



# LENIN

**SPEECH TO THE PETROGRAD SOVIET BY  
GREGORY ZINOVIEV  
CELEBRATING LENIN'S RECOVERY FROM  
WOUNDS RECEIVED IN THE ATTEMPT  
MADE ON HIS LIFE ON AUGUST 30, 1918**



J MILLER

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V. I. LENIN

a speech by

G. ZINOVIEV



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A moment before the attempt on his life, Lenin leaving the Michaelson factory

# Lenin



**An early photograph of the family Ulyanov. Lenin is seated on the right. Standing, centre of back row is Alexander Ilyich Ulyanov, his elder brother**



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*The following document is a stenographic record of the remarkable speech delivered by Gregory Zinoviev, September 6, 1918, at a session of the Petrograd Soviet.*

*The young Soviet Republic faced some of its greatest dangers in this period. In July and August 1918, the famine became more acute. The Czechoslovak troops in Siberia aided by the Allies launched military action against the Soviet government. Other counter-revolutionary rebellions broke out in various parts of the country. Trotsky departed for the Kazan front. At this time the left Social Revolutionists began a policy of terrorism against the Soviet government. In July, they organized a conspiracy and killed Count Mirbach, the German Ambassador, in order to force the Soviet Union into war with Germany. On August 30, Lenin while leaving a workers' meeting at the Michaelson factory, was severely wounded from a shot fired by the terrorist Fanny Kaplan, a member of the Social Revolutionists. Lenin's life was in danger but thanks to his powerful constitution he recovered from his wounds. On September 17 he resumed active work.*

COMRADES! Last week may be called the Lenin week. I think I shall not in any way exaggerate if I say that every honest worker in Petrograd, in the whole of Europe, indeed, in the whole world, so far as he may have heard the news of the attempt on Comrade Lenin, had in the course of these anxious days no other thought than the one question, will the wounded leader of the International Commune recover? And I, comrades, am happy to share with you the good news: today we may—at last—count the recovery of Comrade Lenin as entirely assured. (Thunderous applause).

Comrades, I have in my hands a telegram, written already by Comrade Lenin himself. (Thunderous applause). This telegram was handed in today at 1.10 p.m., from the Kremlin. This is, apparently, the first telegram of Comrade Lenin since he began to recover. Comrade Lenin gives us certain official instructions and finishes the telegram with the following words: 'Affairs at the front are going well; I have no doubt that they will go still better.' (Applause). Thus, comrades, one thing is clear, that Comrade Lenin will live (applause, ovation) to the terror of the enemies of Communism and to the joy of the proletarian Communists.

Comrades! It goes without saying, that in this hall there is not one single man who does not know, in general or in particular, who Lenin is. Every worker has heard of Lenin, knows that this is a titanic figure in the history of the world labour movement. Everyone is so much accustomed to the word 'Lenin', that he does not stop to think what, after all, he has done for the international and Russian labour movement. Every proletarian knows that Lenin is the leader, Lenin is the apostle of world Communism. (Applause). But I think, comrades that we cannot pay a greater honour to our teacher and leader today than if I, who am acquainted with the biography of Comrade Lenin somewhat intimately—I have had the good fortune to work side by side with Comrade Lenin in the closest collaboration for more than ten years—if I take advantage of the present occasion in order to share, though it be only in brief, with younger friends and older comrades, who have never had the opportunity of observing so closely the work of



Comrade Lenin, my authentic knowledge of the life of Comrade Lenin. (Numerous voices: please do!).

\* \* \*

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin-Ulianov is now 48 years old. He was born in 1870, on the 10th of April, at Simbirsk. And out of the 48 years of his life, Comrade Lenin has devoted nearly 30 years' work to the cause of proletarian emancipation.

The father of Comrade Lenin, by birth a peasant, was director of the elementary schools in the Volga provinces, and enjoyed great popularity among the teachers of the town and village schools in his district.

The mother of Comrade Lenin I knew personally. She died in the year 1913. Czar Alexander III had executed her eldest son, Alexander Ulianov. From that time she concentrated her maternal tenderness on Vladimir Ilyich. And Comrade Lenin, in his turn, tenderly loved his broken-hearted little mother.

Living in emigration, hunted by the Czar's government, Comrade Lenin would tear himself away from the most urgent work in order to make a special trip to Sweden to visit his mother and to brighten for her the last days of her life.

## Lenin's Legal Career

After graduating from the 'gymnasium', Lenin entered the faculty of Laws at Kazan University. The universities of the capitals were closed to him as the brother of an executed terrorist. A student, however, Vladimir Ilyich remained but a very short while. Within a month he was expelled from the University for taking part in the students' revolutionary movement. Only after the lapse of four years was it possible for him to take his final examinations.

The legal career, however, had no attractions for Comrade Lenin. Vladimir Ilyich always spoke in very humorous terms of his few days of 'practice' at the bar. Comrade Lenin's predilections lay in an entirely different direction. He yearned after revolutionary activities.

\* \* \*

Comrade Lenin stands, as it were, on the borderland between the old generation of Narodnik [Populist] revolutionists and the new school of Marxist revolutionists. Comrade Lenin himself took part in the student Narodnik circles, but already, even at that time, he stood with one foot in the camp of the Marxists.



Vladimir Ilyich, however, is bound by ties of blood with the early generation of revolutionary terrorists, those glorious fighters, whose names to this day shine like dazzling stars—because they laid low not the friends of the people, like the wretched cretins, the Right Socialist Revolutionists, but the tyrants and hangmen. Vladimir Ilyich is related by blood to this generation of fighters. He is connected with them through his brother Alexander Ilyich Ulianov, who was a prominent figure in the *Narodnaya Volya* (People's Will), and who was on that account hanged by the Czar's Government in the year 1887.

Comrade Lenin himself was never a member of that party. But he has always inculcated into us the most ardent respect for this cluster of brilliant revolutionary fighters, the first generation of Populist revolutionists. Lenin, since the time when he awakened to a conscious political life, has never shared the Populist theories. He first became prominent when he began to fight against revolutionary Populism. He was the very antithesis of Mikhailovsky. He gained his first laurels as a Socialist precisely through the struggle against Populism. But nobody had so great a respect, no one ever taught the workers to respect these first fighters against Czarism, as Vladimir Ilyich.

In the eyes of Comrade Lenin, such workers as Zhelyabov and Sophie Perovskaya stood transcendently high—people who raised the flag of revolt and went forward with bomb and revolver against the Czar at the end of the 'seventies and in the beginning of the 'eighties, when Russia was a prison-house of nations, when every friend of freedom drew breath in pain, when the workers of Russia were still only beginning to form themselves into a class. Vladimir Ilyich well understood how truly great and immeasurable were the services of the first heralds of the Russian revolution.

And Comrade Lenin did not renounce this heritage. He said: This heritage belongs to us, and to us only. Our task is to carry further that work which was begun by Zhelyabov. [The most prominent leader of *Narodnaya Volya*: executed for the assassination of Czar Alexander II in 1881.]

Zhelyabov, who established ties with the working class and who put the question of the Socialist revolution on the order of the day was, in fact, a Bolshevik, a Communist. In order to continue the work of Zhelyabov under new social conditions we must become revolutionary Marxists, our hearts must beat as one with the working class, the only revolutionary class of our time, that class which cannot emancipate itself without emancipating the whole world.

## First Great Working Class Leader

Vladimir Ilyich specially loved and was proud of the figure of the first great working-class leader, the carpenter Stepan Khalturin. Lenin did not know him personally, he knew him by hearsay and books, as we all do. You know the biography of this proletarian of genius, who not only blew up the Winter Palace, but achieved something greater—he was the first to unfurl the banner of political struggle against Czarism in the name of the working class. Comrade Lenin used to say: When we have hundreds of such proletarians as Khalturin, when they are no longer solitary figures, going with bomb or revolver against this or that individual Minister, when they take their place at the head of the many-millioned working class—then we shall be invincible; then will come an end to Czarism, and subsequently an end also to the rule of the bourgeoisie.

Comrade Lenin's affection for proletarians who in any way show capacity is especially striking. A fighter whom Lenin most valued and loved was the worker Ivan Vassilyevich Babushkin, with whom Comrade Lenin here, in Petrograd began his work in the 'nineties, together starting the first worker circles, together leading the first workers' strikes, together taking their part in the organisation of the *Iskra*. This comrade played a prominent part in the revolution of 1905, and it was only by accident that in 1907 Vladimir Ilyich learned from friends among the Siberian exiles that Babushkin had been shot by General Rennenkampf in Siberia.

I. V. Babushkin and Shelgunov, who is still living, and who is known to the Petrograd proletarians (he has now grown blind)—these renowned fighters, coming out of the working class, Comrade Lenin loved like brothers, placed before us as models, saw in them the real forerunners, the true leaders of the dawning workers' revolution.

