

V. I. LENIN
THE REVOLUTION OF 1917
VOLUME XX



COLLECTED WORKS
OF
V. I. LENIN

**Completely revised, edited and annotated.
The only edition authorized by the
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LENIN

VOLUME XX

THE REVOLUTION OF 1917

FROM THE MARCH REVOLUTION
TO THE JULY DAYS

BOOK I



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PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The present volume covers the period of the first four months of the Revolution of 1917—from the middle of March to the middle of July; from the time when Lenin, living in Zürich as an exile, received the first authentic news of the outbreak of the revolution to the critical July Days when he was forced to go into hiding.

The July crisis represents the dividing line between the two periods of the Revolution of 1917—the overthrow of tsarism in March and the defeat of the bourgeoisie in November—not only in point of *time* but also in point of *content*. Constituting a decisive turn in the development of the proletarian revolution in Russia, it therefore offers a natural chronological limit for Volume XX of the *Collected Works*, which, together with Volume XXI, comprises all of Lenin's utterances on the Revolution of 1917.

The new Russian edition published by the V. I. Lenin Institute, which has served as a basis for the present definitive English translation, has been considerably enlarged as compared with the previous editions. All of the writings relating to this period and established as belonging to the pen of Lenin, as, for example, more than 30 unsigned articles from the *Pravda*, as well as all the speeches of that time of which records have been preserved, have been included in this volume. A few letters of special political importance have also been added. These are the two letters to A. M. Kollontai of March 16 and 17, which represent Lenin's first reaction to the news of the Russian Revolution, and the letter to Hanecki of March 30 which shows Lenin's political line and his anxiousness to extricate himself from provincial Switzerland in order to proceed without delay to revolutionary Russia.

Lenin's speeches reproduced in this volume presented a special problem. The difficulty of reporting speeches accurately, even with the best technical facilities, is well known. Many of the speeches of this period, however, were not reported stenographically but only recorded in minutes. But even when stenographic reports had been made, Lenin was able to correct them personally only in very rare instances. Lenin himself repeatedly pointed to this

defect and refused to be responsible for the textual formulation of the reports of his speeches. The careful reader of these speeches, particularly in this volume, will meet these defects himself. Many of the speeches do not reproduce Lenin's words but his train of thought. And in parts even this is broken off, as is particularly the case, for example, in the "Speech Delivered at a Caucus of the Bolshevik Members of the All-Russian Conference of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies" (see pp. 95-103, Book I of this volume). Such gaps are indicated by several dots. In a few cases what are probably the missing words have been supplied in brackets. No changes have been made in the stenographic reports or minute records.

The large quantity of material and the desire to avoid making it too bulky led to the division of the English translation of this volume and its publication in two books. The first of these extends to the beginning of June; the second ends with the July Days.

For the convenience of the reader, a number of appendices have been added, consisting of explanatory notes, biographical notes of persons referred to in the text, bibliography, documents and other materials of historic importance (such as documents dealing with Lenin's passage through Germany, two articles by L. Kamenev, proclamations, resolutions and official party statements with which Lenin deals in his articles or speeches), a chronology of events and a calendar of Lenin's life at that time. The documents and chronologies should give the reader the historical background and contribute to a better understanding of the events of the period.

The appendices as a whole will be found at the end of Book II, with the exception of the explanatory notes which have been divided between the two books. Since the purpose of these notes is to facilitate the understanding of the text, that part which refers directly to material in Book I has been placed at the end of that book. The explanatory notes in Book II continue the numbering of the notes in the first book. These explanatory notes are based upon those in the Russian edition published under the supervision of the V. I. Lenin Institute. In some cases, however, amplifications or additional notes have been made by the editor where these seemed desirable for readers of the English translation.

Lenin's own notes have been reproduced as footnotes to the text. Wherever footnotes by the editor have been added, they have been designated as such. Notes in the text proper by the editor have been placed in brackets and designated as his.

All of the material has been chronologically arranged, with the exception of the "Materials Relating to the Revision of the Party Programme" (see pp. 323-343, Book I of this volume). These have been placed after the material on the April (May) Conference, although the first part was written before this conference and served as material for it.

All dates following the Russian old style calendar, which is thirteen days behind the calendar of Western Europe, and used in the Russian edition, have been changed to new style in accord with our own practice.

The bulk of the translation of this volume has been made by Joshua Kunitz, the remainder having been done into English by Moissaye J. Olgin who also revised the translation as a whole.

Facsimile illustrations were supplied by the V. I. Lenin Institute whose gracious co-operation at all stages of the work has made possible the publication of this volume in English.