariat is questionable. Economically, the position of the Russian labourer has of late years decidedly deteriorated, especially in comparison with the conditions of the labourer in capitalist countries, and for many in comparison with pre-war conditions in Russia itself. And the condition of the proletariat must ever grow worse as the bureaucratically strangled State industry fails. It has only improved socially in as much as those belonging to the classes and strata which until the Bolshevik revolution stood above it in rank, now stand below it, if indeed they still exist at all. This has come about not because the proletariat has raised itself more quickly than they, but only because their position has grown so much worse than its own.

In comparison with these, the proletarian feels himself raised and this may afford him a certain satisfaction, even chain him to the Soviet régime, to which he owes this remarkable kind of improvement.

Nevertheless, even the most crazy of proletarians must finally realise that with the increasing impoverishment of Soviet Russia his aristocratic position is of a very questionable nature and excludes him from any actual betterment.

The industrial labourer is a kind of noble in Soviet Russia, that is to say, of the lowest rank—the small noble. The latter leads a sad existence in many feudal countries and is often forced to deafen the rumblings of an empty stomach with aristocratic exaltation.

Over him stands (as in feudal countries so in Soviet Russia) a high noble. In Soviet Russia he is represented by the Communist Party, which rules the State. Its members are freer than the other "subjects"; they may issue newspapers, accumulate a fortune, adopt the standards of life of a bourgeois. This is not forbidden in Russia on principle, but only for the old "bourgeoisie" and its posterity. The Communists are the ruling class and they dispose as they please of the rest of the population, of which they form but a small percentage.

Naturally, they guard these tremendous privileges even more jealously than the working proletariat guards its own favoured position.

In other countries anyone is admitted to a trade union or a party who is willing to recognize and carry out its principles. In Russia, former "bourgeois" or peasants gain admittance to a trade union only with difficulty. It is even more difficult to enter the Communist ranks, and membership is never assured. Continual "purgings" take place.

Therein lies an essential difference between the Soviet

aristocracy and the feudal aristocracy. The latter was hereditary and conferred a certain privileged position in the State; it often made its opposition very strongly felt and showed its pride and independence not only towards the masses of the people but also towards the monarch.

In Soviet Russia, no one has a right to the position in which he finds himself, for his position depends not on the confidence of the people and their own free choice, as in a democracy, but only on the confidence and the favour of the head of the State. This head is not a hereditary dynasty, but a clique which has seized the entire Soviet machinery, its army, its bureaucracy, the political police, with the help of which it rules dictatorially, that is to say, with unlimited power, not only the Trade Unions and the Soviets but the Communist Party also. To what extent, has lately been shown by the fate of Trotzky, who after Lenin was the most important leader of Bolshevism, and who with the former has led this party to most of its victories.

The unlimited power is, among the atrocious phenomena of Soviet Russia, the most formidable one, the one which most of all degrades the whole population.

The moral greatness of the proletariat originates from the greatness of its historical task to put an end to all slavery and exploitation. It loses this greatness, becomes hard-hearted, harsh, and brutal, when it changes from a fighter for the emancipation of mankind to a master over others, a defender of its own privileges.

These results are already apparent in the Russian proletariat. By its historical position under Czarism,

its energetic members were forced to set themselves a specially lofty ideal. This immediately made of the Russian struggles a symbolical vision for all socialist Internationalists. The Bolshevist revolution has placed the proletariat of Russia in a position which has transformed its enthusiastic sympathy for all outcasts and oppressed individuals into a malicious joy and thirst for revenge towards many suffering people, whom it has even crushed down to the position of pariahs and helots.

From that time the soul of the Russian labourer has altered. Even the Press of Soviet Russia increasingly mentions with apprehension the growing brutality and stupidity of the proletariat, the increasing drunkenness, the ill-treatment of Jewish colleagues, the disregard of women.

Still worse is the change in the character of the Communist Party. Formerly the Bolsheviki were as moral and cultured as all the other Socialists in Russia. To win one of them for a friend gave pleasure and high satisfaction. Of these old Bolsheviki, however, of whom certainly there were only a few, there are not many who still take an active part in the Communist Party. Many have died, many others have realised that things could not continue as formerly. Many have drawn back in disappointment or have been put aside. At best a few of these critical colleagues were suffered as objects for show in positions where they could have neither political nor economic influence. Anyone who is not content with such a passive rôle or who seeks to work actively for the Opposition, is either expelled or simply put out of the way, if it can be done quietly. For anyone

who does not wish to expose himself to such eventualities and who yet feels too energetic to remain inactive, there is nothing to do but disavow his real convictions, and acknowledge openly that he condemns these views and repents.

Thus Communism is becoming a school to educate people to be hypocrites without principles.

Associated with this is the unscrupulous choice of weapons which Lenin had advocated at an early date, namely, lying to one's own comrades. The worse the real situation in Soviet Russia became, the greater became the necessity for lying in order to enable the Communists to hold their own.

If the old Bolsheviks, while they remained active in the party, were more and more oppressed by the influences, both morally and intellectually, much more so were the much greater majority of new Communists. Among them there were doubtless many noble individuals who took the words of their leaders in earnest, but the great and ever-growing majority among them are ambitious men, who begin their career in the party upon the lowest step, to which their older comrades have fallen after long and painful struggles.

Far less hindered by checks, equipped with far more authority than the mass of labourers, the Communists develop the shortcomings of a decaying proletariat to a yet greater degree. They add mendacity to their faults, together with fawning servility before those in authority on whose goodwill their very existence depends to a far greater extent than that of a simple non-party worker.

This whole piteous descent from inspired greatness

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is the unavoidable result of the social conditions which the victory of Bolshevism has produced. What, in this descent and the social arrangement of classes of Soviet Russia which engendered it, must we consider as a social revolution that we have to acknowledge and defend?

III

THE POLITICAL REVOLUTION

(a) THE REVOLUTION OF 1917

A social revolution proceeds from a political revolution. The latter then reacts again on the former. The social and political conditions of a State act and react upon one another. The political conditions are more visible and more easily grasped than the social, because their fundamentals are summarised in short laws or decrees.

The changes in the political constitution of Russia show most clearly the change in her social condition.

The second Russian revolution broke out on March 13, 1917 (February 28th, according to the old-style Russian calendar)—in the middle of the World War. It was a consequence of the frightful misery which this had caused, and of the slackening of discipline in the Army, which, tired of the unsuccessful war, united with the artisan and peasant masses in their cry for peace.

The failure of the Army in the war against the "enemy at home" led to the collapse of Czarism. What the first Russian revolution of 1905 had only partially achieved was now categorically accomplished at one stroke. The victory of a far-reaching political democracy was assured. Upon this was founded a democratic republic, the constitution of which was to be drawn up by the Constituent National Assembly which met in January 1918, elected by universal and equal

suffrage. The Socialist parties had gained a very large majority in this. Of the thirty-six million votes which were cast, nearly twenty-one millions were for the Social Revolutionaries, nine millions were for the Bolsheviks, and not quite two millions for the Mensheviks. The remaining votes, over four millions, went to various bourgeois parties.

The work of this National Assembly was bound to end in an outspoken democracy, friendly to the workers and peasants, but it was never able to begin its work, for at its inception it was broken up forcibly by the fists of the Military. This led to the end of the democratic revolution.

Unfortunately for Russia, the revolution broke out earlier in Russia than in Germany and in the Austrian territories. The military monarchies of the Hapsburgs and Hohenzollerns collapsed with the end of the war. In Russia, the Czar's rule was overthrown in the middle of the war. The different views of the war which had already split the Socialist International and rendered it incapable were the cause of severe differences in the Russian democracy which in no wise coincided with the different classes. The Social Democrats and the Social Revolutionaries also split over this question. Naturally, everybody wanted peace; but what kind of peace, and how to obtain it? That was the great difficulty, for the leading statesmen and military leaders in Germany and Austria felt encouraged by the military collapse of Czarism to extend their war objectives, which made it all the clearer to the Western Powers that they should hold out until the overthrow of the Central Powers. How was the "Peace without annexa-

tions and contributions", demanded by the Socialists, to be achieved?

The Bolsheviks alone had the audacity simply to demand that the Army should be disbanded, leaving the Russian frontiers open to the Germans, the Austrians, and the Turks. They expected that the answer to such boldness would be the disbanding of the other armies and the World Revolution. Had they foreseen that the result of their policy would, instead, be the Peace of Brest-Litovsk (March 1918), and the unopposed march of the Germans through the Ukraine, even as far as Georgia, they perhaps would have urged a little less insistently the disbanding of the Army in the summer of 1917.

Bolshevik Russia was not saved at that time by the revolution, but by the victory of the Entente. It is true that the latter only wanted to continue the counter-revolutionary work of the Germans and Turks in Russia, but the Western Powers were territorially too far from Russia, and the exhaustion of their own armies caused by the war was too great for them to have been able to launch an energetic offensive for a purpose which could not in the remotest degree be said to be warding off a threatened foreign menace.

However, the invasion of Russia by foreign armies continued, and this, together with the civil war, also forced even the Bolsheviks, who had just been hastening the disbandment of their own Army, to set about organising another.

At first, the promise that the Army should immediately be disbanded had brought them enormous popularity

with the workers and peasants, and above all, with the soldiers themselves.

This popularity increased further when the Bolsheviks encouraged the workers and peasants simply to seize all the property they could get hold of, for while the other Socialist parties certainly wanted to confiscate the large estates and undertake the radical socialisation of capitalist industries, they wished to do it after mature thought according to some definite plan and not in a haphazard way.

Meanwhile, no matter how much the popularity of the Bolsheviks was enhanced thereby in contrast to that of the other Socialist parties, they still did not get the majority of the peasants on their side—they did not even get the majority of the industrial workers, at least, not throughout the country as a whole, but only in some towns.

At the first All-Russian Congress of the Workmen's and Soldier's Councils (Soviets) in June 1917, out of the 770 delegates who stated to what party they belonged, 285 were Social Revolutionaries, 248 were Mensheviks, 105 were Bolsheviks, 32 were Internationalists (Mensheviks with Bolshevik tendencies) while 73 were Socialists who belonged to no party.

We have already spoken about the numbers of votes cast in the elections to the Constituent National Assembly. They show a similar picture, only with a considerably smaller number of Menshevik votes. Except in Georgia, the latter were only the party of the industrial workers and not of the peasants. Not even amongst the soldiers, who were pressing hard to be allowed to return home, did the Bolsheviks get a

majority in those elections, but only 1,800,000 votes out of 4,500,000, or 38 per cent.

One thing they had, however; a Party organisation, which, even before the war, had been built up as an organisation of conspirators with iron discipline of the members, who, with no will of their own, were subject to the leader, Lenin. The war disorganised the State machinery and the Army, and did not leave the parties of the revolutionary democracy untouched. It is true that these won a powerful following during the revolution, but there was a total lack of firm coherence. The Socialist parties themselves were split over the war question and also over the participation in coalition governments, which, in the absence of one party numerically stronger than all the others, were unavoidable. Amongst the Mensheviks, the Internationalists formed a group of malcontents who were opposed to the majority of the Party, while the left wing of the Social Revolutionaries adopted a similar attitude.

The Bolsheviks alone knew how to discipline their growing following and thereby gain the ascendancy over the other Socialist parties.

With democratic principles and parliamentary methods, this would not have been sufficient to enable them to seize absolute power. When they realised this, however, they already had another weapon in readiness which was to lead them to victory.

At that time, the soldiers were in exactly the same state as the workers and peasants. Like the latter, but to a greater degree, they were a chaotic mass upon which none of the other Socialist parties knew very well

how to begin. Here again the Bolsheviks showed themselves superior to the others.

They had actually got less than 40 per cent of the votes of the whole Army, "but nevertheless, over 60 per cent of the votes on the Northern Front, and almost 70 per cent of those on the Western Front, i.e. of bodies of troops who were near the capitals and who were primarily instrumental in bringing about the following events" (W. Woytinsky, *The World in Numbers*, VII, p. 27).

The Bolsheviks knew how to raise enough volunteers from amongst their soldier following who, in spite of being weary of the war, did not mind going on fighting. Bringing them again under discipline was the decisive achievement of the Bolsheviks which gave them the ascendancy over the other parties and finally the supreme command.

From the outset this was not based upon the confidence which the majority of the peasants and workmen had in them, but upon the support which the Bolsheviks received from the stronger battalions.

The second All-Russian Congress of the Workmen's and Soldiers' Councils was due to meet at the end of October 1917. In the meantime, the Bolsheviks had strengthened their military position considerably. They started the armed rising in Petersburg against the Provisional Government and were victorious (November 7).

It was only now that the second All-Russian Soviet Congress could meet. As the Menshevik and Social Revolutionary delegates of the Workers' Committees refused to sit under the armed dictators of the *coup*

d'état, the Bolsheviks had reached their goal. Of the 670 delegates to the Congress, 390 were Bolsheviks, while 179 were Left-wing Social Revolutionaries, and 35 were Menshevik Internationalists, the rest being isolated independents. Some of the Internationalists left the Congress during the proceedings, others were in favour of "Unity on the Revolutionary Front", but voted against giving power to the Soviet Government which was now put in, not through the favour of the Soviets, but of the soldiers who were won over to the side of the Bolsheviks.

The latter still permitted the elections to the Constituent National Assembly. Lenin could not very well obstruct these, because he himself had demanded them most loudly and had blamed the other parties for putting difficulties in the way of holding the election. However, when the great majority of the electors voted against the Bolsheviks, the death-knell of the National Assembly was sounded. Immediately after it had met (January 18, 1918), it was dispersed by Bolshevik soldiers and sailors. As the Bolsheviks now had the governmental machinery in their hands, the other parties no longer had any armed forces at their disposal in the capital.

The *coup d'état* of November 7, 1917, resulted in street fighting in Petrograd (not yet called Leningrad), in which much blood was shed. The *coup d'état* of January 18, 1918, met with as little resistance as that which Napoleon Bonaparte encountered on Brumaire 18 (November 9, 1799) in France.

