

# Programme for a World Revolution

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### Publisher's Preface

The author of the **Programme of the World Revolution** is Comrade Bucharin, who is one of the ablest exponents of Socialism in the international revolutionary movement. With the exception of a very small pamphlet, nothing of importance has yet been published in English from Bucharin's brilliant pen. While Lenin is the dialectical champion of the revolutionary theories of Communism in Russia, Bucharin may be looked upon as the most popular expounder of those views. This function of popularising the aims and objects of Socialism is ably performed by Bucharin, due to his wonderful gift of being able to interpret the most difficult social theories in a manner which is as brilliant as it is clear and elementary. We doubt if the case for Socialism, and its revolutionary tactics, has ever been presented in such simple language as that used by Bucharin in the present work.

**The Programme of the World Revolution** has been printed and circulated in many languages. Millions of copies of this famous work have been distributed among the workers throughout Europe. And as the S.L. Press is the only printing establishment in Britain which is devoted to the publication of Socialist literature, we have very great pleasure in recommending Bucharin's volume to the wage-workers of this country. While the capitalist imperialists of the world are seeking to smash Soviet Russia by adopting savage tactics which range from corruption, through violence, on to murder our Russian comrades, as part of their offensive, content themselves with assailing Capitalism by the *publication of literature!*

S.L. Press

# Contents

1	The Reign of Capital, the Working Class, and the Poorer Elements of the Village Population	2
2	Plundering Wars – The Oppression of the Working Classes, and the Beginning of the Fall of Capitalism	4
3	General Sharing, or Co-operative Communist Production	6
4	An Anarchist or a Communist Order	8
5	To Communism Through Proletarian Dictatorship	10
6	A Soviet Government or a Bourgeois Republic?	13
7	Freedom for the Working Class and the Poorest Elements of the Peasantry; Restrictions for the Bourgeoisie	16
8	Banks, the Common Property of the Workers. Nationalisation of Banks.	19
9	Industry to Belong to the Working Class	21
10	Communal Cultivation of Public Land	24
11	Workers' Management of Production	26
12	Bread – Only for the Workers. Compulsory Labour Service for the Rich	28
13	A Systematic Distribution of Products. The Abolition of Trade, Profits, and Speculation. Co-operative Communes	30
14	Labour Discipline of the Working Class and the Poorest Elements of the Peasantry	33
15	The End of the Power of Money. State Finances and Financial Economy in the Soviet Republic	35
16	No Trade Communication Between the Russian Bourgeoisie and Foreign Imperialists	37
17	Spiritual Liberation – The Next Step to Economic Liberation	39
18	The People Armed to Defend Their Gains	43
19	The Liberation of Nations	47
20	Conclusion	49

## Chapter 1

# The Reign of Capital, the Working Class, and the Poorer Elements of the Village Population

In all countries, except in Russia, Capital is predominant. Whatever State one takes, whether semi-despotic Prussia, or Republican France, or so-called democratic America, everywhere power is wholly concentrated in the hands of big capital. A small group of people, landowners, manufacturers and the richest bankers, hold millions and hundreds of millions of town workers and rural poor in slavery and bondage, compelling them to toil, sweating them and throwing them on the street as soon as they become useless and worn out and incapable of being a source of further profit to Lord Capital.

This terrible power of the bankers and manufacturers over millions of toilers is given to them by wealth. Why does a poor man who is thrown on the streets have to starve to death? Because he possesses nothing but a pair of hands which he can sell to the capitalist should the capitalist want them. How is it that a rich banker or business man can do nothing, and yet lead an easy life free of care, getting a solid income, and raking in profits daily, hourly, and even by the minute? Because he possesses not only a pair of hands, but also those means of production without which work is impossible nowadays: factories, land, machines, railroads, mines, ships and steamers, and all kinds of apparatus and instruments. All over the world, except in present-day Russia, this wealth accumulated by man belongs only to capitalists and landowners who have also become capitalists. And it is no wonder that in such a state of affairs a group of men, having in their hands all that is indispensable, the most necessary things, dominate the rest who possess nothing. Let us take the instance of a poor man from the country coming to town to seek work. Who does he go to? To the proprietor, the man who owns a factory or works. And this same proprietor becomes the complete master of the man's life. If his, the master's loyal servants, directors and bookkeepers, have calculated that it is possible to squeeze more profits out of fresh workers than out of the old ones, then he "gives a job." If not, he tells him to "pass along." At the factory the capitalist is monarch of all he surveys. He is obeyed by all, and his directions are implicitly carried out. The factory is extended or reduced at his will. At his command, through foremen and managers, workmen are employed or dismissed. He decides how long they are to work and what pay they are to get. And all this happens because the factory is his factory, the works, his works; they belong to him, are his *private property*. It is this right of *private property over the means of production that is the cause of the terrible power which is in the hands of capital*.

The same thing holds good with regard to land. Take the freest and the most democratic country the United States. Thousands of workers cultivate land that does not belong to them, land owned by landowning capitalists. Here everything is organised on the plan of a large factory: there are tens and hundreds of electric ploughs, reaping machines, reaping and sheaf-binding machines, at which hired slaves toil from dawn till night. And just as at the factory, they work not for themselves, but for a master. That is because land itself as well as the seeds and machines, in a word, everything, except the working hands, is the *private property of the capitalist master*. He is autocrat here. He commands and conducts the business in such a way as to convert the very sweat and blood into shining yellow metal. The workmen, grumbling sometimes, obey, and go on making money for the master because he possesses everything, whilst the worker, the poor agricultural labourer, possesses nothing.

But sometimes it so happens that the landowner does not hire labourers, but lets his land on lease. Here in Russia, for instance, the poor peasantry, holding small allotments hardly enough to pasture a hen, were obliged to rent land from the landowners. They cultivated it with their own horses, ploughs and harrows. But even here they

were mercilessly fleeced. The greater the peasant's need for land, the greater was the rent charged by the landowners, thus holding the poor peasant in real bondage. What enabled him to do that? The fact that the land was *his*, the landowner's land; the fact that the land constituted the *private property of the landowning class*.

Capitalist society is divided into two classes: those who work a great deal and feed scantily, and those who work little or not at all, but eat well and plentifully. That is not at all in accordance with the Scriptures, where it says: "He that does not work, neither shall he eat." This circumstance, however, does not prevent the priests of all faiths and tongues from lauding the capitalist order; for these priests everywhere (except in the Soviet Republic) are maintained by increment derived from private or church property.

Another question now arises. How is it possible for a group of parasites to *retain* private ownership over the means of labour, so indispensable to all? How has it come about that private ownership by the idle classes is maintained to the present day? Where does the reason lie?

The reason lies in the perfect organisation of the enemies of the labouring class. To-day there does not exist a single capitalist country where the capitalists act individually. On the contrary, each one of them is infallibly a member of some economic organisation. And it is these economic unions that hold everything in their hands, having tens of thousands of faithful agents to serve them, not out of fear, but as a matter of conscience. The entire economic life of every capitalist country is at the complete disposal of special economic organisations: syndicates, trusts, and unions of many banking concerns. These combines own and direct everything.

The most important industrial and financial combine is the Bourgeois State. This combine holds in its hands the reins of government and power. Here everything is weighed and measured, everything is premeditated and arranged in such a manner, as to crush instantly any attempt at rebellion on the part of the working class against the domination of capital. The State has at its disposal, forces (such as spies, police, judges, executioners, and trained soldiers, who have become soulless machines), as well as mental influences which gradually pervert the workers and poorer elements of society, imbuing them with fallacious ideas. For this purpose the bourgeois State utilises schools and the Church, aided by the capitalist press. It is a known fact that pig-breeders can breed such stock as are incapable of moving owing to the vast accumulation of fat; but such pigs are extremely suitable for slaughter. They are bred artificially on special fattening food. The bourgeoisie deals with the working class in exactly the same way. It is true it gives them little enough substantial food – not enough to get fat on. But day by day it offers to the workers a specially-prepared mental food which fattens their brains and makes them incapable of thought. The bourgeoisie wants to turn the working class into a herd of swine, docile and fit for slaughter, not capable of thinking and ever subservient. This is the reason why, with the help of schools and the Church, the bourgeoisie tries to instil into the minds of children the idea that it is necessary to obey the Authorities, as they hold their power from heaven (and the Bolsheviks, instead of prayers, have drawn on themselves the curses of the Church, because they have refused to grant any State subsidies to these cassocked frauds). This is also the reason why the bourgeoisie is so anxious to circulate its lying press far and wide.

The *powerful organisation* of the bourgeois class enables them to retain private property. The rich are few in number, but they are surrounded by a large number of faithful, devoted and handsomely-paid servants: ministers, directors of works, directors of banks, and so on; these latter are again surrounded by a still greater number of retainers who get paid less, but who are entirely dependent on them, and are educated along the same lines. They are themselves on the look-out for such posts, should they be lucky enough to attain them. These again are followed by minor officials, agents of capital, etc., etc. It is just as the Russian nursery tale has it: "Grandad holds on to the turnip, grandma on to grandad, grandchild on to grandma," and so on; in short they follow one another in an interminable chain united by the general organisation of the bourgeois State and other industrial combines. These organisations cover all countries with a net out of which the working class struggles in vain to get free. Every capitalist State is in reality one vast economic union. The workers toil – the masters enjoy themselves. The workers carry out orders – the masters lord it over them. The workers are deceived – the masters deceive them. Such is the state of things called capitalistic, which the capitalists and their servants – the priests, intellectual classes, Mensheviks, socialist revolutionaries, and the rest of that fraternity, are inviting the workers and peasants to obey.

## Chapter 2

# Plundering Wars – The Oppression of the Working Classes, and the Beginning of the Fall of Capitalism

In every capitalist country small capital has practically vanished; of late it has been eaten up by the big sharks of capitalism. At first, a struggle went on between the individual capitalists for customers; at the present time when there are only a few of them left (as the small fry is absolutely ruined), the remaining ones have united, organised, and have it their own way in their country, just as in the olden times the barons had full power over their domains; a few American bankers own the whole of America, just as formerly a single capitalist owned his factory. A few French usurers have subjugated the whole French people; five of the biggest banks hold the fate of the German people in their hands. The same thing happens in other capitalist countries. It may therefore be said that the present capitalist States, or as they are called, “Fatherlands,” have become huge factories owned by an industrial combine, just as formerly a single capitalist owned his particular factory.

It is not surprising that such combines, unions of various capitalist countries, are now carrying on among themselves the same sort of struggle which was formerly carried on between individual capitalists; the English capitalist State is fighting the German capitalist State, just as formerly in England or in Germany respectively one individual manufacturer was struggling against another. Only now the State is a thousand times bigger, and the struggle for the increase of profits is being waged by means of human life and human blood.

In this struggle, which has spread over the whole globe, the first to perish were small weak countries. At the beginning it is always the small colonial people that perish. Weak, uncivilised tribes are dispossessed of their lands by the great plundering States. A struggle ensues for the *division* of the remaining “free” lands, i.e., lands not yet looted by the “civilised” States. Then begins a struggle for the *re-division* of that which has already been looted. It is quite evident that the struggle for the re-division of the world must be bloody and furious as no war before it. It is conducted by monstrous giants, by the biggest States in the world, armed with perfected death-dealing machines.

*The world war* which broke out in the summer of 1914 was the first war for the final *re-division* of the world between the monsters of “civilised” robbery. It has drawn into its whirlpool four of the chief rival giants: England, Germany, America and Japan. And the struggle is being carried on to decide which of these plundering unions will put the world under the domination of its bloody iron heel.

This war has everywhere vastly deteriorated the position of the working class, which was bad enough as it was. Terrible calamities have fallen on the workers: millions of the best men were simply mown down on the battlefields; starvation was the fate of others. Those who dare to protest are menaced with severest punishments. Prisons are filled to overflowing; gendarmes with machine guns are held ready against the working classes. The rights of the workers have vanished even in the most “free” countries: the workers are even forbidden to strike; strikes are looked upon in the same light as treason. The Labour and Socialist Press is stifled. The best workers, the most loyal fighters for the revolution, are compelled to hide and build up their organisations secretly, just as we used to do in the time of the Czar, furtively hiding from crowds of spies and police. No wonder that all these consequences of the war have made the workers not only groan, but *rise* against their oppressors.

But now the bourgeois States which are responsible for the great slaughter are in their turn beginning to decay at the root and fall. The bourgeois States have “stuck,” so to speak, They have stuck in the bloody swamp they have created in their hunt after profit, and there is no way out. To go back, to return empty-handed is impossible after such great losses in money, goods and blood. To go on, encountering new terrible risks, is also practically

impossible. The policy of the war has led them into a blind alley from which there is no exit. And that is why the war is still continuing without either coming to an end or achieving any definite result. For the same reason the decaying capitalist order is beginning to totter, and will sooner or later have to make way for a new order of things, under which the imbecility of the world war for the sake of gain will have become impossible.

The longer the war lasts the poorer the combatant countries are becoming. The flower of the working class has either perished or is lying eaten alive by lice in the trenches, busily at work in the cause of destruction. Everything has been demolished in the course of the war: even brass door handles have been confiscated for war requirements. Objects of primary necessity are lacking because the war, like the insatiable locust, has devoured everything. There is no one to manufacture useful articles any longer; what there is, is being gradually used up. For nearly four years factories that previously turned out useful things are manufacturing shells and shrapnel instead. And now, without men, without producing what is indispensable, all the countries have reached a state of decline where people are beginning to howl like wolves with cold, hunger, poverty, want and oppression.

In German villages, where formerly electricity was used, they now burn dried wood chips for lack of coals. Life is coming to a standstill with the general growth of poverty of the people. In such well-kept towns as Berlin and Vienna, the streets are not traversable at night because of the robberies that take place. The press is wailing over the insufficiency of police. They refuse to see that the growth of crime is the consequence of the growth of pauperism, despair and exasperation. Cripples returning from the front find sheer starvation at home; the number of hungry and homeless, notwithstanding the number of various relief organisations, is constantly growing, because there is nothing to eat, and all the while the war proceeds, demanding new sacrifices.

The harder the position of the warring States, the more friction, quarrels and misunderstandings arise between the different sections of the bourgeoisie, who formerly went hand in hand for the sake of their mutual aims. In Austria-Hungary, Bohemians, Ukrainians, Germans, Poles and others are fighting each other. In Germany, with the conquest of new provinces, the same bourgeoisie (Esthonian, Lettish, Ukrainian, Polish) which welcomed the German troops, are now quarrelling furiously with their liberators. In England, the English bourgeoisie is in mortal conflict with the enslaved Irish bourgeoisie. And in the midst of this tumult and general disorganisation is heard the voice of the *labouring class*, before which history has laid the problem of *putting an end to war and of overthrowing the yoke of capitalism*. Thus approaches the hour of the decay of capitalism and the communist revolution of the working class.

The first stone was laid by the Russian October Revolution. The reason why capitalism in Russia became disorganised before it did in any other country, was that the burden of the world war was heaviest for the young capitalist State of our country. We had not the monstrous organisation of the bourgeoisie which they have in England, Germany or America; and our bourgeoisie could not therefore cope with the demands laid on it by the war. Nor could they withstand the mighty onset of the Russian labouring class and of the poor elements of the peasantry who, in the October days, knocked the bourgeoisie out of their seats and put at the head of the Government the party of the working class – the Communist Bolsheviks.

Sooner or later the same fate will overtake the bourgeoisie of Western Europe, where the working class is joining more and more the ranks of the communists. Everywhere, organisations of native “bolsheviks” are growing; in Austria and America, in Germany and in Norway, in France and in Italy. The programme of the communist party is becoming the programme of the universal proletarian revolution.

## Chapter 3

# General Sharing, or Co-operative Communist Production

We already know that the root of the evil of all plundering wars, of oppression of the working classes and of all the atrocities of capitalism, is that the world has been enslaved by a few State organised capitalist bands, who own all the wealth of the earth as their private *property*. The capitalist ownership of the means of production – this is the reason of reasons which explains the barbarity of the present order of things. To deprive the rich of their power by depriving them of their wealth, by force, that is the paramount duty of the working class, of the Labour Party, the party of communists.

Some think that, after depriving the rich of their possessions, these should be religiously, justly and *equally* divided between everybody, and then all will be well. Everyone, they say, would have just as much as everyone else; all would be equal, and freed from inequality, oppression and exploitation. Thanks to this equal share-out, general division and allotment of all the riches amongst the poor, everybody will look after himself, will own all things convenient for his use, and the domination of man over man will vanish.

But this is not the point of view of the Communist Party. The Communist Party considers that such equal sharing would lead to nothing good, and to no other result than confusion and a return to the old order.

Firstly, there are quite a number of things which are impossible to divide. How, for instance, would you divide the railway? If one man gets the rails, another the steel plate, a third one of the screws, and a fourth begins smashing up the carriages to light his stove, a fifth breaks a mirror to have a piece of glass for shaving purposes, and so on – it is plain that this kind of division would not be fair at all, and would only lead to an idiotic plundering and *destruction* of useful things. It is just as impossible to divide a machine. For, if one takes a pinion, another a lever, and the rest, other parts, the machine will cease to be a machine, and the whole thing will go to ruin. And the same thing holds good with regard to all complicated machinery, which is so important as a means of further production. We have only to think of telegraph and telephone apparatus, and the apparatus at chemical works, etc. It is evident that only an unintelligent man or a direct enemy of the working class would advise this kind of sharing.

This, however, is not the only reason why such a sharing is harmful. Let us suppose that by some kind of miracle, a more or less equal division was attained of everything taken from the rich; even that would not lead to any desirable result in the end. What is the meaning of a division? It means that instead of a few large owners there would spring up a large number of small ones. It means not the *abolition* of private ownership, but its dispersion over a larger area. In the place of large ownership there would arise ownership on a small scale. But such a period we have already had in the past. We know very well that capitalism and large capitalists have developed out of the competition between one small owner and another. If we bred a number of small owners as a result of our division, we should get the following result: part of them (and quite a considerable part) would, on the very next day, get rid of their share on some market or other (say the Soukharev Market in Moscow), and their property would thus fall into the hands of wealthier owners; between the remaining ones a struggle would ensue for the buyers, and in this struggle, too, the wealthier ones would soon get the upper hand of the less well-to-do. The latter would soon be ruined and turn into proletarians, and their lucky rivals would amass fortunes, employing men to work for them, and thus be gradually transformed into first-rate capitalists. And so we should, in a very short time, return to the same order which we have just destroyed, and find ourselves once again before the old problem of capitalist exploitation.

Dividing up into small property-holders is not the ideal of the worker or the agricultural labourer. It is rather the dream of the small shopkeeper oppressed by the big one, who wants to become a large shopkeeper himself. How to become a “boss,” how to get hold of as much as possible and retain it in his greedy clutch – that is what the shopkeeper is aiming at. To think of others and consider what this may result in is not his affair so long as he gets



an extra sixpence clinking in his pocket. He is not to be frightened by a possible return to capitalism, for he is cherishing a faint hope that *he himself*, John Smith, may become a capitalist. And that would not be so bad for him.

No; there is an entirely different road along which the working class should go, and is going. The working class is interested in such a reconstruction of society as would make return to capitalism impossible. Sharing of wealth would mean driving capitalism out of the front door only to see it return by the back door. The only way out of this dilemma is a co-operative *labour (communist)* system.

