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"Five Years of Russian Revolution and the Prospects of the World Revolution"

(Comrade Zetkin's Speech)

Eighth Session.

Plenary Session of November 13th.

Comrades: As five years ago, so today the Russian Revolution stands before us as the most formidable historic event of the present period. Scarcely had this giant stretched his mighty limbs, and had plunged into the stubborn and passionate struggle for his existence and further development, than cleavages occurred within the working class of all countries, which were more acute than they had ever been before. "Long live Reform", "Long live the Revolution!" Such was from all sides the reply to the call of the Russian Revolution. This situation gives to the Russian Revolution a quite definite and far reaching significance. About the middle of the nineties of the last century a definite political orientation had arisen within the working class which was, so to speak, the ideological sediment of the imperialist capitalism and of its repercussion on the conditions of the working class. Theoretically, we called this orientation—*Revisionism*, and in practice it was *Opportunism*. What was its nature? Its opinion was that the revolution had become superfluous and avoidable. The revisionists, the reformists of today, asserted that capitalism produces within itself the organizational forms which overcome or at least palliate the imminent economic and social conflicts, thus neutralizing the theories of impoverishment, crises, and catastrophes. According to their conception, capitalism itself no longer created the objective factors of an indispensable and inevitable revolution. Owing to the same conception, another social factor of the revolution—the workers' will for revolution—was eliminated. It was asserted that democracy and social reform gradually undermine capitalism, that society would emerge from capitalism into Socialism. This conception was repudiated in theory at the party conferences of the Social Democrats, the leading party of the II. International. It was rejected in 1903 and 1906 at the International Congresses in Paris and Amsterdam. Nevertheless, it became more and more the practice within the parties of the II. International. This was already apparent in the attitude of the Stuttgart, Copenhagen, and Basle Congresses on the questions of imperialism, militarism and the impending world war.

The world war broke out. The bourgeoisie of the belligerent countries philosophized with machine-guns, tanks, submarines and with aircraft from which death and destruction

was spread broadcast. During the course of the war it became quite evident that it was nothing less than a supreme crisis, that it would end in a terrible catastrophe of world capitalism. It is the bitter irony of history that during the process of the development of affairs, the majority of the organized working class of the highly developed capitalist countries clung to the anti-revolutionary theory, the theory of Reformism. This, on the outbreak of war, led to the ignominious failure of the II. International. The proletariat did not respond to the lesson of the world war by an International alliance for world revolution and for a general settlement of accounts with capitalism. On the contrary, it responded by the alliance of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie of their respective so-called *Fatherlands*. When at the conclusion of the world war, capitalism proved itself incapable of overcoming the catastrophe, when the bourgeoisie showed that it was incapable and unwilling to reconstruct the world out of the chaos which had been created, the opportunist leaders of the working class clung all the more tenaciously to their theory of reformism. They said that Socialism and Communism will arise not out of the collapse of capitalism, but out of its reconstruction and its revival. They said that the evils and the sufferings of the war would be overcome and society restored, not through revolutionary class struggle, but only through co-operation, through harmonious collaboration of the classes, in fact through the bourgeois and proletarian coalition. Their slogan is not revolution for the establishment of society on a Communist basis, but an alliance with the bourgeoisie for the reconstruction of Capitalism.

Comrades! in this stifling atmosphere the Russian Revolution acted like a thunderstorm. The Russian proletariat was the first, and unfortunately is still the only one (apart from that in the small Soviet Republics which sprang up within the former Russian Empire) which drew logical and practical conclusions from the imperialist war and from the collapse of capitalism. The Russian Revolution commenced the actual liquidation of Revisionism, of Reformism, the liquidation which will be finally accomplished by the World Revolution. The Russian Revolution has expressed quite clearly the will and determination of the proletarian masses to put an end to capitalism once and for all. It is the first mighty action of the world revolution which is the supreme judgment over capitalism.

Comrades! the Mensheviks, the Social-Revolutionaries and their brothers outside of Russia have certainly assured the world

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that they represent the theory that the Russian Revolution is nothing but a small national affair, and must be kept within the limits of a purely bourgeois revolution. The aim must be reversion to the February (March) Revolution. There is no doubt whatever that the Russian Revolution gave expression to the historic conditions which, on Russian territory, made for the destruction of Tsarism and for the establishment of new political forms of government. At the same time, from the first day of its existence, the Russian Revolution proved itself to be not a small national affair, but rather the big affair of the world proletariat. It has shown that it cannot be forced into the narrow limits of a mere political bourgeois revolution, because it is the party of the powerful proletarian world revolution. The Russian Revolution has not only given expression to revolutionary social factors, the objective and subjective tendencies of which sprang up on Russian territory. It also gives expression to the social and revolutionary tendencies and forces of international capitalism and of the world bourgeois society. This is evident from the fact that the Russian revolution was an outcome of the world war which was not a casual event, but the inevitable consequence of the economic and political world conditions under the domination of finance capital and of imperialist capitalism. The Russian Revolution gives expression to all the economic, political and social conditions which were created by the imperialist world capitalism in Russia itself, as well as in other countries. Moreover, the Russian Revolution is the embodiment and the crystallization of the proletariat of all countries. International revolutionary socialism, the spiritual and moral forces, were aroused by and are active in the Russian Revolution.

Thus the Russian Revolution is to the world proletarian masses the supreme expression of the life, the strength and the firmness of the social factors of historic development, of the conscience, the will, the action and the struggle of the proletarian masses for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of Communism. It has been asserted that the fact of the Proletarian Revolution having begun is due to the weakness of the Russian bourgeoisie. It is said that it is only owing to the weakness of the bourgeoisie in Russia that the revolution has taken the formidable and menacing form it has. This is true, comrades, but only to a certain extent. I venture to say that the strength of the revolutionary will and of the revolutionary actions of the Russian proletariat, which, imbued with the revolutionary spirit, and having received its ideological training from the Bolshevik Party, became the arbiters of the world's destiny, were more important factors in making Russia the birth-place of the Revolution than the weakness of the bourgeoisie. My conception is borne out by the fact that the Russian proletariat was certainly able, at the outbreak of the revolution, to overpower and overthrow the comparatively weak Russian bourgeoisie. The further triumph of the revolution, its continuance during five years, every day of which was a day of struggle against the powerful world bourgeoisie, is a proof that there was something stronger and more decisive operating in the Russian Revolution than the weakness of the Russian bourgeoisie; it was the strength, the passionate determination the perseverance, in fact the determined will for revolution which inspired the proletarian masses under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party.

Comrades, it was clear from the beginning that the Revolution in Russia could not be a bourgeois revolution in view of the character of its most important social factor, the proletariat, and of the nature of the revolution itself. Louder and louder was the demand: peace through revolution! the land for the peasants! workers' control of production, and above all, the slogan: all power to the Soviets! Such demands are incompatible with a bourgeois revolution. It is true that these demands were kept in the background at first and did not attain their full significance during the February (March) Revolution. But they gained ground, became more influential, and from mere propagandist watchwords they evolved into objects for struggle.

The bourgeoisie was prepared for this Revolution. It was strongly organized in the Zemstvos, the Dumas of the large towns, and in many industrial unions and leagues which sprang up during the world war. The Russian proletariat, on the other hand, had no revolutionary fighting organization. It created them in the course of the Revolution in the shape of Soviets. It is significant that the Soviet did not at first initiate the struggle on a revolutionary basis, for revolutionary aims and with revolutionary determination. In the beginning the Mensheviks and the Social-Revolutionaries played the most important role in them. They fostered within the Russian proletariat the spirit which makes for reformism and for the voluntary relinquishing of power to the bourgeoisie, viz., the fear of responsibility and lack of confidence in its own strength. It is significant that the conference of 82 delegates of workers' and soldiers' soviets, which met in Petrograd in 1917, brought forward a resolution which said that the struggle between capital and labor

must take account of the conditions created by the war situation and by the still incomplete Revolution. The form of the struggle must be determined by these conditions. The faint-heartedness of the Russian proletariat, even of its best elements, those who are organized in the trade unions, was expressed in the Third Conference of the All-Russian Trade Unions which took place on the 20th of June of that year. This conference revealed the growing influence of the Bolshevik Party, as the revolutionary party of the proletariat. Among other radical demands was that for working class control of production. But, they added, the proletariat cannot alone accept the responsibility for the control of national economy. This task is so difficult, so complicated, that all productive elements, all sections of the population must be drawn into its workings. This position of the organized workers is a sign of the coalition policy between the proletariat and bourgeoisie, which has been carried on by the petty bourgeois, reformist, Socialist and Social Revolutionary parties since the March Revolution.

This was in truth and in deed, bourgeois politics, the democratic expression of capitalist class rule. Instead of peace they had the June offensive, instead of satisfying the land hunger of the peasants they were shooting down the rioting mujiks, instead of control of production for the restoration of national economy, they had the renunciation of all social reforms and the exploitation and sabotage of industry through the capitalists and their opposition to the demand for All Power to the Soviets. The democracy in its struggle against the revolutionary working class soon revealed what value it placed upon its principles. It revealed itself more and more as the undisguised class rule of the bourgeoisie, merging into a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The coalitionist, socialistic, petty bourgeois and intellectual, allied with the bourgeoisie, did not wish to go beyond the limits of a bourgeois political revolution; this brought us to the verge of a dictatorship even in the month of September. And behind the dictatorship, whether it be a militarist one or one of Kerensky—it matters not—there loomed the restoration of Tsarism.

In this moment the proletariat, under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party, sprang into the arena. They chased the beautiful government of "pure democracy" to the devil, and centered all the State Power in the Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Soviets through whose representatives a Provisional Government was established. In this decisive historical moment, the proletariat proved that it had lost its doubt in its own power and gained courage with which to assume the responsibilities of carrying out the tasks of destroying an old world and building up a new one.

The Russian proletariat was the first, and until now the only working class which has ceased being the object of history and has assumed a subjective historical position; it no longer suffers history to mould it, but it creates history.

The seizure of power by the proletariat, under the leadership of the Bolsheviks, taught us one great lesson. It is the necessity and the significance of armed revolution, even by a minority. But this lesson of the Russian Revolution draws a very sharp distinction. It shows how wrong historically are our little bookkeeper politicians, those who want to reduce the revolution to a sum in addition and subtraction, those glib talkers who believe that the struggle for the seizure of power by the working class should only be undertaken when conditions "allow", namely, those who wish to secure such a majority for the revolutionary struggle that its result is a foregone conclusion. This conception reduces the idea of revolution to that of an insurance company in good standing which pays promptly, and in gold at that. These misconceptions were shattered by the Russian Revolution.