At that time not everybody immediately realised the significance for the revolution of the replacement of

the Directorate through Napoleon. They did not yet see clearly that out of the ranks of the revolutionaries a new régime would be set up which would be directed against the previous revolution. Only after its culmination by Bonaparte's gaining of the Imperial title (April 1804) was its counter-revolutionary significance made universally clear. Similarly, only a few people at once understood the counter-revolutionary significance of the *coups d'état* of November 1917 and January 1918. There are still Socialists to-day who have quite forgotten that there was a March revolution in Russia through which the democratic Republic was founded. Not a few even think that the real revolution only began with the *coups d'état* which gave the death-blows to the democratic Republic.

The democratic parties in Russia, almost exclusively of a peasant and proletarian nature, were all the more oppressed in those days when adversaries with military backing turned against them simultaneously from left and right.

Although the revolution of March 1917 may be mainly attributed to the rebellion of individual regiments, and although the break-up of military discipline thenceforth made rapid progress, nevertheless there were still troops who seemed to their commanders to be dependable.

General Korniloff, the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army, had already attempted to make use of such troops in August 1917 to overthrow the democratic régime which was still in existence, and to bring back, not only the discipline of the Army, but as far as possible the old State. He launched his offensive on

August 26. However, the revolt soon collapsed. He had very much overestimated the solidity of the troops which he commanded. The latter were all the more easily shaken when all the vital forces in the country took the side of the Government and of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, which had been set up by the first All-Russian Soviet Congress, so that Korniloff's rising became completely isolated and soon came to an end: "a complete, historical example of the subsequent result of the *Kapp Putsch* in Germany". (El. Hurwiz, *History of the Latest Russian Revolution*, p. 122.)

Still, the revolt was not without consequences. It had shown what danger threatened the revolution from the officers and their followers. This forced many of the most determined revolutionaries into the Bolsheviks' camp, not because they shared the views of the latter but because they realised that their military organisations were the one solid support of the revolution. There was something which the Social-Democrats in Germany and Austria only realised later, which the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries in Russia, as distinct from the Bolsheviks, had not yet grasped in 1917, and which had hitherto not greatly occupied the international proletariat: viz. that if there no longer exists a disciplined army, and if the various parties are arming, the democratic Socialists must also organise troops, however much the settling of political differences with mailed fists goes against the grain with them. Only the Mensheviks in Georgia early recognised what the situation at that time demanded, and already on September 5, 1917, they founded the Workmen's Guard in Tiflis, composed of tried, organised members.

The democratic Socialists in the rest of Russia had greatly to repent their unarmed state. On the other hand, the armed state of the Bolsheviks had a great attraction for many revolutionaries of various shades, especially for the Left-wing Social Revolutionaries.

After the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, the war between the parties in the Russian State completely assumed the aspect of a civil war. Generals, "White Guards", again arose and got bands together to fight against the revolution. Without parliament, without freedom of speech and of the Press, it was impossible for the meetings and clubs to oppose the government powers otherwise than with mailed fists. The Bolsheviks themselves vaunted the civil war as being the highest type of the reform of society.

In Russia, as in Germany, Austria, and other countries besides, the unending length of the war brought about not only a frightful war-weariness, but robbed many of the young people of every taste for peaceful work. On the other hand, we find great masses who have the greatest distaste for the profession of arms, but alongside these there are isolated, though nevertheless numerous, elements, partly dreamers and partly idlers, who become real mercenaries, setting out to brawl and plunder, and who fly to the leader of a band exercising powers of this kind.

The armed struggles of the parties would certainly have come to an end more quickly if each of them had only depended upon disinterested, convinced party members. The stream of mercenaries which the war had made superfluous lengthened the civil war. The

interior of Russia, which had been spared foreign invasion, was now devastated.

The number of the combatants was further increased by the fact that the prisoners of the Great War were drawn upon indiscriminately. Not a few of the Czechs who had been taken prisoners by the Russians had allowed themselves to be enrolled as "legionaries", to fight against Austria. They later themselves set up in opposition to Bolshevism. The Bolsheviks, therefore, came forward as the friends of the German prisoners of war, many of whom either enlisted of their own accord in the Bolshevik's "Red Army" or were pressed into service.

The position of the Social Democrats and also of the other non-Bolshevik Socialists in the struggles of that time was grievous. It was impossible for them to declare for the Bolsheviks who had just dissolved the Constituent Assembly, who stifled all the freedom in the State, barred every way leading to the moral, intellectual, and economic improvement of the proletariat, and immediately shot down every Socialist who did not submit abjectly to their leadership.

Could they join up with the Opposition? It is true that the opponents of Bolshevism often proclaimed their aim to be the re-establishment of democracy and of the Constituent National Assembly. In the armed struggle, however, the officers, not the politicians, dominated. The old Officers' Corps, with its Czarist, autocratic, and capitalistic bias, was the determining factor in all the risings which broke out against the Bolsheviks in the interval between 1918 and 1920. High officers of the old Army commanded them; General Korniloff and his

successor, General Alexeyeff, were soon followed by General Denikin, Admiral Kolchak, and finally, General Wrangel. Whenever these gentlemen met with success, they immediately showed the cloven hoof of reaction. Wherever Socialists and Democrats were induced by talk of liberty to be led by these Generals and to join their side, it ended in bitter disillusionment and often in bitter hatred.

A large number of Democrats and Socialists were unable to strike a blow with an easy conscience for either one side or the other. At this time it was very difficult to occupy oneself with politics in Russia in any other way than with a weapon in one's hand. Thus the Social Democrats and the other parties akin to them were pushed into the background in these struggles on the political stage. There were only the two camps.

At the same time, the victory of the officers from Korniloff to Wrangel threatened a return of the old régime. The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, had not yet carried their *coup d'état* to its conclusion. They appeared as the defenders of the new peasant property, so far as the latter had been created by the division of the land of the large landowners. They appeared as protectors of the Works Committees which had given freedom to the wage-earners and had lifted them socially and politically above the capitalists. All the disastrous sides of Bolshevism, the Terror, the omnipotence of the police, the suppression of political freedom, as well as the economic collapse, seemed only to be the consequences of the civil war which would disappear with it.

In addition, there was the fact that foreign capitalist

governments marched their troops into Russia to help the generals opposed to Bolshevism. English, French, Italian, and Japanese troops came after the German invaders had been driven out. Already by the end of 1919 Polish troops were crossing the Russian frontier and in April 1920 there was a regular war between Russia and Poland, which was carried on with changing luck. At first the Bolshevik troops met with great success, but they later suffered considerable reverses. Lenin ended the war by yielding in order to have his hands free to attack Wrangel, whom he soon finished off (November 1920).

At that time the Bolsheviks appeared to be the only power in Russia which was in a position to protect the proletariat and the peasants against their former capitalistic, aristocratic, and bureaucratic oppressors and exploiters, and to ward off the invasion. If ever, it was then that they won over to them the majority of the population of the Russian Empire. They at any rate asserted that it was so, but even in the days of their greatest popularity they very wisely avoided putting it to the test by allowing the whole population to hold free elections.

(b) THE SOVIET CONSTITUTION

By the *coup d'état* of October–November 1917, and after the resignation of the Mensheviks and Right-wing Social Revolutionaries, the Bolsheviks held a Soviet Congress at which only they themselves, and the Socialists tolerated by them, were represented, such as, for example, the Left-wing Social Revolutionaries. The union with these ceased when the Bolsheviks set the

village poor against the rest of the peasants and organised them separately, and when the Government of the Soviets capitulated to the German Government. The opposition of the Left-wing Social Revolutionaries to the Bolsheviks soon came to a miserable end. Thenceforth the latter ruled unhindered in the Soviets (from July 1918). This was shown in the constitution of the Russian Soviet State which was framed by the fifth All-Russian Congress on July 10, 1918.

Ostensibly, this certainly did not establish the omnipotence of the Communist Party but the supremacy of the wage-earners.

The All-Russian Soviet Congress was made the highest organ of the Republic. It consists of representatives of the town workers and of the country population. Here, already, a distinction was made to the detriment of the peasant. It was certainly of a veiled nature. In the towns there was a representative for every twenty-five thousand voters, and in the country for every 120,000 inhabitants. Why is the number of representatives not based on the voters or inhabitants in both cases? The only cause to which this may be attributed is the attempt to make the damage done to the peasants less conspicuous.

The franchise was accorded to both sexes at the age of eighteen. As nearly all the adult inhabitants of the villages were given the vote, there are very many more than 25,000 voters per 125,000 inhabitants. There are possibly something like 70,000. Thus the town proletarians were given a vote between two and three times more effective than that of the peasants.

Beneath the wage-earners and peasants there is a

stratum, the number of which no statistics can cover, but which is certainly not small, that was entirely robbed of the vote. But, after all, the wage-earners' enfranchisement does not mean much. All the dodges which were invented by the Reaction after 1848 for the purpose of stifling the voice of the people and making it of no effect in the elections, even though they dared not openly do away with the right to vote, were faithfully learned by the Bolsheviks. In this respect, at least, they showed themselves to be apt pupils of Western civilization, but only as far as the pronouncedly counter-revolutionary side of the latter was concerned.

As under the Prussian three-class suffrage, the voting is open and indirect. The workers and peasants vote indirectly, and not directly, for the representatives to the All-Russian Soviet Congress. They do not even select delegates for the election of a deputy. The deputies to the All-Russian Congress are elected by the Soviets of the large towns on the one hand, and by the Soviet Congresses of the provinces on the other. The Provincial Congresses are likewise appointed by the Soviets of the large towns, who therefore receive a double indirect vote in the election of the All-Russian Soviet, and by the regional Soviets. The latter in turn are elected by the votes of the Soviets of the smaller towns and of the districts (*volost*). Finally, the Volost Soviets are elected by the village Soviets.

The famous results of this delicately refined electoral system are shown by a few figures taken from the highly informative study on this subject which we have already quoted, volume VII of Woytinsky's *Welt in*

Zahlen (World in Numbers), pp. 26-33. In 1924 not less than 64 per cent of the regional Soviets was made up of Civil Servants, and only 8 per cent of workingmen. The proportion of members of the Communist Party in this same year was 8 per cent in the village Soviets, 20 per cent in the Volost Soviets, 58 per cent in the regional Soviets, and 68 per cent in the Provincial Soviets. Non-Communists, attached to no party, were a disappearing quantity in the All-Russian Congress. This Congress elects the Central Executive Committee of 485 members.

What a complicated and repeated sifting of the delegates for the peasants' representatives! This alone would be sufficient, with open elections, to render open opposition to the Government in the Soviets at any time impossible. Now, however, soon after the November *coup d'état*, were added the destruction of the entire non-Communist Press, the suppression of all free clubs, and also of those associations and trade unions which would not allow themselves to be relegated to the status of mere Communist tools, and the absolute defencelessness of the candidates and delegates to whom immunity was in no wise assured. Instead, the omnipotence of the political police was established, and Revolutionary Tribunals were set up which were "restricted by no conditions in the choice of their weapons against counter-revolution, sabotage, etc." (Decree of the Central Executive Committee, dated June 17, 1918.)

As everything imaginable can be understood by "counter-revolution" and "sabotage", but especially by "etc.", a pronouncement of outlawry against every form of opposition was made.

Henceforth there could be no candidates and delegates other than Communists or those tolerated by the Communist Party, not even mere oppositional speakers. Suffrage is a farce if candidates of different views are not available between whom a choice can be made. The organisation of the suffrage is now only continued in order to make the workers believe that they are the ruling class in the Soviet system. This object is achieved by the Soviet suffrage, at least as far as simple souls are concerned, amongst whom may be counted many admired poets and thinkers, not only in Russia, but in the rest of the world.

That famous suffrage reaches its height in the conditions which make the manner of voting and the persons to be elected entirely dependent upon the Soviet authorities.

The Constitution says the following about it (Paragraph 70):—

“The exact mode of voting, and the participation of the trade unions and workmen’s organisations in the elections is to be fixed by the local Soviets in accordance with the instructions of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.”

The Government itself, then, determines absolutely to its own liking how the voting has to be done. And it can, thanks to its authority, not only prevent anyone who does not suit it from standing as a candidate, but can also deprive anybody of his vote, for clear conditions in this connection are only contained in the Constitution so far as concerns persons who have been deprived of the vote under all circumstances. To this number belong not only capitalists, monks, former politicians, and

lunatics, but also traders, among whom the poor hawkers are counted.

The people entitled to a vote are those "who earn their living by productive work which is useful to the community": this is not very explicit.

Anyone not working can lose the suffrage. Inconvenient people need only be dismissed and kept from jobs, and they lose the vote. And what is productive and necessary work?

Do the bourgeois do such work? Note well that there are no longer capitalists and large landowners in Russia; they have all been dispossessed. But under certain circumstances, engineers and higher teachers can be counted as unproductive workers.

The arbitrariness to which the door is opened by such conditions is most clearly in evidence as regards the peasant population. There have been times when it suited the rulers in the Kremlin to count all peasants, including the well-to-do, as productive and useful workers and extend the suffrage to them. Usually, however, those who were better situated were deprived of it. Sometimes even all the less impoverished peasants were deprived of the vote, which was limited to the "poor" in the villages, i.e. to those who had not land and stocks enough to produce all the food they required for their own consumption. Yes, the *Kolhos* epidemic, which we considered at the beginning, even led, in certain places, to the poor in the villages, if they resisted the *Kolhos*, being deprived of the suffrage along with the rest of their belongings.

It is here that the absolute arbitrary rule of the Communist Party and its Government, to which the

whole population of Soviet Russia is subjected, is most strikingly shown.

As for the rest, the Soviets and Soviet elections have lost all significance of late. Political power is not granted by the Soviets but by the Communist Party. The *Politburo* of the latter is the highest Court of legislation and administration in the State. The Central Executive Committee of the Soviets has lost all true significance. The Soviet Constitution is now only a fiction. At the last Party Day in Moscow, Krylenko declared unashamedly: "The Soviet Laws are nothing but the injunctions of the party."

Here again we may ask which of all these conditions we are to regard as revolutionary, and which as counter-revolutionary. Where is the revolution hiding which we are to protect from the threatening counter-revolution?