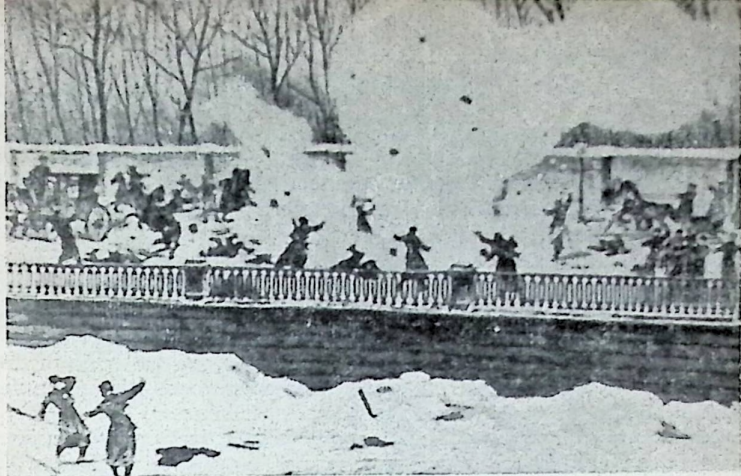
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The first period of activity of Comrade Lenin, as of many other revolutionists who came from the ranks of the intelligentsia, was passed in student circles. When Comrade Lenin was expelled from Kazan University he went to Petrograd. And he used to tell us how, having already been slightly infected with Marxist ideas in Samara, he walked about Petrograd searching for a Marxist. *Vivo voce!* But the 'breed' of Marxists was at that time extremely rare. There was no Marxist in Petrograd; one had to go looking for him lamp in hand in day time. The Populists monopolized the minds of the intellectuals, and the working class was just awakening to political life.





The assassination of Czar Alexander II, March 1881



A. I. Zhelyabov



A. I. Ulyanov



Lenin as a student



C. H. Kibalturin



S. L. Perovskaya



And now there comes this young Comrade Lenin, builds up, after a year or two, in Petrograd the first working-class circle and rallies around himself the first Marxist intellectuals. Very soon Lenin is already crossing swords in the literary arena with the old leader of the Populists, N. K. Mikhailovsky.

Lenin (under the pseudonym of Ilyin) comes forward with a series of brilliant economic articles which at once win for him a name. And immediately in the ranks of the Populist intelligentsia there could be observed a certain alarm. Somebody powerful and strong has disturbed the petty-bourgeois swamp. The movement of the water begins. On the horizon a new figure has appeared. Someone is stirring up the stagnant air, and there is a breath of newness, freshness.

In Petrograd, Comrade Lenin together with other Marxist activists and together with the first workers of whom I have spoken, founds the 'Union of the Struggle for the Emancipation of Labour'. He was entrusted by this organisation with the conduct of the first strikes, and wrote the first simple, unassuming, hectographed leaflets, in which were formulated the economic demands of the Petrograd workers. It was at this time that Lenin published his first illegal pamphlet 'On Fines'—a pamphlet today forgotten, but which for lucid and popular exposition is a classic example of the popularisation of Marxism.

*At that time this was precisely the nub of the whole situation: to agitate against the system of fines, to excite economic conflicts, TO RAISE EVERY ECONOMIC STRIKE TO THE LEVEL OF A POLITICAL EVENT.* And Vladimir Ilyich, with all his passionate nature, gave himself up to this work. He spends days and nights in the working-class quarters. He is hunted by the police. He has only a tiny circle of friends. Nearly all so-called revolutionary intellectuals of that time meet him with hostility. Not so many years had elapsed since the Populists burned the first Marxist writings of Plekhanov, on which Lenin himself was brought up.

## Lenin Opened a New Path

Comrade Lenin opened up here a new path. Throughout the whole activity of Comrade Lenin one can notice that he is always an innovator, that he goes *against the stream*, that he ploughs a new furrow in the political and social life. In the 'nineties, too, at Petrograd, it fell to his share to trace out a new path, to form, to rally the first detachments of workers, the first detachments of a genuine working-class intelligentsia, from which more than one leader of the present workers' revolution has come.

It happens very often at the present time that from somewhere out of far Siberia or the Urals there come to the Council of People's Commissars, to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, workers who are today presidents of local Soviets, the leaders of the local movements. They go up to Comrade Lenin and begin to call up old memories: 'Do you remember in the early 'nineties, at such and such a place, how we stirred up an agitation for the supply of hot water for tea with a certain illegal leaflet, or organised such and such a strike?' Comrade Lenin does not always remember them; too many people have crossed his path. But they all remember him. They know that he was their teacher, that he first let fall within them the spark of Communism. They know that he was their real friend and leader.

Towards the end of the 'nineties Comrade Lenin, after a long confinement in prison, was sent into Siberian exile. There he developed an immense scientific and literary activity. There he wrote several works, out of which I will dwell upon two only. The first work was a little pamphlet '*Problems of the Russian Social Democrats*'. This pamphlet is now hardly read. But it remains a masterpiece of Marxist treatment of the question as to the destinies of the Socialist movement in an economically backward country. At that time no one had finally settled the question: what should be the connection between the political struggle of the workers against Czarism and the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie for economic demands and Socialism?

At the present time, comrades, all this seems as simple as ABC. But in those days this question was far from being so clear. The celebrated 'Economists', the predecessors of our Mensheviks, contended that the political struggle must be left to the Liberal bourgeoisie, and the only concern of the working class must be the struggle for an extra kopek in the rouble. Comrade Lenin, following the late Plekhanov (here it is necessary to say that he took a great deal from Plekhanov) gave a magnificent analysis of the contending social forces in Russia. We must not defer, Lenin argued, the formation of the working-class party in Russia until we have won political freedom. No, we have not lagged behind Europe a hundred years in order to hang back with the organisation of the workers' party until our bourgeoisie has risen to power. No, now is the time, under the leaden lid and yoke of Czardom, to build up in spite of these desperately difficult conditions, an independent Socialist class party of the workers, fighting from the outset both against Czardom and against the bourgeoisie.

The manuscript of this pamphlet was transmitted abroad to the





**'It happens very often at the present time that out of somewhere out of far Siberia or the Urals, there come . . . workers . . . "Do you remember in the early nineties at such and such a place how we stirred up an agitation"?'**



'Emancipation of Labour Group'. In Switzerland there worked at this time a little circle consisting of Plekhanov, Axelrod, and Zassulich, the first founders of Social Democracy in Russia. They had lived abroad already 15 years. When this manuscript of Lenin's came to them it was the first tidings of the coming spring. And it was none other than Paul Axelrod, who was at that time a Socialist, and was able to discern the true leaders of the working class, who, on the receipt of this manuscript, went into raptures. He said then to his circle of friends that a prodigious force had appeared in the ranks of our Social Democracy, that there had arisen a new star of the first magnitude. Axelrod wrote a preface to Lenin's pamphlet, in which he could not find enough laudatory words with which to overwhelm Comrade Lenin. He said that for the first time since Plekhanov there had appeared a leader, a practical expert of the working-class movement, that Lenin was a force to which a great future was assured.

And Axelrod, in the present case—one must give him his due—was not mistaken.

## A Truly Scientific Work

Still in exile, Comrade Lenin wrote a truly scientific work, *'The Development of Capitalism in Russia'*—a book which is bound to become, and in a great measure has become, a handbook for every worker. In this book Comrade Lenin settled accounts with the Populists, who then reigned supreme in the minds of the whole generation of our intelligentsia. He brilliantly proved in this work that Plekhanov was right in asserting that Russia also would not escape the stage of capitalism. By means of statistics he showed that our country has since the 'nineties entered upon the capitalist stage. He gave a profound and subtle analysis of the development of agriculture in Russia and the invasion of it by capitalism. With the aid of a mighty array of facts, Comrade Lenin analysed the whole economic structure of the country, both urban and rural; and out of this dispassionate, objective analysis he brought out the revolutionary conclusions regarding the problems and tasks of the working class.

This book of Lenin's was acknowledged by bourgeois professors as a great scientific achievement. In 1902, when I was still a student in Paris, in the School of Social Sciences, founded by Professor Kovalevsky and others, I heard from Professor Maxim Kovalevsky the

greatest eulogy of Vladimir Ilyich from his point of view. He said: 'What a fine professor might have been made out of Lenin!' This in the mouth of Professor Kovalevsky was the very highest praise. Yes! out of Comrade Lenin there might have been made a fine professor, but out of him came the leader of the workers' Commune, and this, I think is something greater than the most gifted professors. (Applause.)

During the same period of exile, and on the eve of his departure into exile, Comrade Lenin launched a struggle on the other front as well. Fighting with one hand against the Populists in the person of Mikhailovsky and others, he at the same time began a theoretical struggle against the so-called 'legal' Marxism. At its head stood P. Struve, Tugan-Baranovsky and others who at present are leaders of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie. This movement had a profound social foundation. The Liberals of the day were seeking a stratum of society on which they could lean in their struggle against Czarism for bourgeois freedom. And they saw that outside the working class there was none at all. They saw that the Populists, with their old-fashioned 'theory', asserting that we should never have capitalism, were clearly in the wrong. And they began to set their cap at Marxism, emasculating it of its revolutionary spirit and turning it into a 'legal', tame 'Marxism'.

In the struggle against the Populists the legal Marxists were for a time our allies. They also, like ourselves, fought against Mikhailovsky. And at one time we were united with them in a definite bloc. But the sharp ear of Comrade Lenin had already discovered false notes in the very first writings of P. Struve and Co. Lenin immediately said that this was an ally only for an hour, that they would in the end betray us.

