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V. I. LENIN JOSEPH STALIN

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ON September 15, 1917, the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, the headquarters of which were then in Petrograd, received two letters from Lenin through the usual secret channels. The leader of the revolution, who had been obliged to go into hiding, insisted that the Bolsheviks should take state power into their own hands.

What were the circumstances that gave rise to this demand? What changes in class relationships impelled the Bolsheviks to raise the question of capturing power at that particular moment?

The Kornilov revolt in August, 1917, had been suppressed, and Kornilov himself together with his associates —Generals Denikin, Lukomsky, Erdeli, Markov, *et al.*— were under arrest. But General Alexeyev, who had been a party to the Kornilov plot, had been appointed Chief of Staff at General Headquarters. As for the proceedings against Kornilov himself, they were being conducted in such a manner that the General appeared as accuser rather than accused. He was given free access to all secret documents, and through the medium of proxies was able to publish whatever he found necessary about the trial. His "jail" was the building of the Girls' School in Bykhov, and his guard the Tekinsky Regiment, which had but recently been his personal bodyguard.

Under such a " prison " régime and with so " watchful " a guard, Kornilov, who had the advantage of being freed from the difficult and arduous task of commanding an army, could analyse his defeat at leisure and elaborate new plans. Dispatch riders were constantly scurrying between Bykhov and General Headquarters of the Russian army ; officers visited Kornilov freely, supplying him with important information and news. Influential bankers and representatives of foreign powers visited him in " jail." All this afforded Kornilov the opportunity of elaborating a new plan of attack on the revolution —the second Kornilov plot. This time Kornilov and the counter-revolutionary forces that were behind him endeavoured to concoct a much more thorough-going plan of action, involving incomparably greater forces. In August it had been planned to throw a mere corps of 15,000-20,000 men against Petrograd. Now all plans were based on hundreds of thousands, to include in the first place the shock battalions, consisting of approximately 50,000 picked men recommended by their officers, the Junker Schools, the Officers' Training Schools and the senior grades of the Cadet Corps, numbering 45,000-50,000 excellently equipped men, and the cavalry divisions, mainly Cossack units. In addition, particular attention was paid to the Czechoslovak Corps, which the Tsarist Government had begun to form, but which had actually been fully organised under the Provisional Government. By October this corps numbered over 30,000 men trained on the French model and commanded by picked officers. The corps was disposed on the right bank of the Dnieper, so that it could easily occupy all the railway junctions and cut off the south-western front from Petrograd and Moscow, which were preparing to rise.

Besides these forces, there was the Polish Corps, under

General Dowber-Musnicki. This corps was made up of Poles who had seen regular service in the old army and had been recommended by two Polish officers. There were three times as many officers in it as in any regular army corps. It is not difficult to understand what side the Polish Corps was on under these circumstances. The corps was stationed in Byelorussia. In the event of an uprising in Petrograd, it could quickly cut off the western front and hold up any troop trains that attempted to go to the assistance of the insurgent workers.

The instigators of the second Kornilov plot could thus count on 200,000-250,000 men. With the existence of an army at least ten million strong, a quarter of a million would, on the surface of it, not appear to be of decisive account. But by that time the army was no longer an efficient fighting force. Two hundred thousand soldiers massed in a single driving force could compel wavering regiments to act on its side. It was on this that Kornilov was banking. Such were the plans of the counter-revolutionaries.

The historians who endeavoured to reconstruct the picture of the second Kornilov plot at the instance of the Editorial Board of the *History of the Civil War in the U.S.S.R.* were faced with a difficult task, for no documents on the second Kornilov plot were to be found in any of the archives. No records whatever existed. Those who had participated in the plot had left practically no traces. It was necessary to proceed in a roundabout and fairly tortuous way that promised much labour and no few disappointments.

First of all they set about studying the daily ordinances that had been issued by the General Staff during the months of September and October, 1917. At first glance it seemed an almost hopeless task to find the necessary

clue in the tedious batch of marching orders issued to the various units. But one particular circumstance struck the investigators. In the latter part of September, Cossack regiments and occasionally entire divisions had begun to be withdrawn from the front and transferred to the rear. The official reason for this movement was everywhere the same frequently repeated statement : " Shortage of fodder at the front."

But when further investigation revealed where the Cossack units were being dispatched to, it became clear that it was not at all a matter of fodder. Two divisions had been sent to Finland, one division to the Donbas and one to Bryansk. There was not even a hint of fodder in these districts. The fact was that from Finland it was possible to reach Petrograd in forty-eight hours, while from Bryansk and the Donbas it was possible to move on the north and cut off the road connecting Moscow with the Ukraine and the south-western front.

The disposition of the cavalry contingents clearly disclosed the reason for their movements : the cavalry was being put in readiness to fight against the revolution.

In this way the clue was discovered, differing from the mythical clue of Ariadne in that, instead of leading from the labyrinth, it was a guide to its very depths. A closer study was made of the movements of the regiments and the nature of the newly formed units. The so-called shock battalions were examined more thoroughly. This was the name given to the battalions of Cavaliers of the Cross of St. George, of kulaks' sons, undergraduates, etc., formed in 1917. Again, according to the official version, these battalions had been organised to assist the regular army, with a view to reinforcing the regiments that showed a disinclination to fight, and thus welding the disintegrating army together. Nevertheless, despite the

official declarations, the shock battalions had not been dispatched to the front where they were needed, but, strangely enough, had been moved closer to Petrograd. More than forty such battalions had been grouped along the northern and western fronts in such a way as to enable them to reach Petrograd or Moscow in a day or two, cut off all communication between the two cities, and between these cities and the front-line troops.

Thus, step by step, the picture of the military forces at the disposal of the counter-revolution was reconstructed and the plan of the plot itself established. Lenin did not have all this detailed information at his disposal—it is only recently that the data came to light through research in the archives. At that time Lenin was compelled to live in hiding. But the force of the great theory of Marxism-Leninism and the insight of Lenin as a leader showed themselves in the fact that he was able to foresee the plans of the adversary. With his thorough knowledge and understanding of the laws of social development, the master dialectician was able to see through to what underlay the shifts taking place in the camp of the enemy, and to draw the proper conclusions therefrom.

Hounded by spies and circumscribed as he was by the difficulties of life in hiding, Lenin nevertheless followed the course of events with the closest attention. As if he were seated high up in a watch-tower, the leader of the Party cast his glance over the whole of the enormous country, over the whole world, analysed every step of the revolution and gave militant and effective direction to the Bolshevik Party and its General Staff—the Central Committee.

In the three months from August to November 1917 alone Lenin wrote over sixty articles and letters,

constituting an entire volume when they were subsequently published. Among these were such works as " State and Revolution," " The Threatening Catastrophe and How to Avert It," " The Crisis Has Matured," " Will the Bolsheviks Maintain Power ? ", letters on the uprising and numerous additional documents of enormous international significance.

In his brilliant articles, written so simply that every worker could comprehend them, Lenin laid bare the most intricate weavings of the bourgeois, Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik press, tore the mask from the faces of the Kornilovite Socialists—Kerensky and Co.—mercilessly castigated the traitors to the revolution, criticised the slightest manifestation of vacillation in the ranks of the Bolsheviks, and at every stage of the revolution pointed out the path and methods of struggle for the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Lenin providentially saw that the bourgeoisie was adopting a new form of struggle, that it was making preparations for a civil war against the workers and peasants.

Civil war is the highest form of class struggle; in it all the inherent antagonisms of the class struggle become more acute and the class struggle develops into an armed conflict. Civil war is also the acutest form of class struggle ; all society is divided into two hostile camps, and the question of power is decided by force of arms.

Continuing and further developing Marx's doctrine, Lenin wrote as follows about the essence of civil war :

> " . . . experience . . . shows us that civil war is the sharpest form of the class struggle ; it is that point in the class struggle when clashes and battles, economic and political, repeating themselves, growing, broadening, becoming acute, turn into an armed struggle of one class against another class." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXI, p. 231.)

And it was precisely this acute stage that the Russian revolution reached in September-October, 1917.

This was confirmed by the radical changes in the *forms of struggle* of all classes of the population.

First of all, the proletariat's strike form of struggle underwent a radical change. Even before the Kornilov affair the proletariat, under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, had engaged in strikes that had constantly assumed larger dimensions. Economic strikes had grown into political strikes, becoming interwoven with the latter and displaying an unswerving tendency to spread; accumulating, as it were, the forces for a decisive blow. But after the counter-revolutionary Kornilov revolt was suppressed a new feature appeared in the working-class strikes, as illustrated by the following : the workers of the Helferich-Sade Works in Kharkov declared a strike, drove out the plant management and took over the running of the plant themselves. In a number of leather works in Moscow the workers removed their managers, bosses, etc., and elected strike committees which were entrusted with keeping production going. The new feature in the strike movement was that the proletariat not only went on strike, but drove out the capitalists, took over the factories and ran them themselves.

To-day, upon looking over the various documents relating to the year 1917 on the question of the labour movement, one can find thousands of facts confirming this state of affairs. Lenin, of course, had no such reference documents. He knew only of isolated instances which had somehow found their way into the Press. But on the basis of these facts the great revolutionary leader arrived at the general conclusion that the strikes of the

workers had already arrived at the stage of insurrection and that the proletarian struggle was already faced with the question of power.

In the same way the form of the peasant movement also changed radically. The peasants had waged a struggle against the landlords before the Kornilov revolt. In various parts of the country they had mown down the landlords' meadows, seized the fields and felled the trees on the landed estates, but this struggle had been comparatively peaceful. The Kornilov revolt showed the peasants that if Kornilov had been victorious the landlords would have returned to their well-feathered nobles' nests together with him. The peasants everywhere had gone over to a new form of struggle : they had begun to seize the estates, set fire to them and appropriate the farm property. As if they were endeavouring to finish up what had been left undone in the 1905 revolution, when approximately 2,000 noblemen's manors had been wrecked, the peasants all over the country proceeded in common to seize the manors.