But the revolutionary action of the proletariat of Petrograd and Moscow also excluded all romantic *Patch* adventures. It was not the act of an intrepid little party which, without any close connection with the proletarian masses, launched revolutionary slogans and formulae into the void. No, the revolutionary acts of the Bolsheviks was the heroic deed of an organized minority party which had already assured itself of contact with the masses on an extensive scale and which was deeply rooted in the masses.

In history the seizure of power by the Soviets under the leadership of the Bolsheviks, appears as a brilliant isolated deed, as though it were accomplished at one stroke. But such was not the case. This intrepid deed was preceded by months of the most zealous and tenacious propaganda and organization work by the Bolsheviks among the masses. Not only was the support of the broad masses assured them through this struggle, but the Bolshevik war-cries were understood by the masses and they made them their aims of struggle.

So the act of revolution was not a revolutionary acrobatic feat of a daring little party, but a revolutionary deed of the great revolutionary masses.

The most decisive factor was the daring: whether it would be victory or defeat could in no way be foretold. But they neither could nor would forego the attempt. He who wishes to postpone a revolutionary act until the victory is certain, postpones victory to the days of St. Never, since he thus not only declines the revolutionary struggle, but actually renounces the Revolution. The revolutionary work of a party can be ever so skilful and its propaganda ever so diligently spread among the proletarian masses, yet victory is never assured. *One must dare in order to win.* The Bolsheviks, the revolutionary proletariat, won the fight in the Russian Revolution in their first daring uprising only because they had the courage to dare.

That is the lesson of the Russian Revolution, which the workers of all countries must take to heart.

It is well to look before you leap, but don't be so occupied in looking that you forget to leap. The preliminary period of preparation before the Revolution is only for the strengthening of our forces so that we may advance.

Comrades, as soon as the Russian workers, supported by the Russian peasants, had seized political power and were proceeding to build up their dictatorship through the Soviet system, another historical truth came to light. It was the truth which Engels expressed in a letter to Bebel of December 11th, 1884, in complete refutation of the babblings of the reformists of all countries,—that democracy is the only road by which the emancipation of the proletariat may be attained. Engels knew that on the day of the revolutionary crisis and after the revolution, the proletariat could have no more furious and bitter enemies than the "pure democrats". But let me read this quotation to you:

"Pure democracy, in the period of revolution may assume new importance as the last safety anchor. That is why the so-called feudal bureaucratic forces (in the period from March to September 1848) supported the liberals in order to keep the revolutionary masses down. In any case, our only enemy in the day of crisis and afterwards, will be the reactionary forces grouped around the pure democracy; and this I believe should not be lost sight of."

Comrades, it is remarkable that the reformist gentlemen—those gentlemen who are so busy in using Marx and Engels to oppose the Russian Revolution and the conception of the proletarian revolution, those gentlemen who are so busy singing in many tongues the praises of democracy—these gentlemen seem to have forgotten completely this particular view of Engels. The Russian Revolution has plainly shown how correct Engels was. Even on the very day of the Revolution and in the time immediately following the establishment of Soviet Power, the democrats came forward as the bitterest enemies of proletarian class rule. This "pure democracy" was regarded by the Russian proletariat since the revolution as the class rule of capital, the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

The solution advocated by the democrats in their struggle against Soviet rule, was the *Constituent Assembly* as opposed to the Soviets. The democrats opposed to the Soviet power which was the creation of the Revolution, demanded the *Constituent Assembly*.

The democrats had had about eight months in which to elect and assemble the *Constituent Assembly*. But they did not do this; neglecting to carry into life what they had characterized as the purest expression of the will of the people. Why? The *Constituent Assembly* could not have assembled without raising the menacing spectre of the proletarian and peasant revolution. There was the spectre of the agrarian revolution in the form of the peasants cry for land and peace. There was the danger of the proletarian revolution in the control of production. Therefore, the democrats continually postponed, first the election of the *Constituent Assembly*, and then its convocation.

Then suddenly, the demand for the *Constituent Assembly* was made the battle cry of the pure democrats, in order to overthrow the Soviet power. The *Constituent Assembly* was declared to be something sacred, the only way by which a proper system of government could be created. The petty bourgeois socialists, the reformists, in alliance with the bourgeois parties in all countries, were not the only ones to demand the *Constituent Assembly*. This demand found an echo even in our own revolutionary ranks I wish to remind you that no less a person than the great theoretician of Communism Rosa Luxemburg, at one time put forward the same demand, namely: the *Constituent Assembly* and the Soviets as backbone of the proletarian State. The significance of this demand may be seen from the fact that it made its appearance again a short time ago. During the Kronstadt uprising a section of the Social-Revolutionaries, and even the leader of the Cadets *Miliukov*, raised this cry for a *Constituent Assembly* and the Soviets,—but naturally Soviets without Communists, in other words without action...

But, aside from this, what was the situation after the conquest of power by the proletariat? Is there any justification for the opposition to the revolutionary government which still exists in certain circles of the working class on account of its having disbanded the *Constituent Assembly* when it first met in council on January 5th? Let us examine the circumstances carefully. The *Constituent Assembly* declared from the very start that it did not intend to co-operate with the Soviets, but to oppose them. It denied the right of the Soviets as a state power, thereby denying the Revolution itself. The Social-Revolutionists, the Menshevik and the bourgeois majority, refused to recognize the Soviet Power and provisional government. They even refused to discuss the question. The Bolsheviks in the *Constituent Assembly*, and with them the Left Wing of the Socialist Revolutionaries, answered this arrogant declaration of war as it should have been answered. They left the *Constituent Assembly*, and the Soviets declared the *Assembly* dissolved and had it dispersed.

Many critics of the Russian Revolution among the European and American proletariat acknowledged the correctness of this policy of the Bolsheviks which was really the policy of the Revolution. The Soviet power was justified in dispersing the *Constituent Assembly*, the *Assembly* had been elected under different conditions and no longer represented the views and the will of the large masses of the working class. The subsequent elections to the Soviet proved this definitely. But, said these critics, the Soviet Government should at once have proceeded with new elections. New elections, however, were not to be thought of, not only for technical reasons which were then advanced, such as the bad state of the means of transportation, the disconnection between the centres of political life, and the far-off districts of the country, and the resulting impossibility to elect an *Assembly* which would really represent the will of the people. There were other reasons of deeper historical and political significance against it. To call a *Constituent Assembly*, and to place the decision as to the form of Government in its hands would have been nothing less than to deny the right of the Soviet Power and of the Revolution itself. What could possibly be the role of the *Constituent Assembly* acting beside the Soviets? Should the *Constituent Assembly* be merely a deliberating body and the decisions left in the hands of the Soviets? This would not have agreed at all with the demands for a "pure democracy". The "pure democracy" would not be content with an advisory capacity, it wanted to rule. But the Soviet Power could not allow itself to become reduced to an advisory body. The Russian proletariat could not have shared its power with the bourgeoisie after the Revolution had placed it entirely in its hands. Such a dual government could not exist long; this dualism would have led inevitably and very soon to a struggle for power between the *Constituent Assembly* and the Soviets. The work of the Revolution would have been endangered. The existence of the *Constituent Assembly* beside the Soviets would have given the counter-revolution a legal rallying point to carry on its illegal and legal work against the revolution. Therefore, down with the *Constituent Assembly*, all power to the Soviets! This was the only possible slogan if the political power were to remain in the hands of the proletariat.

Another measure of the Russian Revolution aroused the indignation of the critics of the Russian Revolution, namely the Soviet Electoral Law. This electoral law, as is well known, limits the right of suffrage in so far as it denies it to all exploiters. Employers of labor can neither vote nor be elected to office. Outside of these, all workers above 18 enjoy the suffrage right. This limitation of the suffrage right was necessary for the political expropriation of the bourgeoisie. The Soviet regime places the State power in the hands of the working masses. In shops and in all villages, they elect representatives of the Soviet. Since the bourgeoisie can neither vote nor be elected to office, there was no danger that they might regain any portion of the political power.

Some people have said that the refusal of the suffrage right was a petty measure which deterred many creative talents from working for the reconstruction of the new order. Of course, the number of bourgeois who lost their suffrage right was very small; but its social and economic power was still considerable. The proletariat, in fighting for power could not give to the bourgeoisie even the smallest particle of its political power and political rights.

Furthermore, the denial of the suffrage right was a brand-mark of social contempt. He who did not work, be it with brain or with hand, he who existed as the exploiter and parasite in society had no right to decide upon the political and social structure of the new regime.

There is another consideration why the Soviet power deprived the exploiting class of the right to vote. The suffrage right is the political and legal expression

of the character of a society. The right to vote shows the economic basis of the society, the right and power of its various classes. The spread of suffrage into the bourgeois order after their evolution meant only that political rights and political power passed from the old feudal land owners to the capitalist exploiters. It suffered property, income and tax limitations. The introduction of universal suffrage meant that a new class was rising besides the owning class, that of the producers. Universal suffrage means that in addition to property, human labor and the social services of the individual are also rewarded by political power and political rights. The Soviet Regime however, does not base its social order on the division of power between bourgeoisie and proletariat, between the owning and laboring classes but upon the working class alone. In accordance with this character of the Soviet Government as a workers' government, the suffrage right could be granted only to the workers, but not to the employers.

It was not sufficient, comrades, that the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, the Soviet Republic, be created on paper in so and so many paragraphs. It had to become an actual fact. This could be achieved only in the fight against the bourgeoisie, and the counter-revolution. The Soviet State had to defend itself from the very first day of its existence, not only against the Russian bourgeoisie, but also against the bourgeoisie of the whole world, which was in complete solidarity with it from the start. It had to fight the counter-revolution at home and on all fronts. The young proletarian power had to be defended against both internal and external enemies.

The first word of the Soviets was the word of peace. But not peace in a pacifist sense, as I will show later. Soviet Russia demobilized, retired from the world war.

But what was the answer it received to its word of peace? The armies of the German Imperialists in whose ranks were the Social Democrats with the Erfurt program in their knapsacks, hurled themselves on Petrograd and invaded the Ukraine and other territories. The Entente launched an attack upon the Soviet power and rendered political, financial, and military assistance to the counter-revolution.

A Red Army had to be created if the Soviet power was to be saved. It meant the organization and use of force against force.

Besides the Red Army, which was one of the forms of the force called for the defence of the existence and independence of the Workers' Government on the battlefield, there was the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, the Terror. Both these forms of force were an unavoidable historical necessity, as harsh weapons of self-defence if the Soviet State was to survive and develop.