## The Fight Against Struve

Noteworthy is the criticism by which Comrade Lenin exposed the well-known book of P. Struve, *'Critical Remarks'*. Struve had for a long time been regarded as a Social Democrat. He published a very sensational book, *'Critical Remarks'*, directed against Mikhailovsky. This book was criticised by both Plekhanov and Lenin. Plekhanov criticised it with the brilliance, peculiar to him, of a literary academician; Lenin criticised it differently. I feel and know, said Lenin, that in a year or two Struve will leave the working class and betray us to the bourgeoisie. Struve's book ended with the words: 'Let us acknowledge our want of culture and place ourselves as apprentices under capitalism.' These words need



thinking over, said Comrade Lenin. See if this Struve does not end in becoming an apprentice, not of capitalism, but of capitalists. And though Struve was the comrade of Lenin, and rendered priceless services both to him and to the then existing Social Democracy, yet Vladimir Ilyich, with his characteristic firmness and consistency, no sooner heard a false note in Struve's words than he sounded the alarm. He began to fight against Struve, and under the pseudonym of Tulin came out with an article in a magazine which was burnt by the censor, in which he elucidated Mr. Struve in detail, taking to pieces every one of his phrases and every one of his propositions, and showing that Mr. Peter Struve perhaps did not even realise it himself, and regarded himself as a genuine partisan of the labour movement, but that in his innovations one could detect the very old tunes of the bourgeoisie. You are a bourgeois ideologist, Lenin argued, you will inevitably go over to the camp of the bourgeoisie and break with the working class. You yourself bear the guilt of this, because you look upon the working class as a means and not as an end. It is only important to you as a force against the Czar, and you wish to make use of it, without giving it anything in return. Allow us not to allow you to do this. We have up till now fought against the Czar and the bourgeoisie, but we proclaim yet another front: we will fight against 'legal' Marxism. We stand for genuine revolutionary Marxism, and reject your emasculated 'legal' Marxism.

Thus said Comrade Lenin.

\* \* \*

Thus was completed the work of Comrade Lenin before his exile to Siberia and during that exile. In the beginning of the 'nineties Comrade Lenin for the first time left the country.

Lenin was twice in emigration. He lived abroad several years. His second period of emigration I and other comrades shared with him. And when we were heavy-hearted and homesick, especially in the last period, during the war, when we became discouraged (those comrades who were in emigration know what it means when for years you do not hear the Russian speech, when you are homesick for a native Russian word), Comrade Lenin used to say: why do you complain, what kind of foreign exile is this? Now, Plekhanov and Axelrod were really in foreign exile when for the space of twenty-five years they strained in vain their eyesight to catch a glimpse of the first working-class revolutionist.



In point of fact, Vladimir Ilyich himself pined in emigration literally like a lion in a cage. He had nothing on which to expend his immense, inexhaustible energy, and he found salvation only through leading the life of a scholar. He did that which had been done by Marx during his emigration. He spent about fifteen hours a day in the library and at books, and it is not for nothing that he stands out today as one of the most educated Marxists, and generally, one of the most educated persons of our time.

But let us return to his first emigration.

In 1901 Lenin, together with a group of then kindred persons (Martov, Potresov), entered upon the publication of the paper *Iskra* (The Spark). This *Iskra* is an historical paper closely interwoven with the name of Comrade Lenin. Both friends and enemies spoke of the Leninist *Iskra*. This was often the case. Everywhere, whenever and wherever Lenin worked, in organisations, as an editor, in the Central Committee, or, finally, now in the Council of People's Commissars, to all these organisations inevitably stuck the appellation Leninist. Yes, 'Iskra' was Leninist, and it did not lose by this, it only gained. (Applause.) The first important article of Lenin in the *Iskra* was called 'Where to Begin'. In this article Lenin outlined the immediate programme for the labour movement and the Russian revolution. He outlined in it, in their entirety, the foundations of our programme and revolutionary tactics.

## 'What Is to Be Done'

Already in this first article of Lenin you will practically find virtually the whole quintessence of Bolshevism. But this article served merely as a synopsis to the remarkable book of Lenin which was called '*What Is to Be Done*'.

Round everything that Lenin wrote there is always seething strife. Nobody can remain indifferent to his writings. You can hate Lenin, you can love Lenin to distraction, but you cannot remain neutral. In the book '*What Is to Be Done*', Lenin stated and solved in a revolutionary spirit all the vexatious questions of the movement of that epoch. And for many months and years this book was challenging thought, was the centre of raging passions, was the subject of controversy, and ultimately led to the formation of a split into two irreconcilable camps.

The *Iskra* declared a fight to the finish against the so-called 'Economism'. It fought with every variety of opportunism, including Economism, i.e., future Menshevism. It conducted a most energetic



V. A. Shelgunov



G. V. Plekhanov



I. V. Babushkin



The St Petersburg League for the Emancipation of the Working Class. Seated l. to r.:  
V. V. Starkov, G. M. Khrizanovsky, V. I. Lenin, Y. O. Martov. Standing: P. K.  
Zaporozhets, A. A. Vanyev



V. I. Zassulich



P. B. Axelrod



L. G. Dentsh



fight against the adventurism of the Social-Revolutionists, and never yet has it been so plain how clear-sighted in his attitude towards the Social-Revolutionists was Comrade Lenin, who predicted as far back as 1902-3 the fate of the Social-Revolutionary Party. Only think! Fifteen years ago, when the party of the Social-Revolutionists had just been born, when it had in its ranks well-known members of the former 'People's Will', when we had not yet that great political experience which was given to us by the revolution—what was the situation like at the time? There comes forward the party of the Social-Revolutionists, asserting that it is fighting for Socialism, saying that it is more to the left than the *Iskra*. And there gets up Comrade Lenin still quite young, and in the face of the whole world dares throw at them the scornful words: 'revolutionary adventurists'. Lenin declared: 'You, Messrs. Social-Revolutionists, are representatives of the petty bourgeoisie, and nothing more.' (Applause).

When Lenin said that the party of the Social-Revolutionists was a party of the petty bourgeoisie there descended upon him thunder and lightning. It was said that Lenin had a bad character, that he was a misanthrope, and so forth. Now, indeed you can see that it was a prophetic anticipation of that which is. (Applause). Now we know that there are no two more fatal letters in the Russian alphabet than the letters: S and R. Why was this party so doomed? Because, calling itself Socialist, in reality it is a petty bourgeois party. Comrade Lenin was right when he said that these were no Socialists, but representatives of the petty bourgeoisie, that at best they were only revolutionary romantics, fantasts, and nothing more.

## A Prophetic Gift

Now we have an immense and irreplaceable experience of a decade and a half, the experience of the 1905 revolution, the experience of the 1917-1918 revolution. But to have predicted the real truth fifteen years ago, to have determined the real value of the party of the Social-Revolutionists at that time—this required almost a prophetic gift. For this it was necessary to have an immense revolutionary Marxist intuition, for this, in a word, it was necessary to be a Lenin. (Applause).

Lenin's *Iskra* carried on not merely a political struggle, it also carried on an immense work of organisation. The *Iskra* was gathering the scattered segments of our party. Only in the beginning of the 'nineties arose a situation in which it was possible to think of the

formation of a workers' party. Comrade Lenin placed himself also at the head of this practical organising work, and formed the Organisation Committee Attached to the *Iskra*. And Comrade Lenin, who bore the chief brunt of the literary labour in the *Iskra* and in the theoretical journal *Zarya* (The Dawn), at the same time became the soul of the Organising Committee.

The wife of Comrade Lenin, Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya-Ulyanova, was the secretary of the *Iskra*, and secretary of the Organisation Committee. How much our party is indebted to her; of this one might and ought to speak separately. Here I will only say that, in all the work of Comrade Lenin as organiser of our party, a good deal of the credit is due to Nadezhda Konstantinovna. All written intercourse fell on her. At one time she carried on a correspondence with the whole of Russia.

Who among the older underground workers did not know Nadezhda Konstantinovna? To whom did not the receipt of a letter from her mean joy? Who among us thought of her otherwise than with boundless confidence and most tender love?

Martov in one of his spiteful polemics against Lenin once called Nadezhda Konstantinovna 'The secretary of the super-centre, Lenin'. Well, the whole Russian proletariat is now proud both of its 'super-centre' and of his 'secretary'.

Lenin, assiduously, step by step, collected the underground organisation, and in 1903 we reached already the Second Party Congress. Already in that historic congress, when the party was still united, when in its ranks stood Plekhanov, Zassulich, Axelrod, Martov, Potressov and others, already it became clear from the first minute of its labours that the true leader of our young party was Comrade Lenin.

Comrade Lenin is often represented as a man who cuts, carves, uses nothing but the surgeon's knife, who does not spare the unity of the proletarian ranks. But when the first signs of a fundamental split became apparent at the Second Congress it was Comrade Lenin who at first used his influence to prevent a rupture. Lenin as a matter of fact places the highest value on the unity of the labour movement. But on one condition—provided this unity is a unity for the struggle for Socialism. The ideas of Socialism are to him dearest above all. And so at the Second Congress, as soon as he saw that his divergence from Martov, Axelrod and the others was not a slight casual divergence; that there was a resurrection of the old opportunist tendency under a new flag; that there was rising again that same 'legal' Marxism which Lenin had fought at the end of the 'nineties, that his former friend



Martov, with whom he had been intimate, his bosom friend, with whom he had been together in exile, that this Martov began to sing flat; that Plekhanov, whom until that time he had highly valued, began to surrender the principles of Marxism; that this Plekhanov was already extending a finger to opportunism and opportunism would soon have his whole hand; when Lenin saw all this, then the question was decided for him irrevocably. He said: 'I shall stand alone, but I raise the standard of revolutionary Marxism.' And he separated from Plekhanov.