Greatly alarmed by this state of affairs, the Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks tried to comfort themselves and their friends by fabricating false data intended to hide the true situation.

These petty-bourgeois " book-keepers of the revolution " cooked up reassuring data about the peasant movement. Lumping all forms of the movement together, they arrived at the " reassuring " conclusion that in September the peasant movement as a whole was on the decline. Take, for instance, the records of the bourgeois militia, which show the increase in the trampling down of landlords' fields, arbitrary harvesting, refusals to pay rent and wrecking of manors. Passing from these general figures to a detailed analysis one immediately becomes

aware of the dishonesty of these figure-juggling " book-keepers of the revolution," for they have lumped both the peaceful and the violent forms of struggle under one heading. Look at the figures for the trampling down of landlords' fields, arbitrary harvesting, etc., apart from the wrecking of manors, and it is at once apparent that, while the peaceful forms of struggle increased from February to August, from September they decreased with an accompanying increase in the violent forms : seizure of estates, burning of manors, and division of farm implements and livestock. At present we are in possession of numerous statistical compilations and documents which confirm this change in the form of the peasant struggle. Here again is shown the brilliant penetration of Lenin, who without all this data which we now have was able to arrive at the conclusion that the peasant movement had evolved into a peasant insurrection.

An acute change in the nature of the movement for national emancipation also took place. Beginning with February, this movement had been headed by the bourgeois nationalists, who for a short time had succeeded in duping the masses and occasionally even directly forcing a definite part of them to follow their lead.

After the suppression of the Kornilov revolt the nature of this movement changed most decidedly. The working people of the oppressed nations tried to extend a hand to the peasants and workers of Russia, over the heads of their " leaders," so that together they could march against the Provisional Government. The masses of the people began to understand that the only way they could destroy the old Tsarist " prison of nations " was under the leadership of the Bolsheviks. In September, 1917, a spontaneous movement flared up in Tashkent. The representatives of the Provisional Government fled. For

a time the working people were masters of the city. This does not mean that Soviet power was victorious in Tashkent before Petrograd. Such an assertion would be incorrect if only for the fact that the movement in Tashkent was not in the hands of the Bolsheviks. What, then, did the Tashkent events indicate ? They indicated that all the contradictions had become intensely aggravated, finally reaching a climax in those places where they were most rife—in the national and colonial districts. It is of interest to note that on the eve of the February Revolution, too, it was in Central Asia, where the contradictions were particularly acute, that they came to a head. On the eve of the October Revolution, the events in Tashkent indicated that the movement for national emancipation had adopted a new form of struggle for power.

Finally, a radical change took place in the movement in the army, where the Bolsheviks had been carrying on an enormous amount of work to open the eyes of the soldiers, to win them over to their side. In numerous regiments and divisions the soldiers had driven out their old officers, electing new commanders from their own ranks and taking over command of the units themselves. Such instances had been known previously also, but they were isolated cases and did not bear a mass character. After the Kornilov revolt had been put down, millions of soldiers realised that the rebellion of the generals aimed at the restoration of the monarchy and hence the prolongation of the war. The soldiers were seized with horror at the thought of the possibility of having to spend a fourth winter in the trenches. They went over to the new form of struggle with a vengeance : kicked out the Social-Revolutionary and Menshevik windbags from their regiments, re-elected their committees, voted

for the Bolsheviks, drove out their officers, and in many places, in the navy, even killed them. More than that—the soldiers came out as agitators for a peasant uprising. In thousands of letters sent from the front the soldiers advised the peasants to drive out the landlords and seize the land. Behind the lines, the soldiers themselves initiated such movements. The soldiers' movement clearly manifested a tendency to merge with the peasant movement.

It was this change in the form of struggle that permitted the brilliant dialectician, Lenin, to draw the conclusion that the revolutionary crisis, foretold at the Sixth Congress of the Party in August, 1917, was at hand, making it possible for the Bolsheviks to raise the question of overthrowing the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Between September 12 and 14—unfortunately, it has been impossible to establish the exact date—Lenin wrote his letter to the Central Committee of the Party in which he formulated his conclusions :

> " Having obtained a majority in the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies of both capitals, the Bolsheviks can, and must, take over the power of government." (Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. VI, p. 215.)

Lenin explained why it was that insurrection stood on the order of the day at that particular moment :

> " To be successful, insurrection must rely not upon conspiracy and not upon a party, but upon the advanced class. That is the first point. Insurrection must rely upon the rising revolutionary spirit of the people. That is the second point. Insurrection must rely upon the *crucial moment* in the history of the growing revolution, when the activity of the advanced ranks of the people is at its height, and when the *vacillations*

in the ranks of the enemies and *in the ranks of the weak, half-hearted and irresolute friends of the revolution* are strongest. That is the third point." (*The Russian Revolution*, by Lenin and Stalin, p. 191.)

These three factors existed.

"We have the following of the majority of a *class*, the vanguard of the revolution, the vanguard of the people, which is capable of carrying the masses with it." (*Ibid.*, p. 192.)

The racked and famine-stricken people realised that only the proletariat could give them peace, land and bread.

"We have the following of the *majority* of the people." (*Ibid.*, p. 192.)

A lack of faith in their forces, a lack of cohesion, could be felt in the camp of the closest allies of the bourgeoisie.

As is known, after the overthrow of the autocracy in February, 1917, the Provisional Government, with the consent of the Mensheviks and Social-Revolutionaries, had refrained from proclaiming Russia a republic, under the pretext that the question of the form of government, like all the other burning questions of the revolution, was a matter to be decided by the Constituent Assembly, the convocation of which was constantly being put off. Immediately after the revolt of General Kornilov, the Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, under pressure of the masses, had inclined towards the revolution, demanding that Russia be declared a republic. But this shift to the Left was extremely short-lived. Realising that they had not succeeded in increasing their prestige among the masses, while the bourgeoisie was regarding them askance, the Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks backed up again into their old bourgeois stalls.

Vacillation was also manifest in the camp of the bourgeois party of the Constitutional-Democrats (Cadets). The latter were unable to obviate the antagonisms between their two groups. The Lefts were demanding an agreement with the Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, while the Rights were negotiating with the Black Hundreds. Of course, these antagonisms should not be exaggerated, but nevertheless, in the existing conditions of revolutionary crisis, these differences weakened the enemy camp.

The chief allies of the Russian bourgeoisie, the imperialists of the Entente, were also wavering between a war to a victorious conclusion and a separate peace with German imperialism against Russia for the purpose of crushing the Russian revolution.

French historians have published telegrams that had been kept out of the Press in 1917 by the censors. Even from this meagre information it is obvious that unrest had begun to manifest itself among the French troops in the autumn of 1917. The soldiers demanded peace. The anti-war movement had seized on whole corps, spreading to the British units as well. Poincaré has admitted in his Memoirs that there was not a single corps in the French Army that could have been dispatched to Paris for the purpose of suppressing a possible uprising of the workers. The imperialists were feeling the menace of revolution in their own countries too.

Urged on by their fear of revolution, Great Britain and France began to send out feelers with regard to the possibility of concluding peace with Germany. The response on the part of Germany was all that could be desired. At the beginning of September, a German representative approached the French Minister of Foreign Affairs with a proposal to conclude peace. Germany

agreed to concessions to France and Great Britain in the West provided she would receive her share in the East. The erstwhile enemies prepared to make peace at the expense of Russia.

Negotiations were conducted in the strictest secrecy. All rumours that found their way into the Press were declared to be lies by the respective governments. However, the negotiations dragged out: evidently the imperialists were demanding too much of one another. Germany then endeavoured to start negotiations with Russia about a separate peace.

Lenin knew nothing of these negotiations. But his great powers of penetration enabled him to predict not only the negotiations between these two imperialist groups, but also the attempt of Germany to conclude a separate peace with Russia. Information has recently come to light which definitely confirms Lenin's brilliant insight.

In his memoirs on the revolution, written after the conclusion of the Civil War, Francis, American Ambassador to Russia at that time, tells the following facts. Tereshchenko, then Minister of Finance and Minister of Foreign Affairs, he says, visited Archangel and dined with him twice. He was using the assumed name Titov. He had gone to Kolchak on a special mission from Gulkevich, Russian Ambassador to Sweden. Tereshchenko assured Francis that he had received favourable peace terms from Germany about August 1 and that the only person he had shown them to had been Kerensky.

Behind the backs of the people, the counter-revolutionaries, like Nicholas Romanov on the eve of his fall, were preparing to sell out the country only to free their hands for the struggle against the revolution.

Lenin concluded his letter to the Central Committee as follows:

"All the objective conditions for a successful insurrection exist. We have the exceptional advantage of a situation in which *only* our success in the insurrection can put an end to that most harassing thing on earth, vacillation, which has worn the people out; a situation in which *only our* success in the insurrection can *foil* the game of a separate peace directed against the revolution by publicly proposing a fuller, juster and earlier peace *to the benefit* of the revolution." (*Ibid.*, p. 193.)

The great leader of the revolution called on the Party to proceed to insurrection. As yet, Lenin did not speak of the exact date for the uprising in his letters. In his opinion, this question could be settled only by decision of those who were in touch with the workers and soldiers, with the masses, in other words, by the Central Committee of the Party. Lenin insisted that preparation of the armed uprising be on the order of the day in all work of the Party.

In calling upon the Party to make preparations for armed insurrection, Lenin recommended the Party to change its tactics, above all its attitude towards the Democratic Conference. The latter had been called by the Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks with a view to hoodwinking the masses, as a counterfeit, substitute Constituent Assembly.