(c) THE DEMOCRATISATION OF THE SOVIETS

Many of us seek the revolutionary element in the Soviet Constitution in the favoured position which is accorded to the workers and their Councils. Such people do not see that the political, as well as the social, preference enjoyed by the wage-earners in Soviet Russia is bought very dearly at the cost of their moral, intellectual, and economic degradation, and their subjection to the unrestrained despotism of one single sectarian organisation, the Communists.

I hope to have shown by the foregoing that these phenomena do not coincide more or less accidentally, but stand of necessity in relation to one another.

For this reason, all attempts to maintain the Soviet

Constitution by cleansing it of its blemishes must fail. Any endeavour to democratise this Constitution represents an attempt of this sort.

A pertinent watchword was given out by an important section of my Menshevik friends soon after the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly. Paul Axelrod turned against it immediately (cf. his *Observations sur la Tactique des Socialistes dans la Lutte contre le Bolchevisme*, Paris, 1921). What he said against the democratisation of the Soviets still holds good to-day.

Nevertheless, this endeavour does not yet seem to have been quite abandoned. Even the latest exhortation of the Executive, could be construed in this sense. It runs:

“Once again the peoples of the Soviet Union must be given liberty, which is as indispensable to workers and peasants as air and water.”

And the following is then demanded:

“Freedom of speech. Freedom for meetings. Free and secret ballot.”

The fact alone that liberty is indispensable only for workers and peasants, and not for everybody, strikes one as strange. And again, why should only the free and secret ballot be demanded, and not universal, equal suffrage?

Even the Bolsheviks' programme at the time they dissolved the Constituent Assembly included “universal equal, direct, and secret suffrage”.

Naturally, no one in the Labour Socialist International thinks of abandoning this demand. Can it be that there are comrades who think that they must make an exception in the case of Russia? As though it should

be any the less true there than it is everywhere else, that a class receiving special privileges necessarily becomes corrupt and dependent upon those elements which grant and defend those privileges.

The idea of the democratisation of the Soviets is, in itself, an absurdity. It means democratising a privileged aristocracy. Or do they mean that the Soviets include the total population? If so, why their aversion to universal suffrage, which is so simple, and their preference for the artificial Soviet system?

Do they fear the votes of the former capitalists and large landowners? But these did not make their political influence felt in the past through the ballot-paper which they handed in themselves (the number of which must always be the lowest), but through the power of their money. That, and not universal equal suffrage, gave them their political power.

It is doubly senseless to wish to make capitalists and large landowners politically harmless by depriving them of the vote where they have been dispossessed, and, therefore, no longer exist as a class, while as individuals they have lost all means of influencing the population.

The bourgeoisie, of course, also includes people with higher knowledge. This cannot be confiscated. The better educated persons easily gain great influence over the less educated. The Soviet system is, above everything, directed against the educated, because it supplies the possibility of silencing them all and keeping them out of contact with the proletariat, in so far as they do not think along Communist lines, or do not allow themselves to be used by the Communists.

The democratisation would have to include the exact definition of the rights of the individual as compared with those in power and their representatives. In an autocracy and an aristocracy, the laws are only valid as far as the lower classes and stations are concerned, the upper classes not being bound by them. In a democracy, the laws do not merely formulate rights for the authorities and duties for the citizens. They give the citizen clearly defined rights which he can assert against any encroachment from above.

The Soviet system is irreconcilable with this protection of the individual against every arbitrary act on the part of the authorities. As early as 1919, Lenin stated in his pamphlet against me (*The Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Renegade Kautsky*, p. 5):

“The Dictatorship is a rule founded directly upon force, and is bound by no laws.”

In the Soviet system, this arbitrary power falls to the ruling class, the Communists, as against the mass of the people. Still greater arbitrary power is extended to the highest rulers of the Central Executive Committee as against the people and the Communists.

The democratisation of the Soviets must begin with a well-defined Election Law for the Soviets, capable of but one interpretation. Unless this is devoid of all sense it will extend the suffrage to the whole working population, or those who are willing to work. Under the present conditions in Russia, this would actually be universal and equal suffrage.

Similarly, each further attempt to give the workers and peasants greater liberty must result in extending such liberty to the whole people. Is freedom of the

Press only wanted for the workers and poor peasants? May nobody except these write and read a newspaper?

The democratisation of the Soviets is an absurd idea which cannot replace our claim for democracy for all.

Nevertheless, it may succeed in achieving historical importance. It might possibly be that, with the continued failure of the Communist system, this demand would appeal earlier and more easily to a section of the Russian proletariat than the demand for universal suffrage. Man is by nature a conservative, and as long as he wishes to create something new and not merely destroy, even when he acts like a revolutionary, he prefers to adopt what already exists with a view to changing it.

Thus the demand for the democratisation of the Soviets may be one of the starting-points leading to the end of the Communist rule. Where such a demand arises spontaneously, it can be of service to support it. It will, however, be as well to bear in mind that this democratisation cannot lead to an improvement of the Soviet system. Its importance lies in the fact that, through its very absurdity, it forces matters much further towards absolute, pure democracy.

And we all have good cause to make known that such democracy is our political goal.

We ought not to forget that, without the aid of the intelligentsia, the proletariat cannot perform the great historical tasks which its social position makes incumbent upon it: "Science and the Worker", as Lassalle formulated it. Only the proletariat can lend the collective force to the Socialist movement without which the latter cannot be victorious. Only persons with higher educa-

tion who are in sympathy with the proletariat and their objects can acquire and spread that deeper insight which is necessary if the proletarian movement is to march forward clearly and definitely, and make the most of victory, and not have to feel its way forward in the dark.

The intelligentsia, the learned professions and liberal arts, as I have often said before, are not a class, but a stratum which has in the past been attached overwhelmingly to the capitalist class, but which is not bound to it by any class interest. The higher the proletariat climbs, the greater the attraction it exercises on the intelligentsia, and the greater the number out of the ranks of the latter who attach themselves to it. One of the most important tasks of Social-Democracy is to help this process forward.

In Russia the intelligentsia were, due to the political backwardness of that country, highly oppositionist. On the other hand, capitalism was particularly backward, while during the decades immediately preceding the war the proletariat was at a relatively high level. The inclination on the part of the intelligentsia to join the cause of the proletariat was therefore greater than it is in the countries in the West. At the same time, the Russian proletariat stood in greater need of the latter, in view of the fearful illiteracy of the working population resulting from the shortage of schools and newspapers.

Nowhere is close co-operation between wide sections of the intelligentsia and the proletariat so easily possible, or so much needed, and nowhere can it bear better fruit than in Russia.

The revolution of March 1917 opened up excellent

prospects for this once the unhappy war had been settled. Both the Bolshevik *coups d'état* of November 1917 and January 1918 brutally interrupted this co-operation, and filled the proletariat with hatred and mistrust for the whole intelligentsia who did not swear fealty to the Communist flag. The Communists put all such on a par with criminals.

Through short-sighted egoism, the Bolsheviks thus brought about a serious split in the two most advanced elements in Russia, co-operation between whom was the only means of obtaining those fruits from the Russian Revolution which the general condition of Russia enabled it to bear.

One of the most important tasks for her revolutionaries is to make an end of this unfortunate obstruction and hampering of the revolution. That is impossible, based on the Soviet system, which dispossesses every member of the intelligentsia who will not demean himself to become the pliable tool of the Dictatorship. Only the institution of full democratic equality can bridge the gulf between the intelligentsia and the proletariat, which was made by the violence of the Bolsheviks, to the detriment of both.

We must leave no doubt on this score. Under certain circumstances, we may accept the demand for the democratisation of the Soviets as the transition measure towards full democracy, but we must never accept it as a substitute for such democracy.

(d) JACOBINS OR BONAPARTISTS?

We have examined the Soviet system from the most varied angles; the economic, the social, and the political.

We have nowhere succeeded, however, in seeing any progress beyond what the Russian Revolution had either already achieved or prepared the way for, between March 1917 and the Bolshevik *coup d'état*, and what promised to be the starting-point of a rapid advance for Russia and her working classes. What the Bolsheviks added to this subsequently was certainly something overwhelmingly magnificent in their opinion, and still more so in their phraseology. Actually, it proved itself to be nothing but an obstruction, hampering and crippling, of all that the revolution had achieved before the Bolsheviks seized power.

For a time, this was denied by many revolutionaries; even by those in our ranks. The number who deny the steady decline of Russia in all spheres under the Soviet régime, however, diminishes from year to year. The facts speak too plainly for everyone who understands their significance and who is not a crazy visionary.

Under these circumstances, is one not entitled to describe the activity of the Bolsheviks as counter-revolutionary?

The friends of Bolshevism who are unable to bring forward any facts in its favour seek the aid of an historical comparison. They point to the great French Revolution. They say that everything has turned out now as it did then. At first, after 1789, there were, in addition to the Constitutional Monarchists, the weaklings of the Revolution, the Girondins. In 1917, the Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks corresponded to these. The true revolutionaries, who alone used force and energy enough to lead the Revolution to victory,

and who rose above the weaklings, were represented from 1792 to 1794 by the Terrorists, the Jacobins, the "Mountain".

Nobody wishes to call the latter counter-revolutionaries. What the Jacobins were then, the Bolsheviks are to-day.

It can be contended against this that a comparison is no proof. Through a comparison of two similar processes, considerable light may be thrown by one on to the other. The comparison can, however, be very misleading if it is made without sufficient attention being paid to the differences, as well as to the points of similarity, and if only the outward appearance is taken into account. The Jacobins may be distinguished from the Bolsheviks alone by the fact that they were a middle class, or lower middle class, and not a Socialist party. In the eighteenth century the ground was not ready for a Socialist party.

In 1792 and 1794, the circumstances under which the parties rose to power were quite different from those which helped the Bolsheviks into the saddle in 1917. It is true that there was war in both cases. In 1792 however the war was the outcome of the revolution, while in 1917, on the contrary, the revolution was the outcome of the war. The terrorists of the great French Revolution attained power by the fact that they were the people who carried on the war most energetically and ruthlessly against the enemies who were pressing in on them from abroad.

The terrorists of 1917, on the contrary, who dissolved the Constituent Assembly, attained power, not merely by furthering but by actually bringing about, most

definitely and most ruthlessly, a capitulation to the enemies of their country.

In the French Revolution, the Terror was the effect of the war, not of the revolution. It ceased as soon as the external pressure of the enemy countries came to an end. It lasted only two years.

One might have expected the Terror in Russia to cease in a similar way as soon as the period of civil war and "War Communism" was over. Peace would bring economic recovery and a decline in the dictatorship in economics and politics. This was the time when the idea of democratising the Soviets first arose.

We know, however, that it turned out quite differently. The Terror is not merely a war measure in the Bolshevik system; on the contrary, it has consistently dug itself in more and more firmly in the decade of peace since 1920.

After the defeat of the last White Army, it looked for a moment as though the tide had started to turn. The civil war and the economic ruin had brought about such misery that many of the Bolsheviks themselves lost faith in their leaders, and became incensed against them. This led to a General Strike in Petersburg and Moscow at the end of February 1921, and, in conjunction with this, a rising of the nucleus of the Bolshevik troops, to whom they owed their victory most, viz. the sailors who revolted in Kronstadt (near Petrograd).

The continuation of the Terror, that is to say, of the violent despotism exercised by the Communists over the whole working population, seemed insufferable.

On February 27th, a proclamation running as follows was circulated amongst the strikers:—

“A radical change in the whole policy of the Government is necessary, and, above all, the workers and peasants must have liberty. They do not wish to submit to the rule of the Bolsheviki, but desire to determine their own destinies.

“You must demand the following insistently and in an organised way: the setting free of all imprisoned Socialists and workers outside all parties; the raising of the state of siege; freedom of speech and of the Press; freedom of all the working classes to hold meetings; free re-elections in the works committees, in the unions, and in the Soviets. Organise meetings, pass resolutions, send your delegations to the Government, see that your will is carried out.”

This proclamation was openly the work of that Menshevik section that was willing to be limited to the democratising of the Soviets.

There is no word about the Constituent Assembly in the proclamation; no general political amnesty is demanded, but simply the setting at liberty of Socialists and workers outside any party.

Freedom of speech, etc., is similarly only demanded for the workers. Finally, the workers were merely called upon to demonstrate and petition.

Yet, even the granting of these demands would have been a long step forward. The Communists felt that the monopoly of their party in the State was threatened. The *Illustrated History of the Russian Revolution of 1917*, (Berlin, Willi Münzenberg, 1928), in which this and one other proclamation (presumably Social-Democratic) of

February 28, 1921, were reprinted, remarks as follows:

"It is not at all astonishing that the Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries . . . distributed pamphlets of this kind. This had also been done previously. It was, however, new for them to be read, and for them to make an impression. The Soviet Government saw a great political danger in these new occurrences, which seemed to threaten the work of the working classes."

In Communistic phraseology, the "work of the working classes" means the work of the Communist Party under dictatorship rule.

The danger became more serious when the sailors took up the cause of liberty for the workers and peasants. They did not send delegates to the Government, but acted as Lenin and Trotsky had taught them to do; they took up arms.

They were the spokesmen of the peasants, and not of the town workers. The work quoted above says they were "peasant lads dressed up as sailors" (p. 560).

A number of statements from the *News of the Revolutionary Committee*, published by the strikers in Kronstadt, were quoted in the *Illustrated History of the Russian Revolution*. These all show even then, at the time when the White Guard danger scarcely seemed to have been averted, how deep was the hatred of the Communists in the villages. It is characteristic, and important for understanding the situation in Russia to-day, that the peasants were especially angered with the establishment of privileged large-scale farms in the country. A sailor named Kopteloff wrote:

"From their blood-stained platforms they shout that

the soil belongs to the peasants and the factories belong to the workers. Meanwhile, the Communists have everywhere established Communist farms, and, for this purpose, have selected the best pieces of land, and weigh still more heavily upon the shoulders of the poor peasants than the landowners formerly did" (p. 561).

The following sentence is also worthy of mention :

"A new Communist serfdom arose. The peasant in the Soviet farms became a slave, and the worker in the factories a day-labourer. The working intelligentsia disappeared."