## Plekhanov and Lenin

I happened at the time to be abroad. I as a young Social-Democrat, and two of my friends, were introduced to Plekhanov. We were still young, quite fledglings, but we sympathised with all our heart with Comrade Lenin. We read his *'What Is To Be Done?'* and knew that it was the gospel of the adherents of the *Iskra*. In the face of this, Plekhanov attempted, in his conversations with us, to pour ridicule upon Lenin. He would say: 'You are following him, but he has taken up such a line that in a few weeks he will only be fit to be put up as a scarecrow in the orchards. Lenin has raised the banner of struggle against me, Plekhanov, against Zassulich, and Deutch. Don't you see that this is an unequal struggle? Lenin is practically finished. He was done for the moment that he broke with us, the old timers, with the "Emancipation of Labour Group". He is coming to the end of his tether.' Such were Plekhanov's words, and they did make a certain impression upon us, the youngsters. Plekhanov, while speaking, kept severely moving his eyebrows, and we felt very frightened. We would go to Comrade Lenin and innocently complain to him: 'This and that is what Plekhanov says.' Then he would laugh and would console us: 'We'll count our chickens when they are hatched; the fight still lies ahead, we shall see whom the workers will follow.'

'One step forward, two steps backward'—such was the characterisation which Lenin gave of the evolution of the Menshevik wing of the party. One step forward—that was the advance from Economism to Iskraism; two steps back—that was the retrogression from Iskraism to the liberal ideas of 'legal Marxism' which had found their resurrection in Menshevism. No wonder Comrade Lenin took up a merciless fight against this relapse into the opportunist disease. As a counter-weight to the new 'Iskra', which passed into the hands of the Mensheviks, and of which Lenin ceased

to be co-editor, he established the first Bolshevik paper *Vperyod* [Forward]. It was at first a very small sheet which was published on the pennies collected abroad. At that time the Mensheviks had in their hands a tremendous machinery, as well as the whole authority of Plekhanov and other 'ikons', innumerable papers and pamphlets as well as the Central Committee, the Central Organ and the Council of the Party. Comrade Lenin began to blast this Menshevik fortress with his little machine-gun called *Vperyod*. He fired so far, and he aimed so well, that in a pretty short time not a trace was left of Plekhanov's heavy artillery, and by 1905, it became quite obvious that all that was alive in the Russian proletariat would follow the Bolsheviks.

In the summer of 1905 the first congress of the Bolsheviks (its official name was the Third Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party) took place, the first historic meeting which laid the foundations of the present Communist Party. It was then that Lenin for the first time observed that in the forthcoming revolution we would not stop at and with a bourgeois republic. Already at that time Lenin spoke of the rottenness of the European Social Democratic parliamentarianism. Already at that time Comrade Lenin expressed the view that our revolution would stand on the border between the bourgeois and Socialist revolution.

It was hard in those days to be a Bolshevik. Not only the Russian, but also the international conditions, pressed heavily upon us. Bebel, for instance, who was respected by Lenin as a working-class leader of genius, would use every suitable and unsuitable occasion to reproach Lenin for being against Plekhanov. How could Plekhanov ever be an opportunist? At the same time Axelrod was busy telling everybody who was inclined to listen that Lenin was a second edition of Netchayev. (Netchayev was an early Russian anarchist who organised a conspiracy at the end of the 'sixties by unscrupulous means, which included dealings with the Czar's police and fraudulent practice upon N's own comrades, ostensibly for the good of the movement.) And that Lenin in his fight against the 'elder statesmen' was only pursuing ambitious aims. The entire atmosphere of international Social Democracy was hostile to Bolshevism.

## Bebel and the Bolsheviks

On the eve of the Third Congress (that is the first congress of the Bolsheviks), Bebel rendered the following service to the Mensheviks. When our congress met, he sent us a letter in the



name of the Central Committee of the German Social Democracy, in which he said the following: 'Children, don't you want to make peace? I, Bebel, offer you and the Mensheviks arbitration. Why this split? Submit your dispute to our court of arbitration.' Such was the letter addressed by Bebel to Comrade Lenin, who brought it to the congress, and the congress declared: 'We highly respect our Comrade Bebel, but on the question as to how to carry on the fight in our country against the Czar and the bourgeoisie, we must ask permission to hold our own view. Permit us also to deal with the Mensheviks in a way which agents of the bourgeoisie deserve.' Bebel was much amazed by the 'impertinence' of our congress, but there was nothing for him to do, except to shrug his shoulders.

I quote this incident in order to show the kind of atmosphere, Russian and international, in which Lenin was fighting at the head of the then still small army of the Socialist revolution.

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Already in the revolution of 1905 Lenin was playing a leading part. This, to the outward gaze, was not so noticeable at that time as it has been in the present revolution. You are aware that the first Petrograd Soviet of the Workers' Delegates in 1905 was formed by the Mensheviks, but in all its practical actions it followed, on the whole, the lead of the Bolsheviks. When the tide rose and the waters flooded the banks, the working class became aware that to form Soviets was virtually the same thing as to fight for power. Thereby the working class became Bolshevik.

After the 1905 revolution was defeated and the counter-revolution set in, when we began summing up our experiences, Martov and his friends sat down by the waters of Babylon and started bemoaning the course of the first revolution. The Mensheviks themselves then had to admit that, alas, the revolution had been proceeding according to Bolshevik precepts; that the working class had unfortunately followed the Bolsheviks.

The Moscow armed insurrection, though defeated and crushed, had nevertheless been the apotheosis of the Bolshevik tactics during the revolution. We were defeated, and Plekhanov's only comment on the event was the philistine phrase: 'These people ought not to have taken up arms.' Lenin's attitude towards the Moscow insurrection was different. To him there was no nobler and more honourable page in the history of the revolution than the Moscow armed insurrection. The first thing he did was to collect all the material relating to it. He

wanted to elucidate all its features, down to the very smallest, and all its technical details. He wanted to ascertain the biography of every participant in the insurrection. He endeavoured to interrogate every military man who had taken part in it. He invited all those who took part in it to come forward and to explain to the working class and to the world at large, how the Moscow insurrection had been prepared and what had been the reasons for its defeat. For Lenin realised that the Moscow insurrection was the first outpost skirmish with the bourgeois world. He realised the world-historic significance of the Moscow insurrection, crushed and drowned in the blood of the workers, yet the first glorious working class revolt against Czarism and the bourgeoisie in a most backward country.

## The Moscow Insurrection

I repeat that the part played by Lenin in the revolution of 1905 was colossal. He only attended the sessions of the Petrograd Soviet once or twice, and he would often tell us how he sat high up in the balcony, looking down on the worker's delegates assembled in the hall of the Free Economic Society, unperceived by the public. He lived at that time in Petrograd illegally; the party forbade him to come out too much in the open. Our official representative on the Soviet Central Committee was A. A. Bogdanov. When it became known that the Soviet was going to be arrested, we forbade Lenin to attend the last historical session in order that he might not be arrested. He only saw the Soviet in 1905 once or twice, but I am firmly of the opinion that even then, when he was looking down from his seat in the balcony upon this first labour parliament, the idea of the Soviet State must have already been dawning upon his mind. Perhaps, in those days he already foresaw, in a dream as it were, the time when there would be a Soviet State; when the Soviets, that prototype of a Socialist proletarian state, would become the sole power in the country.

Already in those days of 1905 Lenin was teaching that the Soviets were not a fortuitous organisation which had sprung up the day before yesterday and would vanish the day after tomorrow; that they were not a common everyday organisation somewhat similar to a trade union, but an organisation which was opening a new page in the history of the international proletariat, in the history of the entire human race. (Applause.)

No one was more interested in the history of the Petrograd Soviet than Comrade Lenin. Though he formally had taken the least direct





A. A. Bogdanov



Moscow 1905: barricades in the streets. A worker raises the red flag



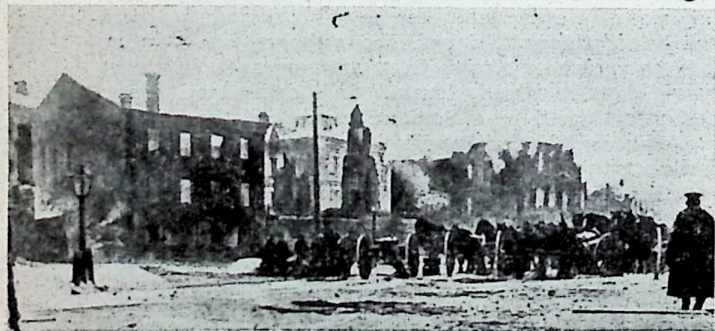
N. K. Krupskaya



Lenin as he appeared in the Czarist police archives



Lenin in 1905



Moscow 1905: General Rennenkampf's guns stand hub to hub against a background of smouldering ruins



A. E. Badner

part in its labours, he, nevertheless, appreciated better than any of us what it meant. For that reason he treated the slogan of the Soviet with the utmost circumspection. Thus, in 1916, during the war, when we in Switzerland received word that a revolutionary revival was beginning here in Petrograd, and that our comrades had begun to advance the slogan of organising Soviets, Comrade Lenin wrote, in articles and letters, that the organisation of a Soviet was a great slogan, and must not be frivolously played with. It must only be raised when the workers were determined to go to the end; to stake their heads on victory and to proclaim that the moment of a real proletarian revolution, the moment to capture power, had arrived. Then, and only then, was it permissible to speak about Soviets, since Soviets could only exist if they assumed all power into their own hands, since the Soviets were the form of a proletarian state, since the Soviets were the undivided rule of the working class.