The Bolsheviks had participated in the Democratic Conference in order to expose the machinations of the Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks from its platform. But with the adoption of the line of armed insurrection it became impossible to remain in the Conference. To do so would result in misleading the masses, would strengthen the illusions about peaceful development of the revolution and induce the masses to depart from the

revolutionary path. Lenin proposed leaving the Conference after reading a Bolshevik declaration exposing the vile game of the compromisers.

> " Having read this declaration, and having appealed for *decisions* and not talk, for *action* and not resolution-writing, we must *dispatch* our whole fraction to the *factories and the barracks*. Their place is there; the pulse of life is there; the source of salvation of the revolution is there; the motive force of the Democratic Conference is there." (*Ibid.*, p. 195.)

The course that had been adopted of proceeding to armed insurrection demanded that the tactics of participation in the Conference be abandoned for the tactics of boycotting the Conference.

This second letter of Lenin's to the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party was devoted to the question of preparing for armed action, and was entitled " Marxism and Insurrection." Proceeding from the experience of the revolutions that had taken place in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Lenin made a thorough and profound summary of the laws of insurrection. But he did more than sum up the experience, more than develop and continue Marx's and Engels' teaching in the new conditions; he at the same time elaborated concrete directives for the organisation of the uprising in Petrograd.

He wrote:

> " And in order to treat insurrection in a Marxist way, *i.e.* as an art, we must at the same time, without losing a single moment, organise a *staff* of the insurrectionary detachments; we must distribute our forces, we must move the reliable regiments to the most important points; we must surround the Alexandrinsky Theatre [where the Democratic Conference was in session.—*I.M.*]; we must occupy the Peter and Paul Fortress; we must arrest the General Staff and the government; we must move against the junkers and the Savage Division such detachments as will rather die than allow the enemy to approach the centre of the city; we must mobilise the armed workers and call upon them to engage in a last desperate fight; we must occupy the telegraph and telephone stations at once, quarter *our* staff of the insurrection at the central telephone station and connect it by telephone with all the factories, all the regiments, all the points of armed fighting, etc." (*Ibid.*, p. 195.)

Lenin himself did not call this a plan of action, but an illustration of what it means to treat insurrection as an art. But anyone who is aware of the actual course of the subsequent events can see how profoundly Lenin had considered the uprising, how carefully he had studied the requisites for victory. As is known, Lenin's directives were carried out in full in the course of the uprising.

Lenin's letter was discussed by the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party on September 15. At this meeting the only one to speak against Lenin was the traitor, Kamenev.

The Central Committee resolutely rebuffed the terrified coward. Comrade Stalin proposed that the letter be printed and sent out to the largest organisations of the Bolshevik Party, which was done.

> " At the end of September," Stalin wrote on the occasion of the first anniversary of the great proletarian revolution, " the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party decided to mobilise all the forces of the Party for the organisation of a successful uprising." (Stalin, *The October Revolution*, p. 28.)

The entire work of the Party was directed towards the preparation of armed action. By September 17, *viz.*, two days after Lenin's letter was first discussed, Stalin,

editor of the mouthpiece of the Bolshevik Party, was able to write in *Rabochy Put* (*The Worker's Road*), as the *Pravda* was then called :

" The revolution is marching on. Fired at in the July days and ' buried ' at the Moscow Council, it is raising its head again, breaking down the old obstacles, creating a new power. The first line of trenches of the counter-revolution has been captured. After Kornilov, Kaledin is now retreating. In the flames of the struggle the moribund Soviets are reviving. They are once again taking the helm and leading the revolutionary masses.

" *All power to the Soviets* !—such is the slogan of the new movement. . . .

" The straight question which life raises demands a clear and definite answer.

" For the Soviets or against them ? " (Stalin, in *The Russian Revolution*, pp. 196-7.)

Circumventing the censorship with consummate skill, Stalin gave a brilliant example of mass agitation for the armed uprising in the legal press.

Comrade Stalin's leading articles were reprinted in the Bolshevik papers of Moscow, Byelorussia, and the Volga region.

" . . . In Russia the decisive growth of a new power is taking place, a genuine power of the people, a genuinely revolutionary power which is waging a desperate struggle for existence. On the one hand there are the Soviets, standing at the head of the revolution, at the head of the fight against the counter-revolution, which is not yet crushed, which has only retreated, wisely hiding behind the back of the government. On the other hand, there is the Kerensky government, which is shielding the counter-revolutionaries, is coming to an understanding with the Kornilovites (the Cadets !), has declared war upon the Soviets and is trying to crush them so as not to be crushed itself.

" Who will conquer in this struggle ? That is the whole issue now . . . the main thing now is not to draw up general formulas for ' saving ' the revolution, but to render direct assistance to the Soviets in their struggle against the Kerensky Government." (*Lenin and Stalin, 1917*, pp. 481-2.)

The Party entered upon the period of organising an assault. Guided by Lenin's and Stalin's articles, the local organisations reorganised their work, placing the main emphasis in their propaganda and agitation on preparations for an armed uprising.

The pursuance of Lenin's line in the Central Organ roused the protest of Kamenev. This contemptible traitor strove to retard the mobilisation of the masses. At a meeting of the Central Committee on September 20, Kamenev protested against the tone of the paper, which in his opinion was too sharp, and objected to various expressions in the articles. The Central Committee adopted a special decision on this score :

" While postponing a detailed discussion on the question of the running of the Central Organ, the Central Committee recognises that its general line fully conforms with the line of the Central Committee." (*Minutes of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.)*, p. 69, Russ. ed.)

The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party fully approved the line of the Central Organ, which in Stalin's editorials was calmly and firmly pursuing Lenin's policy of preparing for armed action.

Preparations for the armed uprising were conducted in the strictest secrecy. In Petrograd Stalin summoned

representatives of the various districts to a secret meeting in a private apartment, personally instructing them as to what units to get ready for action, what buildings to occupy in the districts, and how to reorganise their agitation. From time to time letters explaining the new course, frequently in code, were sent out to the various regions. Use was also made of messengers, for the most part members of the Central Committee.

On September 21 the Central Committee discussed the tactical measures to be taken in line with the course that had been adopted of preparing for insurrection. It was necessary to decide the question of withdrawal from the Democratic Conference. As a matter of fact, the Conference was living its last hours. The Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, continuing to deceive the masses, had decided to terminate the sitting of the Democratic Conference and to appoint a Provisional Council of the Russian Republic from among its delegates. This new body had the right to interrogate the members of the government, while the latter, as in the British Parliament, could either answer or maintain silence as they chose. The Council of the Republic was not empowered to compel them to answer. In general, the Council had no legislative powers whatsoever.

The Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, however, strove to lend this mongrel body the appearance and rôle of a parliamentary institution. In their Press they called this new body the Preliminary Parliament (Pre-parliament). The Bolsheviks thus had to decide on their attitude towards this new Social-Revolutionary and Menshevik institution. The Central Committee issued instructions not to enter the Pre-parliament and to boycott it. This decision was transmitted to the Bolshevik group in the Democratic Conference.

Kamenev, Ryazanov and Rykov, who were members of the group, were opposed to the decision of the Central Committee. These capitulators and defenders of capitalism, fighting against an armed uprising, insisted on participation in the Pre-parliament. The opponents of the boycott succeeded in securing the support of the majority of the Party representatives in the Democratic Conference ; 77 of the group members, as against 50, expressed themselves in favour of participating in the Pre-parliament, whose task was to dupe the people.

The opponents of insurrection, instead of fighting for the immediate capture of power, continued to cling to participation in the Pre-parliament. This group had to be exposed and overcome.

> " It is the duty of the proletariat, as the leader of the Russian revolution," wrote Comrade Stalin in an editorial of the Central Organ of the Bolshevik Party, *Rabochy Put*, " to tear the mask from this government and to expose its real counter-revolutionary face to the masses. . . . It is the duty of the proletariat to close its ranks and to prepare tirelessly for the impending battles.
>
> " The workers and soldiers in the capital have already taken the first step, by passing a vote of no confidence in the Kerensky-Konovalov government . . .
>
> " It is now for the Provinces to say their word." (*Lenin and Stalin, 1917*, p. 503.)

On September 23 the Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks in the all-Russian Central Executive Committee, under pressure of the masses, had finally passed a decision to convene the Second Congress of Soviets on October 20. Beginning with September 27, the *Rabochy Put* carried the call : " Fellow workers, soldiers and peasants ! Get ready for the All-Russian Congress

of Soviets on October 20 ! Convene Regional Congresses of Soviets immediately ! "

On September 29, the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party resolved to convene a congress of the Soviets of the Northern Region, *i.e.*, Finland, Petrograd and its environs, where a Bolshevik spirit prevailed, on October 5. One of the tasks of the Congress was to expedite the agitational and organisational preparations for armed insurrection. Its decisions were to serve as a model for the Regional Congresses throughout the country.

In the latter half of September the work of preparing for armed insurrection became most intensive in the provinces as well. The Central Committee allocated strictly defined functions to each of the various provinces. The Byelorussian Party organisation, where Frunze and Myasnikov were, was instructed by the Central Committee to put out Bolshevik cordons for the purpoes of intercepting troop trains coming from the western front to the aid of Kerensky. Similar instructions were issued to the Polessye organisation which was located in Gomel and headed by Kaganovich. Troop trains passed through Gomel *en route* to Petrograd and Moscow. The Volga region, where Kuibyshev was, received instructions, first, to keep Kerensky from using the local garrisons ; secondly, to take charge of collecting food supplies for the revolution and to prepare stores of grain for shipment to Petrograd and Moscow after the victory of the revolution. Sverdlov wrote a letter to the Bolsheviks in the Urals instructing them to continue the struggle in the event that the uprising in Petrograd and Moscow fell through. The cities and industrial centres of the Urals, like Shadrinsk, where Zhdanov was, got armed detachments ready for the uprising. The Bolsheviks of Northern Caucasus, in the person of Kirov,

were instructed to threaten Kaledin's positions in the Kuban and Don Region in order to prevent him from moving his troops to the assistance of the other counter-revolutionary forces. An agent of the Central Committee was sent to Voroshilov in the Donetz Basin, where he was chairman of the Bolshevik organisation, editor of the local Party newspaper, and chairman of the Lugansk Soviet, to give him notice of the insurrection. All power here was virtually in Voroshilov's hands. The representatives of the Provisional Government counted for nothing in this district. The people in the Donetz Basin were only waiting for a signal from the Central Committee to remove these representatives.