This is how the peasants, as early as 1921, regarded the blessings which Bolshevism had brought them.

The intelligentsia was welcome to disappear, or eke out the existence of helots. And Lenin thought that he would soon have finished with the workers. The Army and the peasants, however, he respected. The crushing of the Kronstadt revolt after much bloodshed was certainly successful, but the warning did not fall upon deaf ears. The only means of making any impression on the Bolsheviks had, up till then, been by actual or threatened revolts—revolts of "peasant lads dressed up as sailors", or soldiers. That was true of Lenin in March 1917, and it was still true of Stalin in March 1930.

In reply to the revolt, Lenin announced the "New Economic Policy" (N.E.P.). This loosened the reins of the dictatorship, both in the towns and in the country, as far as production of, and trading in, goods was concerned.

"From now on, the 'Communism' which had been in force for three years, and in the name of which hundreds of thousands of people had gone to the

prisons, concentration camps, the dungeons of the Cheka, and from thence to death, was no longer described as 'a work of social construction', but as War Communism, a painful necessity, the forced result of the civil war." (Th. Dan, *Soviet Russia as it really is*, Prague, 1926, p. 33.)

Those, however, who thought that a new era of the free movement of the workers, not only in the process of production but also in politics was to begin, were mistaken.

Even in the economic field, the freedom was not far-reaching, and did not last long; it was nothing but a breathing-space. The Bolsheviks would certainly have granted concessions to foreign capital in order to attract a steady stream of it into Russia, for they became more and more in need of it as their own industries collapsed. They were, however, unwilling and unable to renounce their despotic rule without bringing their own domination to an end. Without security of property, however, there can be no accumulation and investment of capital.

The N.E.P. remained a passing phase, and, hence, the economic stimulus which it brought was only short-lived. The more it dwindled and failed, and the more the misery increased, the greater the rapidity with which the wildest experiments in town and country followed one another. All of these had only certain things in common; constantly increased pressure on workers and peasants, reduction of wages, speeding-up of work, greatly increased hours of work, and the plundering of the well-to-do peasants, from whom, first their implements and stocks were taken, and then

their land, while the point which marked the "well-to-do" was constantly forced down.

These were the consequences of Kronstadt in the economic field.

In the political field it did not even bring a passing improvement, but, on the contrary, an immediate change for the worse.

The Bolsheviks saw with dread that the ideas of the Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries began to influence the workers and peasants again, as soon as these classes got the opportunity of hearing freer speech. That had to be stopped at all costs. The policy of hermetically sealing the workers and peasants from every draught of free air was pursued more insistently and systematically than before. They were deprived of even the smallest opportunity of getting information in any way except through the Press and speakers of the Communist Party. The consequences of this systematic isolation and misleading have a crushing effect on the minds not only of those who are kept under, but even on those of the rulers themselves. The bulk of the Communists in Russia also read nothing but the Communist Press, and imagine the world to be exactly as it is there depicted. How can they conduct politics there intelligently and appropriately?

The masses are only allowed to know what suits the rulers. But the latter themselves prefer that their subordinates should report to them only what the rulers wish to hear. An autocrat who only received information about the world from his courtiers was always told lies. This has damaged every State governed in that way. It constitutes the greatest danger, however, to a

régime which, whatever its present nature may be, is of revolutionary origin, is held together by no traditions, and must at some time or other weather heavy storms. As the difficulties of such a régime grow, only one political method is known of keeping it afloat, viz. terrorism. What in the French Revolution was only the result of the war at the time when foreign enemies were most menacing, has become a necessity for the rulers of Soviet Russia, resulting from their conditions of life, and not diminishing in times of peace but ever continuing to increase.

The speech in which Lenin announced the New Economic Policy on March 11, 1921, closed with the words: "The Socialists must nevertheless be kept in prison." (Th. Dan, *Soviet Russia as it really is*, p. 34.)

At the beginning of their activities in the revolution of 1917, the Bolsheviks may have been similar to the Jacobins, although, even then, very great differences prevailed. But since their *coup d'état* they have constantly got further away from their original basis, just as they have adopted, over-night, an entirely new programme exactly opposed to the previous one. The Jacobins never made such a change. They remained true to the idea of Parliament and universal, equal suffrage.

It was not the Jacobins, but an entirely different party, which, although they were the offshoot of the Revolution and of the Jacobins, did not hesitate to throw their whole programme overboard as soon as the opportunity arose for them to get into power and to remain there. This party was that of the Bonapartists.

If it is desired to make comparisons between the

first French and the last Russian Revolution, the Bolsheviks should be compared with the Bonapartists rather than with the Jacobins. The former, unlike the latter, do not represent a short-lived ruling organisation in a passing and abnormal situation, but established a Constitution in the State which was to last a long time and which was equally applicable in time of peace or in time of war.

There were two kinds of counter-revolutionaries in the great French Revolution. The simplest kind consisted of members of the Bourbon dynasty, nobles, and priests who wanted to get back into their former governing and lucrative positions. There are counter-revolutionaries of this type in every revolution. Under certain circumstances (in France these were furnished during the revolutionary wars) and in addition to the above, a counter-revolutionary element arises out of the revolution itself. As soon as the overthrow of the old régime, which kept the various oppressed and exploited classes and strata in subjection has been accomplished, these begin fighting amongst themselves. It may then happen that one of the revolutionary classes, or parties, obtains such a preponderance of power over all the others that they are able to monopolise the fruits of the revolution and to relegate all the other revolutionaries *en masse* to the same state of powerlessness and paralysis which they suffered before the revolution. By this process, the revolution is brought to nothing, as far as the great majority of the revolutionary classes are concerned.

In the great French Revolution the primitive type of counter-revolutionaries were called Legitimists, or

supporters of the legitimate monarchy, while those counter-revolutionaries who arose out of the Revolution itself were called Bonapartists, after their leader, General Napoleon Bonaparte, whom they ultimately made Emperor.

The antagonism of the Legitimist and Bonapartist counter-revolutionaries was repeated in France after the collapse of the revolution in 1848.

Amongst other things, these two types of counter-revolution are distinguishable by the fact that the primitive type, as was the case, for example, in Austria and Prussia in 1849, is openly given out to be what it is. On the other hand the Bonapartist type retains, as far as possible, its revolutionary character, and in many cases its supporters themselves are not clearly conscious of their counter-revolutionary activities. It was years before the first Napoleon went so far as to raise his status to that of Emperor—Emperor by the grace of the people, appointed by a plebiscite which took place in May 1804, and as a result of which he crowned himself in December of the same year. But for his vanity, he could have filled the dignity of First Consul of the Republic, which he had won on Brumaire 18th, until the end of his life, with the same counter-revolutionary functions which he exercised as Emperor, and he would then have been a revolutionary and not a counter-revolutionary in the eyes of the world.

The Bonapartist type of counter-revolution is, then, not as easily recognised as the primitive type. At its outset, it has much in common with a true revolution, and can be counted as a continuation, and, sometimes, even as a perfecting of the latter: However, it always

remains based upon the suppression of a section of the revolutionaries, and upon the limitation of the free movement of the masses. The longer it survives, therefore, the more clearly does its counter-revolutionary character become manifest.

This is what happened in France during the great Revolution. This is what has been happening in Russia since 1917. The attempts to bring about the primitive type of counter-revolution, namely the risings of the "White Guards" Korniloff, Denikin, Kolchak, and Wrangel, were made early. But is this the only type of counter-revolution which occurred? The manifesto of the Executive of the L.S.I. (Labour Socialist International) issued in May of this year only speaks of "White Counter-revolutionaries" against whom the Russian Revolution must be protected. Nothing is said of a Bonapartist counter-revolution.

There are now many Mensheviks who point out that Bolshevism is threatening to degenerate into a new Bonapartism. But has this danger only just now become threatening? Did it not arise some time ago? Has not Bolshevism been Bonapartism ever since the *coups d'état* of November 1917 and January 1918? And has it not subsequently deprived the workers and peasants, little by little, of all freedom of movement, after having outlawed, from the start, all intellectuals who were not in its camp? What has Stalin still to do in order to arrive at Bonapartism? Do people think that this will only come about when Stalin gets himself crowned Czar? Almost one and a half centuries have passed since the great French Revolution. They have not been favourable to hereditary monarchies. Scarcely any of

the monarchies established since then have endured, and many of the old have disappeared. Not even Mussolini thinks it worth while to found a new dynasty. Does this prevent him from being the Champion Incarnate of Counter-Revolution?

Fascism, however, is only the counterpart of Bolshevism, Mussolini merely apeing Lenin. His point of departure is certainly quite different from that of Bolshevism, Fascism shows that the Bolshevik methods of a dictatorship can be used equally well for muzzling the proletariat or its enemies. When we compare the two, however, we find that what was done intentionally from the outset by Fascism, namely depriving the proletariat of all freedom of movement, is, in Bolshevism, an inevitable result. Bolshevik methods must necessarily lead to the muzzling of the proletariat, at least where industry and agriculture go to wrack and ruin, and where, as a result, the position of the working classes in town and country becomes insufferable. This economic decline, again, is the inevitable result of Bolshevik and Fascist strangling of the productive machinery.

The degeneration of Bolshevism into Bonapartism, or Fascism, if that term is preferred, is, then, not a danger which threatens to arise in the far distant future but is what has been actually happening in Russia for about a decade. The hostility of the workers and peasants to which the Bolshevik methods naturally lead, however, developed slowly at first. But it has attained such dimensions in the last few years that, when taken in conjunction with the total collapse of agriculture which seems likely, it is already threatening the Bolshevik

system with that catastrophe which we mentioned at the beginning. This fact makes it more than ever necessary to study the situation in Russia.

The complicated and many-sided character which the Russian Revolution has assumed in the last twelve years is becoming more confused because there are two types of counter-revolution, the primitive, or "White Guard" and the Bonapartist, or Bolsheviki-Fascist type.

Anyone true to the views of democratic Socialism must naturally oppose both. It must be admitted, however, that the type of counter-revolution against which all one's force should be directed at any particular time is the one which happens to be in power, and not the one the advent of which is feared but which has not yet arrived. It did not occur to the French Republicans under Napoleon to give up the struggle against the Empire because this was opposed also by the Legitimists.

In this connection it has been noticed that the counter-revolution which proceeds from the revolution is very much more powerful, and is supported by a much more energetic class of people than the primitive counter-revolution, the supporters of which had already lost all stamina before the advent of the revolution which drove them out. The empire of the first Napoleon was much more secure than the kingdoms of Louis XVIII and Charles X. The whole of Europe had to band together to overthrow Napoleon I, whereas the Bourbons were driven out by the Paris proletariat after only street fighting lasting three days.

At all events, Stalin is in a very much less secure position than Napoleon was. The latter had used all

the forces at his disposal to conquer and plunder the enemies of France. Stalin uses all the means of exercising force which are available for the single purpose of waging war upon, and plundering, the peasants of Russia. That greatly reduces the danger of this kind of Bonapartism for the rest of Europe, but for Russia it is the most powerful and, therefore, the worst manifestation of the counter-revolution.

IV

POSSIBLE FORMS OF A NEW REVOLUTION IN RUSSIA

(a) PEASANT REVOLT

After having considered the present position of Soviet Russia and the factors which produced it, we have to go into the consequences and tasks which result therefrom for the Social-Democracy of Russia, as also for the Socialist International.

Naturally, the forces acting in Russia itself will be decisive. At the moment, Russian refugees will not be able to do much in this direction, and still less the International. On a gigantic colossus such as the Russian Empire, only movements which spring up spontaneously with elementary power from the masses of the people can effect any change of policy.

The expectations which we have regarding the movement coming from the peoples of Soviet Russia themselves must be decisive for our position.

Unfortunately, these movements cannot easily be determined. The basis of all future political and social changes, the tendencies of economic development, can indeed be predicted almost with certainty. "The Marxist prophecies" based on them have as a rule proved true. It is, however, exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to predict a certain form and a certain date for the happening of future events which will be the result of the general economic development.

This is particularly the case as regards the present

Russia, whose actual position is absolutely unique, and cannot be compared with that of other countries of the present or the past. At the same time, no other State has been so isolated from the world since the opening of Japan and China in the middle of the last century, and in no other country but Russia are the sources of information so monopolised by the Government. To-day, it is far easier to know the internal conditions of any other country than Russia.

Nevertheless, the economic conditions of Russia can be ascertained somehow. It is impossible to hide them altogether. But it is difficult to ascertain the condition of the mind of the masses whom the present economy is affecting, and this alone makes it impossible to foresee with certainty how they will react against the decadence of agriculture.

It is not absolutely improbable that this decadence will effect what the manifesto of the L.S.I. (Labour Socialist International) desires; such an intimidation of the Bolsheviks that they, as the manifesto says, "whether Communists or not belonging to any party" will "join the Socialists", will give their freedom to the peoples of the Soviet Union and will thus lead them "peacefully" towards "full Democracy".

No doubt this solution would be the most agreeable one of the many, the one which more than any other method would save Russia the misery and the dangers of civil war. If we do not merely listen to wishes, but give our ear to previous experience and to the nature of things, then we are obliged to say that this kind of solution is the most unlikely one of all.

To transform an autocracy into a democracy has

never yet been peaceably achieved. In Germany and Austria and even in Russia before the war there were far more reasons for it than in the present-day Soviet Republic, and in spite of this the majority of the Social-Democrats described those amongst us who believed in a peaceable growing into a democratic Republic as illusionists. We have to-day no occasion for a greater faith in miracles.

It required a powerful revolt in the spring of 1921 to cause Lenin to grant concessions, and it was no less than the beginnings of such a revolt which, in the spring of 1930, induced Stalin to moderate his pace. And even in these cases only economic concessions were granted; the suppression of Democracy was in no way relaxed, but its consequences on the contrary were more accentuated.

This was most clearly apparent in Stalin's speech at the 16th Congress of the Communist Party of Russia, and in the deplorable treatment which was there meted out to Rykov and Tomsky.

The expectation of converting Communism to Democracy is not seriously to be considered.

We should rather be prepared for something else: the non-appearance of any reaction against a famine which threatens Russia in the near future, unless extraordinarily auspicious weather favours the *Kolhosi* and *Sovhosi*. Hunger indeed leads to despair, but it also weakens and enervates, paralyses all energy, forces men to dull resignation.