In a communist order, all the wealth belongs not to individuals or classes, but to society as a whole, which become it were, one great labour association; no one man is master over it. All are equal comrades. There are no classes; capitalists do not employ labour, nor do workers sell their labour to employers. The work is carried out jointly, according to a pre-arranged labour plan. A central bureau of statistics calculates how much it is required to manufacture in a year: such and such a number of hoots, trousers, sausages, blacking, wheat, cloth, and so on. It will also calculate that for this purpose such and such a number of men must work on the fields and in the sausage work respectively, and such and such a number in the large communal tailoring workshops, etc., and working hands will be distributed accordingly.

The whole of production is conducted in a strictly calculated and adjusted plan, on the basis of an exact estimate of all the machines, apparatus, all raw material, and all labour power in the community. There is also an exact account kept of the annual requirements of the community. The manufactured product is stored in a communal warehouse, from whence it is distributed amongst the workers. All work is carried out only in the largest works and on the best machines, thereby saving labour. The management of production is conducted along the most economical lines: all unnecessary expenditure is avoided, owing to work being carried out on one general plan of production. We do not have here the kind of order that allows one kind of management in one place and another kind of management in another; or that one factory, for example, should not know how things are done at another factory. Here, on the contrary, the whole world is weighed and accounted for. Cotton is only grown where the soil is most suitable. The production of coal is concentrated in the richest mines; iron foundries are built in the neighbourhood of coal and in parts where the soil is fit for wheat, it will not be employed for building monstrous city edifices on, but will be used for sowing wheat. Everything, in short, is arranged in such a manner that each kind of production should be carried out in a place most suitable for it, where work could be done most successfully, where things could be obtained easiest, where human labour would be most productive. All this can be attained only by working to a single plan and by organising the whole community into one vast labour commune.

People in this *communitic* order do not benefit at one another's expense. There are no rich here, no parvenus, no bosses and no bottom dogs; society is not divided into classes of which one rules over the other. And there being no classes means that there are not two sorts of people (poor and rich), gnashing their teeth against one another, the oppressor against the oppressed, and vice versa. For this same reason we have no such organisation as the State, because there is no dominating class requiring a special organisation to keep their class opponents under their heel. There is no Government to rule men. and there is no power of one man over another. There is administration of things only, management of machines; there is the power of human society over Nature. Mankind is not divided up into hostile camps; it is united by common labour and by a common struggle against the elements. The political barriers that divide nations are done away with. Separate fatherlands are abolished. The whole of humanity, without distinction of nationality, is bound together in. all its parts and organised into one united whole. All peoples form one great united labour association.

## Chapter 4

# An Anarchist or a Communist Order

There are people who call themselves Anarchists, that is to say, adherents to an order of things where there is no Government. They affirm that the Bolshevik-Communists are on the wrong path, because they wish to preserve order, and that any kind of power or authority, and any kind of state, means oppression and violence. We have seen that such an opinion of communism is not right. A communist order of life is an order in which there are neither workers nor capitalists, nor any kind of State. The difference between an anarchist and a communist order is not in the fact that there is a State in one and none in the other. No; there is no State in either of them. The real difference is in the following:-

Anarchists think that human life will be better and freer when they sub-divide all production into small labour-commune organisations. A group or association, say, of ten men is formed who have united by their own free will. Very well. These ten men begin to work on their own account and at their own risk. In another place there has arisen a similar association; in a third another. In time all these associations enter into negotiations and agreements with one another concerning the things which are lacking in each respective union. Gradually they come to an understanding, and “free contracts” or agreements are drawn up.

And now all production is carried on in these small communes. Every man is free at any time to withdraw from the commune, and each commune is free to withdraw from the voluntary union (federation) of these small communes (labour associations). Do anarchists reason rightly? Any worker acquainted with the present system of factory machine production will see that this is not right. Let us explain why.

The future order is meant to save the working class from two evils. In the first place from the subjection of man by man, from exploitation from the evil of one man oppressing another. This is attained by casting off the yoke of capital and depriving the capitalists of all their wealth. But there is yet another problem, that of shaking off the yoke of Nature, of mastering Nature, of organising production in the best, most perfect way. Only then will it be possible for each man to spend but a little time in the manufacture of food products, boots, clothes, houses, etc. and to spend the rest of his time for developing his mind, for studying science, for art, for all that which makes human life beautiful. Prehistoric man lived in groups in which all were equal. But they led a brutal existence, because they did not subject Nature to themselves, but allowed Nature entirely to subject them. Although with the capitalist *production on a large scale* humanity has learned to control Nature, the working class still live like beasts of burden, because the capitalist holds them in his clutches, owing to the existence of economic inequality. What follows? That economic equality should be united with production on a *large scale*. It is not enough to do away with capitalists. It is indispensable that production should be organised, as we have already said, on a large scale. All small, inefficient enterprises must disappear. The whole work must be concentrated in the largest factories, works and estates. And not in such a way that Tom should not know what John is doing, nor John know what Tom is doing; this kind of management is all wrong. What we want is a united *plan* of work. The more localities such a plan embraces the better. The world must ultimately become one labour enterprise, where the whole of humanity, in accordance with a strictly worked out, estimated and measured plan, would work for its own needs, on the best machines, at the biggest works, without either employers or capitalists. *In order to advance production, we must on no account sub-divide the big production which capitalism has left us as a heritage.* It should, on the contrary, be still more *widened*. The wider and larger the general plan, the bigger the scale on which production will be organised, the more will it be guided by the estimates and accounts of the statistical centres. In other words, the more *centralised* industry will be, the better: for then the less labour will fall to the share of each individual, the freer will each man be, the greater the scope for mental development in human society.

But the future state of society propagated by the anarchists is just the opposite of this. Instead of enlarging, centralising or regulating production, it sub-divides it, and consequently *weakens* the domination of man over Nature.

There is no general plan, no large organisation. Under an anarchist order it will be even impossible to utilise large machines to the fullest extent, to reconstruct railroads, according to a general plan, to undertake irrigation on a big scale. Let us give an example. A great deal is being spoken of substituting steam plant by electricity, and of utilising waterfalls, etc., for obtaining electric motor power. In order to distribute correctly the electrical energy obtained, it is of course necessary to estimate, weigh and measure where and how much of this energy is to be directed, so as to derive the greatest possible advantage therefrom. What does that mean, and how is it to be made possible ? It is only possible when production is organised on a large scale, when it is concentrated in one or two great centres of management and control. And, on the other hand, it is impossible under an anarchist order of small, disseminated communes but loosely held together. In this way we can see that, as a matter of fact, production cannot be properly organised in an anarchist State. This in its turn results in a long working day, i.e., dependence to a great extent on Nature. An anarchist order would only serve as a bridle retarding the progress of humanity. That is why we, communists, are fighting against the teaching spread by the anarchists.

Now it is plain why anarchist propaganda leads to a *sharing* of wealth instead of a communist construction of society. A small anarchist commune is not a vast collaboration of men, but a tiny group, which can even consist of as few as two or three men. At Petrograd there existed such a group – “The Union of Five Oppressed.” According to the anarchist teachings it might have been “A Union of *Two* Oppressed.” Imagine what would happen if every five men or every couple of men began *independently* to requisition, confiscate, and then start work at their own risk. There are in Russia about a hundred million of the labouring population. If they were to form “unions of five oppressed,” we should have in Russia twenty millions of such communes. Imagine what a “Babel would ensue if these twenty million little communes began acting independently! What chaos and anarchy we should have! Nor would it be surprising that if such groups began, independently of other, to usurp the wealth of the rich, nothing but a sharing-out would result. And sharing-out leads, as we have seen above the reign of capital all over again, to violence and oppression of the labouring masses.

## Chapter 5

# To Communism Through Proletarian Dictatorship

How is the communist order to be instituted? How is it to be attained? To this the Communist Party gives the following answer: Through the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Dictatorship means a power of iron, a power that shows no mercy to its foes. The dictatorship of the working class means the governing power of the working class, which is to stifle the bourgeoisie and the landowners. Such a government of the workers can only arise out of a Socialist revolution of the working class, which destroys the bourgeois State and bourgeois power, and builds up a new State on its ruins – that of the proletariat itself and of the poorest elements supporting it.

This, in fact, is the reason why we stand for a workers' State, whilst the anarchists are against it. That means to say that we, communists, want 'a workers' government which we *must have provisionally, until the working class has completely defeated its opponents, thoroughly drilled the whole of the bourgeoisie, knocked the conceit out of it, and deprived it of the last shred of hope ever to rise again to power.*

And so you, communists, are for force, we may be asked. Certainly, we shall reply. But we, are for *revolutionary force*. First of all we think that by mere gentle persuasion the working class will never attain anything at all. The road of compromise, as preached by the mensheviks and the socialist revolutionaries, will lead nowhere. The working class will achieve liberty in no other way except through a revolution, that is to say, through the overthrow of the power of capitalism, through the destruction of the bourgeois State. But every revolution is a form of violence against former rulers. The March revolution in Russia was force against the oppressors, landlords and the Czar. The October revolution was force of the workers, peasants and soldiers, against the bourgeoisie. And such force against those who have oppressed millions of the toiling masses is not wrong – it is sacred.

But the working class is compelled to use force against the bourgeoisie even after the bourgeoisie has been overthrown in an open revolutionary right. For, as a matter of fact, even after the working class has destroyed the government of the bourgeoisie, the bourgeoisie does not cease to exist as a class. It does not vanish altogether. It continues to hope for a return to the old order, and is therefore ready to form an alliance with anyone, except the victorious working class.

The experience of the Russian revolution of 1917 fully confirms this. In October the working class excluded the bourgeoisie from the government. But, nevertheless, the bourgeoisie was not completely crushed: it acted against the workers, by mobilising all its forces to crush the proletariat again, and to achieve "its own ends by hook or by crook. It organised sabotage; that is, counter-revolutionary officials, clerks, and civil servants who did not wish to be subjected to workmen and peasants, abandoned their posts *en masse*. It organised the armed forces of Dutoff, Kaledin, Korniloff; it is at present, whilst we are writing these lines, organising the bands of Esaul Semionoff for a campaign against the Serbian Soviets; and lastly *it is calling to its aid the troops of the foreign bourgeoisie*, German, Japanese, British, etc. Thus the experience of the Russian October revolution teaches us that the working class, even after its victory, is compelled to have to deal with the mightiest of external foes (the plundering capitalistic States) who are on their way to aid the overthrown bourgeoisie of Russia.

If we seriously consider the whole world at the present time, we shall see that it is only in Russia that the proletariat has succeeded in overthrowing the power of the bourgeois State. The remainder of the world still belongs to the capital robbers. Soviet Russia, with its worker and peasant government, is a small island in the midst of a tempestuous capitalist ocean. And even if the victory of tin- Russian workers is to be followed by a victory of the workers of Austria and Germany, there will still be left big vulture-like capitalist States. If all capitalistic Europe breaks up and falls under the blows of the working class there will still be left the capitalistic world of Asia, with

Japan like a beast of prey at its head. Then we have the capital of America, at the head of which stands the monstrous plundering union called the United States of America. All these capitalist States will not give up their position without a fight. They will fight with all their might to prevent the proletariat from getting possession of the whole world. The mightier the onslaught of the proletariat, the more dangerous the position of the bourgeoisie; the more necessary it becomes for the bourgeoisie to concentrate all its forces in the struggle against the proletariat. The proletariat, having conquered in one, two, or three countries, will inevitably come into collision with the rest of the bourgeois world that will attempt to break by blood and iron the efforts of the class that is fighting for its freedom.

What follows? It follows that *prior* to the establishment of the communist order and *after* the abolition of capitalism, in the interval between capitalism and communism, even after socialistic revolutions in several countries, the working class will have to endure a furious struggle with its inner and external foes. And for such a struggle a strong, wide, well-constructed organisation is required, having at its disposal all the means of fighting. An organisation of this kind is the *proletarian State*, the power of the workers. The proletarian State, similar to other States, is an organisation of the dominant class (the dominating class is here the working class), and an organisation of *force over the bourgeoisie*, as a means of putting an end to the bourgeoisie and getting rid of it.

He who is afraid of this kind of force is not a revolutionist. The question of force should not be regarded from the point of view that every kind of force is pernicious. The force practised by the rich against the poor, by capitalists towards workers – such force acts against the working class and aims at supporting and strengthening capitalistic plunder. But the force of workers against the bourgeoisie aims at freeing millions of working men from slavery; it means redemption from the rod of capital, from plundering wars, from savage looting and: destruction of all that mankind has been building up and accumulating for ages and ages. That is why, in the making of revolution and the forming of a communist order, the iron rule, of a proletarian dictatorship is indispensable.

It should be clear to everyone that, during the transition period, the working class will have to (and must do so now) strain all its energy in order to emerge victorious in the battle with its numerous enemies, and that no other organisation can defeat the enemies of the working class except one that embraces the working class and the poorer peasantry of the whole country. How is it possible to ward off foreign imperialists unless one holds in one's hands government, power, and an army? How is it possible to fight against counter-revolution unless one holds in one's hands arms (a means of coercion), prisons for confining counter-revolutionaries (a means of coercion), and other means of force and subjection? How is it possible to make capitalists conform to the workers' control, requisitions, etc., if the working class possess no means for compelling others to obey? Of course some may say that a couple of "Unions of Five Oppressed" would be sufficient. That is nonsense.

The peculiarities of a *transition* period call for the necessity of a Workers' State. For even when the bourgeois will be defeated all over the world, accustomed as it is to idleness, and imbued with feelings of hostility towards the workers, it will do its best to avoid work, to try and injure the proletariat in every way. The bourgeois must be made to serve the people. Only an authorised government and compulsory measures can do that.

In backward countries like Russia there still exists a multitude of small and medium property-holders, sweaters, usurers and land-grabbers. All these are against the poorest elements of the rural population and still more against the town labourers. They follow in the wake of big capital and of the ex-estate owners. It is needless to say that the workers and the poorest of the peasants must crush them should they rise against the revolution. The workers have got to think how to organise a new plan of work, systematise the work of production taken out of the hands of the manufacturers, help the peasants to organise rural economy and a fair distribution of bread, manufactured goods, iron products, and so on. But the sweater-land-grabber, grown fat on the war, is stubborn; he does not intend to act in the common interest. "I am my own master," he says. The workers and the poor elements of the peasantry must compel him to obey, just in the same way as they are compelling the big capitalists to obey, the ex-landlords and ex-generals and officers.

The more precarious the position of the workers' revolution is, and the more enemies it is surrounded by, the more ruthless should be the workers' government, the heavier should be the hand of the revolutionary workers and of the poorest elements of the peasantry, and the more energetic should be the dictatorship. State government in the hands of the working class is an axe held in readiness against the bourgeoisie. In a Communist order, when the bourgeoisie has ceased to exist, and with it class divisions and every kind of external as well as internal danger, then the axe will be needed no longer. But in the transition period, when the enemy is still showing his fangs, and is ready to drown the whole working class in a sea of blood (let us recall to mind the shooting of the Finnish workmen, the executions at Kiev, executions of workmen and peasants all over the Ukraine and in Lithuania!), we will agree that to go unarmed, to act without this axe of State government, would be an act of folly.

Two parties are clamouring against the dictatorship of the working class. On the one side are the Anarchists; these, being against every kind of government, are therefore against the government of the workers and peasants. To these we can say, "If you are against the workers using means of force *against the bourgeoisie*, then get you to a

convent!”

On the other side, against the dictatorship of the workers we have the Mensheviks and the Right Socialist Revolutionaries (though they were themselves formerly in favour of it). These, are against encroaching upon the liberty ... of the bourgeoisie. They are backing up the purse-proud bourgeois to get for him that which he once possessed, and enable him peacefully to saunter along the Nevsky Prospect in Petrograd or the Tverskaya at Moscow, etc. They maintain that the working class is “not yet ripe” for a dictatorship. To them we can say, “You, sirs, defenders of the bourgeoisie, go to the bourgeoisie whom you love so much, but do leave the working class and the poor peasantry alone.”

Just because the Communist Party is an adherent of the most rigid iron dictatorship of the workers over capitalists – small sweaters, late landowners,, and all other similar delightful relics of the old bourgeois order – it is for that very reason the extremest and most revolutionary of all existing groups and parties. “Through a mercilessly firm government of the workers, through a proletarian dictatorship – to Communism!” This’ is the war cry of our party. *And the programme of our party is the programme of proletarian dictatorship.*

## Chapter 6

# A Soviet Government or a Bourgeois Republic?

Our attitude towards the necessity of dictatorship leads us, as an inevitable result, to struggle against an antiquated form of a parliamentary bourgeois republic (sometimes called “democratic”), and to our attempts at setting up instead a new form of State administration – *a government of the Soviets of Workers’, Soldiers’ and Peasants’ Deputies*.

The mensheviks and the right wing of the socialist revolutionaries are staunch supporters of the Constituent Assembly and a parliamentary republic. They loudly abuse the government of the Soviets. And why? First, because they are afraid of the power of the workers, and desire to retain all power in the hands of the bourgeoisie. But the communists who are striving to realise the communist (socialist) order must inevitably fight for the dictatorship of the proletariat and for the complete overthrow of the bourgeoisie. That is where the difference lies. And for this very reason the parties of mensheviks and socialist revolutionaries are at one with the party of the bourgeoisie.

What is the essential difference between a parliamentary republic and a republic of Soviets? It is, that in a soviet republic the non-working elements are deprived of the franchise and take no part in administrative affairs. The country is governed by Soviets, which are elected by the toilers in the places where they work, as factories, works, workshops, mines, and in villages and hamlets. The bourgeoisie, ex-landowners, bankers, speculating traders, merchants, shopkeepers, usurers, the Korniloff intellectuals, priests and bishops, in short the whole of the black host have no right to vote, no fundamental political rights. The foundation of a parliamentary republic is formed by the Constituent Assembly, while the supreme organ of the Soviet Republic is the Convention of Soviets. What is the principal difference between the Convention of Soviets and the Constituent Assembly? Anybody with the least intelligence can easily answer this question. Although the mensheviks and the right wing of the socialist revolutionaries do, as a matter of fact, try to muddle things by inventing various pompous names such as, for instance, “Master of the Russian Land,” still truth will out. The Constituent Assembly differs from the Convention of Soviets in as much as into the former are elected not only the labourers, but also the bourgeoisie and all the bourgeoisie hangers-on. It consequently differs from the Convention of Soviets in the fact that in the Constituent Assembly may sit not only workers and peasants, but also bankers, landowners and capitalists; not only the labour party (the communists), not only the left wing of socialist revolutionaries, and even not only the socialist traitors such as the right wing of the socialist revolutionaries, but also the constitutional democrats (the party of traitors to the people), the Black Hundred and the Octobrists. This is the crowd for whom these honourable compromisers are demanding enfranchisement. When they clamour for the necessity of a “popular,” “all-national” Constituent Assembly, they do not consider the Soviets as all-national, because the *Russian bourgeoisie* is lacking to complete the full representation of the Russian people. To supplement working-class representation with this crowd of parasites, to give these enemies of the people all rights, to give them seats next to themselves in parliament, to transform the class government of workers and peasants into a class government of the bourgeoisie under the pretext of admitting all sections – this is the task of the right wing of the socialist revolutionaries, of the mensheviks, of the constitutional democrats, in a word of big capital and its petty bourgeois agents. The experience of all countries shows that where the bourgeoisie enjoys all the rights, it invariably deceives the working class and the poorest peasantry.