In the Ufa Region the food committees were in the hands of the Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and it was clear enough that they would try to starve the revolution out. For this reason the Bolsheviks in this region were given instructions to enter these committees, work in them, collect grain and load it on echelons; these echelons, however, were to be placed on sidings and sent on only at the demand of the Central Committee.

In Baku, Shaumyan and Djaparidze were among those who directed preparations for the attack.

There was not a single large region that did not receive some assignment from the Central Committee.

Naturally, however, the work of preparing the assault was most widely developed in Petrograd, where such people as Molotov, Kalinin and Andreyev were working under the direct leadership of Lenin and Stalin. It was here that the plan for the uprising itself was elaborated. It was proposed to rely on the Red Guard, which numbered 12,000 armed men at the beginning of October, the revolutionary sailors of Kronstadt and the Baltic Fleet, and certain units of the Petrograd Garrison.

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On October 3, when preparations for armed action had gone sufficiently far afield, the Central Committee decided to request Lenin to come to Petrograd, so that he would be closer to the centre of events.

Lenin received this decision in Viborg, whence he had made his way from Helsingfors in order to be nearer Petrograd.

Two days later, October 5, the Central Committee resolved to withdraw from the Pre-parliament at its very first sitting.

Lenin arrived in Petrograd on October 7, in conformity with the decision of the Central Committee, and immediately plunged into the preparatory work there.

At this time the international and internal situation had taken a turn such as put a new light on the question of armed insurrection facing the Party.

First of all, there had been a mutiny on the ships of the German Navy stationed in Kiel. The sailors of five cruisers had raised the Red Flag and gone ashore to rouse the garrison to insurrection. The sailors of the *Nuremberg* had thrown their officers overboard and steamed off to Norway to join forces with the Russian revolution. Surrounded by submarines and mine-layers, the ship had been compelled to surrender. After a summary trial by court-martial, many of the sailors had been shot. Approximately 10,000 sailors of the German Navy had taken part in this movement. It was difficult to hush this matter up. Some mention of it had been made in the Reichstag. Lenin understood that revolutionary action on the part of the international working class, which he had foretold, and which revolutionaries abroad were preparing for, was not a matter of the distant future. If mass action had taken place even in such a military prison house as monarchist Germany, it could

be imagined what inflammatory material had accumulated throughout the world.

To-day we can avail ourselves of Poincaré's Memoirs, a compilation of information which the censors had held back in 1917. All this material confirms the existence of a revolutionary situation in England and France.

The correlation of forces within Russia had also changed to a marked degree. News kept coming in from all parts of the country about the growth of the peasant uprising, the national movement for emancipation and the movement in the army. The revolution had made giant strides in one month. On the other hand, the counter-revolutionaries were also taking steps. Kerensky was openly preparing to surrender Petrograd to the Germans, so that the iron heel of the German imperialists might crush the revolution.

With this end in view, it was proposed to withdraw the garrison from Petrograd, ostensibly for the purpose of defending the city against the Germans, but actually in order to remove the garrison from the influence of the Bolsheviks. All this made the question of the armed uprising more pressing.

On October 10, in the evening, a meeting of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party was held. Comrade Sverdlov reported on the situation on the northern and western fronts. A Bolshevik spirit prevailed there. The Minsk Garrison was on the side of the Bolsheviks. But at the same time, the counter-revolutionaries were up to something in those parts. Secret negotiations were in progress between General Headquarters and Staff Headquarters of the Western Front. Cossacks were being drawn to Minsk, and agitation was being carried on against the Bolsheviks. Obviously, preparations were being made to surround and disarm the revolutionary troops.

Lenin took the floor after Sverdlov and delivered a report on the current situation. After making a detailed analysis of the international and internal situation, Lenin pointed out the great importance of thoroughgoing technical preparations for armed insurrection.

> " Politically," Lenin summed up, " the situation has become entirely ripe for the transfer of power. . . . It is necessary to speak of the technical side. This is the whole matter." (*The Russian Revolution*, p. 214.)

Lenin particularly stressed the fact that the political situation had matured, and that it was now a question of the time of the uprising. He came out with the direct proposal to utilise the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region and the readiness of the Bolshevik-minded Minsk Garrison to take the offensive " to begin decisive action."

Lenin was convinced of the necessity for an immediate offensive ; in his opinion further delay would be fatal, and he proposed that any pretext be seized on to begin the uprising either in Petrograd or in Moscow, in Minsk or in Helsingfors. But under the given circumstances, the decisive battle—irrespective of where the uprising began or its immediate cause—had to be fought in Petrograd, the political centre of the country and the cradle of the revolution.

Thus, Lenin considered that the point at issue at that particular moment was the setting of the *date* for the uprising.

His conclusions were embodied in a short resolution drawn up by himself and outlining the Party directives with exceptional precision and clarity :

> " The Central Committee recognises that the international position of the Russian revolution (the revolt in the German Navy, which is an extreme manifestation of the growth throughout Europe of the world socialist revolution ; the threat of conclusion of peace by the imperialists with the object of strangling the revolution in Russia), as well as the military situation (the indubitable decision of the Russian bourgeoisie and Kerensky and Co. to surrender Petrograd to the Germans), and the fact that the proletarian party has gained a majority in the Soviets—all this, taken in conjunction with the peasant revolt and the swing of popular confidence towards our Party (the elections in Moscow), and, finally, the obvious preparations being made for a second Kornilov affair (the withdrawal of troops from Petrograd, the dispatch of Cossacks to Petrograd, the surrounding of Minsk by Cossacks, etc.)—all this places the armed uprising on the order of the day.
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> " Considering, therefore, that an armed uprising is inevitable, and that the time for it is fully ripe, the Central Committee instructs all Party organisations to be guided accordingly, and to discuss and decide all practical questions (the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region, the withdrawal of troops from Petrograd, the action of our people in Moscow and Minsk, etc.) from this point of view." (Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. VI, p. 303.)

At the meeting of the Central Committee, Kamenev and Zinoviev, who were subsequently exposed as traitors, spoke against Lenin.

These defenders of capitalism were resolutely rebuffed by the Bolshevik Central Committee. No one supported these arrant capitulators, and Lenin's resolution became the directive for the entire Bolshevik Party.

The preparations for armed insurrection entered a decisive phase. First of all, it was decided to open the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region, which had

been called for October 10, but postponed in connection with the Central Committee meeting. On October 11 a meeting of the Bolshevik delegates to the Congress was held, at which the decision of the Central Committee was reported. Then the Congress itself was opened amidst the greatest enthusiasm. All its resolutions were permeated with a spirit of resolute action. These resolutions served as a model for the other Regional Congresses.

On the eve of the famous meeting of the Central Committee, October 9, the Provisional Government had ordered the withdrawal of troops from Petrograd under the pretext of dispatching them to the front to fight the Germans, who were supposedly preparing an attack on the city. On the same day a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet was held, at which a resolution calling upon the garrison " actively to prepare, in the event of necessity, for the withdrawal of the regiments of the garrison from Petrograd for the defence of the approaches to the city " was put through by a majority vote of one.

A decision was made to set up a special Committee of Revolutionary Defence to assist the Government in withdrawing the garrison.

On the following day, the Petrograd Soviet rescinded this Menshevik resolution and adopted another : " Kerensky's government is ruining the country . . . The salvation of Petrograd and the country lies in the transfer of power to the Soviets. . . . "

On October 12, at a meeting behind closed doors, the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet decided, against two dissenting votes, that the garrison troops should not be withdrawn and that a Revolutionary Military Committee should be set up to see to the carrying out of this decision. On October 13, the Soldiers' Section of

the Petrograd Soviet endorsed the organisation of Revolutionary Military Committees. The Revolutionary Military Committee thus became the legally functioning headquarters of the uprising.

The plan for the uprising was based on the directives given by Lenin in his letter " Marxism and Insurrection." It was proposed to summon the Baltic sailors from Helsingfors to the capital to reinforce the Petrograd units, for which purpose a coded telegram was drawn up stating : " Dispatch the field regulations." This meant : the uprising has begun, send on armoured cruisers and detachments of sailors.

In every district, committees of three were set up, consisting of the Chairman of the Soviet, the Party secretary of the district, and a representative of the district Red Guard. These committees kept a close watch on all military institutions, banks and government offices of their respective districts. Definite units of Red Guards were assigned to occupy various institutions in their districts ; other were assigned to go to the Smolny. Representatives of the Central Committee made the rounds of all the railway junctions around Petrograd to ascertain whether Bolshevik cordons had been posted in those places to stop Kerensky's troop trains. The Bolshevik organisations were instructed to disarm the soldiers in case of necessity.

Moscow was notified of the fact that the uprising would be begun in the course of the next few days. In its turn Moscow passed on the word to Ivanovo, Shuya, Orekhovo, etc. Every town received definite instructions. A special code was worked out for purposes of communication with all Regional centres.

During these days—that is, between October 10 and 15—in accordance with the instructions of the Central

they considered the uprising a rash venture. This statement was received by Sukhanov, the editor, who handed it over to his fellow Party members. The secret of the contemplated uprising was divulged to the enemy. A meeting of the Bureau of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee was called immediately. The Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, who predominated at this meeting, passed a decision to postpone the convocation of the Second Congress of Soviets from October 20 to October 25, and to invite all Regional organisations and primarily the military organisations to participate in it.