A short time ago in some districts of China, millions of people were dying of hunger, and there was no revolt at all against the famine. Without rousing them-

selves, they silently endured until death put an end to their sufferings. In the Russia of the Czars itself there was a terrible famine in 1891-1892, and again in 1898-1899. And yet each time everything remained quiet.

Will the same happen again? It is not improbable. Among the various possible consequences of the bankruptcy of the *Kolhosi* experiments it would be quite the most pitiable, not only for the Russian people but also for its Communist masters, although it is the course of events which they most desire because it leaves their position as masters untouched.

A famine of this kind would not be the result of the unfavourable weather conditions of a summer of rather exceptional drought. Such abnormal conditions do not repeat themselves so easily. A bad harvest is mostly followed by a good harvest. The misery of famine does not, in such cases, last more than a year.

The lack of provisions must have quite different effects from the results of social and political conditions which do not change and which must be enormously impaired by a famine. Besides which it must be remembered that during the last few years the agricultural districts of Russia, even in the regions where peasant production remained untouched, have not produced a surplus big enough to balance the deficit in the famine areas. All attempts to force the peasants in the better situated territories to deliver larger quantities of products for the poorer districts must only intensify the evil and further prepare the downfall of agriculture. Those districts which still yield a surplus of agricultural products have not, for a long time past, succeeded in nourishing the towns; how much less then can they

provide for the many wide areas with broken-down *Kolhosi* and ruined peasant holdings which must now be taken into consideration.

Should the causes of the present distress remain unchanged, then a famine resulting from them will further weigh down the producing power of agriculture, so that its downfall, which began years ago, will be accelerated.

That must naturally lead to a swift limitation of all culture, namely, of the already pitifully inadequate number of schools; to increasing deterioration of the already insufficient nutrition of the worker, to the perishing of millions of the masses from hunger in town and country.

Finally this misery will not stop short before the Communist Party and the Red Army, for whom until now even starving Russia has always prepared means of well-being.

If the Communists do not turn to democracy of their own free will, which is difficult to anticipate, if this democracy is not enforced by proletarian or peasant movements, then the fate which threatens the Communist Party is to rot in a rotting Russia.

Fortunately this contingency, although not impossible, is not at all certain, perhaps not even probable.

If, for the last twelve years the dictatorship has sought to destroy thoroughly every starting point for a possible Opposition, it has thereby so disorganized and compromised itself, caused so many disagreements, occasioned such instability, that perhaps no very great impetus is required to make it lose the ground under its feet.

Already weaker movements of Opposition have it in their power to bring this about.

Such a successful movement of Opposition might first emanate from the peasantry. The townspeople are indeed as a rule more mobile. But the towns are also the concentration point of the whole machinery of oppression of the State, the Army and the police. The villages are, however, more difficult to reach.

For this reason the towns have remained quiet during the last few years, in spite of the growing distress, while news often comes of the unrest in the villages, and even more often of actions of the Terrorists against individual Communists, of the assassination of Communist agents in the country.

The spirit of rebellion also appears under the present conditions of Russia to be more strongly developed in the country, or rather to be in a stronger position to give vent to its grievances, than in the towns.

Certainly this unrest and acts of rebellion of the peasantry have as yet led to nothing but the increase of terrorism by the Government in the country, where it had been less felt at the beginning of the Soviet rule. The peasant revolts could not succeed so long as they were localized, sometimes restricted to individual villages, where they were directed against particular grievances or perhaps against an especially malicious official. Such revolts are of course easily repressed by the armed powers of the Central Government, as soon as the latter appear on the scene. But things would assume a different aspect if all the villages of several provinces were to rise at the same time. Then the

armed powers of the Central Government would not suffice to repress them.

The situation of the Government would become especially dangerous if the Army itself, or even some part of it, were to prove unreliable, and either go over to the rebels or refuse to fire on them.

Events of this kind are likely to happen when a cause is added to the various local grievances of individual villages which leads them simultaneously to the deepest despair. Such an occurrence is not without effect on the "peasant lads clad as soldiers". A local grievance of a village cannot rouse them to such an extent that they burst asunder the chains of military discipline. If, however, all the peasant lads in a regiment hear the same cry of despair from their villages, and are then commanded to fire on their fathers and mothers, common indignation against oppressors of the peasants may well lend them the courage to rebel together against them.

Should the peasants, united with the "Red" soldiers, win but one victory over the fighting powers of the Government, then in view of the general tension nothing can stop the march of events, the avalanche will have been set in motion and will crush everything that stands in its way.

What dimensions and what conquering strength a revolt of the peasant population in Russia can attain in such circumstances has already been proved by the revolt of Stenka Rasin, a rebellious Cossack, who in 1668 gathered around him a robber band of more than a thousand men, with whom he waged a formal war, and whose military conquests soon brought crowds of

peasants and proletarians to his camp. Even some regiments of the Czar went over to him. He was in a position to conquer great towns like Astrachan, Samara, Saratoff.

“Out of a mere Cossack revolt appeared the threat of a universal revolution which had already taken hold of wide areas of the Upper and Middle Volga.” (S. F. Platonoff, *History of Russia*, p. 211.)

The revolt came to nothing because it had no programme, because it was not directed against the power of the Czar but only against the tradespeople and landlords, who were plundered. A new order in the State could not be built up on this basis for the prerequisites did not exist. The movement collapsed, therefore, in 1671 after Rasin had been defeated by an army of the Czar. Nevertheless his revolt proved how quickly a rebellious movement in Russia can take hold of the great masses of peasants, if the initiators are successful in gaining victories over the troops of the political power. In this respect the conditions since the seventeenth century have been even more favourable for a peasant revolt. The continual unrest in the whole of Russia since 1917 must have influenced the peasants mentally quite differently from the way the fortunes of war of a single robber chief could have affected the conservative peasants of the seventeenth century.

In fact, the *Kolhosi* experiment aroused such pertinacious unrest among the peasants, particularly in the Caucasian area, and such far-reaching ferment in the Red Army, that Stalin, as we have seen, found himself obliged to check the *Kolhosi* movement. But even if he does succeed in bringing to a standstill the

process of expropriation of the peasants, which had started so ruthlessly—an unlikely event—he will not in any case succeed in banishing the economic evil which this movement has already conjured up. It will take its own inflexible course. It is, however, to be expected that, as soon as its consequences are manifest, the movement among the peasantry and the Red Army, which caused Stalin to draw back, will break out with renewed strength and to a far greater extent.

The possibility arises of a victorious peasant revolt against the Bolshevik régime, not resulting from a conspiracy which can be exposed and rendered harmless, but as the necessary result of the evil which emanates from the Soviet system itself and which the latter cannot make ineffective by any police or acts of terrorism.

(b) PEASANTS AND WORKERS

It is quite possible that a peasant revolt may overthrow the Soviet régime. What would replace it? Peasants alone have never been in a position to build up a great State. They are to-day as little able to do so as at the time of Stenka Rasin. The peasants can throw off the yoke, but the elements for a new political form have nearly always come from the towns. In this respect nothing has changed. Rebellious peasants can achieve great and lasting success in conjunction with the towns, but never without or against them.

In the towns of Russia to-day the ruling class is the industrial working-class. Should a peasant revolt arise, it will depend on the attitude of that class whether it frees Russia and opens the way to her further develop-

ment which the Soviet system bars to-day, or whether the revolt ends in the ruin of the whole State.

The first happy event would come to pass if the workers united themselves with the peasants. Yet even the workers and peasants cannot alone found a State without intellectuals.

Peasants, workers, intellectuals have, however, a common interest only when they place themselves on the basis of democracy. In the conditions of Soviet Russia, this is as obvious to the intellectuals as to the peasants, but unfortunately not to the workers, who have been raised to a privileged class.

All this depends on whether the proletarians see through the deceptive appearance of their privileges, and whether they realise that the workers cannot make a scourge for a subjugated class without its being applied against themselves and that they will only establish lasting freedom for themselves when they bring freedom to all. The proletariat in Soviet Russia can only win if it relinquishes its privileges, which indeed cause it to be a little less wretched than the other classes in the country but which prevent the misery, continuously intensified by the Soviet system, from ceasing altogether. If the proletarians have the insight to unite themselves with intellectuals and peasants in the fight for democracy, that is to say, above all for universal equal suffrage and a parliamentary republic, with complete freedom for all its inhabitants, then we may think that Russia is approaching happier times and will shake off the incubus which oppresses it and threatens to strangle it.

But woe to the land if the workers believe that they

must maintain their privileged position against the peasants and intellectuals and therefore have to defend the Soviet system against the latter. No less disastrous would be a lower but very important consideration. The universal dearth of provisions has already caused many bands of workers to march on the villages to take away the reserves of the peasants. Were such proceedings to become common, that alone would suffice to arouse a peasant revolt. Should such practices be continued during the revolt, it would increase in intensity. In any case, the peasant revolt would then become a battle against the proletariat of the towns.

The same ghastly consequences which must gradually arise in Russia from a possible apathetic indifference during a year of famine would swiftly arise from a struggle between proletariat and peasantry. It is as questionable who would be victorious from a military point of view, whether it would be the proletarian or the peasant, as what would be the result of such a victory, whether as a result of the rioting of the workers the Communists would consolidate their power anew, or whether the peasants, by their victory, would open the door to all kinds of reactionary quack remedies. Yet all these questions are without importance in view of the greatness of the evil which must arise out of the event, that in such a battle both industry and agriculture would be trampled down and Russia would then look as if the hosts of Tamerlane had swept over the land.

No doubt every friend of Russia, every friend of humanity, must hope that this atrocity will be spared us. This hope will be fulfilled the sooner, the more the

workers unite with the peasants and intellectuals in the fight for democracy against the Soviet system. The danger of civil war originates from this system. The longer it lasts the greater the danger will become. By maintaining the system the danger may be somewhat postponed, but never banished. The longer the Soviet régime is in a position to do harm, the more terrible will be the breaking of the storm. One may hate a revolt. But if it comes to pass it will be necessary to determine one's attitude to it.

Among the factors which will affect the characteristics of the coming movement of Russia, the attitude of the Communist Party will of course be one of the most important. It is quite possible that in this situation it will be split up, before it is completely annihilated. When formerly an autocratic system was threatened by a revolution, a great state of nervousness was wont to lay hold of its partisans. They realised that things could not continue as they had been, but they did not, however, wish to sacrifice any essentials of the former basis of their existence. The most varied, most contradictory plans were put forward to wash the soiled coat without wetting it. These plans can be divided into two groups: the one seeks to soften the elements of the opposition by concessions and lenience, the other seeks to intimidate them by increased severity.

That is what will happen to the Communists; indeed, it has already happened to them for some time past.

Concessions by falling autocrats hitherto have always been but half-hearted attempts, irresolutely made and soon abandoned. So it has happened in Bolshevik Russia itself, as the fate of the N.E.P. (New Economic

Policy) already proves. One can study the fate of such concessions very well in the attempts at reform of the Government of Louis XVI, which preceded the Great Revolution without preventing it.

The supporters of both courses, that of concession as well as that of intensified severity, are right in their criticism of one another. The repression only increases the despair and the wrath of the opponents of the threatened régime without improving existing conditions. Concessions, however, are only so timidly granted that they also do not improve matters. They only encourage the opponents of the Government and give them more scope for action. In such a situation the Government may turn itself how it will, everything it does is wrong, whether its course be directed to the right or to the left. Everything must miscarry as soon as the system on which it rests, and which it will not give up at any price, has become the obvious cause of its downfall or of the wrecking of the community.

As nothing really helps, the Governments of such periods are distinguished by their growing instability. A few scanty concessions are made, but the Government soon sees, even if it is thereby made popular for a short time, that the opposition turn the concessions all the more to their own advantage, the less their rulers are able to improve the distressing conditions. Then the opposite current in the Government gains the upper hand, the concessions are rescinded and severe measures are applied to annul them. This zig-zag course only causes far more bitterness than merely continuing the old course, and hastens the final catastrophe.

Should the call for democratising the Soviets really arise in Communist circles and find supporters, it would surely be ridiculous not to take the latter at their word and to support them. The call might gain significance as a sign of the tottering of the dictatorship and a means of further shattering it. It would never be the result of a clear, straightforward, well-defined policy of the Soviet Government, but only one of the many contradictory results of its zig-zag course and the growing rifts which announce the downfall of the Communist Party.

It is impossible to foretell what form the coming revolution in Russia will assume. It is to be expected, in all probability, however, that it will take not merely one form, but many, indeed perhaps all the forms which we have here considered and finally many others of which we cannot dream. History always brings some surprises. It seems impossible that so huge a country as Russia should produce the same phenomena in all regions. There may be districts whose population has become quite apathetic and absolutely incapable of action, through hunger and ill-treatment. In others again, the peasants may possess enough strength to offer resistance against their expropriation. But then again, there may be a few towns whose industrial workers turn against the peasants to overcome and plunder them. And again other towns whose workers unite with the peasants and the democratic members of the intellectuals to found a new democratic Republic.

The unity of the Communist Party may fall to pieces; in one place it may democratise the Soviet, grant more freedom of the Press and speech, and in

another place increase the terror and the omnipotence of the political police to the most bloodthirsty debauchery.

A State comprising almost 150 million inhabitants, who have never in history, even for a single year, had the opportunity of organising themselves in large associations covering the whole State, have never yet had the opportunity of receiving information through a free Press for any length of time, never had the opportunity to see their programme presented and applied by great parties in the representative body of the State: a State of this kind, if its masses once start to move, must, to begin with, necessarily become the scene of an apparently interminable confusion. This is certainly to be deplored, but it is unavoidable. The main thing is to bring the chaos to an end as soon as possible. This cannot be achieved by attempts to set up a new dictatorship in the place of the one overthrown. That means perpetuating the civil war.

Only one prospect presents itself for quickly terminating the confusion and bringing rest and security to the Russian masses, eagerly longing both for security and freedom: the co-operation of the town workers with the democratic and socialist intellectuals together with the peasants, to bring about the election of a new national assembly which should work out a constitution for a democratic parliamentary Republic.