By holding the press, newspapers and magazines firmly in its grasp, possessing as it does vast riches, bribing officials, exploiting the services of hundreds of thousands of their agents, threatening and intimidating the more downtrodden of their slaves, the bourgeois succeeds in preventing power from slipping from its hands. At first sight it appears as if the whole nation were voting, but in reality this screen is used by domineering financial capital, which arranges matters to suit itself, and even boasts of “allowing the people to vote” and of preserving all kinds of

“democratic liberties.” This is the reason why, in all countries where there is a bourgeois republic (take, for instance, France, Switzerland, and the United States of America), notwithstanding universal suffrage, the power is completely concentrated in the hands of the leading bankers. And so we see why the right wing of the socialist revolutionaries and the mensheviks are striving to overthrow the power of the Soviets and to summon the “Constituent Assembly.” In granting votes to the bourgeoisie they intend to prepare for a transition to a similar order of things as exists in France and America. They consider that the Russian workers are not “ripe” to hold the government in their own hands. But the party of the communist-bolsheviks, on the contrary, holds that dictatorship of the workers is essential at the present moment, and that there can be no talk whatever of any transfer of government. The bourgeoisie must be deprived of every possibility of deceiving the people. The bourgeoisie must be set aside and firmly prevented from taking any part in the government of the country, because the present is a time of acute struggle. We must strengthen and widen the dictatorship of the workers and the poorer elements of the peasantry. That is why the State government of Soviets is indispensable. Here we have no bourgeoisie whatever, and no landowners. Here the state is governed by the organisations of workers and peasants which have grown up together with the revolution and have borne the whole burden of the great struggle on their own shoulders.

But this is not enough. An ordinary republic does not only represent the power of the bourgeoisie. A republic of this kind can never, by reason of its composition, become inspired with the spirit of the workers’ party. In a parliamentary republic every citizen hands in his vote once in every four or five years, and there his part in the matter ends. All the rest is left to deputies, ministers and presidents, who manage everything. There is no connection whatever with the masses. The masses of the labouring people are only tools exploited by the officials of the bourgeoisie, taking no real part in the government.

Quite a different matter is a Soviet republic, corresponding to a dictatorship of the workers. Here the whole administration is based on an entirely different principle. A Soviet government is not an organisation of officials independent of the masses and dependent on the bourgeoisie. The Soviet government and its organs are supported by general organisations of the working class and the peasantry. Trade unions, works and factories committees, local Soviets of workmen and peasants, soldiers’ and sailors’ organisations – all these support the central Soviet Government. From the Central Soviet Government thousands and millions of threads spread in all directions: first these threads go to district and provincial Soviets, then to the town Soviets, from these to the town-parish Soviets, from these again to the factories and works, uniting hundreds of thousands of workers. All the higher institutions of the Soviet Government are organised on the same lines. Take, for instance, the supreme council for public economy. It is composed of representatives of central committees of trade unions, of factories and works committees, and other organisations. Trade unions in their turn unite whole branches of production; they have branches in various towns and are supported by the organised masses at factories and works. To-day at every factory there is a factory and works committee, which is elected by the workers of that factory; these factory and works’ committees being again united. And these, too, send their representatives to the Supreme Council for Public Economy, which draws up economic plans and directs production. Thus, here, too, the central organ of the control of industry is composed of representatives of workers, and is supported by *mass* organisations of the working class and of the poorest elements of the peasantry. This, then, is an entirely different plan from that of a bourgeois republic. The bourgeoisie is not only deprived of rights, and there is not only a question of the country being governed by representatives of workers and peasants. The great thing is that the Soviets govern the country, keeping in constant touch with the large unions of the workers and peasants, and thus the wide masses are all the time taking part in the administration of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Government. In this way each organised workman exercises his influence. He takes part in the government of the state not only by electing trusted representatives once a month or two. No. The trade unions, say, work out a plan for organising production; these plans are then considered by the Soviets or by the Council for Public Economy, and then, if they are practicable they obtain the full force of law, after being approved of by the Central Executive Committee of Soviets. Any given trade union, any works’ and factories’ committee, can in this way take a part in the general work of creating a new order of life. In a bourgeois republic the more indifferent the masses are, the happier is the government, because the interests of the masses are opposed to those of the capitalist state. If, for instance, the masses of the North American Republic should take matters into their own hands – that would mean the end of the supremacy of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeois State is based on the deception of the masses, keeping them half-awake, by the method of depriving them of any active part in the everyday work of the state, by summoning them once every few years “to vote,” and by deceiving them with their own vote. It is an entirely different thing in a Soviet republic. The Soviet republic, embodying the dictatorship of the masses, cannot even for a minute tear itself away from these masses. Such a republic is the stronger in proportion to the greater activity and energy manifested by the masses and the more work accomplished at works and factories, in the towns and in the provinces. It is not a matter of mere chance, therefore, that the Soviet Government in issuing its decrees addresses the masses with the demand that the workers and poorest peasants themselves should carry these decrees into execution. That is why the significance of various workers’ and peasants’ organisations entirely changed after the October revolution.



At first they were weapons of the class struggle against the governing capitalists and landowners. Take, for example, the professional unions and some small peasants' Soviets. At first they were compelled to carry on a struggle for higher pay and a shorter working day in the towns, and for depriving the landowners of the land in the rural districts. At the present time, when the government is in the hands of the workers and the peasants, these organisations are becoming wheels in the machine of state government. At present, the trade unions are not only fighting with the capitalists, but are taking an active part in the organisation of production, as organs of a labour government, as part of the Soviet State, in the *administration* of industry; and in the same way the village and peasants' Soviets not only have to carry on a war with village sharks or sweaters, with the capitalists and landowners, but are also working to establish a new land system; that is to say, they have the *administration* of the land in their hands as organs of a workers' and peasants' government; they are as screws and nuts in the huge machine of state administration, where the power is in the hands of the workmen and peasants.

In this way, through the workers' and peasants' organisations, the widest sections of the labouring masses have been gradually called to the work of government. There is nothing like this in any other country. Nowhere but in Russia has the victory of the working class and the establishment of a workers' government yet been achieved; no other country has yet a *proletarian dictatorship* nor a *Soviet Republic*, nor a *Soviet state*.

It is very clearly understood that the Soviet Government, corresponding to the proletarian dictatorship, does not suit the groups of the population that are interested in a return to capitalist slavery, instead of going ahead to a communist order. It is also clear that they cannot possibly say frankly and openly, "we want the whip and the stick for the workers."

Here, too, a certain amount of deceit is required. Such *deceit* is the speciality of the right wing of the socialist revolutionaries and of the mensheviks who are shouting about "a struggle for a democratic republic," about the Constituent Assembly, which they declare will save us from all evils, and so on. But as a matter of fact the real question here is to *transfer the government to the bourgeoisie*. And in this fundamental question no agreement can possibly be arrived at between us, communists, and the various mensheviks, right wing socialist revolutionaries, the followers of the **Novaya Zhisn**, and the rest of that fraternity. They, stand for capitalism, whilst we stand for a movement towards Communism. They – for a government of the bourgeoisie, we – for a dictatorship of the workers; they – for a parliamentary bourgeois republic, where capital will reign, we – for a Soviet Socialist Republic where all the power belongs to the workers and the poorest elements of the peasantry.

Until the present time, prior to the Russian Revolution of 1917, the dictatorship of the proletariat was only written about. But, no one seemed to have quite a clear idea as to how this dictatorship was to be realised. The Russian Revolution evolved the actual form of the dictatorship – that of the Soviet Republic. And therefore, at the present moment, the best sections of the international proletariat are inscribing on their banners the motto of a Soviet republic and of a Soviet government. And therefore, too, our task now consists in strengthening the Soviet government by all the means in our power, and in clearing it of various undesirable elements, in attracting to the task of reconstruction a greater number of capable comrades, elected by the working and peasant masses. Only *such* a government, a government of the Soviets, a government of the workers and peasants, is what the workers and peasants can and should defend.

Should our workers and peasants suffer defeats, should the Constituent Assembly be really summoned, should the place of the Government of the Soviets be taken by an ordinary bourgeois republic after the manner of the French and American Republic, then the worker should not only not be under any obligation to defend it, but should make it the task of his life to overthrow such a republic. For it is his duty to defend the government of the workers and not the government of the bourgeoisie. With regard to the government of the bourgeoisie, he has but one obligation, and that is to overthrow it.

## Chapter 7

# Freedom for the Working Class and the Poorest Elements of the Peasantry; Restrictions for the Bourgeoisie

### Freedom of Speech, Press, Unions, Meetings, etc., in the Soviet Republic)

Since we have a dictatorship of workers and peasants whose aim is to crush the bourgeoisie completely and to put down any attempt of reviving the bourgeois government, it is plain that there can be no question of freedom, in the wide sense of the word, for the bourgeoisie, just as there can be no question of allowing the bourgeoisie the right of franchise, nor of transforming the Soviet Government into a republican bourgeois parliament.

The party of the Communists (bolsheviks) are overwhelmed on all sides by shouts of indignation and even threats: “You stop newspapers, you make arrests, you prohibit meetings, you suppress the freedom of speech and of press, you revive despotism, you are violators and murderers,” and much more to the same effect. It is this question of “freedom” in the Soviet Republic that should be thoroughly discussed in detail.

First of all, let us take an example. When the revolution broke out in March of last year (1917), Tzarist ministers were arrested (Sturmer, Protopopoff and others). Did anyone protest? No! And yet these arrests, just as any other arrests, were an infringement of *personal freedom*. Why was this infringement universally approved of? And why do we still at the present moment: “Yes, that was the right thing to do”? Simply because it was the arrest of dangerous counter-revolutionaries. And in a revolution, more than at any other time, we should remember the eleventh Commandment: “Be on the look out!” If you are not, if you set all the enemies of the people free, if you do not keep them under control, there will be nothing left to remember the revolution by!

Another example. When Sturmer and Goremikin were being arrested, the Black Hundred press was closed. This was a deliberate infringement of the *freedom of the press*. Was it justifiable? Most certainly! And no reasonable being will dispute that this was just what should have been done. And why? Again, because at a time of revolution, when there is a life and death struggle going on, the enemy should be deprived of his weapons. And the press is such a weapon.

Prior to the October revolution, several Black Hundred societies (“The Two-Headed Eagle” and a few others) were closed down at Kiev. This was an infringement of the *freedom of association*. But it was the right thing to do, .because the revolution cannot permit the free organisation of unions against the revolution.

When Komiloff was advancing on Petrograd, a number of generals struck, refusing to obey the orders of the Provincial Government. They declared they would support Korniloff to the last. Was it possible to *sanction such freedom* of generals’ *strikes*? Surely for such strikes these Black Hundred generals should have been subjected to the severest punishment.

What does all this mean? We see now that infringement of freedom is necessary with regard to the *opponents of the revolution*. At a time of revolution we cannot allow freedom for the enemies of the people and of the revolution. That is a surely clear, irrefutable conclusion.

After March and before October neither the mensheviks nor the right socialist revolutionaries, nor the bourgeoisie, once raised their voices against the usurpation of power by violence in March, or against the suppression of freedom (of the Black Hundred press), or speech (Black Hundred), etc. They never once raised their voices against all this,

because it was carried out by the bourgeoisie, Goutchkoff, Miliukoff, Rodzinko, and Tereschenko, and their loyal servants Kerensky and Tzeretelli, who had usurped power in March.

By October things had changed. In October the worker's rose *against* the bourgeoisie who had trodden upon their necks in March. In October the peasants supported the workers. It clearly follows that the bourgeoisie grew to hate the workers' revolution, and in its mad hatred behaved no better than the landowners.

All the large property owners united against the working class and the poorest peasantry. They gathered around the so-called party of the people's freedom (in reality the party of the people's treason) against the people. And it is easy enough to understand that when the people succeed in getting the upper hand over their enemies the latter in their impotent fury cry, "usurpers," "violators," and so on.

The following is now clear to the workers and peasants. The party of the Communists not only allows no freedom (such as liberty of the press, speech, meetings, unions, etc.) for the *bourgeois enemies of the people*, but goes still further and demands of the government to be always ready to close the bourgeois press, to break up gatherings of the enemies of the people, to forbid their lying and libelling, and sowing panic; the party must mercilessly suppress all attempts of the bourgeoisie to return to power. And this is what is meant by *dictatorship of the proletariat*.

When there is a question of the press, we first ask *which* press – the bourgeois or the workers' press; when there is a question of gatherings, we ask *what* gatherings – workers' or counter-revolutionary; when a question arises of strikes, the first question for us is whether it is a strike of the workers against the capitalists, or a sabotage instigated by the bourgeoisie or the bourgeois intellectuals against the proletariat. He who makes no distinction between these two things is groping in the dark. The press, meetings, unions, etc., are weapons of the class struggle. And in a revolutionary epoch they are the weapons of *civil war*, together with munition stores, machine guns, powder and bombs. The great question is: which class is using them as a weapon against the other. The workers' revolution cannot possibly grant freedom for the organisation of such risings as those of Korniloff, Dutoff, or Miliukoff against the working masses. Neither can it allow full freedom of organisation, of speech, press, and of meetings of the counter-revolutionary bands who are stubbornly carrying on their own policy, and only lying in wait for a chance of throwing themselves upon the workers and peasants.

As we have already seen, the right wing socialist revolutionaries and mensheviks, in declaring their motto to be "the Constituent Assembly," are only anxious for votes for the *bourgeoisie*. And just in the same way when they violently abuse destruction of freedom they are anxious for the freedom of the *bourgeoisie*. The bourgeois press, bourgeois leaders, the counter-revolutionary bourgeois organisations are not to be touched – this is the real position of these gentlemen.

But, they will say, you yourselves used to close both menshevik and socialist revolutionary newspapers; the party of the Communists has more than once encroached on the liberty of worthy individuals, who in their time (in the reign of the Tzar) suffered imprisonment. How can we justify that? This question may be answered by another: when Gotz, the right wing socialist revolutionary, organised a rising of junkers and officers against the soldiers and the workers – what were we to do? Pat him on the head for it? When Roudneff, the right wing socialist revolutionary, together with Colonel Riabtzeff, in October armed the Moscow White Guards, consisting of the sons of the bourgeoisie, houseowners, and other gentry (the gilded youths), and in union with the officers and junkers tried to suppress by machine guns and drown in blood the October rising of workers and soldiers – what could we do? Decorate them with medals for their feats? When the nienshevik organ **Forward** (which ought really to be named **Backward**) and the socialist revolutionist **Labour** lied to the Moscow workers at the critical moment of the struggle, that Kerensky had taken Petrograd (which they did to break up the unanimity of the workers), were we expected to praise them for these provocatory tricks?

What follows from all this? It follows that when the socialist traitors and socialist traitors' organs begin to serve the bourgeoisie too fervently, or when they cease to differ in their line of action from the Black Hundred cadet organisers of pogroms – then they should and must be treated in the same way as their beloved teachers and benefactors. At the present moment there are many such, who, although having fought against the Tzar and landowners, now cry at the top of their voices when the workers seize the wealth of the bourgeoisie. For what they have done in the past we render them our thanks. But if at the present moment they do not in any way differ from the Black Hundred horde, then they can hardly expect us to encourage them.

But whilst the bourgeoisie and all the other enemies of the proletariat and poorest peasantry require a bridle to restrain them, the proletariat and peasantry, on the other hand, need complete freedom of speech, of association, and of the press, etc., not only in word, but in fact. Never, under any government, was there such a number of workers' and peasants' organisations as there are now in the Soviet Government. Never did any government support such a vast number of -workers' and peasants' organisations as does the Soviet Government. This is because the Soviet Government is the government of workers and peasants themselves, and it is no wonder therefore that such a government supports all other working class organisations as far as it lies in its power. We repeat, the Communists carry all this freedom into effect instead of merely proclaiming it before the world. Here is a little example: the

freedom of the workers' press. Under the pressure of the working class even the bourgeoisie might agree to a greater or smaller amount of freedom for the workers' press. But the workers have no means; all the printing works are in the hands of the capitalists. Paper is in the hands of the capitalists, who have bought up everything. The workers have the right to a free press, but they are unable to make use of it. We, Communists, on the other hand, approach the owners of printing works and of paper works, and we say to them: "the proletarian government is about to confiscate your works and declare them to be the property of the workers' and peasants' government, and to place them at the disposal of the workers"; let them now put their right to a free press into execution. Of course the capitalists will set up a howl at such proceedings, but it is the *only* way to attain real freedom of the workers' press.

Another question may be put to us: why did the bolsheviks never before speak of the complete destruction of the freedom of the bourgeois press? Why were they formerly on the side of a bourgeois democratic republic? Why did they themselves side with the Constituent Assembly without ever expressing themselves in favour of depriving the bourgeoisie of the franchise? In a word, why have they changed their attitude now in connection with this question?

The reason is very simple. The working class at that time was not yet powerful enough to storm the bourgeois fortress. It needed time to prepare, to gather strength, to enlighten the masses, to organise.

It lacked, for instance, a press of its own uninfluenced by the capitalist class. But it could not come to the capitalists and their government and demand: "close your newspapers, Messrs. Capitalists, and start newspapers for us workers." They would be laughed at; it would be ridiculous to put such demands to capitalists. It would be equivalent to expecting the latter to cut their hands off with their own knife. Such demands are only made when a position is being taken by storm. Previously there was no such time. And that is why the working class (and our party) said: "Long live freedom of the press (the whole press, the bourgeois press included)!" Or take another instance. It is evident that employers' associations, such as throw workers on the street, keep black lists, etc. These are very harmful to the working class. But the working class could not demand the suppression of employers' associations and full liberty for labour unions. To do this it was necessary first to destroy the capitalist government, and the workers were not strong enough to do that. That is why at that time our party demanded the freedom of association (not only workmen's), but unions in general.

Now times have changed. There is no question now of a lengthy preparation for the battle; we are now living in the period after the storm, in the period after the first great victory over the bourgeoisie. Now there is only one other problem before the working class: to finally and irretrievably *break up* the resistance of the bourgeoisie.

That is why the working class, acting in the name of the liberation of the whole of humanity from the atrocities and terrors of capitalism, must carry out this task to a definite end and with unswerving firmness. No indulgence for the bourgeoisie and no leniency – but complete liberty and the possibility of realising this liberty, to the working class and poorest peasants.

## Chapter 8

# Banks, the Common Property of the Workers. Nationalisation of Banks.

We have seen above that the cause of all evils in a capitalist society lies in the fact that all the means of production belong to the landowners and capitalists. We have also seen that the only way out of this is to take the means of production out of the hands of the capitalist class (whether they be individual capitalists, or trusts, or a bourgeois State), and to transfer them into the hands of the working class. This can be done and is being done, now, that the workers and peasants possess such a strong weapon as is their Workers' Soviet Government.

It is perfectly understood that the first thing to be done in this direction is to deprive capital of its most essential and most important means of control: to take the principal economic fortresses of capital. The second is to begin with that which is not only easier to take, but easier also to organise and have control and account over, and which can be arranged in the smoothest way. We already know that the task of the working class and the poor peasantry does not consist in depriving the rich of their wealth, distributing this wealth among themselves, robbing and sharing the spoils. No; it consists in constructing society on the basis of labour, working according *to a definite plan*, and organising the production and distribution of products. Hence it follows that the working class must first of all take possession of these organisations which have up till now existed only for the profits of the capitalist, and divert them to their own use, by putting them on a different footing, thus making them serve not capitalists and landowners, not speculators and sharks, but the labouring mass.