Because of the influence of reformist leaders there are still large masses of the working class who do not understand the historical necessity and the real nature of Terror. They abuse the Red Army as an expression of Soviet Imperialism; they were especially indignant over the "barbarism" of the Terror. But let us look at things as they really are: The Red Terror was the answer of the Russian Revolution to the White Terror of the more powerful bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie not only attempted to destroy the political power of the workers by plots and insurrections, it also used its whole influence to prevent the reconstruction of the social and economic life of the country. The Soviet Terror was nothing but an unavoidable policy of self-defence. The task of the Russian Revolution was that which Karl Marx had designated in his treatise "The Class War in France" as the first duty of any revolution; it had to destroy its enemy. Besides destroying the enemy, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Terror had still another task,—to discourage the counter-revolution, to rob it of its last hope of ever re-establishing the rule of the exploiters.

A Revolution is not a young maiden wandering in white robes with a green palm in her hand. It could only come armed with shield and sword to oppose its enemies.

The acts of terror of the proletarian dictatorship are not arbitrary acts of the Revolution. They had a big purpose. It was an evil to prevent a worse evil. The Terror was a necessary act of self defence. Some weep over the hundreds, the thousands who have fallen in the civil war as victims of the Terror. Some tear their hair in despair over the strangulation of democracy, and bourgeois liberties by the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, by the Terror. But no one speaks of the tens of thousands who have fallen as victims of the counter-revolution. No one speaks of the tens of thousands more who would have met the same fate had it not been that the counter-revolution was defeated by force! None of the reformists mention the fact that were it not for the severe measure of the revolution, millions and millions would still be suffering from the barbarian capitalist oppression and exploitation, the prey of misery and death.

Ninth Session.

Comrades, I broke off yesterday with a declaration that the Soviet power cannot possibly dispense with the use of force for its defence and maintenance. Utterly erroneous, however, is the contention of our reformist and bourgeois opponents that the Soviet power exists thanks to force alone. The state cannot maintain power for long with the aid of bayonets. The eight months of coalition government in Russia and especially the months of the Kerensky regime of Social Revolutionaries, gave ample proof of this. The statement applies especially to an epoch of revolution, in which days count as months and years as decades or centuries. The Soviet Power had to justify its existence by an active policy.

The international trend of Soviet policy occupies the foreground in this connection. It secured unequivocal expression in the attitude of the Soviet Power towards the problems of war and peace. Peace was the first demand of the proletarian state. Doubtless the cry for peace was largely rooted in the poverty that the peasant and proletarian masses clamoured for peace. But another, and certainly quite as strong a factor in the demand for peace, was the consciousness of the international revolutionary solidarity of the workers of the world. In the *Class War in France* Marx wrote: "The Social Revolution was proclaimed in France, but it could not be achieved there. The Social Revolution, speaking generally, cannot be achieved inside of national barriers".

From the very outset, this conviction was the left motive of the Russian Revolution, of bolshevist revolutionary policy. Among the first decrees of the provisional government came an appeal to other governments and nations on behalf of peace. This appeal made it perfectly plain that those who issued it were not under the spell of bourgeois pacifist illusions, but were demanding peace as a revolutionary act of the first step to the World Revolution. In particular, the workers of Germany, Great Britain, and France, were reminded that they had already done great and valuable services for humanity, and that it behoved them, therefore, to do their duty now by the deliverance of mankind from the miseries of war.

The appeal of the Soviet Republic for peace by way of the proletarian revolution was lost in the void, although unquestionable peace and the Revolution will never again be obtainable upon such easy terms as were possible, had there been in other countries a prompt continuation of the Proletarian Revolution. A whole year of crimes, of horrors, of the wastage of life and property, would have been spared. Most important of all, the proletarian masses were then in possession of armed power, which they could have turned with deadly effect against the exploiting class.

Peace however, was not brought about by the World Revolution. The Soviet Republic was forced to make peace with the Zweibund—the Peace of Brest-Litovsk. This Peace greatly accentuated the difficulties of the internal situation of the young proletarian State. The Social Revolutionaries, the most compactly organized power of the counter-revolution in Soviet Russia, made this peace the pretext for scandalous incitements against the Soviet Power, declaring that the Soviet Power was responsible for the military collapse.

But what was the real state of affairs? The young Soviet State had to pay for the crimes and follies of the Kerensky Government's June offensive by accepting the severities and humiliations of the Brest-Litovsk Peace. It had to pay for the imperialism of "pure democracy". A more specific attack on the part of the Social Revolutionaries, the counter-revolutionists, was their assertion that by the Peace of Brest-Litovsk, the Soviet Power had strengthened German or Hohenzollern militarism at the expense of the "democracy" and "Kultur" of Entente Imperialism.

In reality Brest-Litovsk was for German imperialism the direct route to Versailles and the Peace of Versailles. The victory mania of German imperialism flamed fiercely. All the forces of the Central Powers were staked upon the war. Then ensued the collapse of German militarism and German imperialism. Now, among the forces leading to this collapse we must unquestionably include the Russian Revolution and its example as one of the strongest factors in undermining the will to war of the German and Austrian armies. When the German proletarians began to refuse to be bled any longer upon the battlefields for the benefit of the German bourgeoisie, the first halting word expressive of a renunciation of the war was the demand for soldiers' councils. When the military collapse culminated in political revolution, the first word of the German Revolution was "workers' and peasants' councils". Whence did the working masses of Germany take this watchword of revolution? They had learned it from the Russian Revolution.

Unfortunately these revolutionists were content with the first letters of the revolutionary alphabet. The German proletariat had not as yet learned to read the book of revolution fluently. It had not learned what the Russian workers and peasants, "backward and illiterate", had been taught in eight months by the capitalist policy of the coalition governments. Four years later, the lesson is still unlearned. The German workers, handed back to the bourgeoisie the political power concentrated in the councils. Instead of the dictatorship of the proletariat, democracy was established, in other words, the class rule of the bourgeoisie. For the time being, therefore, there was no fulfilment of the hopes of the Russian revolutionary leaders that the World Revolution was going to run a rapid course. The counter-revolutionaries twitted the Bolsheviki for their conviction that the Russian Revolution was merely to be the prelude to the imminent world revolution.

Comrades! mockery is easy enough, but there is no justification here for the jibe. The leaders of the Russian Revolution recognized very clearly the trend and the aim of the incipient world revolution. As to the tempo, they may have been mistaken. Why? The aims and the trend of any historical development are plainly discernable. They are displayed by the working of the objective forces of society. But the tempo depends mainly upon the subjective energies of the historical process; that is to say, in the case we are now considering, upon the revolutionary consciousness and activities of the proletarian masses. In the estimate of this factor so many imponderabilities are concerned that it is impossible to prophesy confidently concerning the tempo of the world revolution. But what the wisecracks of universal history stigmatized as an error of calculation, has become one of the strongest motive forces maintaining the persistent energy of the Russian Revolution. This error of calculation has been ten times, a hundred times, more fruitful in its influence far beyond the boundaries of Soviet Russia than all the would-be clever recipes of the self-satisfied calculators. The inviolable conviction that the world revolution must progress, that it would complete what had been begun on Russian soil—this conviction gave the Russian proletarians the confidence, the religious faith in the world revolution and in the revolutionary solidarity among the workers of all lands which still keeps the masses of Soviet Russia fresh, enthusiastic in the fight, eager for work, bold and resolute, after five years of fierce struggle.

Let us pass from the peace policy of the Russian Revolution to its economic policy. The economic policy was to create the steadfast energy of the revolutionary proletariat. It was to revolutionize society.

From the first, the Revolution turned its proletarian side outwards. Its economic policy had to manifest a tendency towards the Communist goal. If the political Soviet Power aims at realizing Communism, it must abolish private property in the means of production. Nor would this suffice. It must reorganize the whole economic structure of society, purposely in the Communist direction. This was a mighty task, and the attempt to solve it has exposed the tragic side of the Russian Revolution. The tragedy lies in this, that there is a contrast between the clear and passionate will to realize Communism here and now, in all its perfection, and the weakness and backwardness of the existing economic and social conditions under which this will has to operate.

If we wish to understand the economic policy of the Russian Revolution, we must form a clear mental picture of the economic and social forces that were available for achieving a communist transformation of the Proletarian State. What were the forces upon which the Russian Revolution could count for the economic transformation of society into a Communist society? In contradiction to utopianism, Marxism starts from the view that the foundation of the social revolution must be supplied by the highest attainable economic-technical development, which shall have brought about a titanic growth of productive energies and shall have created the most perfect instruments and methods for the performance of productive work. On the other hand, economic evolution must have brought into being a proletariat comprising the immense majority of the population, a proletariat of hand and brain workers that shall be competent to fulfill the economic and social tasks of effecting the transformation of Capitalism to Communism.

What was the position of Soviet Russia in these respects? The Soviet State, in its economic and social structure, may be compared to a pyramid which the Revolution has inverted and balanced upon its apex. This pyramid is supported by a youthful, backward, poorly developed system of machine industry; and by a proletariat which is likewise youthful, comparatively, numerically speaking, little trained, young in capacity to deal with the apparatus of production, to manage and guide it, to use

its productive powers to the full—and comparatively inexperienced, likewise in the management of affairs of State. This apex of the inverted pyramid has to support the enormous masses of a peasant agriculture, a peasant population continuing to till the soil by methods which (as Rosa Luxemburg once said) "date back to the days of the Pharaohs." And of course, these peasants have a mentality appropriate to the tenour of their lives.

Comrades, when we realize the state of affairs, we cannot but say: "It is a miracle that this inverted pyramid is still standing, although for five years all the powers of the counter-revolution have been endeavouring to overthrow it". For the long run, however, the position is untenable. The most expert juggler could not save such a pyramid from falling unless perhaps the heavy masses of the erstwhile base should crush the slender apex beneath their weight.

There would seem to be only two ways of saving the situation. We might hope that the narrow support of the proletariat, should undergo a growth so rapid and extensive as to enable it to withstand all the pressure from above. Or, again, the narrow support might be buttressed from without by the progress of the world revolution by the establishment of Soviet Republics outside the Russian Soviet State. Let us suppose that the proletariat were in a position to find new Soviet States with the highest degree of economic development and (to use bourgeois phraseology) at the highest possible level of culture; suppose that the world proletariat, in fraternal solidarity with Soviet Russia were able speedily to expand and to consolidate the same apex on which the inverted pyramid of Soviet Russia stood, and could thus have accelerated the transformation to communism!

