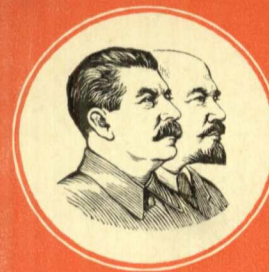

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Political Education Series

HOW THE WORKERS AND PEASANTS OF TSARIST RUSSIA LIVED AND FOUGHT FOR THEIR EMANCIPATION



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Moscow 1951

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Moscow 1951

Printed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This pamphlet is a translation of Part 1 of the *Political Education Series*, published by the *Pravda* Publishing House, Moscow 1950.

Marx and Engels armed the proletariat with the only correct scientific theory. They disclosed the contradictions of capitalist society and showed the role of the proletariat as the gravedigger of capitalism and as the creator of Socialism.

Lenin and Stalin further developed the teachings of Marx and Engels. Russia became the birthplace of Leninism, the centre of the world revolutionary movement.

Lenin and Stalin founded the revolutionary Marxist party, the Bolshevik Party. The Bolshevik Party headed the revolutionary movement of the working class and of all working people against the tsarist autocracy, and against the landlords and capitalists.

The Bolsheviks led the struggle of the working people against tsardom in the first Russian Revolution of 1905-1907. The working class showed that it was the leading force in the struggle for the emancipation of the working people.

After the defeat of the first Russian Revolution the Bolshevik Party began to prepare the working class for new revolutionary battles.

BRIEF SUMMARY

For many hundreds of years human society has been divided into the oppressed and oppressors, the exploited and exploiters. In Russia, as elsewhere, the serf system existed for a long period of time and under this system the peasantry were brutally oppressed by the landlords.

The abolition of serfdom led to the development of a new social system in Russia—capitalism, under which the oppression of the working people continued, only in a new form: hired slavery replaced serfdom.

The peasant reform in Russia was carried out to suit the interests of the landlords. The survivals of serfdom that remained after the reform retarded the development of capitalism. The landlord-capitalist system in agriculture doomed the peasantry to hunger and poverty. The capitalists ruthlessly exploited the workers.

Old Russia was ruled by the landlords and capitalists, with the tsar at their head. The landlord class was tsardom's main bulwark. Tsardom was the bitterest enemy of the working people and tsarist Russia a prison of nations.

Russia was an economically backward country, dependent on foreign states. Tsardom and the bourgeoisie reduced Russia to the status of a semicolony.

The working people of Russia refused to reconcile themselves to the oppression of tsardom. They repeatedly rose up in struggle against the exploiters. The working people could win their emancipation only under the leadership of the proletariat.

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gree as in Russia. In 1910 the number of workers engaged in large plants employing 500 workers and more amounted to 54 per cent, that is, over half of the total number of workers. "The growth of the proletariat," wrote Stalin, "and its concentration in large enterprises, combined with the existence of such a revolutionary party as the Bolshevik Party, were converting the working class of Russia into the greatest force in the political life of the country."*

The Bolshevik Party, guided by Lenin and Stalin, led the workers and peasants to a new revolution.

A new wave of strikes broke out at the beginning of 1914. On May 1, over half a million workers were on strike. That same month the workers of Baku declared a general strike. The workers of Petrograd, Moscow and other cities rose up in struggle as a mark of solidarity with the striking Baku workers. Barricades appeared on the streets. The capital was turned into a military camp. The words pronounced by the workers after the defeat of the first Russian Revolution, that "there will be another 1905!" came true.

But the advance of the revolution was interrupted by the world war that broke out at the end of July 1914.

* *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks). Short Course*, Moscow 1950, p. 182.

Kalinin, Spandaryan and others. For the direction of revolutionary work in Russia a practical centre (the Russian Bureau of the C.C.) was set up with Comrade Stalin at its head. Comrade Stalin escaped from exile and arrived illegally in St. Petersburg to head the Russian Bureau of the C.C.

Events showed that only the Bolsheviks had correctly estimated the situation at that time. A new rise of the revolution was beginning in Russia.

In April 1912 tsarist executioners shot down striking workers of the Lena goldfields in Siberia. This shooting stirred the whole country, and the proletariat of Russia replied by mass strikes, demonstrations and meetings. The tide of the working-class movement was rising.

In those days of the rising revolutionary movement Lenin and Stalin founded the militant workers' paper *Pravda* (Truth). Its first issue appeared on April 22 (May 5, New Style), 1912. It was a day of great rejoicing for the workers. Since then May 5 is celebrated as Bolshevik press day.

Pravda played a great part in developing the revolutionary movement. It gained support for Bolshevism among broad masses of the working class and prepared them for revolution. "The *Pravda* of 1912," wrote Stalin, "was the laying of the cornerstone of the victory of Bolshevism in 1917." *Pravda* was published in conditions of incessant police persecutions. The police frequently raided the print shop and confiscated the issues just off the press. The tsarist government suppressed *Pravda* eight times, but each time, with the support of the workers it reappeared under a new name: *Za Pravdu* (For Truth), *Put Pravdy* (The Path of Truth), *Trudovaya Pravda* (Labour Truth), etc.

The revolutionary working-class movement was spreading. In no other country in the world was the working class concentrated in large-scale industry to such a de-

1. THE CONDITIONS OF THE WORKERS AND PEASANTS IN TSARIST RUSSIA

Prior to the Great October Socialist Revolution the capitalists and landlords in Russia, as elsewhere, held sway, while the workers and peasants were brutally oppressed. The lot of the working people was a heavy and intolerable one, their sufferings unbearable.

Time and again the working people tried to change this unjust system, to throw off the yoke of the oppressors and become the masters of their destiny. But they invariably met with failure. The chains of slavery remained intact or were replaced by new ones, which were just as heavy and degrading. One group of oppressors was followed by another, but oppression remained.

It is only in our country that the working masses, as a result of the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution, overthrew the oppressors, took power into their own hands, built a socialist society in which there is no place for oppression, and are now advancing to Communism. The working people of a number of other countries are today following the same path.

Serfdom

As in other countries the serf system in Russia existed for a long time. Under this system the land and other means of production belonged to the landlords. The landlords lived at the expense of the toil of the serf peasants who constituted the bulk of the population. The peasant was bound, attached to the soil.

The serf peasants were wholly dependent on the landlords who could sell and purchase them like any other possession. The peasants enjoyed no rights. They were flogged and tortured by the landlords. The landholder Saltykova, for instance, had 100 of her serfs flogged to death.

Taking advantage of the serf system, the landlord forced the peasants to toil for him, that is, exploited them. Although the peasants had small allotments at their disposal they had to cultivate the land of the squire for the greater part of the time, that is, five days a week. This was called *barshchina* (corvée). The peasants had to supply the landlord with grain, meat and other produce out of their household, or to pay him a certain sum of money. This was called *obrok* (quit rent). The peasants were crushed by need, vegetated in ignorance, died from poverty and backbreaking toil for the landlord.

For centuries the peasants waged a struggle against the serf-owning landlords. The numerous peasant riots which broke out under serfdom often developed into big and protracted uprisings which shook the very foundations of serfdom. The peasants demanded that the onerous services be done away with, the rights of the landlords and the serf system abolished.