This manœuvre of the petty-bourgeois counter-revolutionaries was very simple. The Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks hoped that, by postponing the Congress to October 25, they would be able to bring an element of disorganisation into the ranks of the soldiers of the revolution. On the other hand, they counted on using the additional time to pack the Congress with Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. Hitherto the Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks had been opposed to the Congress, had ignored the Congress ; at present, however, they began making feverish preparations for it in the expectation of gaining control over it.

Due to the treachery of Zinoviev and Kamenev, the Provisional Government learned of the preparations that were being made by the Bolsheviks. At that time Kerensky was at General Headquarters in Moghilev ; he was immediately called back to the capital.

On the morning of October 18 the Menshevik paper, the *Novaya Zhizn* (*The New Life*), came out carrying Zinoviev's and Kamenev's statement. Simultaneously with the appearance of the paper, the garrison regiments received an urgent and strictly confidential order, signed by Colonel Polkovnikov of General Headquarters, who

was in command of the Petrograd Military Area. This order called for the following steps to be taken : (1) All attempts at demonstrations in the city were to be suppressed ; (2) anyone found carrying on agitation for an armed uprising was to be arrested and sent to Area Headquarters ; (3) the city was to be divided into districts, in each of which horse and foot patrols were to be posted with the aim of suppressing all signs of unrest ; and (4) all meetings and gatherings were to be prohibited.

In addition to this, Junkers from the military schools in adjoining towns were called out to Petrograd. The Winter Palace Garrison was reinforced, and now numbered 1,600 men. A telegram was sent to the front, demanding the dispatch of troops. Communication was established by direct wire with General Cheremisov, who was in command of the Northern Front, and who was to dispatch cavalry and bicycle detachments to help put down the uprising. The militia was placed under the military authorities and augmented by about 600 picked officers, loyal to the Provisional Government.

In short, such measures were taken as to make it impossible for the uprising to begin within the next few days. If the Bolsheviks had launched the offensive on October 19 or 20 they would have fallen into the trap set by the enemy. The uprising had to be postponed. Such was the practical effect of Zinoviev's and Kamenev's treachery.

The postponement of the uprising, however, did not mean that preparations were to cease.

The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party used this enforced delay to mobilise still greater forces and to prepare still more thoroughly. The first thing that was done was to go over the plan for the armed uprising with an eye to the eventuality that the enemy might

the Bolsheviks had not been joking. All the orders that had been sent out by him came back with the inscription : " Not valid unless countersigned by the Revolutionary Military Committee."

Greatly alarmed, Polkovnikov reported this to Konovalov, vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers. The latter rushed to the Winter Palace to report to Kerensky.

The appointment of regimental commissars and the demand which the Revolutionary Military Committee made on Area Headquarters to submit all its orders to the former for endorsement was taken by the government as the beginning of the actual seizure of power by the Soviets.

The Provisional Government had been living in a state of constantly growing alarm these last days. The Bolsheviks had been keeping the Government in the greatest tension.

All the newspapers were filled with rumours from " reliable sources," hints and prophecies.

On October 15 the *Rech*, the Cadet newspaper, carried the following item :

" Around 1 a.m. on the morning of October 15, Militia Headquarters of the capital began to receive reports from various commissariats about suspicious movements of armed Red Guards."

On the following day the same newspaper wrote :

" The Bolsheviks are preparing to act. Formerly, in order to keep up appearances, they claimed that they were against direct action. Now they have broken all bounds and stop at nothing."

On October 18 :

" The Bolsheviks are preparing a blood bath, feverishly, stubbornly and persistently. They are procuring arms, drawing up a plan of action and occupying vantage grounds."

On October 19 :

" The Bolsheviks are hastily arming the factory and mill workers for the impending outbreak. On October 17 and 18 arms—rifles and revolvers—were issued to the workers in the Bolshevik stronghold, the Viborg district. On October 18, the workers of Bolshaya and Malaya Okhta and of the Putilov Works received arms."

On October 20 :

" To-day is October 20, a day beginning a momentous week which not only St. Petersburg, but all Russia, associates with new alarms and new anxieties. Let us give credit to the Bolsheviks where credit is due. They are using every possible means to maintain the state of alarm at the necessary high pitch, to render expectations keener and to bring nervous tension to such extremes that guns will begin to shoot of themselves."

Every day the Ministers were besieged with the question : will the Bolsheviks take action to-day ? Konovalov told newspaper correspondents :

" On October 16, the Provisional Government was not aware of the exact date of the Bolshevik outbreak. On the previous day the Provisional Government had begun to receive information that the Bolsheviks had decided to take action on the 19th and not on the 20th, as everyone had supposed. Apparently the Bolsheviks themselves have not yet arrived at a definite decision on this question."

Thus Konovalov tried to comfort himself.

Matters were still further complicated for the Provisional Government by the fact that the Bolsheviks were preparing the assault in the guise of defence. This was a peculiar feature of the Bolshevik tactics of thosedays.

" The revolution," wrote Comrade Stalin, " as it were, camouflaged its offensive actions behind a screen

of defence in order thereby to draw into its orbit the irresolute and wavering elements." (Stalin, *On the October Revolution*, Russ. ed., p. 64.)

The constant state of tension in which the Provisional Government was held by the Bolsheviks caused chaos and disorganisation in its midst. The Government could not emerge from the crisis in which it was plunged. No sooner had the resignation of Malyantovich, the Minister of Justice, been hushed up, than Verkhovsky, the Minister of War, announced his retirement.

On the morning of October 23 the Revolutionary Military Committee made public its appointment of commissars to all military units of the garrison. This announcement stated :

" The persons of the commissars, as representatives of the Soviet, are inviolable. All opposition to the commissars is tantamount to opposition to the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies."

This declaration of the Revolutionary Military Committee served to alarm the Government still more. Kerensky began to move forces to Petrograd in a frenzy of haste. Particularly large contingents were sent to Moscow. There is no doubt but that some one of the traitors secretly informed the enemy of Lenin's proposal to begin the offensive in Moscow. The measures taken by the Government explain in part why the uprising dragged on for several days in Moscow : the counter-revolutionaries had managed to prepare.

The hasty steps taken by Kerensky gave him reason to hope that troops would arrive in short time.

But Kerensky did not know even the approximate date of the Bolshevik uprising. Here it was that the treachery of Trotsky came to the assistance of the Provisional Government. In answer to a question put by a

soldier in the Petrograd Soviet as to whether the Bolsheviks were preparing for an uprising, Trotsky replied that any action the Bolsheviks might take would have to be postponed to October 25, when the Second Congress of Soviets was to open. Kerensky thereupon decided to take action two days before this date.

He immediately summoned General Manikovsky, newly appointed chief of the War Office, and General Cheremisov, Commander-in-Chief of the Northern Front, to see him. Both generals reported on the measures that had been taken to combat the Bolsheviks.

On October 23, in the evening, the Staff of the Petrograd Military Area was closeted in a confidential session with Kerensky. General Bagratuni, Chief of Staff, reported in detail on the measures taken to deal with the Bolshevik rising.

It was decided at this meeting to launch the attack on October 24. A plan was adopted and transmitted to the regimental commanders.

It was late at night when the meeting broke up.

The Commander of the Finnish Regiment gave this plan to a typist to be typed in several copies. The latter made an extra copy of the plan and that same night delivered it to the Revolutionary Military Committee.

The Revolutionary Military Committee, in its turn, had decided to begin the uprising no later than October 24. The copy of Kerensky's plan merely served to confirm the correctness of this decision, for it had become quite clear that the counter-revolutionaries were trying to forestall the revolution. By order of the Revolutionary Military Committee each regiment sent out two liaison men, who were to be on duty in the Smolny.

About six o'clock on the morning of October 24 several armoured cars carrying Junkers and militiamen

appeared at the premises of the printing shop of the *Rabochy Put* (*Workers' Path*), which was appearing in place of the *Pravda* that had been banned by the Kerensky government, with a warrant of the Provisional Government dated October 23 for the confiscation of the paper and the arrest of the editor. The workers refused to recognise this warrant, since it was not countersigned by the Revolutionary Military Committee, and a regular uproar set in. At the sound of the fracas, workers who were hurrying to the factories in the early hours of the morning began to gather at the printing shop. Among them were a number of Red Guards, one of whom informed the secretary of the Rozhdestvenka District Committee of the Party about the raid that had been made on the central organ of the Party. The latter rang up Stalin.

Stalin immediately called up the armoured car division, which was loyal to the Bolsheviks, and at the same time warned the Revolutionary Military Committee that Kerensky was attempting to smash the *Rabochy Put*. The Revolutionary Military Committee dispatched two companies of the Lithuanian Regiment that were on duty. The revolutionary soldiers and the Red Guards pressed back the armoured cars and placed a reinforced guard over the printing shop and the editorial offices of the *Rabochy Put*. Towards 11 a.m. the *Rabochy Put* came out with a call for the overthrow of the Provisional Government.

Around 10 a.m. Kerensky, who had occupied the apartment of Alexander the Third (apparently in preparation for assuming the rôle of Napoleon), descended to the offices of the Provisional Government and informed the Ministers that the planned attack on the Bolsheviks had been launched. The Ministers proposed that

Kerensky should deliver this information to the meeting of the Pre-Parliament in order to secure the assistance of the latter. After having received a report from Polkovnikov to the effect that soldiers had been dispatched from the front, that cycle detachments would arrive at Petrograd on the 24th, and that trustworthy people had been sent out to meet them, Kerensky left for the session of the Pre-parliament. When he arrived, the Menshevik Minister Nikitin was delivering a lengthy and tedious report on the chaos in the food situation throughout the country. The deputies were rambling about in the corridors. Suddenly they caught sight of Kerensky. His agitated appearance was plain to see. The deputies began to flock back to the hall. As soon as Nikitin left the platform, Kerensky took his place and began immediately :

> " I consider it my duty to quote to you some of the most characteristic passages taken from various proclamations printed in the *Rabochy Put* and written by that arch-criminal Ulyanov-Lenin, who is wanted by the state."