This did not happen; no such Soviet State came into being. The result was that the Russian Revolution and the Russian proletarian State which the revolution had created, had to come to terms with the foreign capitalists. This *modus vivendi* is the new economic policy, and when we are appraising it we must never forget the peculiar Russian conditions under which it came into being. We must not judge it as if the measures that have been adopted formed part of an elaborated plan for the social revolution, carefully thought out in some professor's study. The criticism of our judgment must be, whether these measures are suitably adapted to circumstances which were not freely chosen but were given as such; whether they are steps likely to lead in the communist direction; whether the measures are taken with communism as their goal.

It is above all from their point of view that we must judge the bolshevist agrarian policy, which has been so adversely criticized by the reformists and by bourgeois adversaries, but has also been sharply criticized by some members of our own Party.

I must dwell for a moment upon this matter of the agrarian policy. It is of course impossible here to go into details, but an understanding on broad lines is essential to an understanding of the Russian Revolution, and is moreover of extreme importance as an aid to the solution of the problems which the world proletariat will have to face everywhere after the conquest of political power—although under somewhat different conditions from Soviet Russia. Logical enough, after their fashion, are those Mensheviks who condemn the Russian Revolution on principle because of its agrarian policy. Whether they are justified in calling themselves Marxists is another story.

When we appraise the Bolshevist agrarian policy, we have to remember that capitalism, despite the manifold means at its disposal, has hitherto been powerless to make an end of petty peasant agriculture and to replace it by higher forms. Doubtless capitalism has proletarianized the petty peasant farming of extensive regions and even of whole countries. But petty peasant agriculture has persisted none the less. I do not think only of the Balkan lands, whose characteristics are still predominantly those imposed by petty peasant agriculture; nor is the assertion applicable solely in addition to the petty peasant masses in Italy and France. In Germany, a country where industrial development is far advanced, there is still an extensive stratum of small peasants. Even in the U.S., there are numerous small peasant farms, though of course here when we speak of "small farms" we must apply an American, not a European, standard.

Now then, can it be expected that the Russian Revolution, that the Bolshevist agrarian policy, should in a moment succeed in making an end of petty peasant agriculture? In view of the numerical strength of the peasant population of Russia, it is impossible for the Revolution to make good without an agrarian policy that should commend itself to the peasant masses in Russia, where 80% of the population are small peasants, 9/10 of whom are estimated to be working peasants. The Revolution, the seizure of political power by the proletariat, would have been absolutely impossible in defiance of the will of those masses. I will go further, a revolution would have been impossible

without the active support of those masses. Whoever desired the proletarian revolution in Russia must perforce swallow the Bolshevik agrarian policy. You could not have the one without the other.

One of the decrees of the Provisional Government was the abolition of private property in land. The right to till the land was conceded to all persons without distinction of sex, who themselves worked as cultivators. There was a period during which the great estates were being broken up by the peasants in a wild chaotic fashion; at this time the farming implements and the farm stock of the large landed estates were distributed in like fashion. There came a period when an attempt was made to carry out land distribution in accordance with fixed rules, to avoid the parcelling of the large estates and to effect the deliberate transformation of petty farming into a general system of national farming. This was one of the phases of War Communism, "with its requisitions" etc. Land hunger, had made them strong supporters of the Soviet Power. The consequence of this agrarian revolution were not those which Rosa Luxemburg had feared, namely, that the Russian mujik would succumb to political indifference. He did not sit down by his fireside as soon as he had secured his little plot of land. His land hunger satisfied, he became the heroic defender of the Soviet Republic. He defended his plot of land within the Soviet State against any possible return of the landowner. At the same time the expectations of the leaders of the Russian Revolution were not realized. The distribution of land did not contribute toward intensifying class contrast in the rural districts, and did not bring over the poor peasant masses to the side of the industrial proletariat, for common action in the class conflict between the capitalists and the workers. A large class of middle peasantry arose whose interests soon came into conflict with the policy of "military communism." These middle peasants held in their hands the food and the arms, and thus they forced the introduction of the New Policy, the chief characteristic of which is the food tax in lieu of the compulsory delivery of all agricultural products, minus the necessary existence ration. They forced the introduction of free trade and in connection with it the other well known innovations.

Comrades, it has been said that the Bolshevik agrarian policy is not communistic, that it leads away from Communism and that it is in direct opposition to the task of the Soviet State which should consist in preparing and carrying out the communist revolution; worse still: that it is barring the way to this revolution. What is the real state of affairs? First of all, was it possible to carry out an agrarian revolution resulting in the preservation of large land estates tending towards large scale farming and the introduction of the modern methods of agriculture? Those who assert this, do not know what they are talking about. Agriculture in Soviet Russia is characterized by the small peasant farms. At the beginning of the Revolution, big agricultural concerns worth mentioning were to be found only in Poland, in the Baltic provinces and in some parts of the Ukraine. What does this mean for the solution of the agrarian question as recommended by the old socialist prescriptions? There was no apparatus for agricultural production capable of carrying on agriculture on a large scale. Moreover, there was no real modern rural proletariat capable of manipulating and managing such an apparatus of production. It is very characteristic that in Russia we hear continually of a "poor peasantry" (*bednota*) but never of an agricultural proletariat. Such a proletariat, in the true sense of the word, does not exist. Big agricultural estates that did exist were managed by the land owners according to the old feudal system, and not according to the methods of modern capitalism, with the exception of a few estates owned by "liberal" members of the nobility. Thus it was out of the question that the agrarian policy of the Russian Revolution should be initiated by the establishment of large scale agricultural production. As things stood (taking also into consideration that the Central Power was not very strong at the beginning)—the agrarian reform had to be, strictly speaking, the work of the peasant masses themselves, and could not help being chaotic.

Is it true that the Bolshevik agrarian policy is putting unsurmountable obstacles in the way of the development of agriculture in the direction of communism? I cannot admit this. It is true that the "ingrained ownership psychology" is still prevalent among the small peasantry in Soviet Russia. In many cases this psychology has been strengthened and consolidated; for how long, that is another question. This alleged ingrained petty bourgeois peasant mentality was not the only factor in the rebellion of the peasants against the measures of military communism. The land hunger turned the peasant into adherents and defenders of the Soviet State. The unsatisfied hunger for manufactured goods drove them away from communism and made them counter-revolutionary. In what form did communism present itself to them? Not as solidarity between

town and village, between the industrial proletariat and the small peasantry, but as "Military Communism", which took away everything from the peasantry without giving it the necessities of existence and agricultural production. Therefore, we are justified in assuming that the Soviet economic policy will not be confronted with an unsurmountable anti-communist opposition on the part of the peasants, if industrial production is raised. In judging of the small-peasant psychology, we must not leave out of consideration that the old traditions of primitive village communism have not yet died out among the Russian small peasantry. These traditions have been preserved and strengthened by a primitive, religious attitude regarding property as belonging to God, as God's property. This belief has been encouraged by the propaganda of the Tolstoyans, the Social-Revolutionaries, the Narodniki and of many religious sects. These relics of a communist orientation are systematically nurtured and furthered by the measures taken by the proletarian State. Notwithstanding the new policy, the land has not become the private property of the peasant. It has remained the property of the proletarian State. The peasants receive it for use, but can neither sell it nor leave it to their heirs. The exploitation of hired labor is prohibited. Moreover, the small peasant farms have been linked up with the general national economy, not only by the food tax, but also by a number of decisions, regulations and instructions concerning the agricultural exploitation of the land. The Soviet Government is deliberately and systematically directing the development of agriculture along co-operative lines. This is also partly done by the initiative of the peasants themselves who, under the pressure of last year's famine showed inclination to establish artels and cooperative societies. Neighbors' Leagues, have been formed for the joint purchase and use of machinery, horses etc. The Soviet Government is also endeavouring to establish a number of Soviet estates and to encourage the establishment of cooperative estates and agricultural concerns. It is true that the Soviet estates and cooperative concerns with up to date agricultural organizations are like small islands in a huge ocean of small peasant farms, which are estimated to number twelve millions. However, they can play an important role as industrial, technical and social model institutions, and there are proofs that they have already to a great extent fulfilled this role.

One more thing must be taken into consideration. We must not be led to look upon the Russian agrarian revolution in the light of the French peasant emancipation, in spite of the many outward analogies between these two mighty events. We must not forget that the French peasant emancipation was closely connected with the bourgeois revolution, a characteristic of which was the watchword: ownership and individualism. The Russian agrarian revolution, on the other hand, is linked up with the proletarian revolution, the leit-motiv of which is work and solidarity. This creates a quite different social atmosphere for the development of the small-peasant ideology from that which prevailed during the French revolution.

Above all, the Russian small peasantry will learn by experience that its welfare is bound up with the development of industry and with the raising of the proletariat to higher forms of economic and social existence. The peasantry cannot put its production on a more rational basis if it is not supported by a flourishing industry and by the achievements of the proletariat. In connection with this, I venture to say that the electrification of the Russian agricultural industry is the best agrarian program and the most effective agrarian reform which the Soviet Power has adopted and is endeavouring to carry out. It establishes solidarity between town and village and a community of economic and agricultural interests between the industrial proletarians and small peasants, which could not be attained in any other way.

This brings me to the following conclusion: Even though the Bolshevik agrarian reform has not been able to solve the agrarian question in a way leading to immediate realization of Communism, it has in no way turned the agrarian development away from the goal of a communist society. On the contrary, it has introduced innovations which, economically, socially and culturally lead the small peasantry towards Communism, and will continue to lead it along the path. For it is self-evident that the psychology of the petty property holders will undergo a change as the conditions of labor and production become different.

The petty bourgeois reform Socialists treat the agrarian policy of the Russian Communist Party as if it were the Fall in the Eden of revolution. According to their opinion, through the agrarian policy, the hereditary sin of capitalism was introduced into the Bolshevik world, the sin which implies the revival of capitalism. I believe this point of view to be fundamentally false. Soviet Russia, apart from the Bolshevik agrarian policy, would perforce have to evolve a *modus vivendi* with capitalism, in order subsequently to attain to Communism.

The leading Party of the Russian Revolution has not forgotten the final aim of communism in economic policy. It still

maintains the road which leads to communism. Therefore, the Bolsheviks in their economic policy, always aimed for immediate ends which were in the direction of Communism. Lenin summed it up in 1917. What, he asked, were the immediate economic tasks after the conquest of State power? They were the socialization of the great industries, the means of transportation, the banks, the State monopoly of foreign trade, and the control of production by the workers. And the first decrees of the new government did not go against these demands. The thing progressed slowly. Step by step, broader measures were taken for the elimination of private property in the means of production, in land, etc.