What Lenin meant to convey was that the Soviets were not the ordinary class organisation, whose purpose, according to the Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionists, was to fight only for the economic demands of the working class within the framework of bourgeois society. In his opinion such Soviets would be doomed in advance. In fact, no Soviets were needed for such a purpose. In his view, the Soviets were organisations for the seizure of state power, and for transforming the workers into the ruling class. That is why he again and again told the Petrograd workers in the course of 1916: 'Ask yourselves a thousand times whether you are prepared, whether you are strong enough; measure your cloth nine times before you cut. To organise Soviets means to declare a war to a finish, to declare civil war upon the bourgeoisie, to begin the proletarian revolution.' And Comrade Lenin has remained true to his views to the end.

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But let us go back. The year 1906 was followed by a period of stagnation, by the dark era of the counter-revolution. The working class was digesting the lessons of the first revolution. In reply to the Menshevik philosophy of the first revolution and the causes of its defeat, we gave our own philosophy of the revolution. We were obliged to give it in our underground papers, leaflets, and pamphlets. We were not in a position to publish, with the sanction of the censorship, five big volumes, as the Mensheviks did. We would not have found any publisher; we were boycotted by the entire legal press, and, in fact, we were not allowed to say a



single word by the Czar's censorship. Lenin at that time was depicted as a sort of monster who had no place in respectable society. We Bolsheviks were at that time not permitted to publish 'legal' literature. We could only carry on by means of the free printing press abroad.

The Mensheviks represented the entire 1905 revolution as a wholesale error, as a wholesale chaos, and elemental madness. The workers, forsooth, were themselves responsible for the defeat, because they had gone 'too far' in their demands. Lenin's reply was: 'You have failed to grasp the meaning of this movement! It was a great revolution, and by no means a chaos. It was a great revolution, not because there was the Manifesto of October 30th (The Czar's proclamation of a constitution) not because the bourgeoisie began to stir, but because there was, albeit unsuccessful, an armed insurrection of the workers in Moscow, because for the space of one month the Petrograd Soviet shone brightly before the eyes of the world proletariat. And the revolution will yet arise once more; the Soviets will be reborn and will win.'

In connection with Lenin's views on what constitutes a great revolution, I recall a little incident. Last year, when we came here, we at first were overwhelmed by the colossal swing of the movement, and extolled even the February revolution sometimes as a great one. I remember how in an article in May 1917, I, out of inertia again called the February revolution 'great'. Comrade Lenin, who was at that time with Comrade Kamenev and myself a joint editor of *Pravda*, began vehemently to strike out this word. When I asked jestingly why this ruthlessness against this particular word, Comrade Lenin severely took me to task. 'What sort of "great" revolution was that? It will become a great one when we shall have expelled this counter-revolutionary canaille Kerensky, and wrested all power from the hands of the bourgeoisie, and the Petrograd Soviet shall no longer be a talking-shop, but the sole power in the capital. Then, indeed, our revolution will be a "great" one; then, indeed, you may even write the "greatest revolution of all times".' (Applause.)

## Years of Counter-Revolution

I have dwelt but little on the work of Lenin in the years of the counter-revolution; yet this period was one of the most brilliant in his activity. One had to live through those hard times in distant emigration in order to appreciate all the services rendered by Lenin to the cause. Think for a moment of the foul atmosphere, our emigration

in the years 1908-10. Lenin went into his second emigration in 1907, while I and other comrades were summoned abroad in the autumn of 1908, after we had been released from prison. It was mainly owing to the efforts of Lenin that we established our underground papers, first at Geneva, and then in Paris: the *Proletarian* and the *Social Democrat*. All round there was a complete debacle. There was gangrene in all emigrant circles. The old leaders who had grown grey under the revolutionary banner no longer believed in anything. Pornography captured our entire literature, and a spirit of apostasy pervaded politics. The notorious liquidation movement (a movement predominant among the Mensheviks to abandon all illegal revolutionary activity) was raising its head, and Stolypin was celebrating his orgies. It seemed as if there would be no end of that!

## The Period of Emigration

At such times true leaders are recognised for what they are worth. Lenin was at that time (as throughout his exile) suffering great personal privations and living in poverty; was ill, undernourished—particularly during his stay in Paris; but he remained as cheerful as anybody could be. He stood steadfastly and bravely at his glorious post. He alone contrived to collect a close and intimate circle of fighters, whom he would cheer up by saying: 'Don't be disheartened: these dark days will pass, the muddy wave will ebb away; a few years will pass and we shall be borne on the crest of the wave, and the proletarian revolution will be born again.' The emigrés of that time, more particularly the Menshevik intellectuals, who formed the prevailing element, treated us with marked hostility, declaring that we were a small sect, the members of which could be counted on the five fingers of one hand. There was a special comic paper published in Paris, which jeered at Bolshevism and exercised its humour on such subjects as that 'a reward would be offered of half a kingdom to the person who could name a fourth Bolshevik in addition to Lenin, Zinoviev and Kamenev.' The Bolsheviks were, forsooth, a set of bears sucking their own paws while life was moving past them. The co-operatives, the trade unions, the legal press, were all opposed to the Bolsheviks, while Lenin and his disciples were sitting in a contemplative mood, attaching their faith to the advent of a new Messiah and a new revolution which would never arrive.

In those difficult years Lenin rendered to the working class



services perhaps even greater than ever before. At present, in our own days, a tremendous flood had risen and borne millions of individuals, ready to fight and to die. In those days everything was asleep, like in a cemetery. Stolypin's regime was weighing upon the working class like the lid of a coffin. The 'elder statesmen', like Axelrod and Co., were chanting the dirges of the revolution and of the old illegal workers' party. It was, indeed, a great merit to have raised the banner of the revolution in such times, to have fought all revisionism and opportunism, to have preserved his faith in triumph, and awaited its moment; to have worked and worked without rest or haste.

Lenin was fighting for the party, but at the same time he secluded himself in the library. It is needless to say that Marx is the favourite writer of Lenin, just as his favourite Russian author is Chernyshevsky. Lenin knows his Marx and Engels from the first to the last letter. He knows them in a way as only two or three persons, I think, know them in the world. And Lenin is one of the very few who have advanced the theory of Marx and have been able to fructify it by some new elements and to apply it under the conditions of a new era fraught with the greatest consequences. How proud Marx would have been of Lenin, if he lived today! Lenin never allowed Marx to be insulted by anybody. The Russian so-called 'critics' of Marx invariably came up in their literary exercises against the impregnable fortress called Lenin, and would invariably suffer damage from his guns. Lenin fully sustained his reputation even when the philosophical views of Marx began to be subjected to 'criticism'.

In those days Comrade Lenin carried out a tremendous piece of theoretical work. Those days were marked by a sort of literary spoliation of the dead, by an unprecedented literary demoralisation. Attempts were made to smuggle, under the flag of Marxism, the rotted ideas of bourgeois philosophy into working class audiences. Lenin spent two years in the Paris National Library, and carried out such a mass of work that even bourgeois professors who attempted to sneer at the philosophical studies of Lenin, themselves admitted that they could not understand how one man contrived to read such a mass of books in the course of two years. How, indeed, could Lenin succeed in this domain when 'we', who had studied at our fathers' expense, who had spent thirty years in our scientific careers, who had worn out so many armchairs, who had perused such truck-loads of books, had understood nothing at all in them? . . .

## A Scientific Work on Philosophy

In those two years Comrade Lenin was able to write a serious work on philosophy,\* which will occupy an honourable place in the history of the struggle for revolutionary Marxism. He fought as passionately for communism in the most abstract domain of theory as he fights now in the field of practical politics. Perhaps but few amongst the Petrograd workers have read this philosophical work of Lenin, but know you all that in this book too, the foundations of Communism were laid. He fought in this book all the bourgeois influences, in their most subtle and elusive forms, and succeeded in defending the materialist conception of history against the best educated representatives of the bourgeoisie, and those writers among the Social Democrats who had succumbed to those influences.

Then came the year 1910-11. A fresh wind began to blow, and it became evident in 1911 that the labour movement was being reborn. The Lena day [The wholesale massacre of strikers at the Lena gold mines in 1910] opened a new page in the history of our movement. At that time we had already at Petrograd a legal paper called *Zvezda* (Star), at Moscow a monthly periodical, *Mysl* (Thought) and a small labour fraction in the Duma. The principal worker in these papers and behind the Duma fraction was Lenin.