The history of Russia knows of many peasant uprisings. Notable among these were the big uprisings under the leadership of Stepan Razin and Emelyan Pugachev.

The Bolsheviks Prepare the Masses for a New Revolution

After the defeat of the first Russian Revolution tsardom savagely retaliated against the workers and peasants, and especially against the Bolsheviks. Mass arrests and executions started. Difficult days again set in for the Bolsheviks. But they did not lose heart. They knew that a new revolution was inevitable; they preserved their Party organizations and strengthened them in every way. Lenin and Stalin began to prepare the Party and the working class for new revolutionary battles.

The Mensheviks took up a different position. They considered the revolution as finished and done with and disgracefully turned away from the revolutionary demands of the proletariat. The Mensheviks proposed making peace with the tsarist order, adapting themselves to it and, having given up the revolutionary struggle, obtaining the consent of the tsarist government to the existence of a legal party. They carried on undermining, disruptive activities aimed at destroying the revolutionary party of the proletariat at all costs. This made it absolutely impossible for the Bolsheviks to remain in one Party with the Mensheviks. The Bolsheviks had all the time carried on an irreconcilable struggle against the treacherous line of the Mensheviks. But now it was necessary to make a complete break with the Mensheviks, to rid the Party of them, and finally form the Bolsheviks into an independent Marxist Party.

In January 1912 an All-Russian Party Conference was held in Prague. Lenin guided the work of the conference. Stalin was in exile at that time. The Prague Conference expelled the Mensheviks from the Party and formally inaugurated the independent existence of the Bolshevik Party. The conference elected a Central Committee of the Party, consisting of Lenin, Stalin, Orjonikidze, Sverdlov,

nine days thousands of Moscow workers heroically fought at the barricades. The uprising assumed a particularly stubborn character in the Krasnaya Presnya district of Moscow. The uprising however was crushed.

The first Russian Revolution ended in defeat. The reasons for this were many. To begin with there was still no stable alliance of the workers and peasants against the autocracy at that time. The peasants rose in struggle against the landlords, but they did not as yet realize that the tsar was acting hand in hand with the landlords, and large numbers of the peasants still had faith in the tsar. This influenced the conduct of the army, too, which largely consisted of peasants' sons. Unrest broke out in certain units of the tsar's army and navy, but the majority of the soldiers still assisted the tsar in suppressing the revolution.

Certain sections of the workers came into action slowly and rose up in struggle only when the advanced detachments of the proletariat had already been weakened by bitter struggle. Also there was no unity inside the workers' party. While the Bolsheviks were leading the masses in the struggle to overthrow tsardom, the Mensheviks were doing everything to hamper the development of the revolution.

The West-European imperialists helped the tsarist autocracy to crush the revolution, granting tsardom big loans for the purpose.

Although the Revolution of 1905 was defeated it nonetheless played a big role in the life of Russia. It undermined the foundations of the tsarist autocracy. The workers and peasants learnt a great deal from the experience of the revolution. The revolution disclosed that tsardom was the sworn enemy of the people, that the bourgeoisie was acting in alliance with tsardom. The revolution showed that only the working class in alliance with the peasantry, and guided by the Bolshevik Party, could overthrow the tsar and the landlords.

The 1670-1671 uprising under Stepan Razin covered nearly the whole of the Volga region. A hundred years later, in 1773-1775 a new peasant uprising led by Emelyan Pugachev shook tsarist Russia. In addition to the Russian peasants, Bashkirs, Tatars, and other oppressed peoples of tsarist Russia flocked to the side of Pugachev. The insurgents set fire to manorial estates, drove out or killed the landlords in an attempt to smash the chains of serfdom.

But all these uprisings ended in defeat. Why? Because they were unorganized, because there was no firm discipline and proper leadership among the rebel peasants and they had no clear aim. The tsarist troops brutally crushed the actions of the peasants; they were tortured and executed; rivers of blood flowed everywhere.

The peasants cannot be victorious in the liberation struggle by relying on their own forces alone.

"Why did the peasant uprisings under Pugachev and Stepan Razin fail? Why were the peasants unable to drive out the landlords at that time? Because they had no revolutionary leader such as the working class at that time and could not have."*

Serfdom in Russia existed longer than in the West-European countries. This was one of the reasons for tsarist Russia's backwardness.

Agriculture developed at an extremely slow pace. The slave labour of the serf was of low productivity. The land was tilled with obsolete implements: the wooden plough, and harrow.

There were very few factories and mills in Russia. There could be no real development of industry under the serf system. Manufactured goods need a market if industry is to develop. The bulk of the population, however,

* J. V. Stalin, *Collected Works*, Russ. ed., Vol. 8, p. 143.

consisted of serf peasants who did not have the money to purchase goods. Free labour hands were needed to build factories and mills and to put them into operation. But the serf peasants could not hire themselves out to the factories and mills without the permission of the landlord. The factory and mill owners, on the other hand, could not find the workers needed.

Abolition of Serfdom. Robbing of the Peasantry

Serfdom retarded the development of industry and agriculture and precluded the possibility of raising the productivity of labour. The whole course of Russia's economic development made the abolition of serfdom imperative.

The serf peasants began to rise against the serf-owning landlords more often and resolutely. In 1858 alone, there were 86 peasant uprisings. Frightened by the mass peasant actions, the tsar realized that it would be better to emancipate the peasant from above rather than wait until he would emancipate himself from below. In 1861 the so-called peasant reform was introduced whereby the tsarist government abolished serfdom.

After the reform the peasant could no longer be sold or bought like a chattel. However, the landlord continued to oppress the peasant. The tsarist government put through the reform in a way that was to the advantage of the landlords. The peasants emerged "free men" with not a stitch on their back. They had been shamelessly robbed by the tsar and landlords.

When the reform was being carried out the landlords cut off for themselves more than one-fifth of the lands used by the peasants under serfdom. These lands, taken away from the peasants, were called *otrezki* (cuts). And so the peasants were left with even smaller allotments

mobilization of the masses, in preparing for the armed uprising.

In October of the same year an all-Russian political strike broke out, headed by the working class. The whole life of the country came to a standstill. The factories, mills, mines, pits, railways and even schools and offices closed down. The tsarist government was paralyzed. The terrified tsar issued a Manifesto on October 17, 1905, in which he promised the people freedom. But the Manifesto was nothing but a fraud. The tsarist government wanted to gain time to marshal its forces and then drown the revolution in blood.

In those days of the October strike, in the fire of the revolution the working-class masses for the first time set up a new revolutionary body—the Soviets of Workers' Deputies. Soviets sprang up in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Ivanovo-Voznesensk and in a number of other large towns. The Bolsheviks assigned the Soviets a big role; they regarded them as organs of the armed uprising and revolutionary power.

In November 1905 Lenin returned to Russia. Hiding from the tsar's gendarmes and spies he prepared for the armed uprising of the proletariat. Stalin was guiding the revolutionary struggle of the working people in Transcaucasia. Addressing a meeting of workers in Tiflis in October 1905, Stalin said: "What do we need in order to really win? We need three things: first—arms, second—arms, third—arms and arms again!" At the Party conference in Tammerfors (Finland), in December 1905, Lenin and Stalin met for the first time. Until then they had maintained contact by correspondence and through comrades.