Thereupon Kerensky, amidst shouts and calls from the audience, began to read the passages from Lenin's " Letter to the Comrades " in which he flays the traitors Zinoviev and Kamenev and argues in favour of an armed uprising. Kerensky concluded his speech on an hysterical note :

> " Thus, I must state to the Provisional Council of the Russian Republic that the mood of a certain section of the St. Petersburg population is utterly, openly and definitely an insurrectionary mood."

A regular hubbub arose. Members of the audience demanded that Kerensky explain how it was that he had allowed things to go to such extremes and what steps

he had taken. Amidst the uproar, Konovalov suddenly mounted the steps to the platform and handed Kerensky a note. Kerensky hurriedly read it through and agitatedly raised his hand for silence, indicating that he had not yet concluded his apparently finished speech.

Silence fell. Kerensky continued :

" I have just been handed a copy of a document which is now circulating among the regiments."

In the hushed hall Kerensky read out :

" ' Danger threatens the Petrograd Soviet. You are hereby instructed to keep your regiment in complete military preparedness and to await further orders. Any delay or failure to comply with this order will be deemed treachery to the revolution. The Revolutionary Military Committee '."

Pandemonium broke loose. The deputies rushed to the platform with clenched fists. Kerensky was accused of being to blame for the uprising that was beginning. The deputies demanded that the most stringent measures be taken. At 2.5 p.m., amidst stormy applause, Kerensky, having secured the consent of all Parties to any measures that he might see fit to take against the Bolsheviks, hastened to the Winter Palace for the purpose of proceeding against the uprising.

While Kerensky had been delivering his hysterical and lengthy speech, a meeting of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party had met in the Smolny. Here, without any speeches or loss of time, the following decision had been adopted : Dzerzhinsky was to occupy the Post and Telegraph Office, the two representatives of the Kronstadt Soviet who were in Petrograd at the time were to be sent to Kronstadt, Moscow was to be informed of the commencement of the armed uprising, for which purpose one representative was to be sent

there that day and another the next, two thousand Red Guards were to be summoned from Revolutionary Headquarters. Sverdlov was instructed to keep a watch over every step of the Provisional Government.

In short, the entire carefully prepared mechanism of insurrection had been set in motion.

At 3 p.m., when Junker detachments appeared at the drawbridges on Kerensky's orders to raise them and cut off the working-class districts from the centre, the counter-revolutionary troops found Red Guards, sailors and soldiers from the garrison already posted there by order of the Revolutionary Military Committee. As a matter of fact, they had been there for so long that the Red Guards at the Nikolayevsky Bridge had settled down for a nap, and the Junkers, taking them by surprise, seized the bridge.

Learning of this, the Revolutionary Military Committee issued orders to the commissar of the cruiser *Aurora* to land a party and recapture the bridge.

Around 5 p.m. the Peter and Paul Fortress finally went over to the side of the revolution.

By 5 p.m. the Telegraph Office had been taken. Code messages were immediately sent out to all regions with the information that the uprising had begun.

A note describing all the measures that had been taken was sent to Lenin, who was anxiously awaiting news at his secret lodgings in the Viborg district. He hastily wrote a note asking permission of the Central Committee to go to the Smolny. The housewife in whose apartment Lenin was staying undertook to deliver the note, but was unable to cross by way of the Nikolayevsky Bridge since the Junkers had occupied it. Therefore she delivered the note to the Viborg District Committee of the Party, and from there its contents

were transmitted by 'phone to Stalin at the Smolny. The latter replied that it would be too dangerous for Lenin to leave his place of concealment.

Upon receiving this reply, Lenin wrote another letter, this time a fairly long one. This is the famous letter that begins as follows :—

> " Comrades,
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> " I am writing these lines on the evening of October 24. The situation is critical in the extreme. It is absolutely clear that to delay the insurrection now will veritably be fatal. . . .
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> " We must at all costs, this very evening, this very night, arrest the government, first disarming (defeating, if they offer resistance) the Junkers and so forth . . . under no circumstances must the power be left in the hands of Kerensky and Co. until the 25th—not under any circumstances ; the matter must be decided unconditionally this very evening, or this very night." (*The Russian Revolution*, pp. 230-1.)

Taking this letter, the same comrade made her way to the Smolny. She was obliged to go all the way on foot, as the street-cars were not running. By the time she returned, the Central Committee had already sent for Lenin. There was a representative of the Central Committee in the apartment. In order to avoid an argument with his hostess, Lenin sent her to the Smolny with a third note to the Central Committee. When she returned the apartment was dark. No one was at home. The table was set for two in preparation for the evening meal. And on the bottom of one plate was scrawled : " I have gone to the place you didn't want me to go to."

Lenin had donned a wig, put a bandage around his face, and, accompanied by the Central Committee representative, had gone out.

On the way a street-car passed them, headed for the depot. Lenin hopped on through the front entrance. The driver was a woman.

" Where are you rushing to ? " he asked.

" What a question ! " she replied. " And you a worker, too ! Not to know where we're going ! Why, we're going to knock the stuffings out of the bourgeois ! "

Upon hearing this, Lenin began to explain to the driver what was behind all these events. His companion was on pins and needles. The car was packed and Lenin might be recognised at any minute. Fortunately, the car turned into the terminus just then and the two jumped off.

They arrived at the Smolny around midnight, after many difficulties. Lenin immediately went upstairs to the second storey, sent for Stalin, and, without removing his wig, sat down on a window-sill to wait for him. Just then the Menshevik Dan came out of the Conference Hall carrying a package. Undoing the package, he turned to his companions and said :

" I'm frightfully hungry. Wouldn't you like some sandwiches ? "

Quite by chance, he glanced in the direction of the window and apparently recognised Lenin. Slowly he tied up his package again and moved off to the door. Laughing and winking, the others shuffled out after him.

Stalin came in and told Lenin about all the measures that had been taken.

After midnight messengers carrying news of the uprising hurried through the city, calling out new detachments. According to a pre-arranged plan, these detachments occupied the premises of Government institutions. They met with no resistance on the part of the guards. In one place the soldiers declared that

they would not surrender. The Red Guards unslung their rifles, but it soon became clear that it was all a misunderstanding—the soldiers meant that they would not surrender to the Provisional Government; as for the Revolutionary Military Committee, they were only too eager to assist it in every way. The two detachments thus remained on guard there.

At 1.25 a.m. the post office was occupied. At 2 a.m. the railway stations and the power station were taken. The power was immediately shut off in the Winter Palace. At 6 a.m. the State Bank was seized. Thus the socialist revolution did not repeat the mistake of the Paris Commune, which had left the bank in the hands of the counter-revolutionaries.

At 7 a.m. the Palace Bridge under Kerensky's very windows was taken. Glancing through the window, Kerensky looked out on a sea of Red Guard bayonets. He realised that there could be no question of any attack on his part now. Losing no time, he dashed over to Area Headquarters. Polkovnikov, who had been so confident only the day before, to-day, at the dawn of October 25, announced that not a single regiment had come out, and that even the Cossacks were refusing to budge. During the night the district headquarters of the Red Guard had surrounded the Cossack regiments. When the Cossacks attempted to leave their barracks, they were confronted with machine-guns. Several Junker schools, as, for instance, the Pavlovsky School for Junkers, were likewise surrounded in good time.

Kerensky realised that his only salvation lay in flight. He decided to apply to the foreign powers for assistance. An adjutant was sent to the Italian military attaché with a request for an automobile. The latter said that he would be delighted to give his car to the Supreme Command,

but that he had no petrol. Thereupon the adjutant scurried off to the American attaché. The American said that he would give him a car, but insisted that he be taken to see the Commander-in-Chief. The inquisitive Yankee was then taken to the Winter Palace, where he saw Kerensky and shook hands with him warmly. Kerensky got into the car, which was flying the American flag, and was driven out to the Square.

Seeing the flag of a foreign power, the Red Guards allowed the automobile to pass. Swiftly Kerensky sped down the Nevsky to Tsarskoye Syelo, and from there to Pskov, which was at the front. This flight of the Prime Minister of the last bourgeois government was an admission by Kerensky of the victory of the revolution in Petrograd, not, of course, that the revolution needed any such admission.

At 10 a.m. on the morning of the 25th Lenin wrote the famous manifesto " To the Citizens of Russia " in the Smolny.

> " The Provisional Government has been overthrown. The power of State has passed into the hands of the organ of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the Revolutionary Military Committee, which stands at the head of the Petrograd proletariat and garrison.
>
> " The cause for which the people have fought—the immediate proposal of a democratic peace, the abolition of landlordism, workers' control over production and the creation of a Soviet Government—is assured.
>
> " Long live the revolution of the workers, soldiers and peasants ! "

At 11 a.m. this manifesto could already be seen posted throughout the city. Nothing remained in the hands of the Provisional Government but the Winter Palace.

All Government institutions had been taken without a single shot being fired. All roads leading to Petrograd were in the hands of the revolutionaries.

It was decided to attack the Winter Palace as soon as the sailors arrived from Helsingfors and Kronstadt. The Kronstadt detachment was held up, however, because of stormy weather at sea. Moreover, for every ten men called up, a hundred volunteered, which complicated setting up the detachments and dispatching them.

Meanwhile, at 2.35 p.m. a special meeting of the Petrograd Soviet was opened. Lenin addressed this meeting for the first time after an enforced absence of over three and a half months. In a brief speech, Lenin reported the victory of the revolution.

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

The Petrograd Soviet resolved to place all its 3,000 members at the disposal of the Revolutionary Military Committee.