Lenin managed to teach a few worker deputies of the Duma the methods of revolutionary parliamentarianism. You ought to have heard the conversations between Lenin and our young deputies when he was propounding to them the lessons of this kind of parliamentarianism. Simple Petrograd proletarians (Badayev and others) would come to us abroad and say: 'We want to engage in serious legislative work; we want to consult you about the budget, about such and such a Bill, about certain amendments to certain Bills introduced by the Cadets,' etc. In reply Comrade Lenin laughed heartily, and when they somewhat abashed, would ask what was the matter, Comrade Lenin would reply to Badayev: 'What do you want a budget, an amendment, a Bill for? You are workers, and the Duma exists for the ruling classes. You simply step forward and tell all Russia in simple language about the life and toil of the working class. Describe the horrors of capitalist slavery, summon the workers to make a revolution, and fling into the face of this reactionary Duma that its members are scoundrels and exploiters!' (Applause.) 'You had better introduce a "Bill" stating that in three years' time we shall take you all, Black-

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\* *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*—Editor's note.



hundred landlords, and hang you on the lamp-posts. That would be a real Bill!' (Applause.) Such were the lessons in 'parliamentarianism' which Comrade Lenin would propound to the deputies. At first Comrade Badayev and others used to find them rather queer. The entire parliamentary surroundings were weighing upon our comrades. Here, in this very hall of the Tauride Palace, where we now meet, the Duma used to sit in session, all sitting in magnificent frock coats, with the Ministers, in places of honour—and these poor deputies should break out all of a sudden in such nasty talk! Later on, however, our deputies assimilated the lessons, and Lenin's enjoyment was boundless when he saw our deputy, the simple mechanic Badayev, come out on the rostrum in the Tauride Palace and tell all those Rodziankos, Volkonskies, and Purishkeviches all that he had been counselled to say by the teacher of the working class, Comrade Lenin. (Applause).

In 1912 a new life began. As soon as it became possible to publish here in Petrograd a legal paper, we migrated from Paris to Galicia in order to be nearer to Petrograd. At the January (1912) Conference, which took place at Prague, the Bolsheviks consolidated the ranks which had been broken by the counter-revolution. The party came back to life again, and, of course, Lenin played a leading part. At the insistence of the new Central Committee, Comrade Lenin and myself went to stay at Cracow. There we began to receive visits from comrades from Petrograd, Moscow, and other cities. Communication was established with Petrograd, and the arrangements were soon so perfected that it was very seldom that the *Pravda* would appear without some contribution from Lenin. You have been brought up on those articles, and you know what those papers, *Zvezda* and *Pravda* meant to the working class. Those were the first swallows of the coming Communist spring. Right and left Comrade Lenin hit our enemies in the columns of those papers, and it is owing to his articles, counsels, and private letters to Petrograd that the *Pravda* soon became a sounding board for all questions of the day. Our machinery became so perfect that we frequently managed to have a conference of the Petrograd and Cracow Bureaus of the Central Committee before every important meeting of trade unions or other labour organisations.

## The Metal Workers Meeting

I remember the first large membership meeting of the Petrograd metal workers in 1913. Two hours after the slate of our candidates

to the Union committee was adopted by the meeting (which was at that time an extraordinary success) Comrade Lenin was already in possession of a congratulatory telegram from the local metal workers on the matter. Comrade Lenin was living at that time thousands of miles away, but he was the very soul of proletarian Petrograd. The same thing was happening as in 1906-7, when Comrade Lenin resided in Finland, at Kuokalla, and we undertook weekly pilgrimages in order to receive his advice. He was actually guiding the labour movement at Petrograd from this little village in Finland. He was now doing the same thing from Cracow, guiding not only the Petrograd, but the whole Russian Bolshevik movement.

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I should like to add a few words about Lenin's attitude on the war. He had long ceased to believe in the European Social Democracy; he knew well that something was rotten in Denmark. He had long been saying about official European Social Democrats that they were carrying on a contraband trade in rotten opportunist goods. When the war broke out we were living in a god-forsaken little mountain village in Galicia. I remember having had a bet with him. I said: 'You will see, the German Social Democrats will not dare vote against the war, but will *abstain* in the vote on the war credits.' Comrade Lenin replied: 'No, they are not such scoundrels as all that. They will not, of course, fight the war, but they will, to ease their conscience, vote against the credits lest the working class rise up against them.' In this case Lenin was wrong, and so was I. Neither of us had taken the full measure of the flunkeyism of the social patriots. The European Social Democrats proved complete bankrupts. They all voted *for* the war credits. When the first number of the *Vorwärts*, the organ of the German Social Democrats, arrived with the news that they had voted the war credits, Lenin at first refused to believe. 'It cannot be,' he said, 'it must be a forged number. Those scoundrels, the German bourgeoisie, have specially published such a number of the *Vorwärts* in order to compel us also to go against the International.' Alas, it was not so. It turned out that the social patriots really had voted the war credits. When Lenin saw it, his first word was: 'The Second International is dead.'

At that time those words had the effect of a bursting bomb. At present we all see clearly that this is so, the Second International is dead. It is now as obvious to us as the ABC; but think only how great the prestige of this International had been before the war. On paper, at least, it had counted several million members and con-



tained in its ranks such authorities as Kautsky, Vandervelde, Vaillant, Guesde, Plekhanov. And all of a sudden a Russian Marxist gets up and announces to the whole world, 'The Second International is dead, and let it rest in peace.' The howling and the protests of the acknowledged 'leaders' of the Second International against the impertinent Bolsheviks knew no bounds. It was monstrous, they declared, that Lenin should so insult the entire Socialist world. Herr Scheidemann says so even now. Recently at Berlin the Imperial Chancellor met with the leaders of all parties over the supplementary treaty between Russia and Germany. Herr Ebert, Scheidemann's henchman, was the only one to vote against this treaty, because forsooth, Lenin and his friends were disgracing the banner of Socialism in Russia. Scheidemann knows very well that he has a serious enemy in the person of Lenin. He knows well that if he is one day to hang on a lamp-post—it will come to this, I assure you (Applause)—he will be owing it, to a very large extent, to Comrade Lenin.

Lenin was one of the authors of the main thesis of the resolution of the Stuttgart Congress of the Second International. Jointly with Rosa Luxemburg, Lenin offered the Stuttgart Congress a resolution to the effect that should an imperialist war begin, our business would be to organise a revolution, that is, a civil war. After protracted arguments, the commission of the Congress adopted his resolution, but in different words. Lenin told us at the time how he had been arguing with Bebel about the formulation. According to Lenin, Bebel had accepted the idea, but demanded great care in formulating it in order not to prematurely 'get all the geese in a dither'.

Then the imperialist war actually came, but when Lenin now repeated the Stuttgart resolution, when he now submitted to the leaders of the Second International Bebel's I.O.U., the leaders only waved it impatiently aside and passed to the order of the day, that is, to their respective capitalist governments.

I remember the first manifesto of our party on the war. Naturally, it was drawn up principally by Lenin, as were all our most important party documents. When we translated it into various European languages and when it was read by various comrades, even the Swiss internationalist Grimm and the Rumanian revolutionist Rakovsky, who is now in our ranks, were very indignant. They were almost horror-struck when they read the words that the imperialist war must be transformed into a civil war.

Today, it is ABC. We are all doing it, we are all transforming



Lenin in his leisure moments, hiking in the Carpathians



Lenin's lodgings in Zurich in the garret of a shoemaker's house



G. C. Rakovsky



D. Blavoev



Serrati



A group of anti-war socialists in Scandinavia. l. to r.: Furstenburg (Hanecki), Karl Radek, Kolarov, Lindhagen, Kirkov, Höglund



the imperialist war in action into a civil war, but at that time it seemed monstrous. We were told that only an anarchist could preach such things and war was virtually declared upon us. Even at Zimmerwald not only moderate men, but also men like Rakovsky and the Italian Serrati were bitterly opposed to us, so that very fierce conflicts ensued at various stages. I well remember how the hot-headed Rakovsky nearly took off his coat to fight Lenin and me for our opinion that Martov was an agent of the bourgeoisie. 'How dare you say such things,' they shouted at us; 'we have known Martov for the last twenty years.' But we replied: 'We know Martov as well as you and we are certain that all that is honest among the Russian workers will follow us and will oppose the war, while Martov is defending bourgeois views.'

## European Social Democracy Stagnant

But, of course, all these petty incidents are of no particular importance. I only mention them to show you how dead, how stagnant was the European Social Democracy at the beginning of the war. No one was prepared to fight. All had become habituated to the old grooves of legalism and parliamentarianism; all the old leaders had faith in 'law', and made a fetish of it. Tremendous efforts were needed to make an impression even among the Zimmerwaldians. I remember a clash at Zimmerwald between Lenin and Ledebour. Ledebour argued: 'It is all right for you here living abroad to issue appeals for a civil war, I should like to see how you do it, living in Russia.' If Ledebour still remembers those words, I think he must feel very much ashamed of them now. But Comrade Lenin coolly replied to him: 'When Marx was drawing up his *Communist Manifesto* he also was living abroad, and only narrow-minded philistines could reproach him for that. I now live abroad, because I was sent here by the Russian workers, but when the time arrives, we shall know how to stand at our posts. . . .' And our Comrade Lenin kept his word.

Yes, at the beginning of the war Lenin found very little sympathy even among those Socialists who were opposed to the war. But how is it now?

At present we can say without exaggeration that all that is honest in the International regards Lenin as its leader and banner-bearer. Lazzari, the leader of the Italian workers, who has grown grey

under the Red banner, and who at Zimmerwald opposed Lenin, is now going to prison for three years for circulating Lenin's appeals in Italy. Mehring, Clara Zetkin, the best among the German internationalists, who used to fight Lenin in the old days, now render him the tribute of their greatest respect. Or listen to what has been said about Lenin by men like Gorter, Hoeglund, Blagoev, Loriot and Serrati. There can be no greater satisfaction for Comrade Lenin than the knowledge that he, by his work, has captivated the minds and hearts of such prominent leaders of labour in various countries.