The Bolsheviks called upon the workers and peasants to take to arms, explaining to them that only in this way could they overthrow tsardom. In December 1905, Moscow revolted, the Bolsheviks directing the uprising. For

autocracy. The Mensheviks on the other hand assigned to the bourgeoisie the leading role in the revolution, negated the leading role of the proletariat and the need for a working-class alliance with the peasantry.

"Bloody Sunday," January 9, 1905, marked the beginning of the Russian Revolution. That day the workers of St. Petersburg with their families marched to the tsar with a petition in which they asked the tsar to grant them their freedom, the convocation of a Constituent Assembly for the purpose of changing the political system of Russia, equality of all before the law, an 8-hour working day and the handing over of the land to the peasants. The tsar ordered his troops to fire upon the unarmed crowd. More than a thousand workers were killed and over two thousand wounded.

News of the tsar's terrible crime shook the country. The workers everywhere called strikes which were of a marked political character. They downed tools and emerged into the streets and squares with the slogan, "Down with the tsar!" Following the town, the countryside began to rise. The peasants raided the estates of the landlords, set fire to their manors and in a number of places seized the land. The movement of the workers and peasants had its influence on the armed forces. In June 1905 a revolt broke out on the *Potemkin*, a battleship of the Black Sea Fleet.

The Bolsheviks worked out a clear line of conduct in the revolution that had begun. The Third Congress of the Party which met in April 1905, held that the proletariat was the leader of the revolution, that the proletariat itself had to rise and lead its ally, the peasantry, in the decisive assault on the tsarist autocracy. The congress recognized that an armed uprising of the people was an essential means of overthrowing tsarism. The mass political strikes of the workers which swept Russia for the first time, played a tremendous role in the revolutionary

than they had had under serfdom. Furthermore, these lands were frequently cut up in such a way as to leave the peasants the worst and most unsuitable plots and no watering places and pastures for the cattle.

The peasants had to pay the landlords huge redemption sums for these allotments. They were obliged to redeem not only their land, but their "emancipation" as well. The value of the land allotted to the peasants was 543,000,000 rubles, but the peasants were made to pay approximately 2,000,000,000 rubles in the form of redemption payments. This was downright and undisguised robbery.

The tsar and landlords "emancipated" the peasant in such a way that, tied hand and foot by need, he found himself in hopeless bondage to the landlords.

The Survivals of Serfdom

The reform of 1861 did not destroy the main bulwark of serf economy—the landed estates. The best lands for the most part continued to remain in the hands of the landlords. Thirty thousand landlords possessed 70,000,000 dessiatins of land, that is, as much as 10,000,000 peasant households. The land owned by the landlords averaged 2,300 dessiatins, while that of half the peasant households averaged from one to two dessiatins each. "There is not even enough room for the hen" is how the poor peasants described their allotments, while the highlander of the Caucasus complained: "All my land can be accommodated under my felt cloak."

The peasants could not make a living on such wretched plots, and for that reason they were compelled to slave for the landlord and rent land from him on the most onerous terms. The landlords drew annually approximately 500,000,000 gold rubles in rent alone.

Moreover, for the right to use the landlord's land, meadows and pastures the peasants had to cultivate without remuneration the squire's lands with their own implements and horses. This was called *otrabotka* (labour rent). In the Poltava Gubernia, for instance, the landlords demanded that the peasants plough, sow and harvest two dessiatins of land for every dessiatin rented out as *otrabotka*. More often the peasant was compelled to pay the landlord half of his crop in kind for the land rented. This was known as *ispolu* (share cropping).

Otrabotka and *ispolshchina* (*ispolu*) were the direct survivals of serfdom.

The oppression by the landlord, exorbitant taxes and the redemption payments, which not infrequently exceeded the income of the peasant household, ruined the peasants and reduced them to pauperism. The peasants gathered in very poor harvests. The majority of the peasant households did not have enough grain to tide them over until the new harvest.

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin described the conditions of the peasants in tsarist Russia as follows:

"The peasants were reduced to the level of beggars. They lived together with their cattle, they were clothed in rags and fed on weeds.... The peasants were in a state of chronic starvation, and died in tens of thousands from famine and epidemics during bad harvests, which recurred with increasing frequency."*

The survivals of serfdom retarded the economic development of the country. The landlords found it more profitable to use peasant labour in the form of *otrabotka* and *ispolshchina*. They did not employ machines and fertilizers since this called for big expenditures. Weighed down by the oppressive yoke of the landlords, the peasant

a huge and well-organized strike of workers took place in Baku, led by Stalin. This strike was the signal for revolutionary actions in Transcaucasia and in various parts of Russia. It was like a clap of thunder heralding a great revolutionary storm.

The first Russian Revolution had begun. It was as yet not a socialist revolution but a bourgeois-democratic revolution. It directed its blows against the landlords and tsarist autocracy. Tsardom and the survivals of serfdom were the main obstacles at that time hampering the development of Russia. The chief task of the Russian Revolution was to remove these obstacles.

Who could head this revolution and lead it to victory? The bourgeoisie did not want the revolution to be victorious and the autocracy overthrown. More than anything else the capitalists feared the growing movement of the workers and peasants. The bourgeoisie were afraid that the people, after having overthrown tsardom, would turn their weapons against it. The capitalists needed tsardom as a whip against the workers and peasants. That is why the bourgeoisie made a deal with tsardom, came to terms with it at the expense of the people and by betraying the people.

The Bolsheviks maintained that only the proletariat could head the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia and lead it to complete victory. The proletariat was interested in this victory in order to overthrow tsardom and then lead the struggle for the transition from a bourgeois-democratic revolution to a socialist revolution.

Only a revolutionary peasantry could be the reliable ally of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution. This peasantry was interested in the victory of the revolution for only in this way could it settle scores with the landlords and obtain possession of their lands. The Bolsheviks held that the alliance of the proletariat with the peasantry was the force capable of overthrowing the

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 4, p. 396.

its historic task of destroying capitalism and building Communism if its struggle is directed by a militant revolutionary Marxist party.

Lenin and Stalin created such a party—the Bolshevik Party. This Party rallied the millions of working people into a mighty army and led them forward to overthrow tsardom and capitalism.

The revolutionary movement in Russia at that time was on the upsurge. Big demonstrations and strikes were taking place in St. Petersburg, Rostov, Batum and other towns. In 1903 a general strike broke out in the south of Russia. In the Ukraine and Volga region a broad peasant movement was under way. Revolution was maturing in the country.

The First Russian Revolution

Capitalism was developing in Russia even though many survivals of the feudal-serf system still remained. The most inhuman oppression prevailed there at that time. The greatest people's revolution, headed by the most revolutionary proletariat in the world, a proletariat which had such a reliable ally as the revolutionary peasantry of Russia, started there. Russia became the centre of the world revolutionary movement, and the proletariat of Russia the vanguard of the international proletariat.

In January 1904 war broke out between tsarist Russia and imperialist Japan for the realization of predatory, rapacious plans in the Far East. The people of Russia did not want this war. Poorly armed and trained, and commanded by corrupt generals the tsarist army suffered defeat. The tsarist government hoped that the war would help to strengthen its position and to check the approaching revolution. If anything, however, tsardom was shaken more than ever by the war. The Russo-Japanese War hastened the outbreak of the revolution. In December 1904

was unable to improve his farm. All this explains the extreme backwardness of agriculture in prerevolutionary Russia which led to frequent crop failures and famines.