The proletarian revolution went forward perforce after the April slogan: Workers' Control of Industry! Why? A large number of the capitalists responded to the measures taken by the Soviet State either by sabotage or by the closing down of their enterprises. There was therefore nothing else for the workers to do except to take over these enterprises and to use them, if they did not wish the national industry to cease altogether or to be shattered.

There was also another reason for this. Soviet Russia had to equip and maintain the Red Army, while surrounded by hostile armies which were equipped by the highly developed industries of the whole world. That could not have been accomplished, if they had limited themselves to the primary economic measures demanded by the circumstances of the young revolution. It necessitated the confiscation and use of all means of production and wealth, the utilization of all productive power. Besides, the bourgeoisie, although deprived of its political power, was still in the possession of strong social influences which it did not hesitate to use against the workers. The bourgeoisie had to be attacked at the root of its power, private property. This was accomplished through the nationalization of all the existing means of production and the land.

Finally, there was another consideration. The defence of Soviet Russia against the attacks of the counter-revolutionaries, caused unheard of sufferings among the broad masses. But the masses bore this with rejoicing, because a certain—how shall I express myself?—kind of rough, primitive communism had been introduced. Thus the Russian Revolution was carried far beyond the limits of its immediate aims.

When people now whine that the revolution is beaten, that it is in flight, it is untrue. The Russian Revolution has retired to its initial position in good order, retaining all the advantages which it originally wished to possess. Certainly, Capitalism returns; that capitalism whose might was broken, which was exiled from the Eden of Soviet Russia for ever. It returns not merely in the form of the petty proprietor, but also of the lessee and concessionaire. It is obvious that these gentlemen have no disinterested desire to take part in the progressive Russian economic life, to build it up and to serve it through cultural methods. They follow a "realistic" aim, that of making profit, the greatest possible profit. But, comrades, the capitalist returns to Soviet Russia no longer the absolute master of his own enterprise. And why not? Because he is no longer master of the State. The profit lust of the concessionaires and the lessees will be curbed through the laws of the working class State, through the administration of these laws by means of the Soviet Power. Of course: In the arena of the new economic policy, the opposition between capital and labor will be revealed in all its sharpness and violence. The Soviet State reckons itself as the trustee, appointed by the proletariat, of all the means of production, all natural resources, and all human labour power. The interests of the proletariat are supreme law to the State. By legal conditions the State renders it impossible for foreign or home capitalists to plunder natural resources. The capitalist is also prevented from increasing his profits, however large they may be, through extreme and inhuman exploitation. The proletarian State is fully conscious that the greatest wealth of Soviet Russia is its toilers, who produce all values. It is fully conscious that the Russian proletariat is not going to stay at its present level of living and working. No, it will raise to a far higher level its physical, spiritual, and professional capacities, and its ethical and cultural activity, in order to become the creators and the defenders of the complete communist society.

Therefore, in the inevitable conflicts between capital and labor in the leased and concessional industrial concerns, the trade unions and co-operative organization will play again a very important role as the fighting organs of the proletariat, and will carry on a very fruitful activity. What will, on the other hand, happen in the non-Soviet countries in which the capitalists are also political masters? In such countries, the State power is only an obstacle to the conflicts between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and this interference always benefits the capitalists, unless the working class be strong enough to hold

the State power in check. In Soviet Russia, on the other hand, the State power will be always at the back of the trade unions and of the co-operatives in all the conflicts of the workers with the industrial, trade and usurers' capital.

There is yet another side to State Capitalism which we must take into consideration. The Soviet Republic does not only carry on State Capitalism as a leasing and concession giving power; it must also be a "State capitalist" in its own industrial concerns. Only a part—and hitherto only a very small part—of the Russian industrial and economic organizations are so to speak hired out to the capitalists for exploitation. The other part, and not the last important at that, the heavy industry, the transport, etc., has remained in the hands of the Soviet Power. The Soviet Power, the workers' State itself is the greatest employer in Soviet Russia. But what does this mean under present circumstances when the Russian economic system finds no allies in other States which are on the way to Communism, but form a link in the chain of the capitalist economic system which exercise a certain influence upon the shaping of conditions? The Soviet State, in its capacity of employer will have to take into consideration in the interests of the class which it represents the "rentability" of the various industrial plants. I will go a step further. Even when the transition period will have to come to an end and when pure Communism will have been established, society will have to produce and accumulate surplus value in the interests of its higher economic and cultural development. What is the conclusion to be drawn from this? That the workers' State, as employer, may at times get into conflict with the demands and interests of certain workers and groups of workers against which it will have to defend the present and future class interests of the proletariat. It goes without saying that such conflicts cannot and must not be settled in the momentary interests of individuals or separate proletarian groups, or even of separate branches of the economic system. On the contrary, they will always have to be settled in the interests of the proletariat as a class.

It is self-evident that such conflicts are likely to occur in Soviet Russia. The reasons are as follows; at present the Russian proletariat is not yet able to raise from its own ranks sufficient forces to fill the posts of managers and organisers in the industrial concerns. These posts are occupied to-day by people with a high economic and professional education and experience but lacking communist ideology. Comrades, on this field the trade unions and co-operative organizations have a great task to fulfill, not only as constructive but also as educational organs which must carry on their work in the lower as well as in the upper strata, if you will allow me to say so. In the lower, in order to raise the proletarian masses, in their capacity of producers, to the higher form of efficiency. At times the proletarians might resent this as a hardship. But with respect to this hardship as well as the backwardness of which Comrade Lenin spoke of yesterday, we must bear one thing in mind: outside Russia, in the highly developed Capitalist States the proletariat has for centuries past gone through the hard school of capitalism before it reached its present productive efficiency. The British workers have gone through this hard school, and even to-day the whip of hunger and the scorpions of class exploitation and class domination are brought into play against them. The workers' State of Soviet Russia, with the assistance of the trade unions and the co-operative societies, will educate its working masses for Communism by milder and more humane methods. But in any case, the workers' State must educate the proletariat, and must get it accustomed to labor discipline and skilled work. This being so, conflicts between the State and the workers might occur.

The workers' State with the assistance of the trade unions and the co-operative organizations, will educate a staff of clerks, officials, managers and administrators who, imbued with the spirit of communism, will change the whole present economic system as rapidly and thoroughly as possible. The officials and administrators must be made to realise what it is to be the representatives and the trusted servants of the workers' State.

There is one more fact. I venture to say that Soviet Russia is to-day, notwithstanding its poverty and the disorganization of its economic system, the State with the most advanced labor protection and social welfare legislation and not only on paper. Trade unions and co-operative organizations, in conjunction with the soviet organs are entrusted with the supervision of the proper application of the labour law and of social insurance, and also with their improvement and development. They are the real executors of the social reforms. The activity of the trade unions and co-operative organizations with relation to social reform, was formerly considered by the reformist gentry as a means to bolster up capitalism and to prevent revolution. Present events show that we, the radical element, were right in asserting that effective social reforms with the assistance of the trade unions and co-operative organizations, are out of the question before the conquest

of political power by the proletariat. It is only after the conquest of the political power by the proletariat that the activity of these organizations can be used as an effective means for leading the entire economic system towards communism. Social reform receives a different aspect and another significance with the advent of proletarian political power. From being a bulwark for the protection and defence of the proletariat against capitalism, social reform becomes a means for building up Communism. The conquest of political power by the proletariat, and the establishment of its dictatorship in a Soviet state are a milestone on the way towards a higher development of the new social order.

I need not speak to-day of the influence of the new policy in other directions. Comrade Lenin did this yesterday in a most illuminating manner. However, I thought it necessary to emphasize this side of the new policy, as it forms an illustration of two facts. Firstly, that by the conquest and consolidation of the political power, the proletariat has not yet crossed the stream, but that it has only reached its banks. The proletariat will only get into the promised land of Communism by means of the general policy, and especially of the economic policy of the proletarian State power. Out of this arise a number of problems: the problem of the relations between town and village, the problem of the political power of the workers' as embodied in the Soviet State and the economic organizations of the proletariat—the trade unions and co-operative organizations. There is also the problem of the relations between the producing workers' on the one side and the employees and officials in the industrial concerns on the other side, as well as of the relations between the bureaucracy of the central Soviet institutions and that of the local institutions. The proletariat of every country will have to pay great attention to these State problems after the conquest of political power.

For this reason, we have a good deal to learn from the striking developments of the Russian Revolution, and that not only from those things which appear to be right, but also from those which either appear as being wrong or are so in reality. Above all things, however, we must remain clear with regard to the main problem. This is the seizure of political power for the transformation of society into Communism by the hands of the proletariat itself. All other problems are subordinated to that of the mastery of the State power by the proletariat and for the proletariat. If proof were necessary of the extraordinary importance of the possession of political power for the transition to Communism, this proof is furnished by two classical instances. The first is Soviet Russia; and the second is Germany under the coalition government. In Soviet Russia we have the proletarian political power; socialization of large scale industry; the development of laws for the protection of the workers; the maintenance of the eight hour day, and the consistent struggle against overtime,—it being permitted only in such cases where it is an absolute necessity in the interests of the workers themselves—the development of social welfare activities; in spite of meagre resources, a development of the social system such as has taken place in no other country: all in all, some advances in economic life, and a beginning of economic reconstruction; and—the most important of all—a slight, but quite distinct improvement in the situation of the proletariat.

On the other hand, we have in Germany a proletariat without political power; a coalition government made up of elements ranging from Stinnes to Scheidemann, and even to Hilferding and Crispian,—in short, instead of socialization, the rule of Stinnes, the breakdown of the bourgeois government; the undermining of social welfare institutions, the schools handed over to the churches, the proletarianization of the middle class under conditions of terrible poverty, the economic breakdown which becomes daily more intensified altogether, and increasing impoverishment of the proletarian masses which will mean literally the death of millions. I believe that these facts show more closely than anything the significance of the maintenance of State power in the hands of the proletariat. But it is not merely this aim alone that has led Soviet Russia to the new economic policy as a "necessary evil" produced by conditions specifically Russian. I am more inclined to see in the new economic policy, the only way by which, under the recent circumstances, we can pass over from capitalism into Communism.

But Soviet Russia's progress towards Communism is not conditioned solely by the new economic policy. As an auxiliary of this stands the intensification of communist knowledge, the most potent flowering of the seed of communist idealism, the crystallization of the high cultural values which Communism implies and which must be brought to their fullest fruition. Therefore, together with the new policy of raising economic life to a new and higher level, must go the broadly-planned work of popular education, especially the education and training of the

young. And this education and training must be in the direction of Communism.