That is why our party has put forward the demand (since carried into execution) for the *nationalisation of banks*, that is to say, for the transfer of banks into the hands of the workers' and peasants' Government.

It is generally believed that the chief significance of banks lies in the fact that their vaults are packed with piles of gold and heaps of paper money and valuables, for which reason the Communists are so eager to get the banks. But in reality this is not the case.

Modern banks are not only filled with money bags. Banks, as a matter of fact, represent the *pinnacle of capitalist organisation which rules industry*. The industrial capitalists make profits uninterruptedly, and capital flows to them in a continuous stream. What does the capitalist do with the profit acquired? A part of it is spent on eating, drinking and dissipation. Another part, considerably larger, is saved for extending his business at any given moment: he can only do so when a large enough "balance" has accumulated, a sum big enough, let us say, to build a new factory or set up a new plant. Until that happens he deposits his money into the bank so as not to have "dead" capital on his hands. He deposits it and gets definite interest on it. The question now is, does this capital remain in the bank, increasing *there* of itself? Certainly not. The bank transacts business with this money. It either establishes enterprises, making solid profits, or purchases shares of existing enterprises, or shares of enterprises just being formed. The dividend it obtains on its shares are considerably higher than the sums it pays to its clients.

The difference goes to form the profit, of the bank. This difference accumulates, is again involved in transactions, and in this way the capital of the bank increases. Gradually the banks become the real heads of industrial enterprises; some enterprises are entirely owned by them, others, only partly. Experience has shown that it is enough to own thirty or forty per cent of the total shares to become practically the controller of the whole enterprise. And that is what really happens. For instance, two banks manage and direct the entire industry of America. In Germany four banks hold in their hands the whole economic life of the country. The same thing to a certain extent held good for Russia. The great majority of big enterprises in Russia were limited companies.

Russian banks, too, were the owners of a large number of shares of these enterprises, so that the limited companies were in the closest union and in complete dependence on the bankers were, in fact, under their heel. Seeing that one bank rules over many industrial enterprises, it is evident that a number of the largest banks are in reality the main

directors of industry, the centre as it were, in which the threads of various enterprises meet. That is why *confiscating the banks*, depriving private persons of control over banks, and transferring them into the hands of the workers' and peasants' government, in a word, the nationalisation of banks, should become a question of paramount importance to the working class. In response to this, the bourgeoisie, together with its press and the rest of its suite, have, of course, raised the cry of alarm: "the bolsheviks are robbers! The bolsheviks are thieves! Do not allow them to plunder the national wealth and the national savings!" But the reason for all this clamour is self-evident: the bourgeoisie felt that the nationalisation of banks was a transfer to the working class of the main fortress of capitalistic society – and therefore the first decisive step towards the destruction of their gain and exploitation. Once the proletariat has laid its hand on the banks, that means that it has already taken into its hands to a great extent the *reins of industry*.

On the other hand, it is not hard to see that without the nationalisation of banks it would have been impossible to weaken the power of the capitalist in works and factories. The modern factory depends on the bank; either the bank simply owns the whole factory or a part of its shares. In some cases it allows the factory credit in one form or another. Let us now suppose that the workmen of a certain factory have taken everything under their own control. If the bank of that factory is a private concern belonging to the bourgeoisie, the whole factory must stop work: it will simply be informed by the bank that there will be no further credit. And that is equivalent to cutting off a fortress from supplies. Under such conditions the workers would inevitably have to surrender and bow the knee to the master. That means that, in nationalising the banks, the Soviet Government simultaneously acquires the power of directing and managing finance, and various bonds and certificates which serve as substitutes for money; and thereby the bank, instead of hindering the transfer of industry into the hands of the working class, on the contrary lends its assistance in such transfer. The power that in the hands of the bankers was directed against the *workers*, now under these new circumstances becomes a power helping the working class, and directed against the *capitalists*.

The next task consists in uniting the different and formerly private banks into one national bank, to unite the work of the banks or, as it is called, to *centralise the banking business*. In that case the transfer of industry into the hands of the working class would convert the national bank into the principal counting-house; an institution affecting mutual "payments" between different enterprises and separate branches of production. Let us suppose that the coal, steel, and iron industries depended on the central bank. Each one of these has to utilise the products of the others; the steel foundries must receive their coal from the coal mines, the steel works must get their steel from the foundries, and so on. It is evident that since all the enterprises depend entirely upon the bank, all kinds of "payments" can be settled by the mere transfer of accounts; banks become simply counting houses for central book-keeping, where the relations between the various sections of industry are made clear. In accordance with these relationships the bank supports ("finances") industry, supporting it with financial supplies.

Ultimately, should we be successful in duly organising the whole business (and that is what our party and the Soviet Government, at the head of which our party stands, is striving for) it would result in the following state of things: they are united by means of central national banks, at which the threads of the separate enterprises meet, grouped according to their respective specialities. The bank keeps an exact account of these enterprises and of all transactions effected between them which mutually counterbalance as one branch of production supplies products for another. In the bank, the book-keeping department of communal production, the general position of production is in this manner neglected. The centralised and nationalised banking business (that is to say, the united banking business that is in the hands of the workers' and peasants' State) is converted into a *communal book-keeping department of the socialist co-operative production*.

## Chapter 9

# Industry to Belong to the Working Class

### (Nationalisation of Industry)

Although the most important step towards obtaining the means of production from the hands of exploiters is, as we have seen above, the proletarian nationalisation of banks, nevertheless, if in industry, in factories and works, the power of capitalists will still be maintained, no very desirable results would have been achieved. These enterprises would draw such sums as they required from the bank, and the capitalists would calmly go on exploiting their workers, and would even manage to beg for State subsidies to be spent on all kinds of things. And therefore a transition to a Communist order, which is unattainable without the nationalisation of banks, is just as unattainable without the proletarian nationalisation of all large industrial enterprises.

In, this direction, too, the working class and our party are taking such steps to enable us not only to break with the old, taking the reins of production out of the hands of capitalists, but to create a new standard of relations. That is why the nationalisation of industry must begin with large enterprises, namely, in the first place with the so-called syndicates.

What is syndicated industry (industries united in syndicates)? Syndicates are huge industrial combines. When capitalist owners of various enterprises see that it is not worth their while to compete for each others clients, and that it is far more profitable to form a close union for the purpose of jointly fleecing the public, they organise syndicates or still closer combines of manufacturers, namely – trusts. When promoters are not united in such unions, each one tries to bring down the prices of his rival: each one wishes to w r in over his competitor's client, and this can only be done if he sells goods cheaper, thus ultimately ruining his rival, who is unable to withstand the competition. This sort of struggle between the rich manufacturers invariably leads to the ruin of the smaller man: the big sharks of capitalism and the richest manufacturers come out victorious. Let us now suppose that in some one branch of industry (say the metallurgic) three or four big firms remain. If one of them is stronger it carries on the struggle until the rest are ruined. But supposing that their powers are approximately the same, then it is evident that a mutual struggle is fruitless: it will result in the exhaustion of all the rivals to an equal extent. In such cases we generally see an attempt to come to an understanding; they organise a union of these enterprises and make an agreement not to sell their goods below a fixed price; they distribute the orders among themselves, or appoint one firm to do business in one part of the country and another firm in another; in a word, they amicably divide the market between themselves. As the firms united into a syndicate usually supply much more than half the products required for a given area, that means that the syndicate dominates over the market, and that the directors of the syndicates can fix very high prices and fleece their buyers like sheep. But once they join a union it is natural that they are compelled to form a joint board of management for the formerly separate enterprises and to keep a strict account of all the goods produced, to organise the distribution of orders, in a word, they are compelled to organise production. Not for the people, not for the sake of the buyer's advantage. Oh, no! Only for their own profits and gains, and for the sake of over-charging the worker and fleecing the buyer: that is the real purpose for which capitalists form their unions.

It has now been made clear why the working class must first of all proceed to nationalise those branches of production which are syndicated. It is because such branches have ah been organised by the capitalists, and such production. when organised by capitalists, is easiest to deal with. It is, of course, necessary somewhat to modify the capitalist organisations, ridding them of the most obdurate enemies of the working class; we must strengthen the position of the workers in such a way that everything should be subjected to the workers; and, in the process, abolish certain things altogether. Even a child can understand why such companies are easiest to conquer. Here the same thing is repeated as in the case of Government railroads; being organised by a bourgeois Government, their management was, for that very reason, worked on a principle of *centralisation*, and it was easier for the Workers'

Government to take them into its own hands.

In Western Europe (especially in Germany) and in the United States of America, practically the whole of production during the time of the war has fallen into the hands of the plundering bourgeois Government. The bourgeoisie decided that it would never attain a victory unless the war was conducted in accordance with the latest dictates of science. And modern warfare demands not only expenditure of money, but necessitates all production to be organised for the purpose of the war, a strict account being registered of everything, so that there be no waste and all things be correctly distributed. All this is possible when there is a central united management. It is needless to say that production is not organised for the benefit of the working class, but only for the purpose of conducting the war and of affording the bourgeoisie still more chances of enriching themselves. No wonder, then, that at the head of this system of penal servitude there stand generals, bankers, and the greatest exploiters. Nor is it surprising that the working class in those countries are oppressed and turned into white slaves or serfs. But, on the other hand, if the workers there succeed in shattering the machinery of the bourgeois State, it will be quite easy for them to take possession of the means of production and arrange it on a new plan; they will have to drive the generals and bankers out, and put their own men everywhere; but they will be able to *use* that apparatus for checking and control that has been created for them by the vultures of capitalism. That is why it is infinitely harder for the Western European workers to *begin* destroying the most powerful of bourgeois States, but it will be also much easier to conclude the task, having at their disposal the means of production organised by the bourgeoisie.

The Russian bourgeoisie, seeing that its power was not very secure, and that the proletariat was near a victory, was afraid to start decisively along the road traced by the Western European bourgeoisie. It understood that, together with the Government power, organised production would fall into the hands of the working class. And therefore the Russian bourgeoisie not only did not care to improve its organisation, but, on the contrary, strove to disorganise, and at the time of Kerensky, had recourse to sabotage as a means of ruining production.

However, it is to be noted that, even prior to the war, in Russia, partly owing to foreign capital, the most important spheres of industry were already syndicated. This especially applies to the so-called heavy branches of industry (coal mining, metallurgic industry, etc.). It is this heavy industry that must be nationalised first (and this is already being done: production in the Ural district, for instance, being practically entirely nationalised). After that, *the whole of big production* should be nationalised. Together with the transfer of big industry into the hands of the Workers' Government, the less important industries will also become dependent on the Government, because very many lesser industries depended to a great extent on the greater ones even before any nationalisation took place. Sometimes these smaller firms are no more than branches of larger concerns, depending on them for orders. In other cases they supply their produce to the larger concerns; in others they depend on them for supplies of raw material; sometimes they depend on the banks, and so on. Together with the nationalisation of banks and of large industry, they immediately become dependent in some way or other upon nationalised production. Of course, there will still remain a number of small owners and proprietors of small home industries, etc. There are a great number of such in Russia. But, nevertheless, the *basis* of our industry is not the above named workshops, but the large-scale industry, and the nationalisation by the Workers' Government of this kind of production deals capitalism an irreparable blow. The banks and large scale industry are the two main fortresses of capitalism. Their expropriation, that is to say, their seizure by the working class and the Workers' Government, marks the end of capitalism and the beginning of Socialism. The means of production, that principal basis of human existence, is thereby taken out of the hands of a small number of exploiters and transferred into the hands of the working class and the Workers' and Peasants' Government.

The Mensheviks and the Right Wing Socialist Revolutionaries, who do not wish to deviate one step from capitalism, and who are going hand in hand with the bourgeoisie, are opposed to any kind of nationalisation by the Soviet Government. That is because they are fully aware, as well as the bourgeoisie, that by nationalisation a severe blow is dealt into the very heart of the capitalist order, so dear to them. They deliberately deceive the workers with tales of our "immaturity" for Socialism, of our industry being in a backward state, of it being quite impossible to organise, and so on.

We have already seen that this is not the case at all. The backwardness of Russia is not in the small number of large enterprises – on the contrary, we have quite a number of such. Its backwardness consists in the fact that the *whole* of our industry occupies too little place in comparison with the vast areas of our rural districts. But in spite of this we must not belittle the importance of our industry, for it is a significant fact that the working class is carrying all the vital elements of the Revolution along with it.

There is another curious circumstance to be noted. All the time when the Government was in the hands of the bourgeoisie, Mensheviks and Right Wing Socialist Revolutionaries, these latter drew up a programme of Government regulation of industry. They did not then lament over the backwardness of our country. At that time they considered it possible to organise industry. What is the reason for such change in opinion? It is simple enough. The Mensheviks and Right Wing Socialist Revolutionaries hold it necessary for the *bourgeois* State to organise production (in Western



Europe this would be agreed to by Wilhelm, George and President Wilson); the party of the Communists, on the contrary, wants production to be organised by a *proletarian* Government. The thing is indeed simplicity itself. It is the same story all over again. The Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries want to revert to capitalism; the Communists are going ahead to Socialism and Communism, and the most important step on the road towards Communism they consider to be the nationalisation of banks and the nationalisation of large-scale production.

## Chapter 10

# Communal Cultivation of Public Land

The October Revolution accomplished that for which the Russian peasants had been striving during many centuries. It deprived the landowners of the land and transferred it into the hands of the peasants. The question now is how to allot this land. And here, too, we Communists must take up the same position as we did regarding the question of arranging industrial production. Unlike a factory, land can, of course, be divided. But what would be the result of dividing up land into private allotments amongst individual peasants? The result would be that the man who had managed to save up a little money, being stronger and richer, would soon become a “personality” and turn into a shark, a land-grabber or a usurer; then he would aim still higher and begin buying up the land of those who were getting poorer. Before long the village would be again divided into big landowners and poor peasants, the latter having no alternative but to go to town in search of work or hire himself out to the rich landowner.

These new landowners would not, it is true, belong to the gentry, being only rich peasants, but the difference is after all a small one. The exploiting peasant-landowner is a real vampire; he will sweat the poor worker even harder than the representative of the degenerating, impoverished, and thoroughly incapable nobility.

This shows us that the plan of dividing or sharing the land offers us no way out of the dilemma. The only solution is in a communal *national* holding of land; in land being declared the common property of the labourers. The Soviet Government has made a law of socialisation of land; the land has in fact been taken from the landowners, and it has become the common property of the toiling people.

But that is not enough. We must aim at such an arrangement as would ensure the land being not only owned in common, but also be *cultivated* in common. If that is not done, then no matter what you proclaim of whatever laws you publish, the result will be most unsatisfactory. One man will fuss about his allotment, another on his, and if they continue to live apart without mutual aid and common work, they will gradually come to look upon the land as their private property, and no laws from above would be of any use. *Common cultivation* of the soil is what should be aimed at.

In agriculture, just as in industry, it is easiest to carry on production on a large scale. With large-scale production it is possible to use good agricultural machines effecting a saving of all kinds of material, to arrange the work according to one single plan, to put every workman to the most suitable job, and to keep a strict account of everything, thus preventing undue waste of either materials or labour-power. Our task, therefore, does not at all consist in making every peasant a manager of his own small allotment, but in making the poorer peasants join a common scheme of work on the largest possible scale.

How is this to be done? This can and must be done in two ways: first, *co-operative cultivation of what were formerly big estates*; and secondly, *by organising agricultural labour communes*.

On the estate's of former landowners where the land was not leased to the peasants as a whole, and where there existed the private direction of the landlord, the estate was, of course, ever so much better managed than the peasants'. The evil was that the entire profits fell into the hands of the landowners, who oppressed the peasants. And here again there is one thing clear to the Communists: just as there is no sense whatever in the factory workers plundering the factory plant, to share them between themselves, in ruining the factory, so would it be equally senseless for the peasants to act in the same manner on the land. On the big private estates there is often much that is valuable: horses, cattle, different kinds of implements, stocks of seeds, reaping and other kinds of agricultural machines, and so on. In other estates, again, there are dairies, cheese churns, quite large works in fact. And it would be senseless to plunder all that and drag it away to the different cottages. The village exploiters would be interested in that, knowing that sooner or later all these things would fall into their hands again, as they would buy up the poor men's shares.

The exploiting country shark clearly understands that such a *sharing* will in the end be to his “benefit.” But the

interests of the poorest peasantry, of the proletariat, and of all those who eked out a poor living independently by selling their labour- power, lie in quite another direction. For the poorest peasants it is far more profitable to deal with “the large estates in just the same way as the workers are dealing with the factories,” that is, to take them under their control and management, to cultivate the former landowner’s estates in common, and not plundering and carrying off the machines and plant, but using jointly such machines and plant that formerly belonged to the landowners and have now become the property of the labourers. They could call to their aid agricultural experts, competent men, to help them cultivate the land not in a casual way, but properly, so that it should yield not less than when it belonged to the landlord, but much more. It is not difficult to seize the land; neither did it prove difficult to seize private estates. It had to be done. In spite of all that the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks did to dissuade the peasants (pointing out the lawlessness of such an action, and saying that the whole thing would be useless and result only in bloodshed, and so on), the peasants, in spite of every thing, took the land, and the Soviet Government helped them to do it. It is a far harder task for the workers to retain the land, defending it from the exploiting village sharks whose eyes are already lighting up with greed at the prospect of seizing it. At this point the poorest peasants should remember that they must carefully guard the safety of communal property. For now the wealth that was formerly the landowner’s has become the property of the whole community. It should be improved for the benefit of all the workers. Things should be organised in such a manner that the delegates of the poorest peasantry and of the labourers and those of the regional Soviets and their land departments, should have charge of everything, so as not to allow any waste, and should lend their assistance in the joint cultivation of the land. The more ordered the joint production in such estates will be, the better it will be for the workers. All this means that the land will yield better crops, the village exploiters will be foiled, and the peasant will be trained in co-operative production, the latter a most important principle of Communism.

But it is not enough to preserve the estates of the former landowners and cultivate them on new principles. We must strive to organise *large joint agricultural labour communes* by uniting separate allotments. For now the Government is in the hands of the workers and peasants. That means that this Government will, as far as it lies within its power, assist the peasants in any useful undertaking. It is only necessary for the poorest peasants and semi-proletariat, as well as the late farm hands, to manifest greater activity, more personal initiative. The weak, poverty-stricken peasants, working each one by himself, can achieve nothing; they will hardly be able to exist. But they will attain a great deal once they begin to unite their allotments, jointly purchasing machinery with the aid of the town workers, and in this manner cultivating the land in common, on a basis of common interests.

The town Soviets and economic organisations of the workers will assist such labour agricultural communes, supplying them with iron and manufactured goods, and they will help them by recommending land experts and competent men. And thus gradually the once poor peasant, who has never seen anything beyond his native town, will begin to be transformed into a comrade, who, hand in hand with others, will march along the road of communal labour.