The Development of Capitalism in Russia

In spite of the survivals of serfdom, capitalism began to develop rather quickly in Russia after the reform of 1861.

Extensive industrial and railroad construction proceeded throughout the country. Factories and mills sprang up, railway lines were laid, river and seaports built. Trade revived. The old towns grew and new ones came into being.

After the abolition of serfdom the factory and mill owners received cheap labour power from the countryside. At the beginning of the century millions of peasants left the countryside every year in quest of work.

"What compelled the peasant to flee from the countryside to the towns? The fear of starvation, unemployment, the fact that the village was like a stepmother to him, and he was ready to flee from his village to the devil himself, if only he could find some sort of work,"* wrote Comrade Stalin.

The development of capitalist industry was accompanied by the numerical growth of the proletariat. In 1865 there were 706,000 workers employed in the large factories and mills and on the railways of Russia. Twenty-five years later, in 1890, the number of workers had more than doubled and reached 1,433,000. And by the end of the nineties the number of workers employed in the large factories and mills, in the mining industry and on the railways amounted to 2,792,000.

* J. Stalin, *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow 1947, p. 360.

Capitalism was developing not only in the towns but also in the countryside. Under the serf system the peasants engaged in a natural form of economy. This means that every peasant household produced grain, cultivated flax and raised cattle for the landlord and its own consumption but not for the market. After the abolition of serfdom and with the development of industry and the building of new towns, the demand for grain and other agricultural produce increased. The peasants began to take their produce to the market. They were driven to this also by heavy tax payments. The peasant economy became a commodity economy.

The development of commodity economy led to the fact that the peasantry, the most numerous class in pre-revolutionary Russia, was undergoing a process of cleavage. From among the well-to-do peasants there was emerging a handful of rural rich—the kulaks. They bought up and leased land. The kulaks owned as many horses as the rest of the peasants taken together. Like the landlords the kulaks lived on the toil of others, on the toil of the hired agricultural labourers. The kulaks brutally oppressed the poor peasants and agricultural labourers.

While a handful of kulaks was growing rich the bulk of the peasants was being reduced to pauperism and ruin. Many peasants did not even possess horses; they lived by their hired labour and not from the income of their farms. The position of the poor peasants came nearest to that of the proletariat. Lenin called them semiproletarians. Many of them lost their farms altogether and joined the ranks of the hired proletariat, the agricultural labourers.

Between the kulak and poor peasant was the middle peasant. Even in the best years the middle peasant hardly made ends meet on his farm; need always loomed in the background. Only an insignificant number managed

and Congress on these questions, especially on the question of who could be a member of the Party.

Lenin fought for the creation of a genuinely militant proletarian party, capable of directing the struggle of the working class to overthrow tsardom and capitalism. He put down as an absolute condition to membership in the Party activity in one of its organizations and submission to Party decisions. The opportunists, that is, the people who had betrayed Marxism and come out in favour of compromising with the bourgeoisie, maintained that a Party member need not necessarily belong to a Party organization. They wanted to turn the Party into a loose, amorphous gathering of individuals, and opposed the creation of a militant revolutionary party of the proletariat.

The differences on this question split the Second Congress of the Party into two groups. During the elections of the central organs of the Party the majority of the delegates voted for the supporters of Lenin, the minority for the opportunists. From that time on, Lenin's followers have been called Bolsheviks (from *bolshinstvo*, majority), and the followers of the minority at the congress the Mensheviks (from *menshinstvo*, minority).

The majority of the Social-Democratic organizations in Russia joined the Bolsheviks. At that time Comrade Stalin was in prison. Learning of the decisions of the Second Congress of the Party he determinedly took his stand on the side of Lenin, on the side of the Bolsheviks.

This was the first step toward the formation of the Bolshevik Party, the militant revolutionary party of the proletariat, called upon to lead the working people of Russia in the assault against tsardom and capitalism. The formation of a revolutionary workers' party was of decisive significance for the victory of the working class. Why did the Paris Commune of 1871 fail? Chiefly because the Paris workers did not have their own militant revolutionary party at that time. The working class can carry out

the ways of achieving these aims. All this was outlined in the Party program. The R.S.D.L.P. program adopted by the Second Congress was a militant program of the revolutionary party of the proletariat.

The program stated that the ultimate aim of the Party was to abolish private property of the means of production, to destroy the exploitation of man by man and the division of society into classes, that is, to replace the capitalist system by the socialist system. The Party program pointed out that in order to accomplish this it was necessary to carry out a socialist revolution and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. This part of the program, defining the ultimate object of the Party, constituted the maximum program.

But the Party could not immediately lead the working class to a socialist revolution. It was necessary at first to overthrow the tsarist autocracy, to abolish the survivals of serfdom and thus clear the way to a socialist revolution. The Party program pointed out that the immediate tasks of the Party was the overthrow of the tsarist autocracy, the establishment of a democratic republic, the introduction of an 8-hour working day, the abolition of all survivals of serfdom in the countryside, and the restoration to the peasants of the cut-off lands (*otrezki*) of which they had been deprived by the landlords. Subsequently, the Bolsheviks replaced the demand for the return of the *otrezki* by the demand for the confiscation of all the landed estates. This part of the program, defining the immediate tasks of the Party constituted the minimum program.

The Party could not confine itself to merely adopting a program. It was also necessary to clearly define the composition of the Party itself, its organizational structure and how it was to carry on its work. It was necessary to adopt Party rules. Heated disputes arose at the Sec-

to scramble to the top and reach the level of the kulak. As a rule the middle peasants became paupers, were reduced to ruin and swelled the ranks of the rural poor.

Sixty-five per cent of the peasant households in tsarist Russia were made up of poor peasants, 20 per cent of middle peasants and 15 per cent of kulaks. The peasantry as a class disintegrated. Both in town and countryside the two classes of capitalist society emerged: the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

The serf system was replaced by capitalism.

What Is Capitalism?

Private property of the instruments and means of production is the chief mainstay of capitalism. The factories, mills, land and so on, are in the hands of a small group of capitalists. The proletariat of town and countryside are deprived of the means of production. All they have at their disposal is their labour power. The only means of existence open to the proletariat is the sale of their labour power. Unlike the slave and the serf peasant the proletarian is personally free. But, inasmuch as he is deprived of the means of production he is compelled to sell his labour power to the capitalist in order not to die from hunger. In capitalist society the worker is the hired slave of the bourgeoisie.

Capitalist society is based on the exploitation of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie. How is this exploitation carried out? Since the capitalist possesses the means of production he becomes the sovereign master of the labour power he has bought. The worker, let us assume, has to work only five hours to produce the value of his means of subsistence, received in the form of wages, but he has to expend ten hours of labour power, that is, an extra five hours according to the conditions on which he has been

hired. The labour expended by the worker in these extra five hours is not remunerated by the capitalist. Thus, the worker works only half of the day for himself while the second half of the day he has to work for the capitalist for nothing. The capitalist exploitation of the worker takes the form of the capitalist appropriating the unremunerated labour of the worker. This is the prime source of the enrichment of the bourgeoisie and the reason for the impoverishment of the worker.