Comrades, I should be trespassing beyond the limits of my subject, if I attempted here to describe in detail the important labors accomplished by the Russian Revolution in the particular field of cultural activity. The Russian Revolution is a bearer of culture, a veritable power for culture, such as may be found nowhere else. Recall to your memory all the measures which have been taken in the field of popular education and art. In this connection I will instigate only the important cultural factor which the Red Army has been. The soldiers of the Red Army, who have passed through the schools of revolutionary "militarism" return to their villages as disseminators of culture in the truest sense. Comrades, in the five years of its existence the Russian Revolution has verily accomplished a titanic task in the cultural field. If one were to judge it only by this standard, its fame would still be immortal. . . . But how should we have attained this without the Seizure of political power by the proletariat? Upon what assumption can we base our reliance that Soviet Russia will continue as a power to transform society, economically and culturally, to Communism? I consider it to be an absolutely essential preliminary condition for this, that the Communist Party, the directing revolutionary class party, maintain a profound and organic contact with the broadest proletarian masses who are outside this Party. Out of this strong unity was the Russian Revolution born. Thanks to it, it has been maintained until today. But, besides this, it will assure us of a communist future. It must be a really organic unity of the Party and the masses, which is not the result of the carrying out of a mechanical scheme from above, if a power which is imposed upon the proletariat, but comes from a spontaneous mass force flowing from the masses themselves. The existence and methods of the Communist Party of Soviet Russia is the complete and dynamic expression of revolutionary knowledge and revolutionary will, the revolutionary self-consciousness and initiative of the proletarian masses. The life and will of the masses flow in a rich current from them into the Party; and streams from the Party back to the masses by a thousand invisible channels. We hear murmurs of a crippled and dying dictatorship in Soviet Russia, of a party clique. These are slogans which are nothing more than the echoes of the old anti-Bolshevik lies and libels about the conditions in that country where the proletariat has not only seized power, but is still guarding it and will nevermore cower under the lash of the bourgeoisie. What a contrast to the social and working life of the proletariat in bourgeois countries! What a burning thirst for knowledge! What a cultural inspiration! What activity of countless forces which were previously slumbering!

The Soviet power, acting under the influence of the Communist Party brought out in the working class its most beautiful latent capacities: it has brought to the light most beautiful ethical and aesthetical productions. Look at the Soviet organs, look at the various social organizations. Everywhere we find anticipation and expectation and activity as in no other country in the world. The masses struggle forward and upward. Their heart and their head is the Communist Party. We who come from foreign lands see much suffering, many sorry defects. But in spite of all that what a strong intellectual life here, to work here, yes to die here, if nothing else remains.

Comrades, I recapitulate. Looking at the achievements of the Russian Revolution, so-called friends of order, such as wish to avoid a revolution at all costs, such who hate it, or fear it, or accept it only as a cheaply won "beautiful" revolution will say: Was a revolution necessary to produce this, could it not have been brought about by reforms, along the peaceful ways of democracy? No, I answer. For without the revolution, there would have been no Soviet regime, no creative political change, no Workers' government, no Dictatorship of the Proletariat; and without this decisive change, a new, higher, liberating spiritual life could never have been born.

The Russian Revolution need feel no shame at the alleged smallness of its accomplishments. What it has done is amazing, incomparably great. A proletarian revolution has a far greater, much more extensive and far reaching work to accomplish than any bourgeois revolution. The bourgeois revolution creates a new state apparatus, it revolutionizes the political relation of forces and all that goes with it. It produces nothing creative in the field of economics. Nevertheless, it took a hundred years after the great French revolution to secure its greatest accomplishment, the Republic. It was the insurrection of the Commune which finally did it. The proletarian revolution must do more than "hammer the old, senile capitalist State into the new Soviet government"; it must revolutionize the whole basis of social economics, and with it the whole of society. This is a gigantic task; it cannot be accomplished overnight, nor by the work of a few great personalities. It must be the work of the whole proletarian class, and it will take many decades before the work

is accomplished. Karl Marx wrote in his controversy with Max Stirner that we should not grow discouraged if the proletarian revolution should last for many decades. Its task is not only to create new social conditions, but also to educate man, the new man for the new society. This is what we must remember when we look at the first proletarian State in the world.

The Russian Revolution has accomplished more than any revolution before it. It has not remained stationary, it has developed far beyond its original purpose. With fire and sword, Russia has been cleansed of its old feudal institutions, with a thoroughness which no bourgeois revolution has known.

Look at England. In spite of the bourgeois revolution, in spite of long years of bourgeois class rule, there still remain strong traces of the old feudal order.

Look at Germany, the country of the latest bourgeois revolution. The first victory of the revolution, the Republic trembles before a Kapp-Putsch or an Orgesch-insurrection. In Soviet Russia, Czarism could never return; nor such a modern capitalist State, as the dream of the reformists and petty bourgeois dream of. The proletarian revolution has brought into the consciousness of millions so many germs of a new productive life, that this life can never be destroyed. Soviet Russia will remain as a proletarian State. It is the first type of a proletarian State in this period of transformation from capitalism to communism. As such, all it does and does not do, all its accomplishments as well as its mistakes and its weakness, are fruitful with lessons for the world proletariat and for the world revolution. The proletariat of Russia and the Russian Communist Party have paid dearly to learn how political power is conquered and maintained. They must suffer now to learn how a proletarian State, abandoned by the world proletariat, can transform itself slowly into a Communist society. The policy of the Bolsheviks has great significance in this connection. Some regard it as nothing but a vague fishing in the dark, a series of mistakes and unconsequential actions. Just the opposite is true. The policy of the Russian Communists appears as a whole to follow a straight unified, and consistent line. This policy is the first to attempt in the history of the masses to apply the theory of Marxism to practical facts: it is the history attempt of the proletariat to become a subjective factor in the history of the world; it is the first willed attempt to make history. It is the conscious attempt to direct historical forces, to make history and not suffer it as a play of blind objective forces, as in bourgeois society.

Comrade Lenin said yesterday, that we still have much to learn, both here in Soviet Russia and outside of it. He said that we did not understand Russian sufficiently abroad, to comprehend the resolutions of our Third Congress, conceived and expressed in Russian.

In a way, Comrade Lenin was right. The foreign proletariat has not yet sufficiently learnt to read Russian, i. e., to act as Russians. Just as the Communist International is the centre of the world revolution, so should it be our university for reciprocal experience. Learn, and save time! This is Lenin's call to us. And he who wins time, wins all!

Time comrades, not in the sense of wasteful, idle and listless waiting, but in which every minute is exploited in passionate activity. Let us use it here in Soviet Russia, to learn the use of the art of creation of the Proletarian State. Let us use it outside of Russia, to learn to handle the sword with which to conquer political power.

So is forged the sword of the World Revolution, which will free mankind. From the ruins of the world war, let new life flourish. In this period, the highest, most powerful, most fruitful and most creative form of historical development is the Revolution, the expression of the proletarian masses.

Bela Kun:

Comrades, the time is not yet come to write the history of the five years of the Russian Revolution, and even if it did, it would not be the task of the Fourth World Congress to write that history, although it has been a first rank and full participator in the making of that history. All the more reason for us, therefore, to carefully and discriminately collect all the experiences of the Russian Revolution and to take judicious views of these experiences in our revolutionary struggle. All of us who have fought in the Russian Revolution and have led in revolutionary fights to the West of Russia have built up some more or less faulty generalized theories. Almost none of us have avoided these errors. We ought to avoid utopianism of every kind, applying our experiences with the utmost discrimination in regard to West European conditions. We ought to endeavour to inaugurate on the basis of the experiences of the Russian revolution, a similarly realist revolutionary policy in the West, as the policy of the Russian Communist Party has always been and continues to be.

After the reports of Comrade Lenin and Comrade Clara Zetkin, it is now my task to point out the subjective factor of the Proletarian Revolution, to describe the role of the Russian Communist Party in the Proletarian Revolution, even if only in fragmentary outline. Comrades, you will permit me in this connection to draw a parallel between the great Russian Revolution and the abortive Hungarian Revolution. On looking back at the history of these five years we have to confess that a miracle has happened.

The power of the Soviets is alive and strong to day in spite of the offensive of the new defunct German imperialism, the united offensive of the capitalists of all countries, and the vicious activities of Russian and the international Mensheviks. The invincibility of the Russian Revolution, of the Russian Soviets, is due to factors the absence of which in Hungary was the cause of the collapse of the Hungarian Proletarian Dictatorship.

I do not intend to enlarge upon the international and internal political causes which were favourable to the Russian Revolution, and which on the other hand were detrimental to the Hungarian Revolution. I shall only point to the fact that in Hungary we failed to provide, not only what comrade Lenin described as a plan of retreat, but even a line of retreat. In regard to the Russian Revolution I think that the circumstance which has befied all the Thermidor prophecies about Soviet Russia was the following.—In Russia there was a centralized, disciplined and self-sacrificing Workers' Party in the shape of the Russian Communist Party. The absence of such a Party or of anything approaching it in Hungary was the cause of the inevitable collapse of the Proletarian Revolution, notwithstanding all the sacrifices and enthusiasm of the Hungarian Proletariat and poorer peasantry. Apart from military defeat at the front, the downfall of the Revolution was accelerated by the vacillating influence of the Social Democracy upon the Hungarian Working Class. The Russian Proletariat and its glorious Red Army at that time and afterwards, sustained a number of defeats on the various counter-revolutionary fronts. There were moments in Russia, when in the midst of great dangers, the Russian Working Class began to waver. There were times when the state of mind of a section of the working class was, if not positively, at least passively counter-revolutionary. There were times when the wavering, starving and tired working class gave to the superficial observer sufficient reason for prophesying a Thermidor to Soviet Russia. It is enough to recall the period of the Kronstadt mutiny. Yet all the effects of these waverings of a part of the working class were neutralized. We in Hungary did not have the benefit of a mature Communist Party, and I am safe in saying that at the time we could not have such a Party. We had no mature Communist Party that could cling to the helm of State at the most critical moments, in spite of the wavering of the working class, in spite of the passive and at times even hostile attitude of part of the working class. In Hungary influence was brought to bear upon the masses of the proletariat, by the fusion between the class conscious active and determined minority and the social democracy, which together led the masses to the conquest of power. On the other hand in Russia there has been and there is now a Communist Party with years of fighting experience, whose influence in the critical moments of the Russian Revolution was enormous. Comrades, this party whose class character stands out in prominent relief during these last five years of revolution has become the party of the Russian people. The German Social Democratic Party at the Goerlitz Conference finally discarded its class mask, declaring itself the "Volksparlei" (People's Party) instead of the greatest class party in the world, which it was as the German Social-Democratic Party. It is now really the party of the petty bourgeoisie and as such it has become the servant of the big bourgeoisie of Germany. As against this, the Russian Communist Party, having strictly maintained its class character during the entire period of the Dictatorship has truly become the party of all the toiling elements of the Russian people. This will not be believed in Social Democratic circles, and there are even communists who doubt it. But I will quote just one instance which will suffice to show that the Russian Communist Party is really the Party of the Russian people and that every communist is, so to speak, the spokesman of the toiling elements of the Russian people. Last year we had a party cleaning of the Russian Party of elements that were undesirable. This cleaning was conducted at public meetings of non-party workers, in the presence of the entire mass of the unattached factory workers. Every non-party worker and every non-party peasant had the opportunity to object to any member remaining in the Communist Party, and the non-party workers and peasants made full use of this right. To be a Communist in Russia—let me repeat it once more, is to be the spokesman of the people. This makes the Communist Party in Russia a real party of the toiling people, although it has strictly

maintained its proletarian character throughout the five years of the Revolution.