Comrade Lenin became the leader of the Third International, which is now being born. At first many virtuous self-styled Socialists ridiculed the idea that Lenin should put forward his candidature for the leadership of the Third International, saying that he is aspiring to the honour of being the successor of Bakunin. But who will laugh now when we say that the leader of the Third International is none other than Lenin? The Conciliationists have no inclination to laugh now. They would rather cry, because they know that the Third International is a living fact, although owing to the state of siege it has not come into existence formally. And they also know that the new International has in the person of Lenin a sufficiently strong leader, far-seeing, courageous, such as the working class International properly needs.

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The part played by Comrade Lenin from the beginning of the war has been absolutely exceptional. He was the first to begin collecting circles of Internationalists, and it was a remarkable sight how he was devoting his inexhaustible energy to this work in Switzerland. He lived first at Berne and then Zurich. The Swiss Social Democratic Party was at that time infected by opportunism and defencism, and only a small group of workers rallied round us. Comrade Lenin would spend much time and strength in order to organise some ten or twenty individuals among the Zurich working-class youth. I lived at that time in another Swiss town, but I well remember the enthusiasm which Comrade Lenin devoted to this work so small in its scope. He used to write us numberless letters, urging us all to work among the Swiss, and rejoiced like a child when he was able to announce that at Zurich he had succeeded in getting into the organisation of the Left Social Democrats seven young proletarians, and, might, perhaps, succeed in getting an eighth.



## Swiss Social Democracy

Of course the official Swiss Social Democratic Party looked askance on this work of Lenin's. Gruelich and Co. would declare that Lenin was corrupting the entire working class movement by his Russian 'anarchism'. Indeed Comrade Lenin was 'corrupting' it as much as he could. (Applause and laughter.) The philistine Swiss government was then ready to expel Lenin as an undesirable alien, but now we hear from our Swiss Socialist Comrade Moor that the Swiss government has placed in the museum as an historical document the paper which it exacted from us as a guarantee that we would behave 'decently' in Switzerland. I shall not be surprised if the Swiss bourgeoisie, who are showing their lakes and mountains for a franc per head, should soon charge five francs for showing the autograph signature of Lenin.

At that time, in the years 1915-17, he led a rather secluded life in Switzerland. The war and the collapse of the [Second] International had deeply affected him, and many, who knew him before, were surprised at the change which had taken place in him since the war. He never was very tender towards the bourgeoisie, but since the war his hatred of the bourgeoisie became concentrated and sharp like a dagger. He seemed to have changed even in his appearance.

He then lived in Zurich, in the poorest quarter, in the house of a shoemaker, in a sort of garret. He chased, as it were, after every proletarian in order to proclaim to him that the present war was an imperialist slaughter, that the honour of the proletariat demanded that a war against this war be fought to a finish, that the arms must not be laid down until the working class had risen and destroyed the imperialist bandits. (Prolonged applause.)

The Bureau of the Zimmerwald Left, in which Lenin played the principal part, issued in German and French several leaflets, pamphlets, and three numbers of the periodical, *Verbote*. It goes without saying that Lenin's propaganda was not to the taste of the international bourgeoisie. The German bourgeois professors would write entire books to announce that a certain lunatic had arisen, who was preaching a mad propagandistic doctrine. But we laughed and said, 'Why then do you write books and articles, why concern yourselves with the ravings of a lunatic?'

Comrade Lenin quietly pursued his labours, and now things have reached such a pass that the German bourgeoisie has had to sign a treaty with Comrade Lenin as representing hundreds of millions



**Klara Zetkin**



**Rosa Luxemburg**



**Karl Liebknecht**



**1917: Lenin and party in Stockholm en route for Petrograd. Lenin, centre with umbrella; extreme right, Kamenev; extreme left, Zinoviev and son**



**Franz Mehring**



**Karl Kautsky**



**August Bebel**



of peasants and workers of entire Russia. We shall yet, comrades, see the moment when our proletariat through its leader Lenin will dictate its will to old Europe, when Comrade Lenin will make treaties with the government of Karl Liebknecht, and when Lenin will help the German workers to draw up the first Socialist decree in Germany. (Applause.)

In March 1917, Comrade Lenin returned to Russia. You remember, comrades, the witches' sabbath which broke out when Lenin and we, his disciples, came from abroad through Germany. What a howl there was about the celebrated 'sealed train'. As a matter of fact, Lenin entertained towards German imperialism a hatred as fierce as towards the other imperialisms. At the beginning of the war the Austrian government had arrested Lenin, and he spent two weeks in a Galician house of detention. When a prominent member of Scheidemann's party wanted to enter our carriage (which, as a matter of fact, was not sealed) in order to welcome us, we told him unequivocally, on Lenin's suggestion, that we never discuss with traitors, and would give him a thrashing if he came to us.

The Mensheviks and Social Revolutionists who at first proudly resisted, afterwards used the same means of getting into Russia as we did. So far as Lenin was concerned, the matter was simple; all bourgeois governments are bandits; we have no choice, we can't go to Russia in any other way.

## The July Days

I shall not dwell here in detail on the part which Lenin has played here at Petrograd from the beginning of our revolution. You have seen his work, you have watched it as closely as I. You know the part played by Lenin in the July days of 1917. For him the question of the necessity of the seizure of power by the proletariat had been settled from the first moment of our revolution, and the question was only about the choice of a suitable opportunity. In the July days our entire Central Committee was opposed to the immediate seizure of power, Lenin was of the same opinion. But when on July 16 the wave of popular revolt rose high, Lenin became alert, and here, upstairs in the refreshment room of the Tauride Palace, a small conference took place at which Trotsky, Lenin, and myself were present. Lenin laughingly asked us, 'Shall we not attempt now?' and he added: 'No, it would not do to take power now, as nothing will come out of it, the soldiers at the front being largely on the other side would come as the dupes of the Lieber-Dans to massacre the

Petrograd workers.' As a matter of fact, you will remember in those July days Kerensky did succeed in bringing over soldiers from the front against us. What was to become ripe two or three months later is still immature in July, and a premature seizure of power at that time might have been fatal. Lenin realised this before everybody else. At any rate, Lenin never hesitated for a moment on the question as to whether the proletariat, in our revolution, ought to seize the reins of power, or not. All his hesitations turned round the question as to whether it could not be done earlier.

You know how things developed subsequently. We passed through a time when it seemed that everything was lost. Comrade Lenin for a moment even doubted whether the Soviets, corrupted by the conciliationists, could play a decisive part, and he gave the warning that we might perhaps have to seize power without the Soviets. But he never for a moment doubted that sooner or later the power would be in our hands, and that it was necessary to hur' the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionists into the abyss.

At first, during the July days, we could not realise what was occurring. One night, on July 16, Comrade Lenin alone came into the editorial offices of *Pravda* to hand over a manuscript. Half an hour afterwards, the junkers were already sacking those offices. On the morning of July 18 Lieber (Menshevik leader) took me to the military staff of the district to obtain redress in the matter of the sacking of the offices of *Pravda*. General Polovtsev, the head of the Staff, received me with great respect. At that time he also did not know what to do with us. But an hour later the Bolsheviks were being arrested and killed.

Then the persecutions started. Lenin and I went into hiding. We had firmly decided to be arrested—such was still our faith in the Mensheviks and the Right Social Revolutionists. But the party did not permit us to do so. We, therefore, decided to go on hiding ourselves. A week later Comrade Lenin told me: 'How could we have been so silly as to think for one moment of trusting this gang and getting ourselves arrested? There is no other way but to fight this gang ruthlessly.' (Applause.)

In the same way as Comrade Lenin in July 1917, wisely declared that it was impermissible to seize power, so after the Kornilov days—especially by the end of September 1917, Lenin began urging the workers to seize power, or else it would be too late.

When, following the Kornilov days, the so-called Democratic Conference assembled at Petrograd, Lenin at first came out with an article on 'Compromises'. He invited for the last time the Mensheviks



and Social Revolutionists to break with the bourgeoisie, to renounce their policy of treason, and to make a compromise with the working class against the Kornilovists. But these two parties were rotten to the core. They had already sold their souls to the devil and could not accept Lenin's invitation. Thereupon Lenin sent a letter from his Finnish exile to the Central Committee of our party saying that the time had come to drop all procrastination, that it was necessary to surround the Alexandra Theatre (where the Democratic Conference was holding its sessions), to disperse all this scum, and to seize power.

Our Central Committee at that time did not agree with Comrade Lenin. Almost everybody thought that it was still too early, and that the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionists still had a large following. Lenin then, without hesitating long, left his hide-out, and without consulting anybody, without considering the fears of his friends, came to Petrograd in order to preach an immediate rising. Kerensky and Avxentyev were at that time issuing writs for the arrest of Lenin, while Lenin, from his underground hiding place, was preparing the insurrection, arguing with those who hesitated, castigating those who vacillated and writing and agitating for an early rising. And he got it.