Lenin wrote: "Capitalism is the form of society where the land, factories, implements of production, etc., belong to a small number of landowners and capitalists, while the people as a whole possess no property at all, or hardly any property and therefore have to hire themselves out. The landowners and manufacturers employ workers, force them to manufacture different products which they then sell on the market. Furthermore, the manufacturer pays the worker just enough to keep him and his family barely alive; everything produced by the worker over and above the manufacturer pockets; this constitutes his profits."*

Owing to the private property nature of the means of production capitalist economy is scattered; it consists of the private enterprises of individual capitalists. Hence the anarchy of production, the absence of planning in production. In his activities the capitalist is guided not by the interests of society as a whole, and still less by the interests of the working people, but solely by his selfish interests of personal gain. Capitalist production produces for the market, with the object of increasing the profits of the capitalist. It does not aim to satisfy the demands of the population.

In the race for profits the capitalists strive to manufacture more goods. But the creators of all riches—the working people who comprise the bulk of the popula-

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 4, p. 287.

ately, having no common line of action or a single leading centre.

While in exile Lenin worked out a detailed plan for uniting all the revolutionary Social-Democratic organizations, for building up a party. He came to the conclusion that it was essential to start the publication of a political paper on an all-Russian scale, a newspaper that would link together the separate Marxist circles and organizations and prepare the way for the creation of a party.

When he returned from exile Lenin made the arrangements for the publication of such a paper. The first issue of *Iskra* (*Spark*), appeared in December 1900.

The title sheet bore the words: "The Spark Will Kindle a Flame." *Iskra* was printed abroad and secretly smuggled into Russia. The tsarist authorities threatened to imprison or exile anyone found circulating the paper. But this did not prevent the paper, which had its representatives or agents from being distributed throughout the country. Organizations of *Iskra* supporters appeared in many towns. The *Iskra* organization in Transcaucasia was directed by Stalin. The illegal Georgian newspaper *Brdzola* (*The Struggle*), second only to *Iskra* as a Marxist newspaper in Russia began to appear, edited by Stalin.

Lenin's *Iskra* played a tremendous role in building a revolutionary Marxist party. It elaborated the Party program and rules, educated and consolidated the advanced detachment of the working class of Russia on the basis of revolutionary Marxism. From the *Spark* (*Iskra*) started by Lenin there subsequently flamed up the great revolutionary conflagration.

The successful activity of Lenin's *Iskra* prepared the way for the Second Congress of the Party, which was held in London in 1903. The chief purpose of the congress was the adoption of the Party program. The Party had, above all, to clearly define its principal aims, and

Lenin and Stalin showed that the cardinal question of the proletarian revolution was the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the question of the conditions for winning and consolidating this dictatorship. Lenin and Stalin elaborated the question of the peasantry as the ally of the proletariat in the struggle for power, the national question as part of the general question of the proletarian revolution and dictatorship of the proletariat, the question of a party capable of leading the proletariat to victory, the organizational structure of such a party and the policy it should pursue. Russia was the birthplace of Leninism, the birthplace of the proletarian revolution.

Guided by the great revolutionary theory, Lenin and Stalin led the workers and all working people of Russia to storm the bourgeois-landlord system.

Formation of the Bolshevik Party

Lenin's League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class was the rudiment of a revolutionary proletarian party. Leagues of Struggle were formed in other towns of Russia: their aim was to unite into a single party of the Russian proletariat.

In March 1898 the representatives of several Social-Democratic organizations in Russia met illegally in Minsk for the first congress which announced the formation of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (R.S.D.L.P.). The congress was attended by only nine persons.

But no party was as yet formed at this congress. The absence of Lenin (he was at that time in exile), affected the work of the congress. It did not draw up a Party program or Party rules. The Central Committee of the Party elected at the congress was very soon arrested. The Social-Democratic organizations continued to work sepa-

tion—live in utter poverty under capitalism and their purchasing capacity is extremely restricted.

As a result economic crises of overproduction recur from time to time under capitalism; more goods—textiles, fuel, manufactured goods, foodstuffs—than the market can absorb, and the main consumer, the people whose incomes remain at a low level, can buy, are produced and find no market.

As a result part of the enterprises are closed down and production is curtailed. Millions of workers are thrown out onto the street, forming an army of unemployed, hungry, homeless people. To keep prices up, the capitalists either stack the warehouses with goods or destroy them. The people are compelled to live in poverty because of overproduction! Naturally, had production been aimed at steadily improving the material conditions of the people and not at making the maximum profits, there would be no surplus of goods, no crises. But this is impossible under capitalism. Capitalism has to be destroyed if there are to be no crises.

"Thus," wrote Comrade Stalin, "crises, unemployment, suspension of production, anarchy of production, and the like, are the direct results of present-day unorganized capitalist production."*

Conditions of the Working Class in Russia

The capitalists brutally exploited the workers. In their drive for fat profits they lengthened the working day at the factories to the maximum while wages were down to a minimum.

The workers in tsarist Russia toiled for the factory and mill owners from early morn until far into the night.

* J. Stalin, *Anarchism or Socialism?* Moscow 1950, p. 57.

In the eighties of the last century the working day at factories and mills was not less than 12 1/2 hours, and in the textile industry it was 14 to 15 hours. The workers received a very low wage. Although women and children put in as many hours as the men, they were paid even less. The factory owners widely exploited female and child labour for which they paid an inordinately small wage.

The worker rarely received even his miserable wage in full. He was compelled to make his purchases in the factory-owned shops at prices three times above market prices. In addition to all this he was rapaciously fined at every step. Recalling the terrible conditions of the Russian worker, Pyotr Moiseyenko, an old Russian revolutionary weaver, wrote: "You had to pay a fine for everything. If you walked past the director's windows and forgot to raise your cap you were fined. If you spoke in a loud voice in the barracks you were fined. If you appeared on the street with an accordion you were fined. The wife gave birth to twins you were fined. You might just as well stretch out and die!"

The workers lived in hovels, in crowded factory-owned barracks and mud huts. It is not for nothing that the workers' settlements on the outskirts of the Donbas were called "kennels." The congestion in the barracks was simply appalling. Several families were crowded together in one room. The bunks for single workers were arranged in two and sometimes three rows. In 1902 a gendarme officer, describing the conditions of the workers after an investigation conducted in connection with the strike movement in Moscow, wrote in his report to his superior: "From 18 to 24 people live in very small rooms which in turn are divided into nine cubicles and in each of these cubicles, which measures 2 1/2 arshines in length and about 2 arshines in width you have a family with children."

caucasia. He founded the Batum Social-Democratic organization at the beginning of 1902, directed the struggle of the Batum workers and organized revolutionary propaganda in the countryside. In March 1902 he directed the political demonstration of the Batum workers. In April of the same year Stalin was arrested. But even while in prison he still kept in contact with revolutionary work.

Later Comrade Stalin worked among the proletariat of Baku, the biggest industrial centre of Transcaucasia. Under his leadership the Baku proletariat waged a heroic struggle in the front ranks of the working-class movement of Russia. Recalling the beginning of his revolutionary activity Stalin noted that while he received his first militant revolutionary baptism among the workers of the Tiflis railway shops, it was in the oil fields of Baku that he received his second revolutionary baptism of fire, after learning what leading large masses of workers meant.