V

WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

(a) THE WHITE GUARD REFUGEES

What is to be done? That was the question which the great Russian Socialist, Nikolai Gavrilovich Chernishevski, in 1863 put, in his novel of the same name, to the revolutionary youth of Russia striving for new forms of the State and life. They were recruited almost entirely from intellectual circles, which again were in many instances derived from the nobility. Two generations have passed away since then. The industrial proletariat, which at that time did not consist of a self-conscious class in Russia, has since then become so important that although it does not indeed rule the State itself, yet it was able to carry an organisation to political power. It exercises this power autocratically in the name of the proletariat, granting the latter a privileged position but thereby robbing it, as it does every other class and social stratum, of all freedom. This particular constitution of the State was, however, only to be ascribed to the coincidence of quite abnormal circumstances which arose from the atrocities of the World War. Such abnormality could not last long, and is even now drawing to an end. Consequently, as in 1863, the question again arises for Socialist Russia: What is to be done to raise the Russian people from the misery of autocracy to a higher level?

This question does not, indeed, mean the same to-

day as formerly, for one thing because the autocracy which is to be fought against is to-day quite different; but also because the classes engaged in the struggle of political and social development are quite different from those of 1863. Above all, however, because to-day the question is no longer theoretical but practical. Theoretically our standpoint on the question of Bolshevism has long ago been established. To-day arises the practical question: What shall we do if it should totter, if a revolt should threaten it?

That this is to-day no idle question is proved forcibly by the appeal of the Executive of the L.S.I. (Labour Socialist International) already mentioned many times, to the workers of Russia, which was born out of the knowledge of this threatening revolt. To discuss this question has become the more urgently pressing, as the Socialists of Russia are unfortunately themselves not unanimous on the answer which they have to give.

This chiefly concerns the Socialist refugees. There are certainly still non-Bolshevik Socialists in Russia, excellent comrades, but many of them live in prison or in compulsory residence. It is quite impossible to estimate how many of them are still free, for only by keeping their views strictly secret are they safe from the political police. An open discussion with them is quite impossible.

There is, on the other hand, nothing to prevent such a discussion among the Russian refugees, almost all of them known as outspoken Socialists and as such still among the living.

Along with the Russian democratic and Socialist

refugees—two groups which are almost identical—there are also similar elements who have left Italy.

These two groups of refugees have much in common, but in one thing they differ. The Italian refugees consist entirely of Socialists and middle-class democrats. With the Russians, on the other hand, together with refugees of this kind there is another, fundamentally different, group—a group of reactionaries, of members of the Russian dynasty, great landlords, capitalists, bureaucrats, officers of the old régime. Some of them are certainly reconciled to their fate, have perhaps established a pleasant existence, and do not dream of exposing themselves to new dangers and an uncertain future by participating in a revolutionary rising. A not inconsiderable number have, however, either not found things so pleasant or have retained sufficient energy to take part in new struggles or to take new risks upon themselves. They still expect that it will be possible for them to return to Russia, but they do not form a united body. The motive of many in their ranks is only nostalgia. They understand the change which has set in well enough to know that a return to former conditions is impossible. Their only desire is economic freedom, to enable them to establish an existence in the old homeland again.

A considerable number of the refugees, however, are not so peacefully disposed. They wish for a return to the old society and the brilliant rôle which they played, and they await the opportunity to bring about this reaction. Like so many other people, they also have forgotten that there was a great revolution in Russia in March 1917, that the Russian Revolution is by no

means the work of the Bolsheviks, that the latter only guided it along in channels, monopolised it themselves, and finally ruined it.

These reactionaries believe that if the Bolsheviks waver the whole revolution will thereby be put in doubt. If unrest arises in Russia they will scent the moving air and rush in to repeat the deeds of Korniloff, Kolchak, and so forth. There is no doubt that such a danger, which the manifesto of the L.S.I. (Labour Socialist International) points out, does exist. But we must not complacently accept the illusions of the White Guards.

It is part of the tragic fate of a refugee that he loses the sense of proper appreciation of the new conditions in his homeland which have come into being after he left it. The last impression which the refugee received of it while he was still active there is the most enduring and affects him more strongly than later accounts in letters and newspapers.

Thus it is easy to understand that a greater part of the reactionary refugees incline to the belief that when the Bolshevik régime falls the time when the White Guard Generals were able temporarily to gain great power will return. They overlook the fact that since then world-history has not stood still. A decade has passed by, a decade of unheard-of, far-reaching changes. One can think of them as one likes, but it is certain that men come out of them completely changed.

The old Russia no longer exists, and every attempt to resurrect it is doomed to failure. Even in the years of civil war and war communism, the White Guards were frustrated because they appeared as the advocates of

the great landlords, who demanded back their properties from the peasants. Should these latter now rise against the Bolsheviks, it would be in defence of the same properties. They would not resist expropriation through the *Kolhosi* to prepare the way for expropriation by the great landlords. If anyone were only suspected of such aspirations he would be sent home with a broken head.

Since 1917 the peasants in Russia have taken part in so many revolts, have lived in such constant unrest, that they have broken away from all tradition, which formerly had a powerful ascendancy in the monotonous life of the villages, in which one year resembled another, apart from the varying yields of the harvests. This old tradition no longer imposes itself on them to-day, least of all a tradition represented by masters who suddenly appear in the country, who have become complete strangers to their homeland and no longer find themselves in their right place there.

In the years from 1917 to 1920 the old Army organisation was still effective. In spite of their extensive dissolution, there were still bodies whose members held together to a certain extent. The officers' corps in particular still formed a united body. To-day there is nothing left of all these. Whence, therefore, should the White Guards derive their new power?

Many fear that the same might happen as in Hungary after the collapse of the Soviet Republic. But the latter only lasted a few months and no new organisations could be created. The distribution of the land of the great landlords to the peasants remained only a promise, it was never carried out. Under the protec-

tion of Rumanian bayonets the old nobility and a counter-revolutionary army led by the old officers' corps, quickly returned and set up the old conditions again.

These conditions are in no way to be compared with those in present-day Russia.

Others fear a dissolution of the Bolsheviks by a Fascist dictatorship. But Fascism could only prosper in Italy, and its initiators in Germany and Austria can only win a considerable following and some power by money, with which capitalist circles abundantly provide them, because the latter fear the growing strength of the proletariat and wish to have a pack of snapping bloodhounds as a defence against its attacks. Without capitalist support there will be no Fascism—at least as long as it has not conquered the Treasury.

But where in present-day Russia are there capitalists rich enough to equip and pay a private army? Even before the revolution of 1917 native capitalism in Russia was very poor. The greater part of her capital came from abroad. Bolshevism has completely exterminated the capitalist class. A peasant revolt and the setting up of a democracy would not immediately conjure up a new, strong capitalist class. Whence then would come the money to pay for Fascist bands?

The granting of such means by foreign capitalists would indeed be possible. Yet how large these sums would have to be to enable the bands paid by them to become a ruling power in this gigantic realm! Why should the capitalists of Western Europe and America make such sacrifices to attack the peasant democracy of Russia in the rear? What have they to gain thereby? Naturally the democratic elements would have to

watch closely the White Guards who went to Russia, although the greatest danger to democracy and the reconstruction of Russia does not threaten from that direction but from a conflict between workers and peasants. If this conflict is avoided and the two elements come to an understanding, then we may hope for the best. The matter would become very serious, as has already been said, if these two classes were to attack each other. If the peasants are left to their own resources, if they feel bitter against everything derived from the towns, then they could certainly cause terrible disaster, and in so doing some queer cranks might take the leadership. Yet these new leaders will certainly not be the champions of the great landlords, of the old officers' corps, of the old bureaucracy and of a Czarism closely based on these elements.

The movement might well assume a religious character, but the Orthodox Church, which had served the interests of the Czar will not be able to have a leading part in it. The Orthodox Church is too disorganised, and other religious sects have acquired too great an influence.

We must bear in mind, however, that some representatives of the Orthodox Church may become leading personalities, although this will not be due to the power of the Church. The time may then come for fanatics and prophets, for people with the tendencies of Gapon, Tolstoi, Gandhi. And likewise for social quack remedies and jugglers. The Asiatic and semi-Asiatic peasantry presents a fertile soil for such personalities. They may give us many surprises. We must

be prepared for such events, but not for repetitions of the rising of generals as happened after the World War. They have passed away, and still more so the social and political conditions of pre-revolution times.

The forms of the coming events are very difficult to foresee. One thing, as a rule, can, however, be foretold: the events will appear different from past events, even if the latter are of the same kind. In his *18th Brumaire* Marx has mocked at the French revolutionaries of 1848 and 1849 who wished to form a Committee of Public Safety after the pattern of 1793. And no less absurd was the playing with such a Committee under the Paris Commune of 1871. In the same way can one say it is absurd to regard the coming revolt against Bolshevism from the same point of view as the revolt of the White Guard officers in the period from August 1917 to October 1920.

We have here ignored the fact that the Bolshevism of that time still embodied a good part of the Revolution, while to-day it has become completely anti-revolutionary. We have already treated this matter in detail.

The reactionary section of the refugees can scarcely become dangerous through its activities in Russia, but rather through its activities abroad. The refugees maintain personal relations with influential political circles in many Governments, as well as with the reactionary Press and many wealthy people. With riots breaking out in Russia they can easily induce the latter to counter-revolutionary utterances, actions, and support. These could not indeed be far-reaching. Certainly no Great Power plans a military intervention in Russia, probably not even Poland, but nevertheless

there might be measures, ideas, and support which would promote disorder in Russia, which would compromise the democratic movement there and make its struggle harder.

Where such actions of the reactionary refugees become marked, it is certainly our duty to oppose them as far as possible. Yet the democratic and Socialist members of the refugees will not be able to do much more than to follow the activities of the other part of the refugees and to keep the International well informed. It will above all be the task of the Socialist Parties in every country to prevent their Governments from undue interference in the inner movements of Russia and to keep a strict eye on the reactionary Press.

(b) DEMOCRAT REFUGEES

The paralysing of the activities of the reactionary refugees should be the least important duty of the Democratic-Socialist body of refugees. The tasks which proceed from within the Russian realm itself are of far greater importance.

How far or how little the genuine Democratic-Socialist elements are disseminated in Russia to-day cannot, as has already been remarked, be estimated. In spite of all the ill-treatment and physical extirpation, there is certainly still quite a number of them, some of whom are remnants of the old Party, others are new adherents who have been won over to Democratic-Socialist ideas through recognition of the instability and injurious effect of the Dictatorship. It is to be expected that their number will be of considerable significance as soon as the pressure of the Bolshevik terror comes to an end.

Yet in any case the tasks which devolve upon them will demand far more strength than they will in the first instance be able to muster. Then the most diligent co-operation of the refugees will be indispensable, as they alone have a full knowledge of foreign countries and their innovations since the end of the World War, which are either kept from the inhabitants of the Soviet State or misrepresented to them. On their part the compatriots of the refugees who have remained in the homeland will be superior as regards a correct estimation of the inclinations, capabilities and powers of the new generation which has grown up under the Soviet régime.

The smoother the interaction and co-operation of the refugees with the comrades who remained in the country, the greater their success will be, the sooner will they attain and maintain the leadership of the movement.

A very disturbing impediment exists, however, in that the Democratic-Socialist refugees do not form a united body. They form a number of organisations and groups, which are partly very strictly divided. There are naturally differences of opinion as regards tactics, organisation, and occasionally also of principles in every party, and this is unavoidable. Such differences arise mostly where the basis upon which action must be taken is uncertain. One must naturally hope that the differences of opinion which disturb action to such a degree will cease. Yet in this instance also the conditions are stronger than our wishes, and the differences of opinion arise out of conditions, not out of personal whims.

However, one can and must aim at one object: to bring about conditions at an early date which will render possible a convergence of the various directions of thought and groups in spite of all incidental antagonism, and to facilitate such a convergence.

Above all this end calls for the renunciation of any dictatorship by the leaders of individual groups, in the face of any possible opposition in their ranks.

The expansion of the Socialist parties of Western Europe into parties of the masses became possible only by the abandonment of sectarian intolerance, which prohibits every member of the party from expressing other opinions in public than those of the leader. The necessary unity of organisation and action in a Mass Party can only be maintained by providing any opposition every opportunity to bring forward their arguments in public. Certainly differences of opinion are injurious. They will not cease, however, but grow worse if the right of propaganda is monopolised by the leaders and the opposition is barred from it, for they will thereby be embittered and finally driven to recede. Public opinion itself also has a right to know everything which can be advanced in an issue affecting it, as only by this means will it be in a position to find and accept the most appropriate solution of the question.

In view of the importance of the Russian affairs for the whole international proletariat, the latter should demand that all parties among the Russian Socialists should take the opportunity to inform them of their tactical and theoretical differences.

These differences will thereby certainly not be intensified but rather lessened. Naturally the L.S.I.

(Labour Socialist International) should not be appealed to as arbitrator. The settlement of the differences must remain the business of the organisations in question. Yet I believe that the International, if possessed of all the facts, would be in a position to bring about an understanding without there being any conquerors or conquered.

Of course this would not always succeed, and in any case it would not result in removing the traditional boundaries between individual party organisations produced by the party history of decades. It is to be hoped that the necessary conditions will be existent as soon as the Russian working classes have the possibilities for free mass organisation and mass action, particularly for free elections. These conditions are completely lacking as long as there are any refugees.

Yet an understanding between them for a programme of united action should be possible. Our Italian comrades have given us a good example. They have overcome their differences and have joined together in a united organisation. Of course, the elements under Russian influence have declined to co-operate, but these are only either strict Communists or semi-communist individuals.

The conditions among the Russian Socialists are not so favourable for a union of the various parties.

In the history of modern Socialism, we can distinguish three great periods, at least for the Continent of Europe. The one extends (setting Russia aside) from the initiation of Socialism after the great French Revolution until the Franco-German War and the Commune of Paris. The economic, and even more,

the political conditions at that time were not favourable for the growth of proletarian mass parties and mostly made them impossible. The Socialist movement was restricted to small conventicles, in every one of which a different personality ruled. Sectarianism, rifts in the proletarian movement, and dictatorship of the leaders prevailed.