It has now been made clear that to organise matters in this direction we must have a solid organisation of the poorest elements of the peasantry. This organisation must accomplish two principle tasks; the first is the struggle with the country sharks, usurers, former inn-keepers, in a word, with the former bourgeoisie; the second is the organisation of agricultural production and the control over the distribution of land, the organisation of labour communes and the management of the estates of former landowners with a view to their best possible utilisation; in other words, they must set before themselves the great task of a new reconstruction of land. The poorest peasantry should form such organisations in the shape of regional Soviets, and should introduce into them special departments such as, for instance, a food supply department, a land department, and others. The land departments of the peasants’ Soviets should form the chief support of the poorest elements of the peasantry in connection with the land question. To arrange matters on a firmer basis it would be best to construct these Soviet organisations in such a way that the local and neighbouring factory workers should also have their representatives. Workmen are a more experienced set of people than the peasants, they are used to joint business organisations, and are also more experienced in the struggle against the bourgeoisie. The factory workers will always help the village poor against the rich, and therefore the former will ever find in them their staunchest allies.

The village poor should not allow themselves to be duped. They have fought and struggled for the land, and they have finally won it from the landlords. They must see that they do not lose it again. They must see that they do not let it slip through their fingers. The danger is there if they are going to work in the direction of sub-dividing the land and sharing it out into private lots. The danger will vanish if the rural poor, together with the working class, go along the road of *joint* production on as large a scale as possible. Then we shall all proceed at top speed towards Communism.

## Chapter 11

# Workers' Management of Production

Just as in connection with the land, the leading part in the management in the various localities is gradually transferred to the organisations of the poorest peasantry and the different peasant Soviets and their departments, so is industrial management gradually being transferred (which is exactly what our party expects) into the hands of the workers' and peasants' government.

Prior to the October revolution and in the period immediately following upon it, the working class and our party put forward the demand for a *workers' control*, that is to say, for workers' supervision over factories and works to prevent the capitalists from making secret reserves of fuel and raw materials, to see that they did not cheat or speculate, damage goods or dismiss workers unjustly. A workers' *supervision* was instituted over production, as well as over the sale and purchase of products, raw materials, their storage, and the financing of enterprises. However, a mere supervision proved inefficient. Especially did this prove insufficient when the *nationalisation* of production took place and the various privileges of the capitalists were destroyed, and when enterprises and whole branches of industry were transferred into the hands of the workers' and peasants' government. It is easy to see that a mere *supervision* is quite inefficient, and that what is required is not only a workers' control but *workers' management* of industry; worker' organisations, works' and factories' committees, trade unions, economic branches of the Soviets, of workers' deputies, and finally organs of the Workers' and Peasants' Government (such as special committees, Soviets of public economy, and so on). These are the organisations that should not only supervise but should also *manage*. There is another thing that attention should be drawn to here.

Some of the workers who are not sufficiently imbued with the class-spirit argue as follows: we are here to take our factory into our own hands, and there is an end to the matter. Before, the factory was the property of, say, Mr. Smith; now it is the property of the workers. Such a point of view is, of course, wrong, and closely resembles dividing. Indeed, if a state of affairs came about in which every factory belongs to the workers of *only that particular factory*, the result would be a competition between factories: one cloth factory would strive to gain more than another, they would strive to win over each others customers; the workers of one factory would be ruined whilst those of another would prosper; these latter would employ the workers of the ruined factory, and, in a word, we have again the old familiar picture; just as in the case of the sharing out capitalism would soon revive.

How are we to fight against it? It is evident that we must i build up such an order of workers' management of enterprises which would train the workers in the idea that every factory is the property not only of the workers of *that* particular factory, but of *the whole working people*. This can be attained in the following way. Every factory and works should have a board of management composed of *workers* in such a way that the majority of members should belong not to that factory in question, but should consist of workers delegated by trade unions of the special branch of industry, by the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, and finally by the local Soviet of Public Economy. If the board is composed of workers and of employees (the workers must be in the majority, as they are more reliable adherents to Communism), and if the majority of workers should belong to other factories, then the factory will be managed in the manner required for furthering the interests of *all* workers as a class.

Every worker understands that works and factories cannot do without book-keepers, mechanics, engineers, etc. Therefore another task of the working class lies in enlisting these into their service. So far the working class could not produce such specialists from their own midst (but they will be able to do so when plans of general education will have been carried out successfully, and a special higher education will have become accessible to everybody), until that time, of course, we shall have, willy-nilly, to pay high wages to ordinary specialists. Let them now serve the working class just as they formerly did the bourgeoisie. Formerly they wore under the control and supervision of the bourgeoisie; now they will have to be under the supervision and control of the workers and employees.

To ensure a smooth running of the wheels of industry it is indispensable, as we have already explained, to have

one general plan. It is not enough for every large factory to have its own board of management consisting of workers. There are many factories and many branches of production; they are all bound to one another, all inter-dependent: if the coal mine yields little coal the result will be that factories and railroads will be brought to a standstill; if there is no petrol, navigation is impeded; if no cotton, there will be no work to do for the textile factories. It is consequently necessary to form such an organisation which should embrace all production, should be based on a general plan, and be united with workers' boards of management of other works and factories; should keep an exact account of all requirements and reserves, not only of one town or of one factory, but for the whole country. The necessity for such a general plan is especially evident in the case of railroads. Any child can understand that the disorganisation in the working of railroads causes incredible calamities; in Siberia, for instance, there is a super-abundance of bread, whilst Petrograd is on the verge of famine. Why is this ? Because the bread is beyond the reach of the inhabitants of Petrograd, as it is impossible to transport it. To ensure regular traffic it is necessary that everything be strictly registered and correctly distributed. And this is only possible under one uniform plan. Let us imagine that one mile of the railroad is under one management, another is under a different one, and a third under a third, and so on, all working independently of each other. An indescribable muddle would be the result. Such a muddle could be avoided only by conducting the railway through a single centralised management. Hence the necessity arises for such workers' organs and labour organisations as would unite entire branches of production to each other, forming one complete whole, and which would limit the work done in different parts of the country, as, for instance, Siberia and the Ural districts, the northern provinces, the centre, and so on. Such organs are in the course of construction: they are the district and regional Soviets of Public Economy, special committees uniting whole, branches of production or commerce (as, for instance, Centro-textile, Centro-sugar, and so on), and over all the rest we have, as a central organisation, the Supreme Council (Soviet) of Public Economy. All these organisations are connected with the Soviets of the workers' deputies and work in unison with the Soviet Government. Their staff is mainly composed of representatives of *workers' organisations*, and they are supported by trade unions, works' and factories' committees, unions of employees, and so on.

In this way gradually a *workers' management* of industry is being formed from the top of the ladder to the bottom. In the respective localities we have works' and factories' committees and the workers' board of management, and above those the region and district committees, and Soviets of Public Economy, and at the head of all these organisations we have the Supreme Council of Public Economy. The task of the working class now lies in enlarging and strengthening by all possible means the workers' management of industry, educating the vast masses of the people in this direction. The proletariat taking production into his own hands, not as the property of separate individuals or groups, but as the property of the whole working class, should concern itself with supporting the central and district workers' organisations by thousands of branches, by and at the various works and -factories. If the higher organs of workers' boards of management in the localities of production are not supported by the local ones, they will hover, as it were, in mid air, and become transformed into bureaucratic, institutions devoid of any live revolutionary spirit. But, on the other hand, they will be enabled to cope with the terrible existing disorganisation if they are supported on all sides by the vital forces of the workers in every locality, and every command of the workers' central organisation will be responded to and executed not as a matter of form, but as a matter of duty by the workers' organisations and by the working masses in their respective localities. The more the masses discuss matters for themselves, the more keen their interest in the election of their boards, the more work carried on at the works and factories, the greater the part they take in the business of doing away with all kinds of disorder and dishonesty – the sooner will the working class possess itself not only in word but in deed of the whole industrial production, thus realising not merely a political, but even an *economic dictatorship of the working class*, that is to say, the working class will become the actual master not only of the army, the courts of justice, schools and other departments, but it will also be at the head of the management of *production*. Only then will the might of capital be completely rooted out, and the possibility for capital ever again to crush the working class under its heel be completely destroyed.

## Chapter 12

# Bread – Only for the Workers. Compulsory Labour Service for the Rich

A transition to the communal order means a transition to an order where there will be no class difference between people, and where all will be *communal workers* and never hired labourers. It is necessary to pass immediately on to the organisation of such an order. And one of the first steps in this direction on a parallel with a proletarian nationalisation of banks and of industry, is the introduction of *labour service for the rich*.

There are at present many people who do nothing, create nothing, but consume that which others have made. And more than that, there are people who not only do no work, but whose whole activity is directed at hindering and interfering with the work of the Soviet Government and the working class. The workers saw with their own eyes the instance of the sabotage attempted by the Russian intellectuals, teachers, engineers, doctors and others of the “learned professions.” It would be superfluous to mention the bigger game such as directors of factories and banks, the late high officials, etc. They all made efforts to disorganise and destroy at the root the work of the proletariat and the Soviet Government. The task of the proletariat consists in *compelling* these bourgeoisie, former landowners, and numerous intellectuals of the well-to-do classes to *work* for the common good. How is this to be done? By means of introducing *labour record books* and *labour service*. Every one of the above-named class should receive a special book in which an account is kept of his work, that is to say, of his compulsory service. Fixed entries in his book entitle him to buy or receive certain food products, bread in the first place. Anyone who refuses to work, supposing he sabotages (an ex-official, a former manufacturer or landowner who cannot possibly accustom himself to the idea of the loss of land on which he has lived for years and has become a frenzied enemy of the workers), if such an individual refuses to work there is no corresponding entry in his book. He goes to the-store, but is told, “There is nothing for you. Please to show an entry confirming your work.”

Under such a system the mass of idlers who fill the Nevsky Prospect in Petrograd and the main streets of other big towns, will have to set to work against their will. It is perfectly understood that the carrying into execution of this kind of labour service will be hindered by many obstacles. The upper and upper-middle classes will, on the other hand, make every endeavour to evade this compulsory service, and on the other hand, try by every means within their power to hinder such an order. To arrange matters so that certain food products should be obtained only on producing a corresponding entry in the labour book, and that such products should not be distributed in any other way, is not an easy matter. The rich who possess money (and money means merely counters for obtaining products) have also a thousand possibilities of deceiving the Soviet Government and duping the workers and poorest peasantry. These possibilities must be destroyed by a well-regulated organisation for supplying products.

Of course labour service for the rich should only be a transitory stage towards *general labour service*. The latter is necessary not only because the productiveness of our trade and agriculture can be increased by enlisting the service of all members of society fit for work, but also because a strict *account* of labour power and a proper distribution of such over the various branches of production and the different undertakings is necessary. Just as in war time it is necessary, on the one hand, to mobilise all the forces, and on the other to keep account of and properly organise them, so in the *war with economic disorganisation* it is necessary to draw all the useful sections of the population into the work, register and organise them into one great army of labour with a labour discipline and a proper understanding of its duties.

At the present moment in Russia, in consequence of the economic disorganisation and shortage of raw material which has been intensified by the occupation of South Russia and Ukraine by the forces of German Imperialism, there is a considerable amount of unemployment. As a result we are faced with the following situation: we know that we can only win through by the aid of human labour power, from the fact that only labour can increase the

productivity of our industry and agriculture; and of this human labour power we have plenty. But in spite of that there is no opportunity to apply this labour power. There is already a large amount of unemployment as a result of the shortage of fuel and raw materials. Where then shall we place these people whom the Workers' and Peasants' Government intends to compel to work? It is true that one of the most important questions is the organisation of public works and construction of such things of supreme social importance as railways, grain elevators, and the opening of new mines. But it is evident that this work could not at once absorb the large surplus of labour that exists.

Thus it will be necessary *from the very first* to limit ourselves to *registering the working hands*, noting their respective *compulsory service* only at the request of the Soviet Government, or working class bodies superintending the management of production. Let us illustrate this by an example. Supposing that for surveying new mines in Siberia engineering specialists are required. The metallurgic department of the Soviet of Public Economy puts forward a demand for such. The department for registering labour power examines its lists and finds the people who correspond to the kind required, and these are then *obliged to go* where the above-mentioned departments choose to send them.

Naturally, as the organisation of production becomes more ordered, and the demand for labour increases, so will compulsory service be carried into effect; that is to say, all persons capable of work will be compelled to do their share of work.

Compulsory labour service in itself is not a new idea. At the present moment, in practically all the warring countries, the Imperialist Governments have introduced labour service for their population (in the first instance, of course, for the oppressed classes). But the labour service introduced in Western Europe is as far removed from that which ought to be introduced by us as is heaven from earth. In the Imperialist States such service means the complete *subjugation* of the working class, its complete enslavement to financial capital and the plundering Government. And why is that? Simply because the workers do not govern *themselves* but are governed by generals, bankers and big syndicalists and bourgeois politicians. The worker there is a mere pawn in their hands. He is a serf whom his master can dispose of as he pleases. No wonder that compulsory service, in the West at the present time means a new contribution, a new *feudal* levy, the institution of a new system of military *hard labour*. It is introduced there for the purpose of enabling the capitalists, whose pockets are being filled by the labour of the workers, to carry on an interminable plundering war.

Our workers *themselves* must, through their own organisations, introduce and carry out compulsory labour-service on the basis of *self-government* by the workers. There is no bourgeoisie over them here. On the contrary, the workers are now placed over the bourgeoisie. Controlling, accounting, and distributing labour power is now the concern of the *workers' organisations*, and as compulsory labour service will affect the rural districts, it will become the concern of the peasant Soviets, which will stand over the village bourgeoisie, subjugating it to their rule. All the organs dealing with labour will be purely workers' organs. This is quite natural: if the administration of industry is to become a workers' administration, the management of labour must also be in the hands of the workers, for that is only part of the management or administration of production.

The working class, which wishes to take the lead in the economic life of the country (and which will do so in spite of all obstacles), the class that is becoming master of all the wealth, is confronted with this main question – the *organisation of production*. The organisation of production demands in its turn the solution of two principal problems: the organisation of the means of production (accounting, controlling, and correct distribution of fuel, raw material, machinery, instruments, seeds, etc.), and the organisation of labour (accounting, controlling and correct distribution of labour power). In order to utilise, thoroughly all the forces of society, compulsory labour service, which will sooner or later be introduced by the working is indispensable. Idlers must vanish; only useful social workers will remain.

## Chapter 13

# A Systematic Distribution of Products. The Abolition of Trade, Profits, and Speculation. Co-operative Communes

It is impossible to take possession of production properly without taking control of the distribution of products. When products are wrongly distributed there can be no proper production. Supposing that the largest branches of industry are nationalised. As we have seen above, one branch of production works for another. To make production systematic it is necessary that each branch should be supplied with as much material as it requires; one enterprise getting more, another less. That means that each product should be distributed regularly, according to plan, in correspondence with the demands of the branches in question. The various organs of *supply*, that is to say, such working organisations as deal with distribution of products, must be in direct communication with the organs dealing with its production. Only then can the work of production run smoothly.

But there are some products that are directly used by the consumer. Such as bread, for instance, many food products, the greater part of clothing materials, many india rubber products (no factory buys goloshes, which enter into direct use of the consumer), and so on. Here an equally strict account and a just distribution of these products among the *population* is necessary. And such a just distribution is absolutely impossible without a definite plan being carried into execution. First, the quantity of goods must be registered, then the demand for them, and after that the products must be distributed according to these calculations. The best instance of the necessity of an organised plan is the food question, the question of bread. At present the bourgeoisie, the village sweaters, the Right Social Revolutionaries, the Mensheviks, the well-to-do land grabbing peasants, have all raised a hue and cry about repealing the bread monopoly, and that speculators, big and small, the wholesale dealers and myesochinki <sup>1</sup> should be allowed to run their trade as they like. It is easy to understand why the tradesmen are interested in the repeal of the bread monopoly; in some way or another this monopoly hinders them from fleecing the consumer. On the other hand, it is quite clear that the present state of things is absurd: the rich calmly go on eating white bread, buying it in smuggler fashion; that they have black bread in plenty there is no question. They just pay considerably more and get everything they want. Who helps them in this? The speculators, of course. What they are anxious about is not to feed the population, but to grab a little more money, to stuff a little more, into their pockets, and it is, of course, the rich, not the poor, that can give more. That is why the speculators bring bread not to those localities where it is most needed, but to where they get paid most. And, so far, it has not been possible to put an end to this. Hence it is clear that to organise a systematic distribution of bread, the bread monopoly must be left intact, as well as the food committees and the hoards of food, and further, this monopoly must be carried out in the strictest manner, speculators must be dealt with without mercy, private traders must be made to understand that they dare not make money out of a national calamity, disturbing the general plan. The trouble at the present time is in the fact that the bread monopoly is imperfectly carried out, while contraband private trading is thriving, and not in the fact that there is a monopoly. And that, at a time when there is so little bread, when the Germans have occupied the richest provinces; at a time when in many places grain stored for seeds has been eaten up, when the fields remain uncultivated and people are *starving!* Every piece of bread is precious, every pound of flour and grain is priceless. And just for this very reason everything must be strictly registered, so that not a crumb be wasted, and that all the bread be distributed evenly, and that the rich should not be privileged in any way. This, we repeat, can be done

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<sup>1</sup>The term “myesochnik” comes from a Russian word which means a sack, and is applied to petty food speculators who carry flour, bread, etc., from the country into the towns in sacks.



and will be attained if the workers only set to work promptly, if they aid the working organisers in their task, if they help to catch speculators and cheats.

Unfortunately, there are quite a number of people not filled with class spirit, who make purchases at their own risk independently of the working organisations, thereby also increasing the disorganisation of the general plan. Each one thinks to himself: "No matter what you say, I can mind my own business best" – and off he goes to buy bread. Later on, conflicts are apt to arise on the way, on account of this very bread, and then he complains: "They don't give you a chance to look after yourself." As a matter of fact the whole affair looks somewhat like this: let us imagine a train going, packed full; some passengers are standing in the corridors, others lying on the floors in a word there is not enough room to drop a pin. Then all of a sudden one man smells something burning, raises a cry of "fire," and dashes like mad towards the door, pushing people aside. The people, panic stricken, try to break open the door, a wild scuffle ensues, they bite and hit each other, break one another's ribs, trample children underfoot. The result is – dozens of killed, wounded, maimed. Is that right? It might all have been quite different. If reasonable people had been found to reassure the crowd, to calm it, everyone would have walked out in *order* without a *scratch*! Why did everything happen in the way it did? Because each one thought: he will act for himself, the others are "no concern of mine." But in the end it is he who gets his neck broken first.

The very same thing takes place with those who buy bread independently, infringing the regulations of the workers' food organisation. Each one thinks that he will make things easier for himself. But what is the result? Every such purchase upsets the systematic registering of the stock in hand: owing to these purchases the regular delivery of bread becomes impossible. One locality, for instance, where there is absolute starvation, must have bread delivered at the expense of another, where things are comparatively better. But, instead, some people from the latter locality buy up all the bread and take it with them. The former locality is thus left to starve to death. What follows? As the organised *public* purchases have become disorganised there appears on the scene the marauding speculator. He at once begins to try his hand at private purchases. In this manner the unintelligent poor, lacking in class consciousness, not understanding things themselves, aid and abet the vampire speculator, whose real place is on the gallows. Now we can understand why these speculating gentry exploit the natural dissatisfaction of the hungry against the Soviet Government, and why the greatest scoundrels and sweaters often stand at the head of risings against the Soviets in small provincial towns. Workers should understand once and for all that salvation is not to be attained by a return to the *old* order, but by ways which lead forward towards the destruction of speculation towards the annihilation of private trade, towards the social distribution of products by the workers' organisations.