Lenin and Stalin were the disciples of Marx and Engels. Marx and Engels lived in the period when the proletariat was still preparing for socialist revolution. Lenin and Stalin developed their activities in the period when the socialist revolution was already a practical inevitability, when the hour for storming the capitalist system had already struck.

In these conditions Lenin and Stalin further developed the teachings of Marx, and particularly the theory of the proletarian revolution and dictatorship of the proletariat. Leninism is the further development of Marxism. Comrade Stalin points out: "Leninism is Marxism of the era of imperialism and of the proletarian revolution. To be more exact, Leninism is the theory and tactics of the proletarian revolution in general, the theory and tactics of the dictatorship of the proletariat in particular."*

* J. Stalin, *The Foundations of Leninism*, Moscow 1950, p. 11.

worked on his book *The Development of Capitalism in Russia* in which he showed that Russia was moving towards capitalism, that the proletariat, the decisive force of the revolution, was developing in the country.

During those years Comrade Stalin was engaged in revolutionary activity at the other end of the country, in Transcaucasia. Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin (Djugashvili) was born on December 21, 1879, in the town of Gori, Tiflis (Tbilisi) Gubernia, in the family of a cobbler, and later a worker in a shoe factory. Stalin joined the revolutionary movement at the age of fifteen when he established contact with the underground groups of Russian Marxists then living in Transcaucasia.

In 1896 and 1897 Stalin led Marxist study circles. In 1898 he joined the Tiflis Social-Democratic organization. He made a deep study of Marxist theory and already then became an educated Marxist. Stalin was deeply impressed by Lenin's writings which he read at that time, and he became an ardent follower, loyal disciple and associate of the great Lenin. He took Lenin's path as his own. From this path he has never swerved; after Lenin's death he confidently and courageously carried on his work.

Lenin's League of Struggle was the model on which the revolutionary Social-Democrats of Tiflis led by Stalin, moulded their activities. In the Caucasus Stalin united Socialism with the working-class movement which had been effected earlier by Lenin in St. Petersburg. At the head of the Tiflis Social-Democratic organization he organized workers' strikes and demonstrations, led the strike at the railway shops in Tiflis and the first workers' demonstration in the city.

Persecution by the tsarist government forced Comrade Stalin to go underground. Hiding from the police and gendarmes, he led the tense, heroic life of a proletarian revolutionary. Stalin formed Social-Democratic organizations not only in Tiflis but also in other centres of Trans-

The workers lived on a meagre diet, were poorly clad. Tuberculosis and other diseases took their toll of lives. There was no such thing as social insurance. Medical treatment had to be paid for and this when a worker's family did not even have enough money for food. The worker turned old at an early age; when exhausted or ill, the capitalist threw him out onto the street.

The conditions of the unemployed were particularly terrible. They milled around factory gates in the futile quest for work. Death from starvation was their lot.

In Russia, as elsewhere, capitalism battered on the bones and blood of the workers. Exploitation of the workers gave the capitalists enormous profits. Lenin calculated that in 1908 21¼ million working men and women received 555,700,000 rubles in wages while a handful of factory owners made a profit of 568,700,000 rubles. The worker averaged 246 rubles a year while the capitalist netted an annual profit of 252 rubles on every worker. Thus, for more than half the working day the proletariat was compelled to work for nothing for the capitalist and only the remaining hours for themselves. The worker earned 67 kopeks a day which sum had to cover all his expenses on food, clothing, housing, the education of his children, and medical treatment.

In 1912 the workers wrote in the Bolshevik newspaper *Zvesda (The Star)*: "In a year's time the thick neck of the capitalist will be encircled by new creases—the result of satiation and confidence in his power, while the worker's face will be lined with fresh wrinkles caused by hunger and incertitude of the morrow."

Working day and night for the capitalists only to be thrown out onto the street later—such was the lot of the workers in tsarist Russia. Working from dawn to dusk for the landlords and kulaks—such was the lot of the millions of poor peasants.

It could not be otherwise seeing that the factories, mills and land were in the hands of the capitalists and landlords. All power belonged to them.

The Lack of Rights of the Working People

Old Russia was governed by landlords and capitalists, headed by the tsar. The landlord, merchant, manufacturer and house proprietor lorded it in the towns, the same landlord and the kulaks in the countryside. The tsar was the biggest landholder, the royal family owning 8,000,000 dessiatins of land. The landlord class was tsardom's chief mainstay.

The tsar wielded unlimited powers, promulgated laws and appointed officials. A state system under which the tsar holds unlimited powers is called an autocratic monarchy.

Under tsardom the workers and peasants enjoyed no rights or liberties. The people had no right to discuss and settle state matters or to elect anybody from among themselves to state organs. Tsardom prohibited workers and peasants from uniting into unions and holding meetings. The tsarist authorities did not allow the working people to form their own organizations and publish their own newspapers.

The tsarist gendarmes, bailiffs and police, as well as the tsarist army and court guarded the interests of the tsar, landlords and capitalists. They all ruthlessly oppressed the working people. Tsardom imposed excessive taxes on the population which went to pay for the upkeep of the tsar, his menials, the army and the entire state apparatus of the autocracy.

Tsardom established a regime of unprecedented terror against the workers and peasants. Up until 1903 corporal punishment existed in tsarist Russia. The peasants

that would overthrow the tsarist autocracy, after which the Russian proletariat, in alliance with the labouring and exploited masses, would, along with the proletariat of other countries, take the straight road of open political struggle to the victorious communist revolution.

Lenin guided the St. Petersburg Marxist workers' circles and in 1895 united them into the League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class. The League's activity was of great importance. It led the mass working-class movement, linked up the struggle of the workers for their economic demands with the political struggle against tsardom. When a strike broke out in some factory Lenin, assisted by Babushkin and other politically advanced workers such as Babushkin, wrote leaflets in which he explained how the workers should fight for their interests, how to link up the economic struggle for better working conditions, for a shorter working day and increased wages with the political struggle against the tsarist autocracy. Under the leadership of the League of Struggle, the St. Petersburg workers held big strikes which were remarkable for their high level of organization. Lenin in this way for the first time in Russia united Socialism with the working-class movement and prepared the ground for building up a revolutionary Marxist workers' party.

In December 1895 the tsarist authorities arrested and imprisoned Lenin. But even in prison he did not discontinue his revolutionary work. He directed the activities of the League of Struggle and wrote pamphlets and leaflets for it, which were smuggled out of prison. While in prison Lenin drafted a program for the Party, he used milk as an invisible ink and wrote between the lines of a book on medicine. In 1897 Lenin was exiled to Siberia. There, in the distant snowed-in village of Shushenskoye, he wrote his great theoretical works in which he upheld and further developed the teachings of Marx. There, too, Lenin

The Beginning of the Revolutionary Activities of V. I. Lenin and J. V. Stalin

Beginning with the nineties of the last century the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat of Russia was headed by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (Ulyanov). He was born in Simbirsk (now Ulyanovsk) on April 22, 1870, in the family of an inspector of public schools. Vladimir Ilyich first began his revolutionary activities at the age of seventeen when still a student in the Kazan University. Lenin was persecuted by the tsarist authorities from the very outset of his revolutionary activity. He was arrested for taking part in the student movement. A police officer, trying to convince Lenin of the futility of carrying on the struggle, said to him: "What are you rebelling for, young man? Don't you see there's a wall before you?" To which Lenin replied: "A wall, yes, but a rotten one, just prod it and it will topple over."