This is the real reason of the wonderful development of the Party. It rests naturally in its revolutionary policy and in its wonderful, flexible tactics. Nevertheless, we must ask whence did the Party obtain such a policy and such an influence over the working class. What is it that enabled the Russian Party not only to gain a majority at the time of the October Revolution, but to retain it throughout the vicissitudes of the Revolution. The secret lies first of all in the close organization of the Party. No other Party, bourgeois or proletarian, had such a carefully picked and strongly welded nucleus, or to use a favourite military metaphor of Comrade Bukharin, a uniform ideological general staff, as has the Russian Party.

This Party, this General Staff, this nucleus, this fundamental group was built up during the long years of struggle. During these struggles the opportunist elements were swept out of the Party, not only mechanically, but also by deliberate elimination. All elements that were unsuitable to the close circle of fighters were weeded out of the ranks. On the other hand, the Russian Communist Party in the course of its struggles not only developed its nucleus, but also brought new elements into the movement which became welded to the nucleus. It has become a party really capable of organizing and leading the masses, not hangers on, not intellectuals who refuse to submit to party discipline, but real workers, the majority of the working class. The characteristic feature of the five years of the Russian Revolution was that all the Menshevik and Social-Revolutionary elements who were really faithful to the workers and to the working class were gradually absorbed by the Russian Communist Party. There was nothing left in the Menshevik and Social Revolutionary Parties than a few intellectual scribes who had nothing whatever to do with the labor movement, who were, so to speak guests, and not leaders of the working class. The influence of the Communist Party over the large working class masses, with the State under Communist control, is naturally exercised not only by means of propaganda, but also by the authority of the State and of the administration.

In this way, comrades, wherever workers go, wherever workers are occupied, you can meet a Bolshevik, a Communist. The Soviet institutions, the Soviet administration offices may be as faulty as Comrade Lenin yesterday said they were, nevertheless, thanks to the Communist Party, they have become a kind of proletarian democracies. The Soviet organs through the Communist Party, have become the organs of proletarian democracy, and not vice versa. A comparison with the history of the Hungarian Soviets will show this clearly. In Hungary we have had Soviets such Soviets as Gorter or the German Independents would have them—but without Communist leadership. The organs elected by the suffrage of the large masses of the proletariat did not really become the organs of the working class. They were not the expression of the will of the proletariat. Here in Russia where the Mensheviks demanded free election to the Soviets, where all reformist elements from Martov to Miliukov united for free Soviet elections against the Bolshevik Dictatorship, the Soviet organs are much more the organs of the proletarian democracy than the freely elected ones of Hungary which were not led by Communists.

In Hungary there was no united Communist leadership of the Soviets and the Trade Unions. The Trade Unions claimed the leadership of the State because they were much more proletarian than the Soviets which contained non-proletarian elements. It was a struggle between the Soviets and the Trade Unions, and the Trade Unions could claim with right that they represented to a greater extent than the Soviets the opinions of the large masses and the class character of the proletariat. There resulted a conflict between the reformist, social-democratic Trade Union leaders and the Soviets. The workers went more willingly into the Trade Unions which were led by Labor leaders even though reformists, than into the Soviets, where no Communist leadership existed. In Russia, with the help of the Communist Party, the Soviets became a real popular institution, an organ of proletarian democracy. In Hungary we could not achieve this because there was no Communist leadership. But how is it possible to achieve united action in such a large country with so many State organs, with so many labor organizations? How is it possible, in a country where there are single portions much larger than France, Germany and England together a unified Party leadership which could be felt even in the smallest village?

How is centralization at all possible in such a country as Russia? I would like to answer this question by a comparison. In Germany, the social-democracy, having attained power, was practically dissolved as a party organization. The governmental organs influenced the social-democracy much more than the latter influenced the government. The deciding factor in the

social-democracy is the governmental social-democratic bureaucracy which originated from the old Party bureaucracy. It is just the opposite in Russia. The Russian Party always saw to it that the leading elements of the Party should influence the Soviet organs, and not vice versa. To bring this about something was required from the Communist Party which is still not understood by many persons otherwise well acquainted with the Russian movement. This is what I said yesterday to one of the comrades of our Party: Russia is not a Prussian sergeant, and we are not recruits. Moscow represents the best leadership of the world revolution. Those who do not understand the significance of centralized discipline as the experience of the Russian Revolution created it, are not good recruits of Communism or of the Communist Party. The leadership of the whole State apparatus by the Communist Party in a country as vast as Russia is a most difficult task. The history of the last five years shows that the forces of the Party are to be totally regrouped to meet the new task which the Revolution put before the Party. Such a weapon as the new economic policy could not possibly be applied without a strict discipline in the Communist Party. It was only by a radical regrouping of the forces of our Party that we were able to carry out this policy without any great crisis in our Party.

How can we explain this discipline? Of course, there is the story that old time Bolsheviks were an organization of conspirators under the leadership of Comrade Lenin. I am sorry to say that I was not a party to such conspiracy, and do not know what sort of conspirators they were. I know however, that these conspirators have become the best leaders of the masses. Why? Because during this conspiring period of the Russian Revolution, a strict discipline was created and the members of the Party were trained in this discipline. Naturally this discipline comes not only from the masses but mainly from the leaders, and it requires therefore a great confidence in the leaders. This leadership is really the heart of the Russian Communist Party, the authoritative body of the whole Communist movement. It may be that the members of the Communist Party have not always understood what was going on, especially in the matter of the new economic policy. But the masses have such confidence in their leaders that even when they do not understand at once the purpose of some political measure, they are confident that the leaders will not fail to make it clear to them. Allow me to quote these few words from the Austrian poet Anzengruber: "Thou shalt honour thy father and thy mother, but they must be worthy of it." The leaders of the Russian Revolution have gained the confidence of the masses and of the Communist Party because they have been worthy of it.

The iron discipline of the Russian Communist Party was what made it possible to carry on their elastic policy. I do not intend to say why this policy is elastic. The cause and source of the elasticity is well known to all. There is no body in the world where Marxism has been so completely incorporated as in the Communist Party of Russia; but the best Marxian analysis remains only an historical document when there is no organization sufficiently elastic to act in accordance with this analysis. Without a strict discipline, without well organized cadres the accomplishment of such a policy would be impossible. At the present time, in the sixth year of the revolution, the Communist Party of Russia is being faced with its greatest problem since the beginning of the Revolution. It is, how to apply the economic policy under the leadership of a working class political party so that the realization of this policy might not bring into the party certain petty bourgeois elements. The Communist Party of Russia has stood the test thanks to its discipline, and its elastic organization. Centralization and centralized discipline are the greatest lessons which we have been able to learn in the Russian Communist Party. Some of the best theses of the Comintern, it seems to me, are those of the Second Congress on the role of the Communist Party in the proletarian revolution. These theses have had the same effect, on a less intense scale, than the Communist Party of Russia has had in the Russian Revolution. The activity of the Communist Party of Russia should be a subject of study for every leader and organizer of the Western parties so that they may make critical use of the Russian experience in the Western situation and prepare their parties for the conquest and maintenance of power. The application of this experience is not the least problem of the International Revolution.

Comrades, I am far from being an adherent of the free will doctrine, but I believe that for a realization of the prospects of a world revolution, the subjective factor of a Communist Party is one of the most important. We cannot determine the objective factors, at most we can influence them through the Communist Party. Nevertheless, I believe that if we had had Communist Parties like the Russian in 1919, at the time of the demobilization crisis, we would have been able not only to seize power,

but also to hold it. The importance of the Communist Party as a subjective factor remains the same even in this period of comparative apathy. The question before us is: considering the prospects for a world revolution, how can we build up such Communist Parties which in Western circumstances, perhaps through different means, can gradually win over the majority of the proletariat, before the revolution and after the revolution? Is it possible to create such Communist Parties? I believe so. I have been working within the Communist Party of Russia, and I can say that the masses of its membership do not stand on a higher intellectual level than the German proletariat. I might even say that the masses of the German proletariat stand higher in culture than those of the Russian Communist Party. Of course, behind the Russian proletariat are five long years of experience in revolution; it is this experience which has made possible the elastic policy of the Russian Party.

But such elasticity is possible in all Parties. I believe that the main problem in building up such subjective factors of the world revolution is the creation of basic revolutionary cadres. I believe that if we are able to form these cadres, these vanguard troops, we will be able to lead the Western proletariat to the conquest of power, and retain this power after we have gained it. That is why this is one of our chief tasks, and the lessons which the Russian Communist Party has given us from five years of experience in the Russian Revolution are most important.

To the Working Men and Women (of the Red Army) of Red Petrograd.

The IV. Congress of the Communist International, on its opening day, the anniversary of the October Revolution, sends greetings to the heroic proletariat of Red Petrograd.

In February and March 1917 the working men and women of Petrograd, fraternally supported by the soldiers of the city garrison, boldly assaulted and overthrew the hated Tsarist regime from its bloody pedestal, and formed those workers' and soldiers' councils which were destined to become the foundation stones of that organization which was able to speedily carry out the revolution and to begin an era of construction of a proletarian state.

During the memorable October days of 1917 the proletariat of Petrograd took an enormous stride forward, and commenced a new epoch in the history of the world.

The example of the immortal Paris Commune of 1871 was followed by the workers of Petrograd, the yoke of the bourgeoisie was shaken off, the dictatorship of the proletariat proclaimed, and the era of social revolution thus unfolded not only in Russia, but all over the world. During the years of internal and external struggles which then began, the proletariat of Petrograd has always stood in the front ranks, has sent its sons to every front, and has sacrificed its blood and its work to the uttermost.