The stimulation of democracy in the sixties, together with the founding of the German Empire and the French Republic, formed the first favourable background for mass organisation. The transition from sects to a mass party finds the correct theoretical basis in Marxism when the latter itself is not conceived as restricted and sectarian.

Therewith the Socialist movement entered its second period. The mass parties are revolutionary, as the sects were, not only in a social sense, which is natural, but also in a political sense. This is true at least of the military monarchies.

Irreconcilable opposition was the task of the proletarian party in that period and also bitter antagonism to the parties of the middle-class opposition. The mass of workers at that time still remained in the camps of middle-class radicalism, and it was important to get them out of it.

This last task was almost accomplished in most States when the World War broke out. After it came the overthrow of the three great military monarchies, and with it came the third period in the history of modern Socialism, the period in which we now live.

The political problems of the proletarian parties are fundamentally altered by the overthrow of the military

monarchies and its consequences. The State in which they live is no longer a military monarchy, but a democratic Republic, which is threatened by the reaction and finds certain protection only in the proletariat. It is now our function to maintain the Republic, that is, the existing State, not to overthrow it. In so far the Social Democracy ceases to be revolutionary and becomes conservative; not because it has relinquished any of its aims, but only because it has realised a certain part of them. Not Social Democracy but the State has changed. The idea of the political revolution after the Revolution has no sense.

Yet though we defend the democratic Republic, it has not—apart from the Socialist organisation of the methods of production—by a long way attained the form after which we are striving. It only presents the starting-point for it. The proletariat is most ardently interested in the further development of the Republic. It cannot leave it to the middle-class party alone. It must try to co-operate actively.

At the same time, however, the proletariat has also so expanded and won such strength that it has attained, if not predominance, at least equality with the middle-class party. A Socialist Party cannot yet rule alone, but it no longer requires to stand in unconciliatory opposition against every Government, against every other party. The less so as their task is already essentially fulfilled, namely to sever the proletariat from the middle-class parties and to gather them together into a class party. Where the Socialists have not attained this aim, they easily persevere in hostile antagonism towards the Radicals.

All these factors lead to the result that since the revolutions which followed the World War, the Socialists everywhere are forced to give up their basic aversion to occasional coalition with other parties, from which they had hitherto been held, and rightly held, by the former conditions and the political problems of the proletariat arising from them. The fourth and last phase of the struggle for Socialism will set in as soon as we have attained a sufficiently big majority to form alone a strong government and to impress our stamp on the legislation.

Russia, as the most backward of the great States of Europe both economically and politically, finds itself to-day in that phase in which the sectarianism of Socialism thrives. Yet that is only relatively true. Certainly the revolution which began in 1917 proceeded partly under conditions which recalled the France of 1789, but Russia does not live outside the world. She participates in its progress and its most progressive formations, and that alone makes it impossible for a mere repetition of the phases of the French Revolution of the eighteenth century to be discovered in the present-day Russian revolution. Most primitive and most high development are coupled in Russia in a peculiar combination. Reminiscences of the middle-class revolution of the eighteenth century are mixed with the movements of a great industrial proletariat.

Conditions have thus brought it about that the Russian Socialists are separated into different groups, after the primitive Socialist fashion, and almost every group divided again in itself when it took part in the Revolution of March 1917. But on the other hand,

the Russian Socialists were the first in the revolutions after the World War who entered into coalitions, not from theoretical considerations, moreover not from "treason"—the employment of this word to designate differences of opinion distinguishes the sectarians—but under the pressure of circumstances.

Although the circumstances certainly enforced the formation of coalition governments, unfortunately they did not produce the conditions necessary for their success. In the chaos which arose out of the dissolution of the Army, sectarianism persisted more easily with the lack of united disciplined mass parties than the coalition; Bolshevism was victorious.

Meanwhile outside Russia the conception and practice of the policy of coalition had persisted even more under the pressure of events in spite of the opposition of the revolutionary traditions which had been formed in the century of Socialist aspirations up to the end of the World War.

I am persuaded that if there should be a collapse of Bolshevism in Russia, no Democratic or Socialist party will be strong enough there to form a government alone. If Democracy is to be victorious, all its various elements must co-operate in unison; at any rate, at least the different Socialist parties and sections.

Whether the psychological conditions are suitable for a democratic block of the Russian refugees, an outsider cannot judge. One may, indeed, wish that it would come about, but it would be wrong, even harmful, to wish it realised too soon, before the time is ripe. At all events, every effort towards the creation

of relationships between the different parties in the meantime will be of advantage.

(c) DEMOCRATIC AIMS IN RUSSIA

A co-operation of the different Democratic and Socialist parties of Russia will be the more possible, the more their aims, at least their most essential aims, agree. One would think that it would not be difficult to arrive at an understanding.

It is naturally a matter of course that they are all striving for the same form of State—a democratic, Parliamentary Republic. Even the champions of the democratisation of the Soviets would not put this forward as a means of maintaining the Soviet Constitution, of investing the wage worker with privileges, and of hindering the establishment of full democracy, but as a first step towards such a democracy, because they are of the opinion that a part is more easily attained than the whole, and we do not stand for “all or nothing”.

It should also be possible to attain agreement that Russia will prosper better as a Federal State and not under a bureaucratic centralisation.

There will scarcely be any differences regarding the Constitution of the State and also of State policy. The middle-class democracy in Russia has less interest in capitalism than Western Europe, because there was never a strong national capitalist class there. Such a class has now almost disappeared and even under economic freedom it will not grow again very quickly.

Those Democrats of Russia who are not Socialists reject Socialism, not on account of capitalist interest

but because they have no faith in Socialist production, but they do not feel any hostility against the working class or a necessity to keep it down. They will also allow the workers to organise socially and politically as much as the Socialists.

Should there be a labour legislation in Soviet Russia surpassing what has been attained in Western Europe, the rising democracy need not diminish it for the workers. Certainly I must state that such organisation is not known to me, at any rate not a general organisation, but one which only exists for a few protégés.

Generally speaking, the labour legislation of the capitalist countries is superior to that of Soviet Russia. It will there be one of the most important tasks of the victorious democracy to bring to the workers all that their brothers in some countries of the West already have: far-reaching protection of workers, sound dwellings, independence of the Works Councils towards the Board of Management, complete freedom of the trade unions, insurance corresponding with the level of wages in the case of unemployment, sickness, infirmity and old age.

Democracy has much to bring to the workers of Russia, which will richly repay them for the privations of the pitiable and ineffectual privileges which the Soviet Constitution accorded them.

And now the peasants. If they are to rise up against the Dictatorship, it will be in order to protect their ownership of the land, and especially to win security for their persons and their possessions, which are hourly threatened—a fact which bars every form of peaceful work.

The carrying out of the democratic programme ensures full personal security against arbitrary official action and security of every kind for legally recognised property.

The Bolsheviks did indeed, when they came into power, give over all the land of the State for distribution among the peasants, but declared the whole of the land as belonging to the State. The question has arisen whether it is necessary that these declarations should be rescinded by the victorious democracy.

The answer is that it is not by any means necessary to get heated over this. Every Socialist must demand, in the interests of the community, that the most important means of production shall be withdrawn from private management and placed at the disposal of the community. The most important means of production is the soil. We must, on principle, strive for its nationalisation or socialisation.

But we must clearly understand that as regards peasant agriculture, this nationalisation will never be more than an empty formula, as was also the case in Soviet Russia. Whether this formula will be maintained or not is a very unimportant question.

The peasant owns the soil in virtue of his work. He not only obtains the harvests, but also improves the land if the necessary economic and technical conditions are provided. The fruits of this labour he often only harvests years afterwards. He feels defrauded of the fruit of his toil if his holding is taken away from him without adequate compensation.

Every expropriation, even against compensation, rouses his most energetic resistance. Democracy will

not in the least desire to take away from so great a section of the population the right of disposing of their land.

The matter is different with the great landlord. He forms only a very small stratum of the population, wherever he exists, and so long as he is merely a landlord, not also an active farmer, no toil attaches him to the land. His dispossession will be an easy and insignificant matter for democracy.

But even in co-operative large-scale agriculture, the individual labourer is not so closely attached through his work to a certain piece of soil. The *Sovhosi* and *Kolhosi* are therefore fit for communal ownership. The question of the communal ownership of land is an important one for him, but not, however, for the peasantry.

But how shall a democratic régime behave towards the nationalised industrial production which it will find in the Soviet State? Does the Democratic programme simply demand that it should be handed over to capitalists because Russia is not yet ripe for Socialist production?

This would be as stupid a procedure as the opposite, the swift, stereotyped nationalisation which has been carried out by the Bolsheviki.

Continuity, the undisturbed progress of production, is indispensable for every enterprise, of whatever nature. Every great, lasting disturbance means a crisis and terrible misery.

If the Soviet State collapses, it will be the most urgent task of its successors to provide for the undisturbed continuity of production, the more so the

more pitiable the economic conditions which they find. One can as little transform nationalised production into capitalist production at one blow without incurring danger, as vice versa. State enterprise not only must but shall, be allowed to continue operating.

We must demand that the new N.E.P., like the old one of Lenin, but in a greater degree, must work in a way which will recognise the economic freedom gained, and permit free enterprises of capitalist, co-operative, or communal nature to flourish side by side with State undertakings. Should the former work with more success, more cheaply, or deliver better products, pay better wages, etc., then the State undertakings should be given up, but not before it is proved. Only where it is of advantage for both consumers and workers will the change to another method, in some case even to capitalist production, occur.

Firstly, after private enterprise is allowed, commercial dealings will be brought into operation again. Most of the branches of commerce sustain with difficulty a bureaucratic nationalisation. Socialist production requires less the *nationalisation* of commerce than its *substitution* by organisation of the circulation of goods between the associations of producers and consumers.

The trading monopoly belongs to the State organisations of Soviet Russia, which operate most tyrannically and must cease as soon as possible, to make way for free trading.

On the other hand, there are natural monopolies, and there are no democratic considerations to urge a change from State monopoly to private or capitalistic monopoly. The victorious democracy will have every

reason to retain the State character of the natural monopolies, such, for instance, as the railways, the forests, the mines, and other mineral resources like petroleum.

We must wait and see how the conditions for enterprises of other kinds will develop.

After the overthrow of Bolshevism capital will probably stir itself only very timidly, partly on account of its weakness, partly from lack of confidence. On the other hand, the newly won freedom of activity in State trading must have a favourable effect on the freedom of the trade unions and works councils of the workers, freeing them from espionage and threats by the Communists and the endless complaints of the bureaucracy by the leaders of commerce. More courage, more knowledge, more self-confidence will be gained by the men who work in State producing organisations; their pleasure in work and their understanding of it will increase. Under these circumstances it is quite possible that even beyond the sphere of the natural monopoly there will be a good many branches of production in which nationalised production, after complete transformation to an economic democracy, will continue.

Whether and how far this will be realised cannot of course be foretold. But in any case, it would be wrong to believe, as in the expectation of a resurrection of the Korniloffs, that the further development of industry after the overthrow of Bolshevism will simply recommence from where it left off a dozen years ago.

One may evaluate the actions of the Bolsheviks during the period as one will. They have created a new foundation, however, which must not be ignored

and on which democracy must build as soon as it has succeeded in replacing the Communist autocracy.

First of all, Communist large-scale agriculture (the *Kolhosi* and *Sovhosi*) will collapse, in so far as it is held together solely by outside force and not by the needs of the workers and material necessities. Yet even this process of the return to peasant agriculture will be all the more economically fruitful, the better it is prepared beforehand. If the peasants were again, as in 1918, violently worked up against the large estates (this time the *Kolhosi* and *Sovhosi*) in order to ruin and destroy them, it would only lead to the destruction of valuable goods which production so urgently needs.

It is not impossible that some undertakings of large-scale agriculture will remain, either because they are technically particularly well equipped, or because they have at their disposal the most skilled workers and an excellent management. The simultaneous advent of the greater freedom of the population will also cause the labourers and directors of such undertakings to produce better results.

It is therefore not impossible that some *Kolhosi* will remain in existence, even perhaps continue to be considered as model farms. It is not necessarily the most industrially advanced countries which are most likely to fulfil the conditions for Socialist large-scale agriculture. The necessary material requirements may exist in backward countries rather than in countries of higher industrial development. The essential is the psychological prerequisites, viz. a developed sense of solidarity and high intelligence.

Nothing certain can be said about the prospects of

such enterprises, which at first could only be scattered experiments. One can treat them sceptically or enthusiastically. The former experiences and the whole conditions of Russia speak more for the sceptical outlook. Yet differences on this point need not divide us too much. Every Menshevik will be pleased if the *Kolhosi* and *Sovhosi* thrive and no Social-Revolutionary will approve of their forceful installation according to Bolshevik methods. Both parties will agree that the agricultural population is to be allowed complete liberty in the choice of the kind of enterprise which suits it best.

In this chapter we are not dealing with the conditions which will arise in Russia after the collapse of Bolshevism. Our task is to investigate whether it is not possible to formulate a programme which can be accepted by all parties of democracy and Socialism in Russia, which is absolutely realistic and based upon the actual conditions and yet does not demand the renunciation of one of their particular concepts.

Differences in regard to hopes for the future which do not react upon our practice in the present need not be a ground for dissension.

As much can already be said to-day: if the struggle of the so-called "formal" democracy achieves a success, then it must bring to the working classes of Russia in town and country not only political freedom of movement, but also increased productivity in their work and thereby increased wealth, so that the workers and peasants will, at least at first, have to deal with a weak capitalist class and not with big landlords—with intellectuals who will almost all sympathise with the

party of the working class. Nothing is more false than the view that the prestige of the proletariat in Russia, and with it that of the whole world, must sink if it loses its privileged position in that State.

The reverse is rather the case. Only evil and bitter opposition between peasants and workers can result from the Soviet Constitution, and only democracy will permit the State to prosper again and peasants and workers to have common interests; as regards political activity under it for the common welfare, the workers, together with the intellectuals, will assume the leadership. That democracy will take over control in virtue of intellectual superiority and not by means of political police and armed "storm troops" must considerably raise the prestige of the Russian proletariat, which has sunk so low under the Bolshevik leadership. The carrying out of the above programme of democracy must bring about the most powerful improvements not only for Russia, but for the whole of Europe.