Lenin spent four years in Samara (now Kuibyshev), where he organized the first Marxist circle in that city. Already in those days he amazed his comrades by his thorough knowledge of Marxism. But Lenin was eager to get away to where the proletariat was concentrated and the revolutionary struggle was being waged. And so in 1893 he removed to St. Petersburg where he engaged in extensive activity. His extraordinarily profound knowledge of Marxism, his ability to apply Marxism in Russian conditions, his unshakeable belief in the victory of the worker's cause, and his outstanding talent as an organizer made Lenin the acknowledged leader of the Russian Marxists and won him the warm affection of the politically advanced workers. It was at that period that Lenin wrote his celebrated work *What the "Friends of the People Are" and How They Fight Against the Social-Democrats*. In this book Lenin pointed out that it would be the working class of Russia, in alliance with the peasantry,

were flogged for the slightest offence, for failure to pay taxes on time. Strikers were beaten up or shot by the police and gendarmes.

The people used to sing the following song about the tsar:

*The Emperor of All Russia,
The tsar is the bastion of the nobility,
The hangman of the workers,
The hangman of the peasants.*

Tsardom ruthlessly crushed the revolutionary struggle of the workers and peasants. Tens of thousands of revolutionary fighters were shot or hung by the tsarist government, hundreds of thousands perished in tsarist prisons, in penal servitude, in exile. The tsarist autocracy was the bitterest enemy of the working people. It had to be destroyed if the workers and peasants of Russia were to win their emancipation.

Tsarist Russia—a Prison of Nations

Dozens of different nationalities inhabited tsarist Russia. The conditions of the workers and peasants of the non-Russian nationality were even worse than those of the Russian workers and peasants. The non-Russian nationalities were entirely devoid of rights.

The working people of these nationalities shouldered a double yoke under tsardom. They were oppressed by their own, local exploiters and by the Russian landlords and capitalists.

Tsardom strangled the national culture of the peoples of Russia. It prohibited the non-Russian nationalities from opening their own schools, from teaching their children and printing books and newspapers in the native tongue, from developing their literature and art. The pop-

ulation of many of the outlying regions of Russia were practically one hundred per cent illiterate. In Azerbaijan, for instance, less than 10 per cent of the population could read and write, in Kazakhstan only 2 per cent; as for Tajikistan nearly the whole population there was illiterate. Some of the nationalities inhabiting Russia did not even have their own written language.

The landlords and bourgeoisie retarded the economic progress of the national districts, from which they drew their raw materials, obstructed the development of their industries; they furthered the economic backwardness of Central Asia and the other national districts.

The tsarist government subjected the non-Russian nationalities to insults and humiliation of every kind. The tsarist autocracy deliberately fanned discord among the different peoples inhabiting Russia, instigated one nation against another, engineered Jewish pogroms, Tatar and Armenian massacres. The tsarist autocracy practised the policy of "divide and rule" hoping in this way to split and weaken the forces of the working people, and to keep them in submission.

Today the British, American and other imperialists are pursuing a policy of savagely oppressing different nationalities, of setting one nationality against another with the object of weakening them and bolstering their own power.

The Economic Backwardness of Russia and Her Dependence on Foreign Capital

Russia took the path of capitalism later than the other countries and lagged behind them economically.

Russia was a backward, agrarian country in which low-productive, individual peasant farming based on small ownership predominated. According to the 1897

owner abolish the rapacious fines. The strikers held out staunchly and it was only after the police had arrested their leaders and 600 active strikers that the strike was suppressed. The Morozov strike demonstrated the strength and organization of the workers and greatly influenced the further development of the Russian working-class movement.

The first Marxist circles in Russia, which played a big role in spreading the teachings of Marx and Engels, were formed at this period. They showed that in Russia also the revolutionaries should place their chief hopes on the proletariat which was growing from year to year, was developing politically and becoming organized and, by virtue of its position was the most revolutionary class of society. However, while propagandizing these correct ideas, the Marxist circles of that period had no practical connections with the working-class movement; they were isolated from this movement.

The task was to bring the ideas of Marxism, the ideas of scientific Socialism to the working masses. In other words, it was necessary to unite Socialism with the working-class movement which was developing spontaneously. It was a question of imbuing the working class with a socialist consciousness. "Without knowledge the workers are defenceless; armed with knowledge they constitute a force!"* wrote Lenin.

The working-class movement needs Socialism like the ship its compass, in order successfully to weather the storm and reach its goal.

The task of uniting Socialism with the working-class movement was carried out by the revolutionary Marxists of Russia, organized by Lenin and Stalin into a militant, consolidated party of the proletariat—the Bolshevik Party.

* V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 2, p. 76.

class movement at that time was unorganized, and scattered and followed no clear aim.

In the beginning the workers carried on a struggle mainly for economic demands: a reduction of the intolerably long working day, wage increases and abolition of the excessive fines.

However, the working class could not confine itself to these demands alone. It had to fight not only for better working conditions, but also for the destruction of the whole capitalist system. And zealously guarding this system was tsardom with its troops, police, and officials. Even when the workers presented modest economic demands, tsardom vigorously came to the defence of the capitalists and furiously attacked the workers. The tsarist authorities sent police and troops against the unarmed strikers. The workers' actions were suppressed and their leaders thrown into prison or sentenced to penal servitude.

In order to overthrow the rule of the capitalists it was necessary to start an economic struggle against individual capitalists, and a political struggle against the tsarist autocracy; it was necessary to overthrow tsardom.

It was left to the working class to play the leading role in overthrowing tsardom. The more advanced workers of the time fully realized this. At his trial in 1877 Pyotr Alexeyev, a weaver, who had been arrested for carrying on revolutionary propaganda stated: "The muscular arm of the working millions will be lifted, and the yoke of despotism (tsardom—*Ed.*) guarded by the soldiers' bayonets, will be smashed to atoms."

The seventies and eighties of the last century were marked by a large number of strikes in Russia, the biggest of which was the strike at the Morozov Mill in Orekhovo-Zuyevo. In January 1885 the mill's 8,000 workers downed tools, their chief demand being that the mill-

census five-sixths of the country's population were engaged in agriculture and only one-sixth in industry, trade, on transport and in building work.

Before the Revolution such important industries as the machine building, automobile and chemical did not exist at all in Russia. The bulk of the equipment for the factories and mills was imported. She bought her machine tools, electrical equipment, farming machinery and even scythes abroad. Pointing out to the fact that although the consumption of iron in Russia had increased fivefold in the fifty years after the peasant reform, Lenin showed that Russia nevertheless remained a backward country, equipped with modern implements of production to one-fourth the extent of England, one-fifth the extent of Germany and one-tenth the extent of America.

Because of her economic backwardness tsarist Russia became increasingly dependent on West-European capitalism.