At present everybody sees that Lenin was right. It was all a matter of touch and go. If we had not taken power into our hands in October, Savinkov and Palchinsky would have crushed us in November. The question was posed by history in no ambiguous manner. Either we or they. Either the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, mad with fear and hatred towards the workers, or the dictatorship of the proletariat pitilessly sweeping away the bourgeoisie.

Now, of course, it is all clear, but at that time, amidst the whirlpool of events it required the exact eye of a Lenin, his genius and intuition, in order to declare: 'Not a week later, now or never.' And it also required the unbending, strength of will of a Lenin to surmount all the obstacles and to start at the appointed time the greatest revolution ever known in history. It is not that Comrade Lenin did not realise the tremendous difficulties with which the working class would be confronted after the conquest of power. Lenin knew all this to perfection. From the very first days of his arrival at Petrograd he had been carefully watching the progressive economic ruin. He valued the acquaintance of every bank clerk, trying to penetrate into the details of the bank business. He knew well the food and other difficulties. In one of his most remarkable books, *'Will the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?'* Comrade Lenin dwelt in detail on these difficulties. It is

true that the latter proved more formidable than even Lenin had anticipated. But no other way was open to the working class than the one trodden in October.

## Clearness, Precision, Concreteness

Both on the question of the nationalization of the banks and on that of our food policy, as well as military policy, the decisive word was said by Lenin. He alone drew up in all its details the scheme of practical measures in all these domains long before October 25. Clearness, precision, concreteness—such are the chief features in Lenin's work, and he alone has generalised all these individual measures in his work on the State (*'State And Revolution'*) which, to my mind, is the most important one after Marx's *'Capital'*. The Soviet State has found in Lenin not only its chief political leader, practical organiser, ardent propagandist, poet and singer, but also its principal theoretician, its Karl Marx. The October revolution—insofar as even in a revolution one may, and indeed, *must* speak of the role played by the individual—the October revolution and the part played in connection with it by our party are to the extent of nine-tenths the work of Lenin. If anybody could bring into line all those who doubted or hesitated, it was Lenin.

I can say this for myself, that if I shall repent in my life of anything, it will not be of the fifteen years that I have been working under the leadership of Comrade Lenin, but of those few October days when I thought that Lenin was too much in a hurry, was forcing events, was committing a mistake, and that I would have to oppose him. [Zinoviev together with Kamenev—and abetted behind the scenes by Stalin—opposed the Bolshevik seizure of power in October 1917. They publicly denounced, in a non-party paper, the Bolshevik policy as 'adventurism'. Lenin called them strike-breakers and demanded their expulsion from the party.] It is now as clear as noonday that if the working class, under Lenin's leadership, had not seized power in time, we should, a few weeks later, have had the dictatorship of the most ruthless, most unscrupulous bourgeois rascals. (Loud and continued applause). It is known now that it had been decided to massacre all of us by the time of the convening of the Constituent Assembly, and if the generals had had more soldiers at their disposal, they would have done so. Even after October 25 the Right Social Revolutionists intended to massacre us, and one of their members, Masslov, even recruited soldiers for the purpose. He admitted very recently himself, that he had succeeded



in scraping together only 5,000 champions of a very doubtful quality. There was the will, but there was not the way.

Comrade Lenin calculated the moment to perfection. He did not want to delay even for a week, and knew how to raise the question to a direct issue. He wrote article after article, publicly, over his signature, in a paper which everybody could read, openly appealing for an armed rising, and fixing a definite date. And all this, while Kerensky was still in power and seemed to many to be still very strong. Lenin challenged the entire bourgeoisie and all conciliators, telling them that tomorrow he and his friends would overthrow them. And everybody knew that on the lips of Lenin this was not an empty threat, that it would be followed by deed. This could have been done only by Lenin.

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And what about those memorable days of Brest, the days of bitter disappointment! How difficult, how painfully difficult was it at that time to make a decision! I cannot even imagine what would have happened if we had not had Lenin with us at the time. Who else could have assumed this terrific responsibility of acting against the overwhelming majority of the Soviets, against a considerable portion of our party, and at one time against even a majority of the Central Committee of the party? Only Lenin could lift this burden on his shoulders, and only he could have been followed by those who were hesitating. It was Lenin who was fated to save Petrograd, Russia, our party, our revolution. Today there are but few clever persons who would attempt to ridicule Lenin's theory of a 'breathingspell'. It is now clear to everybody that it was the only right thing to do, to yield space to the enemies in order to gain time. . . .

That is why the man who has accomplished such work is entitled to immortality. That is why a blow directed against him is received by everybody as a blow directed against themselves. Comrade Trotsky was right when he said in Moscow: 'When Comrade Lenin lay cruelly wounded and struggling with death, our own lives seemed so superfluous, so unimportant. . . .'

Comrade Lenin has been frequently compared with Marat, but fate was kinder to him than to Marat, who became dear to his people after his death. Our teacher Lenin came within hair's breadth of death. He was dear enough to our people even before the attempt, but now, after that treacherous attempt, he will become a thousand times dearer to the hearts of the working class. Marat lived still in the memory of his people a long time after his



Bolshevik newspaper office wrecked by junks,  
July 1917



Lenin in disguise  
as a railwayman,  
Summer 1917

November 7, 1917:  
The storming of  
the Winter Palace







The contending parties face each other across the table at Brest Litovsk shortly before concluding the 'peace'. Seated on right and facing the camera are the chief representatives of the Soviets, L. B. Kamenev and A. A. Joffe

physical life had been cut, but Lenin will live long yet, not only in our minds and hearts, but also in our ranks, in order to fight with us and to carry to a triumphant conclusion the first Workers' Socialist Revolution. (Storm of applause).

Yes, a Marat closely connected with the millions of the urban and rural proletariat. That is Lenin. Take the fanatical devotion to the people which distinguished Marat; take his integrity, his simplicity, his intimate knowledge of the soul of the people, take his elemental faith in the inexhaustible strength of the 'lowest of the lowly', take all this and add to it the first-class education of a Marxist, an iron will, an acute analytical mind, and you will get Lenin such as we know him now. A revolutionary Social Democrat is just a Jacobin who had tied up his fate with the most advanced class of modern times, with the proletariat—such was Lenin's reply in 1904 to the Mensheviks who were accusing him of Jacobinism. The figure of the proletarian 'Jacobin', Lenin, will yet throw into shade the glory of the most glorious of the Jacobins of the time of the Great French Revolution.

August Bebel was never forgiven by the German bourgeoisie for having once declared in the Reichstag: 'I hate your bourgeois order; yes, I am a deadly enemy of your entire bourgeois society.' And the same Bebel used to say: 'When I am praised by the bourgeoisie, I ask myself, "You old fellow, what folly have you committed to have merited the praises of these cannibals?"' But Comrade Lenin never had to put himself such a question. He is quite guaranteed against that. He has never been praised by the bourgeoisie who had been persecuting him with a wild hatred all during the long years of his activity, and he is proud of it. At the tensest moment of struggle, Lenin is fond of repeating, as he did on the eve of the October Revolution, the poet's words: 'We get our approbation not in the sweet murmur of praise, but in our enemy's wild shouts of rage.' This is characteristic of Lenin. These words are Lenin himself. Lenin quotes poetry but seldom, but in this case he used it with good reason. The wild shouts of rage of the enemies of the working class have ever been the best music to Lenin's ear. The greater the rage of the enemies, the more calm and assured Lenin is.

Again, Lenin is fond of comparing our revolution with a rushing railway engine. Indeed, our railway engine rushes with a dizzy swiftness, but then our driver manages the engine as no else can. His eye is sharp, and his hand is firm and will not tremble for one second even at the most dangerous culverts.

At this moment our leader is lying wounded. For several days



he struggled with death, but he has vanquished it, and he still lives. This is symbolic. At one time it looked as if our revolution had been mortally wounded. It is at present coming round again, as our leader Comrade Lenin is coming round; the clouds will scatter, and we shall vanquish all our enemies. (Storm of applause.)



Lenin (centre) in conversation with Trotsky (left) and Kamenev (right)







**GREGORY YEVSEYEVICH ZINOVIEV (Radomyslski)** 1883-1936. Teacher. Then active in 1900-1901 strikes. Joined Russian Social Democratic Labour Party in 1901. In emigration 1902-1905. A Bolshevik from 1903. Collaborated with Lenin on *Vperyod*, 1904. Active in St. Petersburg during 1905 Revolution. Arrested. Emigrated. Elected to Central Committee at 1907 Congress. Co-editor of *Proletarii*, 1908. Arrested same year and exiled. Escaped abroad. 1909 co-editor of *Sotsial Demokrat* and *Proletarii*. Co-author with Lenin of *Socialism and War*. Represented party with Lenin at Kienthal and Zimmerwald conferences. Member of bureau of Zimmerwald Left. Returned to Russia March 1917 with Lenin. Opposed Lenin on April Theses, October Revolution and Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. President of Northern Commune. Member Military Revolutionary Committee of 7th Army during civil war. President of Committee for the Defence of the Republic. Chairman of Executive Committee of the Communist International. After Lenin's death joined Stalin against Trotsky. Broke with Stalin 1925 and joined Left Opposition. Expelled from Party 1927. Capitulated and readmitted 1928. Expelled again 1932 and sent to Siberia. Recanted. Framed in Kirov assassination case and given 10 year sentence. Given death sentence and shot in 1936 Moscow Trials.