The meeting had scarcely been concluded when the ships from Kronstadt steamed into the mouth of the Neva. The sailors landed in quick order and took up their posts. The Winter Palace was completely surrounded. Preparations for the assault on the Palace began. The Peter and Paul Fortress was to raise the Red Flag, upon seeing which the *Aurora* would fire a round from its six-inch guns. This was to be the signal for the attack. Wishing to spare the forces of the revolutionary army as much as possible and to save the Palace building itself from destruction, the Revolutionary Military Committee decided to present the Provisional

Government with an ultimatum. The demand to surrender the Palace on pain of artillery fire was hastily written on a scrap of paper and given to a rank-and-file member of the cycle detachment who volunteered to deliver it. Waving a white handkerchief as a flag of truce, the cyclist approached the Winter Palace. The Junkers took him to the Staff Headquarters of the Military Area, which adjoined the Palace. There he met Kishkin, who had been appointed dictator of the city after Kerensky's flight, and his two assistants—Palchinsky and Ruthenberg.

The cyclist delivered the ultimatum. In the rush, they had forgotten to set a time limit for the ultimatum, and the cyclist himself set the limit at twenty minutes.

Seizing the ultimatum, Kishkin dashed into the Palace to confer with the Government. The members of the Provisional Government were in the Malakhitov Hall, from the windows of which the Peter and Paul Fortress and the cruiser *Aurora* could be seen. Before replying, it was decided to consult General Headquarters. Either through treachery or because proper precautionary measures had not yet been taken by the insurgent masses, a connection was established with General Headquarters by direct wire. The tape recording the conversation has been preserved.

Dukhonin reported that troops had been dispatched, and proposed that the Government hold out till they arrived.

Upon receiving this information, the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Menshevik Nikitin, called up Moscow. The telephone operator at the exchange managed to fool the inexperienced Red Guard who was stationed there to keep a check on the calls she put through, and connected Nikitin with Rudnev, the Social-Revolutionary Mayor of Moscow. Rudnev was

informed of the ultimatum, of the conversation with Dukhonin, and of the decision not to surrender. He was also told that, in the event of the arrest of the Provisional Government, he, Rudnev, was charged with the formation of a new government.

Meanwhile the twenty minutes had elapsed. The cyclist turned to General Poradelov and demanded an answer. Poradelov asked for an additional ten minutes, so that he could get in touch with the Winter Palace. The cyclist agreed to give him ten more minutes. While the general was talking to the Palace over the 'phone, the cyclist went out of the building into the street, where, under cover of the darkness, the Red Guards had begun to gather. Exactly ten minutes later the doors of the Staff Headquarters were burst open and the Red Guards entered and arrested Poradelov, who was still at the 'phone, and all the Staff officers.

The news of the seizure of Staff Headquarters was taken to mean the fall of the Winter Palace. All further preparations were stopped and the commanders of the revolutionary troops began to rush towards the Winter Palace. They were met with machine-gun fire. It was going on for 9 p.m. before the whole thing was straightened out and the mistake cleared up. Lenin sent a note from the Smolny to the commander of the revolutionary troops besieging the Winter Palace ordering him to attack immediately. At 9 p.m. a warning shot was fired from the Peter and Paul Fortress, followed by the thunder of the six-inch guns of the *Aurora*. The attack had begun.

The Red Guards rolled out a three-inch gun, mounted it under the arch leading to the Palace Square, and fired two shells point-blank at the Winter Palace. One shell broke off part of the cornice, another hit the room

adjoining the one in which the members of the Provisional Government were sitting. The Ministers moved to the inside rooms of the Palace.

The first group of sailors that forced its way into the Winter Palace was captured, but the appearance of Red Guards within the Palace had caused extreme consternation in the ranks of its defenders. In order to raise the general spirit, Palchinsky called together some of the Junkers and began to deliver a speech to them. He told them that Kerensky's troops were approaching Petrograd and had taken Luga, some thirty kilometers from Petrograd.

Suddenly someone shouted out :

" Luga is not 30 kilometers from Petrograd, but 130 ! You ought to know your geography ! "

The effect of the speech was entirely lost. Palchinsky made no attempt to finish what he had been saying, turned and went out. Some of the Junkers hastened from the hall, shouldered arms and left the Palace. Nevertheless, there were still over 900 armed Junkers, exclusive of officers, in the Palace.

In order to smash the resistance of the defenders of the Winter Palace, artillery fire was opened on it from the Peter and Paul Fortress. As many as thirty shells were fired. At the same time rifle and machine-gun fire opened up. The Provisional Government would fall at any moment now. For the last time Nikitin rang up the Municipal Duma. Kuskova, a Constitutional-Democrat member of the Duma, informed him that a delegation consisting of representatives from all the parties was heading for the Winter Palace. The members of the Municipal Duma were discussing the question of whether to go to the Winter Palace. The floor was taken by

Minister Prokopovich, who complained that he had not been allowed to enter the Palace.

" Now, when our chosen representatives are facing death, let us forget Party differences and brave death together," proposed Prokopovich.

They got out on to the street and began to form ranks. Just then the delegation that had left for the Winter Palace returned. The deputies of the Municipal Duma retraced their steps and entered the building again. The delegation informed them that they had not been permitted to board the *Aurora* or to enter the Winter Palace.

Then Countess Panina took the floor and declared that if the deputies were not permitted to enter the Winter Palace, they could at least stand before the guns and die in front of the Winter Palace.

Once again the deputies went out on to the street and began to fall in. This time a representative of the All-Russian Peasant Council came running up with the request to wait for the members of the Peasant Council. And again they turned back to the Duma premises, again speeches were made and a vote taken. It was already dark when they left the building for the third time. On the way to the Winter Palace they were stopped by a detachment of seven sailors and entered into a dispute with them. The sailors declared that the Revolutionary Military Committee had given orders to allow no one to pass.

Voices were raised in angry shouts. One of the sailors called out sharply above the tumult :

" Disperse to your homes and leave us in peace ! "

It was sufficient for these political corpses to hear a raised voice for them all to turn back.

In any case, it was too late to go to the Winter Palace.

At 11 p.m. sharp a rifle shot rang out as the signal for the final attack. Red Guards rushed the Winter Palace from all sides. In places they were beaten off, but they managed to break in through most of the entrances and began to scatter through the halls on the first and second storeys. They soon came upon the room where the Provisional Government was sitting and placed its members under arrest. Their names were taken down, a check-up was made to see if they were all there, and they were then convoyed to the Peter and Paul Fortress by way of the Troitsky Bridge. When the men at the fortress saw the convoy approaching they opened fire, thinking the enemy was attempting an attack. The order was given to fall prone, and down the Ministers went. After a moment or so the fire ceased. Wet and muddied, the Ministers rose from the ground and entered the fortress. The story goes that when they were being placed in their cells one of the Ministers complained to Uritsky, who had been appointed commandant of the fortress, that the cells were damp and very close ; to which Uritsky replied : " You built these cells yourselves, you have only yourselves to blame."

The news of the capture of the Winter Palace was sent to the Smolny, where the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets had been opened at 10.45 p.m. on Lenin's proposal.

The Bolsheviks secured an overwhelming majority at the Congress. The Mensheviks, Bundists and Right Social-Revolutionaries, seeing that their day was done, left the Congress, announcing that they refused to take any part in its labours. The Congress condemned them and, far from regretting their withdrawal, welcomed it, for with their departure the Congress had become a genuinely revolutionary congress.

The news of the storming of the Winter Palace was received with the wildest enthusiasm.

The Congress proclaimed that all power had passed to the Soviets.

> "Backed by the will of the vast majority of the workers, soldiers and peasants, backed by the victorious uprising of the workers and the garrison which has taken place in Petrograd, the Congress takes power into its own hands," the proclamation of the Second Congress of Soviets read.

Neither Lenin nor Stalin spoke at this sitting of the Congress. The two organisers of the victorious revolution were engaged in work of exceptionally great importance at the time. The Provisional Government had left Petrograd with only a two day's supply of bread and flour, hoping in this way to make the Bolsheviks' first gift to the people—hunger. All day and all night Lenin and Stalin worked at organising armed detachments, placing a Bolshevik in command of each, and sending them out to search the city, to scour the stations, to open all railroad cars, but to find flour or grain. And on October 26 the leaders of the revolution received the report: grain sufficient for ten days had been found. It was only then that Lenin put in his appearance in the Smolny hall. When Lenin took the floor he was unable to begin his speech because of the stormy ovation he was accorded as the leader and organiser of the victorious revolution. Finally, the audience quietened down and Lenin began to speak. Without any solemn declarations, without any long-winded introductions, he started his speech by reading the decree on peace. And this calm, business-like beginning was characteristic of the stern face of the revolution, was characteristic of all the future work. Lenin spoke a second time at this sitting, reading

out the decree on the land, according to which over 150,000,000 dessiatins of former landlord, crown and monastery land passed into the hands of the toiling peasantry. Thunderous applause and cheers burst forth for the third time when the formation of the Council of People's Commissars was announced—the first workers' and peasants' government in the world in the first victorious socialist revolution. Lenin was endorsed as chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, and Stalin, who had built up the Bolshevik Party together with Lenin, who had prepared the Great October Socialist Revolution together with Lenin, who had led it to victory together with Lenin, was confirmed as the People's Commissar of Nationalities.

Not a single revolution in the world was so bloodless as the revolution in Petrograd.

The *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)* analyses the reasons for the victory of the revolution with exceptional profundity.

The Great October Socialist Revolution, it says, was victorious, first, because it "was confronted by an enemy so comparatively weak, so badly organised and so politically inexperienced as the Russian bourgeoisie." (*Op. cit.*, p. 212.)

Russian capitalism had made its appearance on the world arena when all the free territory of the globe had already been occupied by countries in which capitalism had developed much earlier and was consequently on a much higher plane. The only way to wrest a good bit for oneself now was by brute force. Tsarism with its mighty army of one and a half million possessed this quality.