The most important branches of industry were in the hands of foreign capitalists. For instance, half of the oil industry and three-quarters of the coal-mining and metallurgical industries belonged to the British, French, German and Belgian capitalists. The capitalist Nobel owned the oil fields of Baku. The big industrial centre of the Donbas was called Hughesovka in those years, the name of the British capitalist Hughes who owned the metallurgical works and coal mines there.

The foreign capitalists ruthlessly exploited the workers of Russia: their annual profits totalled 200,000,000 gold rubles.

The tsarist government contracted big loans in France, Britain and other countries, which the tsar spent on equipping the army, the police and gendarmerie.

The Paris and London bankers granted these loans on enslaving terms, thus increasing tsarist Russia's dependence on foreign capital. To meet the interest of these

loans, tsardom squeezed from 600,000,000 to 700,000,000 gold rubles out of the people annually.

Shortly before the First World War the tsarist government concluded secret treaties with the governments of Britain and France, whereby tsardom undertook, in the event of war, to send millions of Russian soldiers to fight for the interests of the Anglo-French capitalists.

Thus, the policy of the tsarist government, of the Russian landlords and capitalists led to Russia becoming more and more dependent on foreign states and being turned into a semicolony of West-European capitalism, primarily British and French.

commonly known as the First International, was founded in London under the leadership of Marx and Engels.

In the lifetime of Marx and Engels the working class made its first attempt to win political power and to smash the bourgeois order. This was the Paris Commune which arose in 1871 as a result of the uprising of Paris workers. But it existed for only two months and ten days, the counterrevolutionary bourgeoisie of France savagely retaliating against the heroes of the Commune.

The bourgeoisie, however, were powerless to crush the working-class movement or to stifle the striving of the proletariat to win their freedom. Millions of workers in all capitalist countries began to rally and unite under the banner of Marxism. The working-class movement in Russia started to develop at the close of the last century.

The First Steps of the Working-Class Movement in Russia

The proletariat in Russia grew and crystallized into a powerful force in the second half to the nineteenth century. The bulk of the workers were concentrated in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Ivanovo-Voznesensk, Yaroslavl, Nizhni-Novgorod, Ekaterinoslav, in the Donets Basin, the Urals, Baku and other big industrial centres.

The working class of Russia began to awaken already in the seventies of the last century and started a struggle against the capitalists. Low wages, excessive fines, cheating and swindling of the workers over wages tried the temper of the workers; they went on strike and demanded that the factory owners improve working conditions.

In those years the movement of the workers often broke into disorderly actions. The workers would wreck factory-owned shops and factory offices; the working-

men scattered in the small workshops or the peasants in the villages. The proletariat, as a class, grows from year to year, develops politically and easily lends itself to organization owing to its conditions of labour.

The proletariat alone is capable of heading the working people and leading them in the struggle to overthrow the power of the exploiters and to build Socialism.

Marx and Engels taught that it was impossible to get rid of the power of the capitalists and to build Socialism by peaceful means. Capitalism will not fall of its own accord, the bourgeoisie will not give up its riches and power, voluntarily. Capitalism can be destroyed only by a proletarian revolution, which will forcibly overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat (that is, the unlimited power of the proletariat over the exploiters). The dictatorship of the proletariat must deprive the capitalists of their wealth, convert this wealth into the property of the people, crush the resistance of the overthrown bourgeoisie and organize the building of Socialism.

In order to carry out these tasks the working class must have its own revolutionary party which would lead the class struggle of the proletariat. It was such a party that Marx and Engels began to build. They called it the Communist Party. In 1848 Marx and Engels published the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* in which they outlined their teachings. The *Manifesto of the Communist Party* closes with the words:

"Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic Revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.

"Workingmen of all countries, unite!"

Marx and Engels called on the working class of the world to unite for struggle against capitalism; they formed the first international organization of the proletariat. In 1864 the "International Workingmen's Association,"

2. THE STRUGGLE OF THE WORKERS AND PEASANTS AGAINST THE LANDLORDS AND CAPITALISTS

Class Contradictions and the Class Struggle

The division of human society into oppressors and oppressed, exploiters and exploited is connected with the appearance of private property of the means of production. Land, cattle, the implements of production, etc., are needed in order to live, to have food and clothing. Having seized all the means of production, the handful of rich compels the overwhelming majority of the population to work for it, while it itself idles away the time; this handful appropriates the labour of others, exploits them. The result is the division of society into irreconcilably hostile classes.

The people who possess the means of production, form one class, share the same class interests; they seek to reinforce their dominant position and to oppress and exploit the working people to the utmost. The people who have been deprived of the means of production, form another class, with absolutely other class interests; they strive to overthrow the rule of the exploiters and to free themselves from the fetters of oppression.

A continuous struggle is in progress between the two opposing classes. The exploited classes refuse to recon-

cile themselves to the fact that they have to work all their lives for the exploiters. And so they wage a struggle for their emancipation. The exploiting classes for their part do not want to lose their dominant position, their wealth and their power. And so they redouble their exploitation of the working people.

In capitalist society the capitalists own the means of production. In this society the workers are deprived of the means of production and are subjected to brutal capitalist exploitation. The result is an irreconcilable class struggle between the workers and capitalists. The struggle first began when capitalist society took shape. In the beginning the workers fought against individual capitalists for better working conditions, for a shorter working day, for increased wages, and so on. At that period they were as yet ignorant of the main class tasks.

The cardinal task of the working class is to destroy the capitalist system under which the worker is compelled to sell his labour power to the capitalist and is exploited. The working class can secure its emancipation only after it has overthrown the domination of the bourgeoisie and destroyed private property of the means of production. The proletariat has to carry out a socialist revolution in order to destroy bourgeois power and take state power into its own hands. With the help of this power it is called upon to destroy the capitalist system and to build a socialist society.

These tasks were first placed before the working class by its great teachers Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, who embarked on their activity at a time when the working class in the European countries had only just emerged as an independent political force. Marx was born in 1818 and died in 1883. Engels was born in 1820 and died in 1895.

Marxism—the Revolutionary Teaching of the Proletariat

Long before Marx and Engels there were men who dreamt of a system of society under which there would be no oppression and exploitation of man by man. But they were individual dreamers who were called socialist utopians. They did not see the real path that leads to Socialism, they invented plans for a better form of human society and thought that "it was only necessary to convince the rulers and the governing classes of the injustice of the modern social order, and it would then be easy to establish peace and general well-being on earth. They dreamt of Socialism without a struggle."*

From a dream, from utopia Marx and Engels turned Socialism into a science; their teachings is therefore called scientific Socialism. Marx and Engels showed how human society develops and why changes take place in social life. They made a particularly detailed study of the capitalist system. Marx and Engels scientifically proved that capitalism was doomed and would be replaced by a new social system—Socialism.

After analyzing the experience of the class struggle, Marx and Engels came to the conclusion that capitalism was creating its own gravedigger in the person of the proletariat. The proletariat is the only class that is consistently revolutionary. The proletariat does not possess the means of production, is not fettered by private property. It is interested in completely destroying the system of exploitation and in building a socialist society.

Under capitalism vast masses of workers concentrate in huge factories. Naturally, it is easier for the workers in such factories to act jointly than for the handicrafts-

* V. I. Lenin, *Marx-Engels-Marxism*, Moscow 1951, p. 57.