The same holds good concerning a whole series of other products. The working class ought not to suffer in order that the rich may get everything for extra prices, but, on the contrary, must put an end to the profiteering speculators who, like the hungry ravens, come flocking from all directions. A just, regulated distribution of products, on the basis of registering the demands and reserves, is one of the fundamental tasks confronting the working class. What does this mean? It means the *nationalisation of trading*, that is, in other words, the *abolition of trading*, for the transition to social distribution cannot exist side by side with dealers and agents who live like parasites and completely upset the work of supply. Not back to "free private trading," that is to say, to "free" robbery, but towards an exact, regulated distribution of products by workers' organisations this should be the watchword of the intelligent workers.

In order to execute this plan more successfully a compulsory union of the whole population into *co-operative communes* must be aimed at. Only then can products be justly distributed, when the population that is to get them is united and organised into large groups, whose demands can be exactly estimated. If the population, instead of being united and organised, is scattered, it becomes extremely difficult to carry out this distribution in a more or less orderly way; it is difficult to calculate how much of each article is needed, what and how much is to be delivered, and through what agency the distribution is to be effected. Let us imagine that the population is united into co-operative communes according to their parishes. Every town or parish, say, is united into one co-operation which is in its turn united with the house committees. Then a given product is first distributed to such communes, and these, having calculated beforehand what product and of what quality they require, they distribute it through their agents, amongst the different consumers.

In uniting the population into such co-operative communes the already existing *co-operative societies* will be of great importance. The wider the sphere of work of the co-operatives, the wider the circle of the population included, the more organised will the distribution of products become, and the more frequently will these co-operatives be changed into organs of *supply for the whole population*. Compulsory communes surround already existing co-operatives; such, in all probability, will be the most convenient form of the organisation of distribution, by the aid of which it will be ultimately possible to supplant trade and do away once and for ever with *private profit*.

To make the task of a regular distribution of products still easier, we must aim at changing our private system of *domestic economy* into a social one. At present every family has its own kitchen, every family, independently of others, buys provisions, dooming woman to slavery, turning her into an eternal cook who sees nothing from dawn till night except kitchen utensils, brushes, dusters, and all kinds of refuse. An immense amount of labour is absolutely

wasted. If we united and organised housekeeping, beginning with the supply and preparation of food (by means of joint purchase of provisions, joint cooking, construction of large model restaurants, etc.), it would be much easier to keep an account of the demands of various households, and besides the saving of money thus effected, the regular general distribution would be greatly assisted.

One of the most vital questions for the consumer, and a very painful one for the town labourers, is the *housing question*. The poor are here mercilessly exploited. And on the other hand landlords used to make heaps, of money on the business. The expropriation of this kind of property, a transfer of houses and of various kinds of residential premises, their registering and the regular distribution of flats and rooms, the transfer of this work into the hands of the local workers'committee and of the organs of the Soviet Government is a difficult but grateful task. We have had enough of the lording of the better classes! The worker, the poor toiler, has also a right to a warm room and to a living as befits a human being.

In this way must economic life gradually be organised. The working class must organise production. The working class must organise distribution. The working class to organise consumption – food, clothes, and housing – there is an account kept of everything, everything is distributed in the most reasonable way. There are no masters – there is the self-administration of the working class.

## Chapter 14

# Labour Discipline of the Working Class and the Poorest Elements of the Peasantry

To organise production so that life should be possible without masters, to organise it on a fraternal basis, is a very good thing, but it is easier said than done. We meet with numberless difficulties: in the first place we are now standing face to face with the heritage of the unfortunate war – a ruined country. The working class, is now obliged to clear up the mess made by Nicholas Romanoff and his servants – Sturmer, Sukhomlinoff, Protopopoff, a mess which was later increased by Gutchkoff and Rodzianko with their servants – Kerensky, Tzeretelli, Dan, and the rest of the treacherous company. Secondly, the working class are now compelled to organise production whilst repelling the blows of their greatest enemies; on the other hand, those who are attacking them with savage hatred from without, as well as those who are attempting to destroy the Workers' Government from within.

In order to emerge victorious under such conditions, to conquer once and for ever, the workers must struggle against their own inertia. Whilst organising a *labour army*, it is at the same time imperative to create a *revolutionary labour discipline* in this army. The fact of the matter is that there are still such individuals among the workers who do not yet believe that they have now become masters of the situation. We want them to understand that at the present time the State Exchequer belongs to the workers and the peasants; the factories are national factories, the land is the land of the people, forests, machinery, mines, factory plant, houses, everything has been transferred into the hands of the working class. The administration over all this is a *workers' administration*. The attitude of the workers and peasants towards all this wealth cannot now be the same as it was before; before it belonged to the *masters*, now all this wealth belongs to the *people*. The masters used to sweat the workers to the utmost. The landowner who lived like a lord fleeced the poor peasant and farm labourer as bare as he could. Both the worker and the farm labourer were therefore right when they did not consider themselves bound to do their best under the master's whip, for the sake of strengthening the might and power of their tormentors. This is why there can be no question whatever of a labour discipline when the whip of the capitalist is brandished over the workmen's head and the whip of the landowner over that of the peasant and farm labourer. Things are quite different now. These whips have now been destroyed. The working class is now working for itself, it is now not making money for the capitalists, but working in the *people's* cause, in the cause of the toiling masses which were previously held in bondage.

But nevertheless, we repeat, there still are workers lacking class spirit who do not seem to see all this. Why is that? Because they have been slaves too long. Slavish servile thoughts ever crowd in their brain. Perhaps they think, at the bottom of their hearts, that they cannot possibly exist without God and a master. And consequently they use the revolution to their own ends, trying to fill their pockets, to grasp where they can, and what they can, never stopping to think of their labour duties nor of the fact that slovenliness and cheating at work at present is a *crime against the working class*. For labour does not now serve to enrich a master; labour now supports the workers – the poverty-stricken classes who are now at the helm of State. The indifferent workman now does not injure directors or bankers, but members of workers' administrations, workers' unions, and the Government of the workers and peasants. To handle machinery carelessly, to break tools, to try and get little work done in the ordinary working hours for the purpose of working overtime and receiving double pay – by all this it is not the master who is cheated, it is not the capitalist who is harmed, but the *working class as a whole*. The same thing applies to the land. He who steals farming implements which have been registered by the farm labourers and peasants, robs society and not the landowner, who has been driven out a long time ago. The man who cuts down timber despite the prohibition of

the peasants' organisations is thereby robbing the poor. Any man who, instead of cultivating the land taken from the landowner, is engaged in bread speculation or secret distilling, is a cheat and a criminal against the workers and peasants.

Now it is quite evident to everyone that, for setting in order and organising production, it is necessary for the workers to organise themselves and create their own labour discipline. At the factories and works the workers must themselves see to it that every comrade should turn out as much as is required. Professional workers' unions and the Soviets of the workers are in direct supervision of production. They may, when possible, shorten the working day, and we mean to aim at such excellent organisation of production as to make it possible for each set of workmen to work only six instead of eight hours. But the very same workers' organisations, as well as the workers' Government and the working class as a whole, may and should expect of their members the most careful handling of national wealth and the most conscientious devotion to their work. The workers' organisations, especially labour unions, should themselves fix the average output, that is to say, the amount of work that must be performed by every workman during one working day: he who does not execute the required quantity, allowance of course being made for sickness and weakness, is *sabotaging*, undermining the work of constructing a new social order, and hinders the working class in its progress towards perfect Communism.

Production is a vast machine, every part of which must be in perfect harmony with the other, all working equally well. An imperfect tool in the hands of a good workman is worthless, and so is a good tool in the hands of an inefficient one. What we want is a good tool and a good workman.

Therefore we should strain our powers to the utmost to organise the supply of fuel and raw material, to organise transport and to distribute this fuel and raw material properly, at the same time taking measures for self-discipline and a proper training of the working masses to conscientious labour.

It is more difficult to do this in Russia than in any other country. The working class (and this applies in a still greater degree to the peasantry) have not gone through a long stage of organised training as the Western European and American workers have. We have among our number many workers who are only just becoming workers, who are only just getting *accustomed to collective social work*, who are only now learning that to say "other people's business is no concern of mine" is not the proper sentiment for a workman to express. This kind of workman will always tend to disturb the harmony of social labour. The more we have of the kind who still nurse the idea of becoming their own masters, of saving a little money and starting a shop, the harder will be our task of carrying through real labour discipline. But for this very reason must those in the vanguard of the revolution, pioneers and labour organisations, grow more and more determined to establish and strengthen such discipline. If *this* is a success it will become possible to organise everything else and for the working class to emerge victorious out of the difficulties created by the war, by disorganisation and sabotage, and all the barbarity and atrocities of the capitalist order.

## Chapter 15

# The End of the Power of Money. State Finances and Financial Economy in the Soviet Republic

Money at the present time represents the means of obtaining goods. Thus those who have much money can buy many things; they are rich. However low the rate of money falls, it is always easier to live for the man who has much of it. The rich classes who even now have an abundance of money can live at their ease. In towns, traders, merchants, capitalists and speculators: in the country the “kulaks” (rich peasants), the sharks and sweaters who have fattened on the war to an incredible degree, having saved hundreds of thousands of roubles. Things have reached such a pitch that some buried their money in the ground in boxes or glass jars.

The workers’ and peasants’ State, on the other hand, is in need of money. Additional issues of paper money depreciates its value: the more paper money is printed the cheaper it gets. And yet the works and factories must be maintained by these paper tokens; workers must be paid, the administration must be kept going, the employees must get their wages. Where is the money to come from? To get the money it is necessary first of all to *tax the rich*. *An income and property tax*, that is to say, a tax *on* big profits and on large property, must be the principal tax; a tax on the rich, a tax on those who receive a surplus income.

But at the present time, when everybody is living through a revolutionary fever, when it is difficult to arrange for the regular imposition of taxes, any means of obtaining money is reasonable and admissible. For instance, the following is quite an excellent measure. The Government declares that up to a certain date all money must be exchanged for new, and that the old money has lost its value. That means that everybody must empty his boxes and jars and cupboards and bring his hoard to the bank to be exchanged. And here the following system should be carried out; the savings of poor people must be untouched, a new rouble being paid for every old one; but beginning with a certain sum a part must be deducted for the benefit of the State. And the larger the amount of money saved up, the greater will be the sum retained. Let us propose the following scheme: up to 5,000 the exchange is to be a rouble for a rouble; of the following 5,000 a tenth part is deducted; from the third 5,000 a seventh part; from the fourth a fourth part; from the fifth a half; from the sixth three-quarters; and beginning with a definite sum, *the whole is confiscated*.

Thus the power of the rich would be considerably undermined, additional means for the needs of the Workers’ State would be obtained, and everybody would be more or less equalised with regard to income.

In a time of revolution the imposition of *contributions* on the bourgeoisie is justifiable. It is certainly not at all advisable for one local Soviet to tax the bourgeoisie according to one system, whilst the other does so in accordance with another system, and a third according to a third. This would be as bad as if there were varying forms of levying taxes in a given locality.

We must strive towards a uniform system of taxation, suitable for the whole Soviet Republic. But if in the meantime we have not been able to build up such machinery, contributions are admissible. There is a Russian proverb which says: “When you can’t get fish, a lobster will do.” We must bear in mind that the duty of the party and of the Soviets, as well as that of the working class and the poorest peasantry, consists in uniting and centralising on one definite plan, the collection of taxes, thereby *systematically* driving the bourgeoisie out of their economic stronghold.

We must, however, note that the more successful the organisation of production on new labour principles, the more will the importance of *money* decrease. Formerly, when private enterprises were the dominating institution,

these private enterprises sold their goods to one another. The tendency now is for various branches of industry to unite and become different departments of general social production. Products may be exchanged between the different departments simply by a process of book-keeping without the need of using money at all. This method is actually in process between the different branches of capitalistic trusts or combines.

Combined enterprises are those which embrace several varying branches of production. In America, for instance, there are enterprises which own metal works, coal mines, iron mines, and steamship companies. One branch of the enterprise supplies the other with raw materials or transports its manufactured products. But all these separate branches represent but parts of *one enterprise*. It is, of course, understood that one part does not *sell* its products to another branch of the enterprise, but distributes it according to the orders of the central head office of the various departments. Or let us take another example: the works of one department transfer the half-finished product to another, yet *within* the works no kind of purchase and sale transaction takes place. The same sort of thing will be established in the general plan of production. The main branches of production will be organised into huge social enterprises under the management of the workers. A systematic distribution of the necessary means of production will take place between the different branches; this will include fuel, raw materials, half-finished products, auxiliary materials, and so on. And that will mean that money will lose its importance. Money is important only when production is unorganised; the more organised it becomes the smaller becomes the part played by money, and the need for it gradually decreases.

What about the workers' pay? we shall be asked. The same thing will hold good here. The better production is organised by the working class, the less will social workmen be paid in money and the more they will be paid in kind, that is to say, in products. We have already spoken of co-operative communes and of labour registers. Products required by workers will be issued without any money whatever, simply upon the evidence that such an such a man has worked and is working; they will be given out by the co-operative stores in accordance with such entries in the labour registers. This, of course, cannot be organised all at once. It will be long before we are able to organise this into proper working order. It is a new plan that has never been worked before, and is therefore exceptionally difficult to carry out. But one thing is clear: in proportion as the workers come into possession of production and distribution, the need for money will become less and less and subsequently will gradually die out altogether.

An "*exchange*" of goods must then begin between town and country, without the agency of money; municipal industrial organisations send out textile, iron and other goods into the country, while the village district organisations send bread to the towns in exchange. Here, too, the import-unco of money will be lessened in proportion as the town and country labour organisations of the workers and peasants become more closely united.

But at present, *at this very moment*, the workers' Government *needs* money, and needs it badly. That is because the organisations of production and distribution is only *just getting* into working order, and money still plays a most important part. Finances, including income and expenditure of State money, are at present of the utmost importance. And that is why the question of *taxes* is so acute at the present time; they must be exacted by every means. The confiscation of surplus incomes of the town and country bourgeoisie is inevitable, as is also periodical taxation.

But in the future taxation will also become obsolete. To the extent that production becomes nationalised, so capitalists' profits cease; as there are no more landowners, the "so-called land tax is abolished. Property holders are deprived of their houses, and thus another source of taxation is gone. Superfluous wealth is confiscated, the rich are losing their main support, and the whole population is gradually becoming employed by the proletarian State organisations. (Later on, with complete Communism, when there is no State, people, as we have seen, will become equal comrades, and the very memory of the division of society into bourgeoisie will vanish.)

When such a state of things exists it will be much simpler to deduct the necessary taxes immediately from salaries than to deduct considerable sums in the way of taxes or dues. It is not worth while spending both time and money on the senseless transaction of giving with one hand and taking away with the other.

We have seen, on the other hand, that when production and distribution are thoroughly organised, money will play no part whatever, and as a matter of course no kind of money dues will be demanded from anyone. Money will have *generally* become unnecessary. finance will become extinct.

We repeat that that time is a long way off yet. There can be no talk of it in the near future. For the present we must *find* means for public finance. But we are already taking steps leading to the abolition of the money system. Society is being transformed into one huge labour organisation or company to produce and distribute what is already produced without the agency of gold coinage or paper money. The end of the power of money is imminent.

## Chapter 16

# No Trade Communication Between the Russian Bourgeoisie and Foreign Imperialists

### (Nationalisation of Foreign Trade)

At the present time every country is surrounded by other countries on which it depends to a considerable extent. It is very difficult for a country to manage without foreign trade, because one country produces more of one product than another, and vice versa. Blockaded Germany is now experiencing how hard it is to do without a supply from other countries. And should England, for instance, be surrounded by as close a ring as is Germany, it would have perished long ago. The Russian industry, nationalised by the working class, cannot possibly dispense with certain goods from abroad, and on the other hand, foreign countries, especially Germany, are badly in need of raw material. We must not forget even for a minute that we live in the midst of rapacious capitalist States. Naturally enough these plundering States will try to obtain everything that they require to further their aims of plunder. And the Russian bourgeoisie, that has been so hedged in and persecuted in Russia, will be very glad to enter into direct contact with foreign imperialists. There is no doubt whatever that the foreign bourgeoisie could pay the Russian speculators even more than does our own home-made, true-Russian patriotic bourgeoisie. A speculator, as we know, sells to him who pays the most. And so we have only to give our bourgeois the chance of exporting goods abroad, and foreign plunderers the possibility of arranging their little business affairs here, and the Socialist Soviet Republic would have little cause to rejoice at the results.

Formerly, when the question of foreign trade arose, the discussion confined itself to two points; whether high import duties on foreign goods were necessary or whether they should be abolished altogether; that is to say, Protection or Free Trade. During the last years of the reign of capital, capitalists were very active in carrying out the policy of .Protection. Thanks to this the syndicalists received additional profit. Having no competitors or rivals within the country, they were the monopolists of the home market, the high wall of import duties protected them from foreign competitors. In this way, by the aid of high duties, the syndicalists, that is the biggest sharks of capital, could fleece their countrymen shamelessly. Making use of this double extortion of their countrymen, the syndicalists began to export goods abroad at extremely cheap prices in order to displace or remove their rival syndicalists of other countries from their path. Naturally these cheap prices were only temporary. As soon as they had removed their rivals they immediately raised the prices in the newly-conquered markets. It was in order to carry out this policy that they required high customs tariffs. In raising a cry about the *defence* of industry the syndicalists were really clamouring for a means of *attack*, for means of economic conquest of foreign markets. And as always happens in such cases, these professional impostors on the people were disguising their plunder by a pretence of guarding the national interests.

A few Socialists seeing this, put forward the demand for Free Trade between the different countries. That would have meant everything being left to the chances of a free economic struggle between individual bourgeoisie. But this war cry was left to hover in mid-air; it was simply of no use to anybody. For what syndicalist would reject a proposition of additional profit? And since he received this additional profit only owing to his being immune from foreign competition thanks to the high customs tariff, how do you expect this syndicalist to reject such high duties? First of all *it is imperative to overthrow the syndicalists*. Our first object is a Socialist Revolution. This is how the question was answered by true Socialists, by Communist Bolsheviks, as we now call them. And a Socialist Revolution

means the institution of such an order where every thing is in the hands of *an organised State of the working class*. We have seen what harm private trade causes within the country: the harm done by tin's kind of trade between different countries is not less. In other words, abolishing Free Trade within the country whilst establishing it abroad is sheer nonsense. Equally absurd, from the point of view of the working class, is the system of taxation of foreign capitalists. A *third* way out is wanted, and this consists in the *nationalisation of foreign trade by the proletarian State*.

What does this mean? It means that no one who lives upon Russian soil has a right to make business agreements with foreign capitalists. If anyone is caught at it, he should be fined or imprisoned. The whole of the foreign trade is carried on by the Workers' and Peasants' Government. The latter carries out all transactions whenever occasion arises. Supposing American machines are being offered in exchange for certain goods or for a certain amount of money or gold, whilst some Germans offer the same machines at a different price and on different terms. The workers' organisations (Government Soviet organisations) consider whether it is necessary to make the purchase and of whom it should be more advantageous to buy. In accordance with their decision the machines are bought in the place, and upon terms which are the most profitable. Products bought in this manner are distributed to the population without any profits being made out of them, because the transaction is carried out not by capitalists to make money out of the workers, but by the workers themselves. In this manner the domination of capital would be abolished in this department as well. The workers must take the business of foreign trade (as they have done and are doing) into their own hands and organise it so that not a single swindler or speculator or shopkeeper should be able to evade the workers' watchfulness.