Although Russia has become impoverished she is not quite devoid of means. As soon as the possibility of arbitrary confiscation ceases, the hidden hoards will come to light. The wealthy refugees who return home will bring further means with them, and at last the credit of the State will increase as soon as parliamentary legislation replaces the present autocratic power. This, together with the increasing productivity of the workers in town and country resulting from the new conditions, will not only place the inhabitants of Russia in a position to satisfy their needs for merchandise better than formerly, but also remedy the lack of means of production, which in turn will increase the

producing power and the credit of industry and agriculture and lead to a continuous increase of the Russian purchasing power in the world market. Then a process will be initiated which can at last lead to the overcoming of the terrible crisis which at the moment weighs on all industrial States.

The crisis was partly brought about by the fact that the gigantic agrarian territories of the East—India, China, Russia—through unrest, insurrections, boycott, etc., since the World War have offered only very limited markets for the industry of the West. This the statesmen of Europe knew. Many of them have tried to be on good terms with the Bolsheviks, so that the industry of their country could be admitted to the Russian market. They hoped for rich contracts, but unfortunately this market must remain insignificant as long as Bolshevism rules.

The victory of democracy in Russia would not only open this market to the industry of the world, it would also swiftly extend it to tremendous dimensions.

This must react not only upon industry but upon the working class of Europe (and America), reinforce their self-consciousness, their political strength, lessen the number of individuals reduced to beggary by war and unemployment who allow themselves to be bought by capitalists or squander their energy in senseless petty war against the law. The proletarian democracy must grow in strength in the influential States of the world, overcome the phase of paralysis due to the equilibrium of the classes and determinedly open the way to that higher form of life which we call Socialism.

And yet further, should democracy come into

power in Russia, it will find a completely impoverished land.

Democracy certainly offers her the opportunity for swift economic progress, but only if she shuns all wastefulness and concentrates all her means upon the development of productivity. Unlike capitalists, we naturally do not consider expenditure devoted to the maintenance and improvement of labour-power as being extravagance. Provision for schools, sick and unemployed workers, is not luxury expenditure to our way of thinking.

On the other hand, we consider all expenditure on means of destruction, such as, for instance, military expenditure, as waste. No country needs disarmament more than Russia. But disarmament cannot be accomplished, and its beneficial results cannot be enjoyed in peace, if Russia alone disarms while surrounded by armed neighbours, such as Poland and Turkey, who are ruled by warlike military parties.

Naturally, membership of the League of Nations is comprised in the democratic programme for Russia, but before everything else comes the policy of general disarmament. In this respect she will be on the side of Germany and a number of the smaller States. England will also be favourably inclined if Labour remains at the helm, and so will France if Labour gains power.

The isolation of Fascist Italy will then have to be accomplished in order to force disarmament upon it as well. This would be the beginning of the suppression of Fascism by democracy. Bolshevism is the stumbling-block preventing this much-to-be-desired development. Once it can be overcome and replaced by democracy,

the way will be clear, not only for the progress of Russia but for that of the whole of Europe.

(d) THE SELF-DETERMINATION OF NATIONS

It must be admitted that as soon as a programme such as the one which has just been sketched has been generally acknowledged, any theoretical and tactical differences which might still exist could be pushed sufficiently far into the background to allow an understanding to be effected, at least between the Socialist parties, which would not make co-operation impossible.

And, yet, such an understanding has still to contend with one obstacle: national opposition.

Russia belongs to those States the population of which is made up of different nations, each of which inhabits a particular district. If there is any striving towards democracy in a State of this nature, the demand for the independence of the different nations is added to the other claims for democracy which are being put forward. Each race wishes to be governed, taught, and judged in the language which it understands.

The immediate and simplest form which such striving assumes is that of the claim for absolute independence for each nationality, and the division of the parent State into national States.

This means that, when the democrats of the different nations, instead of opposing the undemocratic régime together, simply adopt hostile attitudes to one another, or mistrust each other too much to come together, the power of democracy is very much reduced in the very place where it should be fighting for recognition.

This has certainly never assumed such a bad form in Russia as in Austria. Here, since the days of Metternich, the Governments have obtained the support of single nationalities by promising them advantages to the detriment of other nationalities.

The pressure of the autocracy was too strong for this to have happened in Russia. There, every nation which demanded independence was at once hostilely opposed by Czarism. And yet, even there, there was no lack of nationalist differences within the democracy among the people.

The Socialists and democrats in Russia are divided, not only into different schools, but almost every section is subdivided into different nationalist parties. If it is desired to form a *bloc*, or even an *entente* between the democrats, or, at least, between the democratic Socialists, not only have the different sections to be taken into account, but the Socialists and democrats of the different nationalities must also be brought together into the picture.

It is now clear that scarcely one of the nationalities in Soviet Russia can win or maintain its freedom for itself alone, and if it tried it would cause a terrible struggle in which the whole nation would perish. A revolt against the Soviet State may very well break out in one of the nationalities, but it will be without any hope of success unless the others support it. Each nationality can only gain its liberty in conjunction with the others in the realm, and this will be effected all the more easily, the more the Socialists and democrats of each nationality maintain permanent and friendly relations with those of the other races, even

previous to the struggle for liberty. This presupposes an agreement, in principle, on their national programmes.

There is no doubt that every nation has a right to self-determination; this will hardly be denied by a democrat, not to speak of a Socialist. But what form must self-determination assume? That is the great question.

In answering this, our comrades in Russia, or those amongst the refugees, will do well to take counsel by the experience of the West, that is, learn from the West how not to do it in their case.

The collapse of Austria and of Czarist Russia owing to the World War has resulted in a whole series of States, amongst them some very small ones, springing up on various parts of their territories.

The large number of States which already existed in Europe was thereby considerably increased. This coincided, however, with a stage of the capitalist system of production which, on the one hand, demands large economic fields of activity, while, on the other hand, the capitalists, together with their supporters amongst the landowners, etc., endeavour to substitute monopolies for free competition, and close the home markets, as far as possible, in order to exercise more widely their monopolies in them. This policy brings momentary large profits to individual capitalists and large landowners, but the detrimental effect upon economic life in general is intensified as the size of the State in which it is pursued decreases. This monopolistic policy was favoured by the enormous concentration of capital, and by the simultaneous increase in the number of States in

Europe brought about by the Great War. This is one of the principal reasons why Europe cannot recover economically from the havoc caused by the War, although it has overcome it technically, and why crises cannot be avoided.

The whole world recognises this and insists that this state of affairs must be brought to an end by doing away with the division of Europe into small States, and by instituting some kind of European Federation. But as long as capitalists and their adherents are in power their immediate and special interests prevail and prevent the adoption of a saner view. The same holds true of disarmament. Only the Socialists are above this narrow self-interest and fight for the general good. A European Federation can only be realised when the Socialists have attained power in the States which matter. The same applies to disarmament, although it is no specific Socialist idea.

We can see the difficulty of overcoming any division into different States once it has been effected, however necessary re-union may be.

The different Nationalist Parties amongst the Socialists and democrats in Soviet Russia would do well, therefore, to think the matter over when they have gained freedom, before they use their freedom to bring about a splitting up into separate States.

It was the autocracy, first of the Czars and then of the Bolsheviki, which drove them from Russia. Take, for example, the Georgians. They still sent their delegates to the National Assembly after the elections of 1917. They only separated from the Russian State after the suppression of the Constituent Assembly.

Even then they thought it advantageous to be members of a larger entity. They therefore joined the Azerbaijanians and Armenians to form the Transcaucasian Republic. Georgia only became an independent State after this had split up.

The self-determination and the sovereignty of a nation are not synonymous terms.

In a monarchy, the ruler is always struggling for sovereignty and for supreme and absolute power. The struggle is carried on against foreign countries as well as against the monarch's own subjects. Under a monarchy the only way to weld several States into one entity is by conquest.

Republics only can join together voluntarily to attain greater security, or to build up a larger economic organism. It was from this type of union that the Swiss Confederation and the United States of America proceeded.

After freedom has been gained nothing is more necessary, indeed, one may say indispensable, for the economic recovery of Russia than the avoidance of the disruption which would be caused by forming separate States. These would be much worse off than the remaining States of Europe, including the Austrian Succession States and the Western part of what was formerly Russia, because they would be poorer. They need absolute freedom and the absolute right of self-determination, but they also need to unite voluntarily with one another.

To-day, at a time of the widest travel facilities and of the most far-reaching dependence of one nation upon another for its prosperity, sovereignty is not a

protection, but a danger for nations. Already the League of Nations demands a certain limitation of sovereignty on the part of every State, but it does not demand enough. Further limitations are necessary for neighbours who are in close contact with one another.

Every alliance and every commercial treaty implies fundamentally a certain limitation of sovereignty.

The Russian peoples, who are already united, could achieve very easily what the rest of Europe is striving with so much difficulty to obtain. If these Eastern peoples gain their freedom they will be in a position to set an example to Western Europe, by founding a Russian Federation or the United States of Russia, Russia being the term applied to the territory and not to a ruling people. There can naturally be no ruling nation in a Federation based upon voluntary union. There is no ruling nationality in either the United States or in Switzerland. Modern democracy demands not sovereignty, but equal rights for nations. Breitscheid recently formulated this well for a European Federation.

There can naturally be differences of opinion regarding what tasks are common, and what particular or, shall we say, cantonal. In the Swiss Confederation and in the United States, there has been argument about these points from the start, and it still goes on to-day, but it does not prejudice the bonds of union.

Much would already have been accomplished if the free States in the territory of present-day Russia were to form a Customs Union and, in this way, obviate the folly of the high protective duties existing in the smaller European States. There would naturally have to be a Customs Parliament for the Customs Union.

A Currency Union would also be important, on the lines of the Latin Union which was formed in 1865 between fully sovereign States—France, Belgium, Italy, and Switzerland—at the time when Free Trade was at its zenith.

Uniformity of policy with regard to commerce and intercourse is bound up with the uniformity of the Customs Frontiers; and so is foreign policy, which, in its turn, leads to a certain uniformity as far as armies are concerned. Any single State in the Union must know that the others will protect it in case of attack, while quarrels between the members of the Union must be out of the question.

All these arrangements do not prejudice the self-determination of the nation in all questions of education, collection of taxes, internal administration, jurisdiction, etc. Naturally, agreement in many of these provinces is an advantage, as, for example, a common Civil Code.

With full democracy, care will always be taken that the common tasks of the Union are never carried to a point where its advantages cease to be an attraction and where its disadvantages preponderate. The Union should only be founded and held together on the basis of the advantages of mutual help, and not of forcible subjection.

In building up this Union of States, then, none of the peoples in the territory of present-day Russia must be forced to join it. When it is once established and functions well on democratic lines, those States which still cherish doubts will easily be brought in. The advantages of union are great for everyone, while the

dangers of isolation are no less great. It may even be expected that States which have existed as sovereign States for a decade will join the Union; the Baltic States, for example. How much better would the outlook be for, say Riga, if Latvia were not separated from Russia by a Customs barrier!

One of the most important tasks to be undertaken by all who have taken the cause of democracy in Russia to heart is the arranging of some kind of internal co-operation without there being any mistrust. An important part can be played by the Socialist Labour International as regards co-operation between the Socialist Parties of the different nations in Russia.

As we have already said, conditions there are so unfathomable that we cannot say with certainty how the latest Bolshevik crisis will end. One thing is certain, however. The more understanding and energy which is put into co-operation between the democratic parties and the socialists in Russia and amongst the *émigrés*, and the sooner they decide upon some programme of concerted action, the better will become the prospects for democracy and Socialism, not only in Russia, but in the whole world.

Although Russia is the most backward of the large European Powers, the conditions there have, in the past, often assumed a form which gave a new impetus to the arrested development of Europe and helped it forward.

The revolution in 1905 gave a great impetus to the struggles for universal suffrage in Western Europe, and in many States (Austria, for example) gave them the power which made them victorious. The revolution of

1917 had many repercussions; it greatly encouraged and aroused the proletariat in Western Europe and would have inspired them to achieve great results but for the fact that the Bolsheviks held this occasion to be the most suitable for splitting the proletariat everywhere, and encouraged quarrels amongst the proletarians where they were getting command of the helm of the State.

Even now, great things may be expected for Europe if there is a democratic revival in Russia which enables the crisis to be overcome and increases the power of the Socialist parties. Disarmament and a European Federation are already being prepared in Europe, but they encounter great opposition from those in power both in Russia and elsewhere. A democratic revolution there would set the whole of Europe in motion in a forward and upward direction.

But will there be a democratic revolution in Russia? I can only regard it as one among many possibilities. The one thing which is certain is that the distress in Russia is growing terribly, and is bound to grow. It is yet too early to see whether this state of affairs will lead to the stagnation of the people, or whether active and far-reaching movements will set in which may fundamentally change the face of Soviet Russia. There are many signs, however, which point to the latter.

The gravity of the hour is clearly shown by the impressive tone of the manifesto of the L.S.I. (Labour-Socialist International) of May 1930. It is addressed to the workers of Russia, but it is not meant for them alone. The question of Russia is, more than ever, a question for the Socialists all over the world, not only

in the sense of the political bonds between the Russian proletariat and that of all countries, but also in the sense that the way things turn in Russia to-day is to an extraordinarily large extent connected with the development of the rest of the world, the weal and woe of the latter depending upon it. It is our bounden duty, therefore, to recognise the situation in Russia and to think over the tasks which will be ours as a result.

Many of us would perhaps prefer not to speak of Russia, but of the Russian Revolution, but as this word has been applied to such multifarious and contradictory events since the Bolshevik *coup d'état*, it is so vague, and has so many different meanings, or, if one prefers the term, it is so ambiguous, that whenever the Russian Revolution which is to be awakened or revived is mentioned, it is as well to find out exactly which one is meant.

The Russian Revolution which we all must have at heart can only be the Democratic Revolution.

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