The Russian bourgeoisie needed tsarism as a police force over the proletariat. That is why the bourgeoisie supported tsarism, and especially its predatory foreign

policy. This support partly explains why tsarism existed for so long in Russia, being overthrown only in February, 1917.

But the Crimean campaign (in 1854) had already shown that it was beyond the powers of Russia to compete with capitalist Europe. The unsuccessful war, in which the flintlock of the Russian army was so badly beaten by the rifled bore, tore the mask from the supposed might of tsarism : to the eyes of the astonished world Russia now appeared a colossus with feet of clay. To make up all the shortcomings and to wrest itself from foreign dependence, it was necessary to accelerate the growth of large-scale industry. The tsarist government began to build more railways and more iron and steel works. Subsidies were granted to the capitalists. In order to protect its own capitalists from competition with cheap goods, the Government erected high-tariff barriers, setting substantial duties on imported goods.

Both these measures robbed the masses of the population. It was the people who were fleeced to provide the money for the subsidies granted the capitalists. And the protective tariff obliged the people to overpay for every nail, for every yard of cloth. At the close of the nineteenth century, sheet iron in St. Petersburg sold at from 3 rubles 4 kopeks to 3 rubles 25 kopeks a pood (about 35 lbs.), while in London the price was only about a third as much —1 ruble 13 kopeks. For calico alone the working people of Russia overpaid more than 120,000,000 rubles annually!

Despite government patronage, industry in Russia did not make sufficient progress to catch up with the equipment of Western Europe. It was necessary to apply to foreign capital again and again. And the foreign capitalists were only too eager to advance loans. They never dreamed that tsarism could be swept away by a revolution.

In order to get round the high tariff barriers, French, English, German and Belgian capitalists began to build factories in Russia itself.

Tsarism found itself in a vicious circle. To rid itself of foreign dependence, large-scale industries had been set up in Russia. But the capital required for this purpose came from abroad, and this merely served to increase the dependence on foreign capital.

The Russo-Japanese War and particularly the 1905 Revolution once again forced tsarism to its knees in supplication to foreign capital. The Paris Stock Exchange —at that time the hub of international loan capital—came to the aid of tsarism. The French capitalists needed tsarism in its fight against the German manufacturers, needed it to wring the interest on the old Russian loans from the people, needed it to safeguard the factories of the foreign capitalists in Russia, and most of all needed it to crush the revolution, sparks of which might kindle a mighty conflagration across the Russian border as well.

Russia's state debt rose uncontrollably. The new loans scarcely sufficed to cover the interest on the old.

Rallying from the effects of the defeat in the Russo-Japanese War and crushing the revolution on funds supplied by the foreign imperialists, tsarism became irrevocably enmeshed in the bonds of foreign capital. A number of the principal branches of industry were practically the monopolies of foreign capitalists. The French and British controlled over 70 per cent. of the iron and steel works in Russia the Germans over 10 per cent. The iron and steel industry, locomotive and railway car construction works, machine-building plants, the coal mining and oil industries were almost entirely in the hands of foreigners.

During the World War, Russian dependence on foreign

capital increased sharply. Tsarist Russia conducted the war on funds supplied by the French and British imperialists. In three years the foreign debt tripled, rising from 4,500,000,000 gold rubles to the enormous sum of 12,000,000,000! By cutting down or increasing the credit they extended, the foreign imperialists could direct the policy of tsarism as they chose. Russia became in essence a semi-colony, of which the British and French ambassadors felt themselves the uncrowned rulers. Millions of workers and peasants of Russia perished for the sake of the predatory interests of the foreign imperialists. Countless working people of Russia fell victim because of the policy of the feudal landlords and the bourgeoisie, which was directed towards preserving the backwardness of the country and its dependence on foreign capital.

The bourgeois democratic revolution in February 1917 did not effect any change. The change in government did not change the imperialist nature of the war: under the bourgeois Provisional Government as under the tsarist government the war remained a predatory one and was continued on the very same enslaving loans from the foreign imperialists.

> " From the viewpoint of world policy and international finance capital," wrote Lenin, " the Guchkov-Milyukov government is simply a clerk in the banking firm of ' Britain and France,' an instrument for the continuation of the imperialist slaughter of the peoples." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russ. ed., Vol. XXX, p. 315.)

The entire course of the historical development of Russian capitalism, its backwardness and dependence on foreign capital, explains the weakness and inexperience of the Russian bourgeoisie.

As the *History of the C.P.S.U.(B.)* states:

> " It had neither the experience of the French bourgeoisie, for example, in political combination and political chicanery on a broad scale nor the schooling of the British bourgeoisie in broadly conceived crafty compromise." (*Op. cit.*, p. 212.)

Nor were the compromisers—the Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks—of assistance to the Russian bourgeoisie. In the course of many years of struggle, the Bolsheviks had exposed the Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks as agents of the bourgeoisie. In the stormy months of the revolution of 1917 the Bolsheviks had isolated these compromising agents of the imperialist bourgeoisie by means of their far-reaching and extensive agitational and propaganda work, with the result that the bourgeoisie and its Provisional Government were left without a support.

Another reason for the celerity and success of the socialist revolution was the fact that

> " The October Revolution was headed by so revolutionary a class as the working-class of Russia, a class which had been steeled in battle, which had in a short space passed through two revolutions, and which by the eve of the third revolution had won recognition as the leader of the people in the struggle for peace, land, liberty and Socialism." (*Ibid.*, pp. 212-13.)

The condition of the working class in old Russia was exceptionally difficult. The exhausting working day averaging twelve and a half, and in the textile industry as much as fifteen, hours sapped all energy. Unemployment was a constant threat to the worker. In addition to all this there was not a single capitalist country in the world in which there were so many feudal survivals as existed in tsarist Russia. The dictatorship of the feudal landlord hindered the development of capitalism. The working class of tsarist Russia suffered doubly: both because of

capitalism and because of the insufficient development of capitalism and the lack of all civic rights. Hence it was the working class, which in its very first actions headed the revolutionary movement of all democratic elements in town and country against tsarism. Because of its determination and persistence the working class succeeded in awakening and rousing all the working people, all the peoples inhabiting the " prison of nations," as Lenin called tsarist Russia, for the struggle against the autocracy.

In one of his earliest works, " What the ' Friends of the People ' Are and How They Fight Against the Social-Democrats," written as far back as 1894, Lenin had foretold that " the Russian WORKER, rising at the head of all the democratic elements, will overthrow absolutism and lead the RUSSIAN PROLETARIAT (side by side with the proletariat of ALL COUNTRIES) *along the straight road of open political struggle towards the* VICTORIOUS COMMUNIST REVOLUTION." (Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. XI, p. 575.)

This brilliant forecast of the great leader of the working people has been borne out.

The proletariat prepared for its rôle as leader in long years of struggle and came out as the true and acknowledged leader of the masses.

The third reason for the victory of the revolution was the fact that

> " The working-class of Russia had so effective an ally in the revolution as the poor peasantry, which comprised the overwhelming majority of the peasant population." (*History of the C.P.S.U.*[*B.*], p. 213.)

The poor peasantry constituted 65 per cent. of the population in old Russia. Tens of millions of people lived in a state of semi-starvation. The lack of land and the exorbitant taxes crushed the peasant poor. Over 60,000,000 hectares of land belonged to a mere 20,000 landlords, who forced the peasants to work for them as in the epoch of serfdom.

From the very first days of the Party's existence, the Bolsheviks carried on an enormous amount of work among the poor peasants. The masses of the peasantry realised that they could win land, peace and bread only under the leadership of the Party of Lenin and Stalin.

> " This served as a solid basis for the alliance of the proletariat and the poor peasantry. The existence of this alliance between the working-class and the poor peasantry determined the conduct of the middle peasants, who had long been vacillating and only on the eve of the October uprising wholeheartedly swung over towards the revolution and joined forces with the poor peasants." (*Ibid.*)

The October Socialist Revolution was a popular revolution. The Bolsheviks won the masses away from the Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. The overwhelming majority of the working people supported the proletariat, headed by the Bolshevik Party.

The international situation also did much to facilitate the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution. The entire imperialist world was split into two hostile camps and was absorbed in the imperialist World War. Clutching at one another's throats, neither the Anglo-French bloc nor the German bloc could render direct military aid to the Russian bourgeoisie. In face of the devastating onslaught of the proletariat, which led the masses of the working people after it, the Russian bourgeoisie was unable to hold out by itself. It was with good reason that Lenin called the victorious and rapid spread of the Great October Socialist Revolution throughout the country the triumphal march of the revolution.

But the main reason for the victory of the revolution

was the fact that it was headed by so tried, militant and revolutionary a party as the Bolshevik Party. Under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin, the Party succeeded in smashing the traitor followers of Trotsky and Bukharin, Zinoviev and Kamenev, rallying the proletariat around its banner. The flexible and wise tactics of the Party convinced the working people of the correctness of the Bolshevik ideas and drew the masses of the people into the struggle.

> " Only a party like the Bolshevik Party, courageous enough to lead the people in decisive attack, and cautious enough to steer clear of all the submerged rocks in its path to the goal, could so skilfully merge into one common revolutionary torrent such diverse revolutionary movements as the general democratic movement for peace, the peasant democratic movement for the seizure of the landed estates, the movement of the oppressed nationalities for national liberation and national equality, and the Socialist movement of the proletariat for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat." (*Ibid.*)

The international situation had been favourable in other revolutions as well. Most peoples had experienced revolutions before. A favourable balance of forces had accompanied a number of revolutions. But not one of these revolutions was led by so consistently revolutionary, so devoted and wise, so firmly welded and flexible a party as the Bolshevik Party. The fact that it was led by the Party of Lenin and Stalin was the principle condition that in the final analysis determined the course and outcome of the Great October Socialist Revolution, which was organised and guided by such brilliant leaders as Lenin and Stalin.