The example of the Petrograd proletariat has been the means of spreading enthusiasm among the working population of the whole of Russia, and to-day, after five years, the Russian workers can congratulate themselves on their complete victory over inner and outer enemies alike.

To-day, now that the peaceful work of reconstruction is beginning, the Petrograd proletariat takes its place of honor in the front ranks of labor. It is thanks to its exertions that the wounds of Petrograd are beginning to heal, and that the city is regaining its position as an industrial and proletarian centre.

Great are the benefits accruing not only to the Russia of the workers and peasants, but also to the whole world proletariat, through the work accomplished by Red Petrograd. If Soviet Russia has become the backbone of the International Labor Movement, its hope and support, if the Russian Revolution has fired the enthusiasm of all workers, and has mightily furthered the international struggle for social revolution, thanks are due above all to Red Petrograd. The example of inexhaustible heroism, given by the workers of Petrograd, has inspired the workers of the whole world, encouraging them to fight on unflinchingly for their final emancipation and for the creation of a federation of Soviet republics which shall embrace the whole globe.

The world proletariat therefore regards Red Petrograd as one of its strongest ramparts, and therefore the hearts of all workers beat in full sympathy and love for the working population of the Northern Commune.

It is for this reason that to-day, on the fifth anniversary of the glorious October Revolution, on the day of the solemn opening of the IV. Congress of the Communist International, the first thoughts of the delegates of this World Congress of the world's workers naturally turn to Red Petrograd, within whose

hospitable walls we celebrate this great festival of the world proletariat.

Eternal glory to the heroic proletariat of Red Petrograd!

Long live the Petrograd workers — these pioneers of social revolution, this shining example for the proletariat of the whole world.

The IV. Congress of the Communist International to the Red Army and the Red Fleet of the RSFSR.

The 4. World Congress of the Communist International, gathered together in the capital city of the Workers' and Peasants' Republic of Russia, sends its greetings and heartfelt thanks to the heroic fighters of the Red Army and the Red Fleet. Soviet Russia is the sole state on the surface of the globe where the representatives of the revolutionary workers of the whole world can freely discuss and resolve upon the questions of organization for the struggle of toiling humanity for emancipation from the yoke of capital. Thanks are due solely to the victories of the Red Army, and to its powerful protection, for the possibility of convening the delegates of the workers to their world congress for the fourth time.

You fighters of the Red Army and of the Red Fleet! You must know that the revolutionary workers of all countries feel the joy of your victories with you, and have suffered with you in defeat. The class conscious workers of all countries appreciate that you do not fight for your Russian cause alone, but for the common cause of the workers of the whole world. At the former congresses we already spoke of you with one voice as the champions of the Communist International, the heroes of the common struggle of collective humanity.

Fighters of the Red Army and the Red Fleet! During the past years of fighting, the revolutionary workers of all countries have unfortunately been too weak to hasten to your aid in the last decisive battle. Hence it has been so difficult for you to carry on the struggle against the united forces of world capital. But the Communists of all countries have not lost a single day, have been working zealously the whole time towards the enlightenment and unity of the masses, and towards their preparation for the overthrow of capital. The present 4. Congress is also devoting the whole of its work to this most important task of the world proletariat.

The 4. World Congress of the Communist International congratulates you, heroic fighters of the Red Army and Red Fleet, on your last brilliant victory in the Far East, but must however warn you that the day of final peace and general disarmament, the age in which wars will be no more, has not by any means arrived, and will not arrive so long as the power is still in the hands of capital in the majority of states, and so long as the capitalists utilize the armies for their own rapacious ends, and send millions of workers and peasants to their death in the interests of capital. So long as this is so, wars will not cease, and all peoples, including the peoples of the Soviet republics, will be threatened by the horrors of war.

Be on your guard, heroes of the Red Army and Red Fleet. The danger is not yet past. The 4. World Congress joyfully congratulates the Soviet Republics on their exertions towards the rebirth of the Red Fleet, which is to be brought into a state of complete readiness to fight in the defence of the revolution. Long live the Red Army and the Red Fleet!

To the Proletariat of England, Belgium, Italy and Czecho-Slovakia.

Comrades!

The forced peace of Versailles has been pressing heavily on us and on you for years. The German workers are perishing on their starvation wages and the high prices. You are afflicted with mass unemployment, high prices, and reaction.

Up to the present time the reparations paid by Germany consist in extracting the last pennings from the pockets of the German workers, and placing them in the pockets of your capitalists.

During the last half year the impoverishment of the working class in Germany has made gigantic strides. We have not even bread, potatoes, or coal; our children and infants have no milk, sugar, nor clothing. Mass unemployment also stands at our door.

The working class has taken up the fight against this impoverishment, all over the country, by means of the Shop Stewards Movement. We demand the security of our daily existence, we demand that all burdens should be removed from the shoulders of the propertyless, and be placed on the shoulders of the bourgeoisie. We demand as our fighting organ a Workers' Government in Germany, supported by the shop stewards.

We are aware of your struggles and sufferings. We know that the failure of the reformists enables reaction to triumph over the corpses of workers in Italy at the present time.

We know of the brutal actions of the Czecho-Slovakian employers against the unemployed, of their efforts to banish them from the country.

We know of the mighty mass strikes in France, of the growing enlightenment of the masses of French workers, by which Poincaré's dominance is being more and more undermined.

We welcome the election victory of the Labor Party in England, and hope that the English workers will compel their leaders to fully and ruthlessly utilize this victory in the interests of the English and the international proletariat, against the English bourgeoisie and English imperialism.

We know that the position of the working class throughout Central and Western Europe is becoming worse from day to day.

It is high time, comrades, that we all unitedly take up the fight against our own and against the international bourgeoisie.

The victorious Russian Revolution, the revolutionary war of the Turkish peasant masses, these show to us all that the rapacious peace treaties, which are in reality a continuation of the world war, and which entail fresh wars, can only be done away with by international solidarity, by the masses of workers fighting together.

We have begun the fight against the German bourgeoisie against the will of our bourgeois leaders, and shall continue it until we win the victory—cost what it may.

We expect from you, working brothers and sisters of England, France, Italy, Belgium, and Czecho-Slovakia, that you also take up the fight, as we are doing, for the security of your living wage, the struggle against the burden of taxation, the struggle for the control of production, and that you prepare the way for the rule of the working class in your countries.

Down with the imperialist peace treaties of Versailles and Sevres!

Down with the rule of the bourgeoisie and reaction in Western Europe!

Long live the victorious Russian Revolution!
Long live the victory of the Western European proletariat, which will complete the Russian Revolution.

The Shop Stewards' Congress of Germany.

Special IV. World Congress Number

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Report of the Executive Committee of the Communist International

(Comrade Zinoviev)

Zinoviev: Comrades, first of all I must report on the activity of our Executive during the period intervening between the III. and the IV. Congresses, and then discuss the future activity of the Communist International. Accordingly, I shall divide my report into two parts between which we may have an internal if necessary.

I have embodied the facts and figures concerning the activity of the Executive during the past 15 months in an article which has appeared in several languages. Therefore I will not refer again to these matters.

We have two questions to consider: firstly, whether our Executive has carried out the decisions of the III. Congress in the right way, and secondly whether these decisions themselves were correct. This is all the more necessary since much material has accumulated during the 15 months, which we had not at our disposal before.

Let us now consider the situation at the end of the III. Congress, which was a determining factor in our entire policy. Immediately after the III. Congress, it became evident that world capitalism had begun a well organized and systematic offensive against the working class throughout the world. The working class was, so to speak, beating a retreat. A large number of very important strikes on a large scale took place throughout the world during the last 15 months of our activity. In examining somewhat closely the results of these strikes, we must admit that the majority of them ended in the defeat of the workers. These strikes were in the nature of a capitalist offensive. The economic organizations of the working class have become less numerous. There were in 1920, 25,000,000 members in the trade unions. In 1922 the trade unions had only 18,000,000 members, and I am not quite sure if even this figure is not exaggerated. This fact alone shows us the difficult position of the working class during the period covered by this report.

The position of Soviet Russia during this period must be taken into account. I need not remind you, that immediately after the conclusion of the III. Congress that famine on a large scale was beginning in Russia. This was not quite evident during the III. Congress, but immediately after its conclusion we had to address the workers of the whole world on behalf of the Executive of the Communist International asking support for the Russian proletariat during the famine year. This fact had enormous political consequences. You are aware that we have been accused of using the International as a weapon of the Russian Soviet Republic. There are even some "friends" who make this assertion. It is of course self-evident that there is and there ought and must be an interaction between the first

proletarian republic and the Communist Party which is fighting against the bourgeoisie. From our communist viewpoint it is perfectly clear that the Communist International is of the greatest importance for Soviet Russia, and vice versa. It is utterly ridiculous to ask who is the exploited, who the subject and who the object. The Republic and the International are as the foundation and the roof of a building, they belong together.

The situation with which we were faced during the last year, was taken advantage of by our opponents, in order to fight against the idea of the proletarian dictatorship in general. The entire II. International endeavoured to use the Russian famine for a campaign against the Communist International.

A special feature of their campaign was the assertion that the Communist International was only a weapon of the Soviet Republic.

The Russian Soviet Republic is such a great international factor, that no one can possibly ignore it. It is only a question on which side of the barricade one takes up his position. Let me give you as an illustration from the recent events the letter of Clynes, the leader of the British Labor Party. I believe that most of you have read that letter. Mr. Clynes, one of the best known leaders of recent years, has addressed a letter to the Soviet Republic which has now been published. In this letter Clynes proposes that the Soviet Republic should endorse as soon as possible the agreement with Mr. Urquhart (which you all know) in order that the Labor Party should have a better chance of success at the coming general election. Mr. Clynes assured us that he was speaking not for himself alone but on behalf of all his colleagues. Though Great Britain is a big capitalist imperialist power, nevertheless the general election in that country is closely connected with the situation of Soviet Russia. The Labor Party, one of the important Parties or rather the most important Party in the II. International, cannot ignore this situation in Russia and must take sides, but on whose behalf, on which barricade? The answer is—on the side of Mr. Urquhart, on the side of the bourgeoisie. Therefore, we think that when the II. International is accusing the III. International of being nothing but an appendix and a weapon of Soviet Russia we can justly say that neither can the II. International brush aside the Russian Soviet Republic, but must take it into account. The only difference is that the II. International is endeavouring to make use of the proletarian Soviet Republic for the benefit of the bourgeoisie and not for that of the proletariat.

As I said before, the famine in Soviet Russia served the II and 2½ Internationals as a starting point for an energetic