It is clearly understood that capitalist smugglers should be dealt with mercilessly. They should be made to forget all their tricks. The management of economic life is at present the business of the working class. "It is only by the aid of a further strengthening of this order that the working class can attain its final liberation from the remnants of the accursed capitalist order.



## Chapter 17

# Spiritual Liberation – The Next Step to Economic Liberation

### (The Church and the School in the Soviet Republic)

The working class and its party, the party of Communist Bolsheviks, are struggling not only for economic freedom but also for spiritual liberation of the toiling masses. Economic liberation itself will be the easier attained the sooner the workman and the farm labourer get their brains cleared of all the rubbish with which the landowners and the manufacturing bourgeoisie have stuffed them. We have already noticed before how cleverly the dominating classes have hitherto bound the workers with their newspapers, journals, pamphlets, priests, and even the school, which they cleverly converted from an organ of enlightenment into an institution for dulling the minds of the people.

One of the agencies in achieving this object was the belief in God and the Devil, spirits good and evil (angels and saints), in short, in *religion*. A great number of people have grown accustomed to believe in all this, whilst if we analyse these ideas and try to understand the origin of religion and why it is so strongly supported by the bourgeoisie, it will become clear that the real significance of religion is that it is a *poison* which is still being instilled into the people. It will also become clear why the party of the Communists is a strong antagonist of religion.

Modern science has proved that the original form of religion was the worship of the souls of dead ancestors. This worship began at a time when the so-called elders – that is to say, the richer, more experienced and wise old men of the tribe who already had some *power* over the rest, had attained great importance. In the early stages of human history, when men were still living in herds, like semi-apes, people were indeed equal. It was only later on that elders or heads of tribes began to have command over the whole tribe: they were the first to be worshipped. The worship of the spirits of the dead rich – this is the basis of religion: and these “sacred” idols were later on changed into a terrible God who punishes and forgives, judges and governs. Let us analyse why people have come to accept such an explanation of everything that takes place around them. The reason is that people judge of things that are little known to them by comparing them with things with which they are familiar: they weigh and measure things on a scale that is concrete and comprehensible. A well-known scholar quotes the following instance. A little girl, brought up on a private estate where there was a poultry farm, constantly had to do with eggs: eggs were ever present before her eyes. Once, when she saw the sky strewn with stars, she told a story of how the heavens were sprinkled with a vast number of eggs. Such instances may be quoted endlessly. The same thing holds true as regards religion. People saw that there are those who obey and those who are obeyed. They constantly witnessed the following picture the elder (and later on the prince) surrounded by his followers, more experienced, wiser, stronger and richer than the others, orders others and reigns over them: the others act according to his wish: he is obeyed by all.

This kind of thing witnessed daily and hourly appeared to explain all that takes place in the world. There is on the earth, they said, one commander and those who obey him. Consequently, they reasoned, the whole world is built up on the same scheme. There is a master of the world, a great, strong, terrible master upon whom everything is dependent, and who punishes his servants severely for disobedience. This master over the world is *God*. And so the idea of a god in the heavens arises only in those cases when people are accustomed to the power of the elders over the tribe.

It is an interesting fact that all the names given to God confirm the same origin of religion. The Russian words for God and for rich are of the same origin; thus “*Bog*” (God) and “*Bogat*” (rich) are derived from the same root. God is great, powerful, and rich. God is called Lord or Master. What does “Lord” signify but the contrary to servant or slave? In prayers we have: “We are thy servants.” God is further called the “Heavenly King.” All the

other titles point in the same direction: “sovereign,” “ruler,” and so on. And so, what does “God” really mean? It means, as we are told, a rich, strong master, a slave owner, a “heavenly king,” a judge – in short, an exact copy, a reproduction of the earthly power of the elders, and later on of the princes. When the Jews were governed by their princes, who punished and tortured them, there arose the teaching of a cruel and terrible God. Such is the God of the Old Testament. He is a vicious old man, who chastises his subjects severely. Let us now consider the God of the Greek Orthodox Church. The teachings concerning this god arose in Byzantium, in the country which served as a model of despotism. At the head stood a despotic monarch surrounded by his ministers; these, in their turn, were surrounded by high officials; next followed a whole host of avaricious officials. The Greek orthodox religion is an exact model of this system. The “Heavenly King” sits above. Around him are gathered the most important saints (for instance, Saint Nicholas, the Holy Virgin, something after the style of an empress, the wife of the Holy Ghost), these are ministers: next comes a hierarchy of angels and saints in the order of officials in a despotic government. These are the so-called “ranks of angels and archangels”: cherubs, seraphs heralds and various other “ranks” or “offices.” The word “rank” itself shows that we have to do with *officials* (“rank” and “official” are words which have the same root in the Russian language). These “ranks” are represented on images in such a way as to show that he who stands higher in rank is better dressed, has more laurels, that is to say, he has more “orders,” just the same as on our sinful earth. In a despotic State the official invariably demands “a bribe,” else he will do nothing for you; and just in the same way it is necessary to light a candle before the image of the saint or he will get angry and not deliver your message to the highest official – to God. In a despotic State there are special officials whose express mission is to act as intercessors, for “a bribe,” of course. Here in the orthodox religion there are also special saints – “intercessors,” or intermediaries, especially women. For instance, the Holy Virgin is, so to speak, a professional female “intercessor.” Of course, she does not perform her services free of charge; she expects to have more churches built in her name than anyone else, and a great number of surplices have to be bought for her images, ornamented with precious stones, and so on.

In short, we see that the belief in God is a *reflection of the commonest everyday relations*: it is the belief in *slavery*, which people are made to believe exists not only on the earth, but in the whole universe. We understand, of course, that in reality there is nothing of the kind; and it is clear to everybody that such legends hinder the development of humanity. The progress of Man is possible only when he finds *natural* explanations for all phenomena. But when, instead of a logical reason, people invent a god or saints or demons or devils, then, of course, we can expect nothing sensible. Here are a few more instances. Some religions people believe that thunder is caused by the Prophet Elijah taking a ride in his chariot; and therefore, when they hear thunder they take off their hats and make the sign of the cross. In reality this electricity which causes thunder is perfectly well known to science, and by this same power we run trams and carry on them many things we desire. A logical line of reasoning shows us that we can convey manure with the aid of the “Prophet Elijah,” and that he makes a good carman. Let us suppose that we believed in the Prophet Elijah version. In that case we should never have invented tramcars. That means that, owing to religion, we should for ever have remained in a state of *barbarism*. Another instance. War breaks out, people perish in millions, oceans of blood are shed. A reason explaining this must be found. Those who do not believe in God think, reason, and analyse; they see that the war was started by Tzars and Presidents, by the rich bourgeoisie and landowners; they see that war is conducted for plundering purposes and for filthy aims; and therefore they say to the workers of all countries, “To arms against your oppressors!” “Down with capita !” We see quite a different attitude in the case of a religious man. Sighing like an old woman, he reasons as follows: “God is punishing us for our sins. Lord, our heavenly father! Thou art chastising us justly for our transgressions.” And if he is very pious, and Greek Orthodox into the bargain, he makes it a point to use one particular kind of food on definite days (this is called fasting), to beat his forehead against stone floors (this is called penance), and to perform a thousand other idiotic things. Equally foolish things are done by the religious Jew, the Moslem Turk, the Buddhist Chinese, in a word by everyone who believes in God. Hence it follows that really religious people are incapable of fighting. Religion, as we have shown, not only leaves people in a state of *barbarism*, but helps to leave them in a state of *slavery*. A religious man is more inclined to suffer anything that happens resignedly (for everything, as they believe, “comes from God” (“from on high”)); he considers himself bound to submit to the authorities and to suffer, for which he will be repaid a hundredfold in the life to come. Little wonder, then, that the dominant classes in capitalist States look upon religion as a very useful tool for deceiving and stultifying the people.

At the beginning of the chapter we saw that the power of the bourgeoisie is sustained not only by bayonets but also by dulling the *brains* of the slaves. We also saw that the bourgeoisie poisons the minds of its subjects on an *organised* plan. For this purpose there is a special organisation, namely, the *Church* organised by the State. In nearly all capitalist countries the church is just as much a State institution as is the police; and the priest is as much a State official as is the executioner, the gendarme, the detective. He receives a *Government salary* for administering his poison to the masses. This is the most dangerous part of the whole affair. Were it not for this monstrously firm and strong organisation of the plundering capitalist State, there would be no room for a single priest. Their bankruptcy

would be swift enough. But the trouble is that the bourgeois States support the whole church institution, which in return staunchly supports the bourgeois Government. At the time of the Tzar the Russian priests not only deceived the masses, but even made use of the confessional to find out what, ideas or intentions their victims entertained towards the Government; they acted as spies while discharging their “sacred duties.” The Government not only supported them, but even persecuted by imprisonment and exile and all other means, all so-called “blasphemers” of the Greek Orthodox Church.

All these considerations explain the programme of the Communists with regard to their attitude to religion and to the Church. *Religion must be fought, if not by violence, at all events by argument. The Church must be separated from the State.* That means that the priests may remain, but should be maintained by those who wish to accept their poison from them or by those who are interested in their existence. There is a poison called opium; when that is smoked, sweet visions appear; you feel as if you were in paradise. But its action tells on the health of the smoker. His health is gradually ruined, and little by little he becomes a meek idiot. The same applies to religion. There are people who wish to smoke opium; but it would be absurd if the State maintained at its expense, that is to say, at the expense of the people, opium dens and special men to serve them. For this reason the Church must be (and already is) treated in the same way: priests, bishops, archbishops, patriarchs, abbots and the rest of the lot must be refused State maintenance. Let the believers, if they wish it, feed the holy fathers at their own expense on the fat of the land, a thing which they, the priests, greatly appreciate.

On the other hand, freedom of thought must be guaranteed. Hence the axiom that religion is a private affair. This does not mean that we should not struggle against it by freedom of argument. It means that the State should support no church organisation. As regards this question, the programme of the Bolshevik Communists *has been carried out all over Russia*. Priests of all creeds have been deprived of State subsidy. And that is the reason why they have become so furious and have twice anathematised the present Government, i.e., the Government of the workers, by excommunicating all workers from the church. We must note this. At the time of the Tzar they knew well enough the text in the Scripture which says, “There is no power but from God,” and “The powers that be are to be obeyed.” They willingly sprinkled executioners with holy water. But why have they forgotten these texts at a time when the workers are at the head of the Government? Is it possible that the will of God does not hold good when there is a Communist Government? What can the reason be? The thing is very simple. The Soviet Government is the *first* Government in Russia to attack the pockets of the clergy. And this, by the way, is a priest’s most sensitive spot. The clergy are now in the camp of the “oppressed bourgeoisie.” They are working secretly and openly against the working class. But times have changed, and the masses of the labouring class are not so prone to become the easy prey to deceit they were before. Such is the great educational significance of the Revolution; revolution liberates us from *economic* slavery, but it also frees us from *spiritual* bondage.

There is another vital question concerning the mental education of the masses. It is the question of the school.

At the time of the domination of the bourgeoisie the school served more as an organ of educating the masses in a spirit of *submission to the bourgeoisie* than as a medium of real education. All primers and other appurtenances of study were permeated with the spirit of slavery. Especially was this the case with history books. These did nothing but lie in describing the feats of the Tsars and other crowned scoundrels. Next to these, an important part in the schools was played by the clergy. Everything aimed at one object: to mould the child so that it should emerge not a citizen but a *subject*, a slave, capable if the occasion requires to kill his fellow-men should they rise against the capitalist Government. Schools were divided into grades; there were schools for the common people and others for the better classes. For the latter there were colleges and universities, where the sons of the bourgeoisie were taught various sciences with the final object of teaching them how to manage and subjugate the rabble; for the rabble there was the lower school. In these, more than in the others, was the influence of the clergy predominant. The object of this school, that gave very little knowledge but taught the children a great deal of religious lies, was to prepare people to suffer, obey, and be resignedly submissive to the better classes. The common people, had no access whatever to the higher schools, that is to the universities, the social higher technical schools, and various other institutions. And thus an educational monopoly was created. Only the rich or those supported by the rich could enjoy a more or less decent education. For these reasons tin- intellectuals utilised their position in a very clever manner. And, of course, at the time of the October Revolution they were against the workers; they scented danger of their privileges and rights vanishing if *everybody* had the right to study, and if the “rabble” were given the possibility of acquiring knowledge.

[It is therefore necessary in the very first place to make education *general* and *compulsory*. In order to construct life on new principles it is necessary that a man should be accustomed from childhood to honest toil. For this purpose school children should be taught all kinds of manual labour in the schools. The doors of the high schools should be open to all. The priests should be turned out of the schools; let them, if they wish to, fool the children anywhere they like, but not in a Government institution: schools should be *secular* and not religious. The organs of the local government of the workers have control over the schools, and should not be parsimonious where public

instruction and the supply of all the requisites for successful teaching for boys and girls is concerned. At present in some of the villages and provincial towns, some idiotic schoolmasters, aided by the “kulaks” (or rather the “kulaks” aided by these idiots) are carrying on a propaganda, saying that the Bolsheviks are aiming at destroying science, abolishing education, and so on. This is, of course, a most despicable lie. The Communist Bolsheviks have quite different intentions; they wish to liberate science from the yoke of capitalism, and to make- all science accessible to the labouring masses. They wish to destroy the *monopoly* (exclusive right) of the rich to education. This is the true foundation of the matter: and it is no wonder that the rich are afraid of losing one of their chief supports. If every workman acquires the qualifications of an engineer, then the position of the capitalist and of the rich engineer is not worth a brass farthing. They will have nothing more to boast of, for there will be many such as they. No undermining of the workers’ cause, no amount of sabotage by the old servants of capital will be of any avail. And that is what the right honourable bourgeoisie is afraid of.

Culture for the bourgeoisie, spiritual subjection for the poor – these are the capitalists’ war cries. Culture for all, liberation of the mind from the yoke of capital – this is the watchword of the party of the working class, the party of the Communists.

## Chapter 18

# The People Armed to Defend Their Gains

### (Army of the Soviet Republic)

“The best guarantee, the best security for freedom, is a bayonet in the hands of the workers.” These were the words of one of the creators of scientific Communism, Frederick Engels. Now we can actually see how true this saying is: it has been completely confirmed by the experience of the great Revolution of 1917.

Quite a short time ago even some of our more radical comrades raised the cry of “disarmament.” This is what they said: The bourgeoisie is everywhere building a monstrous, colossal fleet – submarine, marine and aerial; huge armies are growing. Fortresses are being built, colossal cannon and such organs of destruction as armoured cars and tanks. All this terrible system of violence must be destroyed. We must demand general disarmament.

But the Bolsheviks argued otherwise. We said: Our war cry is *disarmament of the bourgeoisie* and unconditional and universal *arming of the working class*. And indeed, it would be ridiculous to attempt to persuade the bourgeoisie to surrender its most powerful weapon – its armed forces (composed by the way, of deceived workmen and poor peasants). This violent death-dealing machine can only be destroyed by means of *violence*. Arms are surrendered only by the compulsion of the superior armed force of the other side; and in this fact lies the significance of the armed *resistance* against the bourgeoisie.

For the bourgeoisie the army is a weapon in the struggle for the division of the world on the one hand, and a weapon in the struggle against the working class on the other. The Tsar and Kerensky dreamed of conquering Constantinople as well as the Dardanelles, Galicia. and many another spicy bit by the aid of their army. At the same time both the Tsar and Kerensky (and that means the landowners and the capitalists) were oppressing the working class and the poorest peasantry as much as they could. In the hands of large property owners the army served as a weapon for the division of the world and for the subjection of the poor elements of the population. That is what the army used to be in former times.

How was it possible for the bourgeoisie to make of the workers and peasants (of whom the army is largely composed) a weapon against these very workers and peasants? What enabled the Tsar and Kerensky to do so? Why is it still being done by Wilhelm and Hindenburg and by the German bourgeoisie, who are turning their workers into executioners of the Russian, Finnish, Ukrainian and German revolutionaries? Why were German sailors who revolted against their oppressors shot down by the hand of other German sailors? How is it that the English bourgeoisie is suppressing by means of English soldiers (who are also mostly workers) the rebellion in Ireland, a country oppressed and trodden underfoot by cruel English bankers?

To this question the same answer should be given as to that of how the bourgeoisie manages to retain its power in general. We have seen that this is achieved by means of the perfect organisation of the bourgeoisie. In the army the power of the bourgeoisie rests on two principles; firstly on the *officer corps*, consisting of nobles and bourgeois; and secondly on the special training and spiritual murder, i.e., on a bourgeois *moulding of the minds of the soldiers*. The officer corps on the whole is a purely class institution. An officer is ideally trained for the work of militarism, to inflict brutal corporal punishment on the soldiers and to cruelly mishandle them. Just glance at one of these brave officers of the Guards or at a Prussian dandy with the face of a prize bull-dog. You can see at a glance that like a circus trainer he has been long and persistently learning how to ill-treat and bully and keep the human herd in a state of mortal fear and blind obedience.

You can see that, since such gentlemen are picked and chosen from among the bourgeoisie and nobility and sons

of landowners and capitalists, it is quite evident that they will lead the army in quite a definite direction.

And now, look at the soldiers: they enter the army as common men, with no common bond, from different provinces, unable to show any united resistance, with minds already tainted by the clergy and the school. They are instantly put up at barracks, and the training began. Intimidation and teaching of the most anti-democratic nations, a constant system of fear and punishment, corruption by rewards for crime (for instance, for the execution of strikers), all this makes idiots of the men, dummies who blindly obey their own mortal enemies.

It is evident that with the Revolution, the army entirely resting on the old Tzarist basis, the army driven to slaughter for the purpose of conquering Constantinople even by Kerensky, must inevitably have become disorganised. Do you ask why? Because the soldiers saw that they were being organised, trained and thrown into battle *for the sake of the criminal cupidity of the bourgeoisie*. They saw that for nearly three years they sat in the trenches, perished, hungered, suffered, and died and killed others all for the sake of somebody's money-bags. It is natural enough that when the revolution had displaced the old discipline and a new one *had not yet had time* to be formed, the collapse, ruin and death of the old army took place.

This disease was inevitable. The Menshevik and Socialist revolutionary fools accuse the Bolsheviks of this disaster: "see what you have done! Corrupted the army of the Tzar." The fail to see that the Revolution could not have been victorious if the army had remained loyal to the Tzar and to the generals in February and to the bourgeoisie in October. The soldiers' rising against the Tzar was *already* the result of the disorganisation of the Tzarist army. Every revolution destroys what is old and rotten: a certain period (a very difficult one to live through) must pass until the new life is formed, until the building of a new beautiful edifice is begun upon the ruins of the old pig-sty.

Let us give you another example from a different sphere. As the older workers know, in bygone times, when the peasants were only beginning to turn to factory work, the first thing that happened when they came to town was to become desperate "hooligans," "rowdies," "roughs." The word "factory hand" or "worker" were practically words of abuse; and indeed our workers were great hands at ruffianism, obscenity and swearing. Basing their arguments on this state of affairs, all reactionaries fearing any kind of innovation used to propagate a return to serfdom.

What they said was this: As town life depraves workers and as its tendency is to "roughen their characters," what they want is the country, and especially the paternal rod of the landowners. Under these conditions virtue, will be sure to thrive. And they sneered ill-naturedly at those who looked upon the working class as the salt of the earth. They used to say to us Marxists, disciples of the great Communist, Karl Marx: "Do you see what your workers are? They are swine, not men. They are blackguards! And you say that they are the salt of the earth! A good whip and a stick – that is what they want; that will teach them to behave themselves."

Many were "convinced" by such arguments. But the truth of the matter is this: when the peasants went to town and broke with the country, the old village ties and traditions were forgotten. In the country they lived according to old traditions, looking up to the old men as if they were oracles, obeying them although they had grown childish with age: they would stay peacefully within the limits of their cabbage patch, never setting foot outside their native town, and would, of course, be afraid of anything new. This is an example of rustic wisdom. Bad as it was, it served as a bridle, and helped to preserve village order. This simplicity vanished rapidly in the towns, where everything was new: new people, new outlooks, and a multitude of new temptations in store. No wonder that the old village morality vanished into thin air, and some time elapsed before a *new* was formed. It was this interval between two periods that came to be a period of depravity.

But during the course of events a new consciousness arose in the new sphere of life; the consciousness of *the solidarity of the proletariat*. The factory united the workers; the oppression of the capitalist taught them to struggle jointly: in the place of the weak, insipid grandfatherly wisdom there arose a new proletarian, outlook, infinitely higher than the old. It is this new outlook that is changing the proletariat into the most advanced, most revolutionary, most creative of all classes. We Communists, of course, and not the feudal landowners, proved to be right.

At the present time the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries have taken up the attitude of the feudalists with regard to the army. They are loudly bewailing the disorganisation of the army, whilst laying the blame on the Bolsheviks. And just as the feudalists used to call the workers back into the country under the protective wing of the landowner and his whip, just so do the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries now appeal for a return to the old army discipline, to serve under a Constituent Assembly on a basis of a. return to capitalism and all its "attractions." But we Communists look ahead. We know that the past is dead, having become rotten as was inevitable, and that, failing thus, the workers and poor peasants could never take the Government into their hands: we know that in the place of the old army a new, more enlightened one, the *Red Army of Socialism*, has arisen.

As long as the *bourgeoisie* stand at the head of Government, and our country is a fatherland of bankers, traders, speculators, police, kings and presidents, so long will the working class have no personal interests in guarding this filthy profit-producing apparatus. A proletarian's duty is to *rise* against this institution. Only miserable lackies and hangers-on to money-bags can say that we must not strike and revolt against the plundering Imperialist Government at a time of war. Of course, such revolts stand in the way of the plundering war business. It is quite clear that agitation

within the country, and more especially agitation in the army, aids disorganisation. But how is the domination of Wilhelm, for instance, to be broken without disorganising the Wilhelm discipline? Impossible. The German martyr sailors murdered by Wilhelm's executioners, certainly aided the disorganisation of the army organised after the highway robbery system. But if the robbers' army is inwardly strong, that would mean death to the revolution. If the revolution is strong, that means death to the robbers' army. The followers of Scheidemann, the German social betrayers, are persecuting Liebknecht as a disorganiser of the army. They are persecuting all the German revolutionists, the German Bolsheviks, as people who are "dealing the valorous army a dastardly blow in the back," in other words, a blow to the cause of plunder. Let the Scheidemanns fraternise with our Mensheviks and such like individuals – they are all of a kidney.

Russia has passed through this period. The revolution of the workers is victorious. The period of decay has passed into the realm of memory. The period of construction of a new order of things is upon us. A Red Army is being built now *not for plunder*, but for the defence of *Socialism*: not to guard the fatherland of profit, where everything was in the hands of capital and the landowners, but to protect the *Socialist* fatherland, where everything has been transferred to the hands of workers; not for the sake of mutilating and ravaging foreign countries, but for the purpose of aiding the *international Communist Revolution*.

It is needless to say that this army must be built on different principles to the old one. The Red Army, we have said, must represent an armed people alongside a disarmed bourgeoisie. It must be a class army of the *proletariat* and the *poorest peasantry*. It is essentially directed against the bourgeoisie of the whole world, including its own. This is the reason why it cannot include armed representatives of the bourgeoisie. To admit the bourgeoisie, into the army would be equal to arming it: it would mean creating a White Guard within the Red Army which might easily disorganise the whole concern, becoming a centre of treason and revolt, and go over into the camp of the imperialist troops of the enemy. Our object is not to arm the bourgeoisie, but to disarm it, depriving it of its last browning.

Our second, and not less important task, is to prepare a *proletarian officer corps*. The working class has to defend itself against enemies who are attacking it from all sides. War has been imposed upon it by the imperialist rascals: and modern warfare requires well-trained specialists. The Tzar and Kerensky had such men at their disposal, but the working class and the peasantry have not. Specialists have to be trained. For *this* purpose we must utilise the knowledge of the old ones; they must be compelled to instruct the proletariat. Then the Socialist Soviet Fatherland will have its own officers and its own *officer corps*. And just as in the devolution, the more experienced and active working class leads after it the poor peasantry, so in the war against the imperialist robbers, the worker-officers will lead the whole mass of the Red Peasant Army.

The Red Army must be created on the basis of universal training of the workers and the poorest elements of the peasantry.

This is most urgent and important. Not a minute, not a second should be lost.

Every workman and every peasant must be trained and must be taught how to use arms. Only fools can argue that: "They are a long way off yet; until they come we shall have time to get, ready." Russian sluggards often reason like that. All the world knows that the favourite Russian saying is ("*avos*") "perhaps" or "maybe"; "*avos* we shall manage." But before you have time to wink, the class foe called land-owners and capitalists, arrives on the spot and takes the workman by the collar; and, maybe, when some brave Prussian subaltern (or an English one, who knows?) places our workman against the wall to be shot, the good-natured fellow will scratch his head saying, "What a fool I have been!"

We must look sharp. *Don't let Peter wait for Bill, or Bill for Peter*. Let no one be idle, but all set earnestly to work. Universal military *training* is the most urgent and most important problem of the day.

The old army was based on the *retreat* of the soldiers. This happened because of capitalists and landowners commanding over millions of soldier-peasants and workmen, whose interests were contrary to their own. The capitalist Government was thus obliged to turn the soldier into a brainless tool, acting against his own interests. But the *Red Army* of the workers and peasants, on the contrary, is defending its own cause. It must therefore be based only on the *enlightenment and conscientiousness* of all comrades who enter its ranks. Hence the need for special courses, reading-rooms, lectures, meetings and conferences. In their leisure hours the soldiers of the Red Army must take an active part together with the workmen in the political life of the country, attending meetings and *sharing the life of the working class*.

This is one of the most important conditions for creating a firm *revolutionary discipline*: not the former discipline of the rod, but the new discipline of the class-conscious revolutionary. If the bond between the army and the working class is broken, then the army rapidly degenerates and can easily turn into a band willing to serve the master who pays most. Then it begins to fall asunder, and nothing can save it. And, on the contrary, if the soldiers of the Red Army keeps close contact with and *takes an interest in the lives*, then they will be exactly what they are meant to be – the armed organ of the revolutionary masses.

One of the best ways of keeping in contact with the masses besides the above-mentioned lectures, political

meetings, is the utilisation of the soldiers for continuously training the workers in shooting, handling rifles, machine guns, etc. Instead of idling, card playing, and other “recreations,” instead of senselessly sauntering about the barracks, they can turn to creative work, which is in uniting the proletariat into one friendly family. In this way an *armed people* is created, as well as an armed peasantry, to keep watch over the great revolution of the workers.



## Chapter 19

# The Liberation of Nations

### (The National Question and International Diplomacy)

The programme of the Communist Party is a scheme not only for the liberation of the proletariat of one country, but for the emancipation of the proletariat of the whole world: for it is a programme of *international revolution*. But it is, at the same time, a programme of the liberation of all oppressed countries and nations. The plundering “great Empires” (England, Germany, Japan, America, etc.) have, by dint of robbery, acquired ascendancy over untold expanses of land and vast numbers of people. They have divided our whole planet between them; and no wonder that in these conquered countries the working class and the labouring masses are groaning under a *double* yoke – that of their own bourgeoisie and the *additional* one cast upon them by their conquerors.

Tzarist Russia had also gained by plunder a great deal of territory and many peoples. The present size of “our” Empire is only to be explained in this way. It is quite natural that among many “aliens,” including even some sections of the proletariat who did not belong to the “great Russian” nationality, there was a general *lack of confidence* towards the “Moscal,” as the natives of Muscovy were formerly called. The nationalist persecution evoked nationalist sentiments; the oppressed part of the proletariat had no confidence in the oppressing nationality as a whole, without distinction of class; the oppressing parts of the proletariat did not sufficiently understand the position of the “alien” proletariat subjected to by a *double* burden of persecution. And yet, in order to attain the victory of the workers’ revolution along the whole front, *complete and perfect confidence of the various parts of the proletariat towards each other* is imperative. The proletariat of “alien” nations should be made to feel by deed and word that it has a loyal ally in the person of the proletariat of the nation that formerly was the oppressor. Here in Russia the dominating nation used to be the “Great Russian,” which conquered in succession the Finns and the Tartars, the Ukrainians and the Armenians, the Georgians and the Poles, the Sivashes and Moravians, the Kirghizes and Bashkirs, and dozens of other tribes. It naturally follows that some proletarians of these peoples foster mistaken notions concerning *everything Russian*. He has been accustomed to being ordered about and abused by the Tzar’s officials, and he thinks that *all* Russians and the Russian proletariat as well are like what the former was.

It is for the purpose of instilling a brotherly confidence in the various sections of the proletariat that the programme of the Communists proclaims the *right of the labouring class of every nation to complete independence*. That means to say that the Russian worker who is now at the head of the Government must say to the workers of other nationalities living in Russia:

“Comrades, if you do not wish to form a part of the Soviet Republic: if you wish to organise your own Soviets and form an independent Soviet Republic, you can do so. We fully acknowledge your right to do so, and we do not wish to detain you by force even for a single moment.”

It is self-evident that only by *such tactics* can the confidence of the proletariat as a whole be won. Let us imagine what would happen if the workers’ Soviets of Great Russia were to attempt by force of arms to coerce the working class of other nations into submission. The latter would, of course, defend themselves with arms. That would mean the complete collapse of the whole of all proletarian movements and the fall of the Revolution. *That* is not the right way to act, for, we repeat, victory is possible only on condition of a *fraternal union* of the workers.

Let us bear this in mind. The question is not of the right of the *nation* (i.e., of the workers and the bourgeoisie together) to independence, but of the right of the *labouring classes*. That means that the so-called “will of the nation” is not in the least sacred to us. We consider sacred only the will of the *proletariat and the semi-proletariat masses*.

That is why we speak not of the rights of nations to independence, but of the right of the *labouring classes* of every nation to separation if it so desires. During a proletarian dictatorship it is not the Constituent Assemblies (all

national, embracing all the people of the given territory), but the *Soviets of workers* that decide questions. And if in any out-of-the-way corner there would be simultaneously convened two conferences, the “Constituent Assembly” of the given nation and the Convention of Soviets; and if it so happens that the “Constituent Assembly” expressed itself in favour of separation, and the Proletariat Convention voted against it, even then we should support the decision of the *proletariat* against that of the “*Constituent Assembly*” by every means, including force of arms.

This is how the Proletarian Party decides questions relating to the proletarians of the various nations living within the boundaries of the country. But our party is confronted with a still more difficult question, that of *its international programme*. Here our way is clear. We must pursue the tactics of universal *support of the International Revolution* by means of revolutionary propaganda, strikes, and revolts in Imperialist countries, and by propagating revolts and insurrections in the colonies of these countries.

In Imperialist countries (and such are all countries except Russia, where the workers have blown out the brains of capital) one of the main obstacles to a revolution is the social-patriotic party. Even at the present moment it is proclaiming the defence of the (plundering) fatherland, thereby deceiving the masses of the people. They are deploring the decay of the (plundering) army. They are persecuting our friends the German, Austrian and English Bolsheviks, who alone persist in refusing with contempt and indignation to defend the bourgeois fatherland. The position of the Soviet Republic is an *exclusive* one. It is the only *proletarian* State organisation in the world, in the midst of organised plundering bourgeois States. For that reason alone this Soviet State has a right to be defended; and more than that, it must be looked on as a weapon of the *universal proletariat* against the universal bourgeoisie. The war cry of this struggle is self-evident: the universal war cry of this struggle is the motto of the *International Soviet Republic*.

The overthrow of Imperialist Governments by means of *armed insurrections* and the organisation of the international Soviet Republic, such is the way to an *international dictatorship of the working class*.

The most efficient means of supporting the international revolution is the organisation of armed forces of the revolution. The workers of all countries who are not blinded by social patriots, the local Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks (of whom there are many in every country) recognise in the Russian Workers’ Revolution and in the Soviet Government facts that concern them intimately. Why? Because they understand that the government of the Soviets means the government of the workers themselves. It would be quite different if the bourgeoisie, aided by the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, had overthrown the Soviet Government, convened the Constituent Assembly, and by its means had organised the government of the bourgeoisie, approximately on the same plan as that which existed before the October *coup d’etat*. In that case the working class would have *lost* its country, its fatherland, for it would have lost its power. Then the banks would inevitably have been returned to the bankers, the factories to the manufacturers, and the land to the landowners. The *fatherland of profits* would have revived, and the workers would not have been interested in the least in defending such a fatherland. On the other hand the West European workers would also have ceased to regard bourgeoisie Russia as the bright beacon showing them their way in the difficult struggle. The development of international revolution would have been retarded. On the contrary, the organisation of the armed forces of the workers and peasants, the organisation of *resistance* against international robbers who are fighting against Soviet Russia as its *class* enemies, as owners and capitalists, in a word, as a band of executioners of the *Workers’ Revolution*, the organisation of the Red Army – these are the factors combining to strengthen the revolutionary movement in all European countries.

The better we are organised, the better we arm the battalions of workers and peasants, the stronger will be the proletarian dictatorship in Russia, and the quicker will the cause of international revolution advance.

The Revolution is inevitable, however its progress hindered by German, Austrian, French and English Mensheviks. The Russian working masses have broken with the compromisers. The workers of Western Europe will also break with them. (They are, as a matter of fact, doing so already.) The maxim of overthrowing the bourgeois fatherlands, of shattering the plundering Governments, and of establishing *workers’ dictatorships*, is steadily gaining ground. Sooner or later we shall have an *International Republic of Soviets*.

The International Republic of Soviets will free hundreds of millions of peoples of their yoke. The “civilised” plundering Empires have cruelly tortured the inhabitants of their colonies by their blood and iron regime. European civilisation was maintained by the blood of small peoples mercilessly exploited and robbed in the far-off countries beyond the seas. They will be freed by the *dictatorship of the proletariat*, and by that alone. Just as the Russian Soviet Government has announced its refusal to participate in a colonial policy, and has proved its decision by its attitude with regard to Persia, just so will the European working class, after overthrowing the domination of bankers, etc., give complete freedom to the oppressed and exploited classes. That is the reason why our programme, which is that of the international revolution, is at the same time a scheme for the complete liberation of all the weak and oppressed. The great class – the working class – has set before itself great problems: and it has not only set them, but is proceeding to solve them in a bloody, painful, heroic struggle.

# Chapter 20

## Conclusion

### (Why We Are Communists)

Up to the time of the last Convention, our party called itself the party of the social democracy. The party of the work ing class bore the same name all over the world. But the war has been responsible for an unprecedented schism in the social-democratic parties here. Three main tendencies have come to the fore – the extreme right, the centre, and the extreme left wing.

The right social-democrats have proved to be thorough-going traitors to the working class. They prostrated themselves in the dust, and are still doing so, before the generals whose hands were covered with the blood of workers. They support the vilest projects and greatest crimes of their Governments. We have only to remember that the German Social-Democrat Scheidemann is supporting the Ukrainian policy of the German generals. They are the real *executioners* of the workers' revolution.

When the German workers have won their cause they will hang Scheidemann on the same gallows as Wilhelm. There are a great number of these kind of persons in France and England, as well as in other countries. It is they who deceive the workers by empty words about the defence of the fatherland (the bourgeois, Wilhelm fatherland), and *crush* the workers' revolution at home and *execute* it in Russia with the aid of the bayonets of their Governments.

The second current is the *centre*. This has a tendency to grumble against its Government, but is not capable of carrying on a revolutionary struggle. It has not the courage to call the workers into an open fight, and fears beyond everything an armed insurrection, which is the only way of solving the question.

And lastly, there is the third current, the *extreme left*. In Germany Liebknecht and his comrades. They are German Bolsheviks, their policy and views being those of the Bolsheviks.

You will understand what a muddle ensues as a result of all these groups calling themselves by one and the same name. The Social Democrat Liebknecht and the Social Democrat Scheidemann! What have they in common? The one, a mean traitor, an executioner of the revolution; and the other, a brave fighter for the working class. Can you imagine a greater difference?

In Russia, where the revolutionary struggle and the development of the revolution in October caused the question of Socialism and the overthrow of the bourgeois Government to be settled: immediately the dispute between the traitors to Socialism and the adherents of true Socialism was decided by *force of arms*. The Right Socialist Revolutionaries and party of the Mensheviks were on the same side of the barricades as the counter-revolutionary rabble: the Bolsheviks were on the other side, side by side with the workers and soldiers. *Blood* marked a boundary line between us. Such a thing cannot and never will be forgotten.

This is why we were *compelled* to give a different name to distinguish us from the traitors to Socialism. The difference between us is too great. Our ways and means are too far apart.

As regards the *bourgeois* Government, we Communists know but one duty towards it – to blow it up, shattering at one blow this union of plunderers. The Social Democrats propagate the defence of the union of business men, screening themselves by a pretence of defending their fatherland.

But after the victory of the working class, we stand for the defence and protection of the workers' Soviet Government against its sworn enemies, the Imperialists of the whole world. But they, like true traitors to the workers' interests, make it their task to break up the Workers' Government and demolish the Soviets. And in their struggle in this direction they go hand in hand with the united bourgeoisie.

We Communists are eagerly striving onward in spite of all difficulties: we are going towards *Communism through the dictatorship of the proletariat*. But they, like the evil bourgeoisie, hate this dictatorship with all their hearts, libelling and lowering it whenever they can, proclaiming as their watchword: "Back to Capitalism!"

We Communists say to the working class:

“There are many thorns upon our path, but we must go onward, undaunted. The great revolution which is turning the old world upside down cannot go smoothly; the great revolution cannot be carried out in white gloves; it is born in pain. These birth pangs must be gone through with infinite patience; when duly born they will serve to free us from the iron grip of capitalist slavery.”

And the Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries and Social Democrats stand aside, looking on at our mistakes and failings, and draw the conclusion of going back. “Let us return,” they say. “Give up everything to the bourgeoisie and content ourselves with a modest helping at capitalist tables.”

No! Our road is not the same. These wretches try to scare us by the bogey of civil war. But there can be no revolution without a civil war. Or do they perhaps imagine that in other more advanced countries Socialist revolutions will take place without civil war? The example of Finland has proved the contrary. Thousands of murdered Finnish comrades afford the best evidence of civil war in advanced capitalist countries being ever more fierce, more bloody, more cruel and frenzied than ours proved to be. Now we can foresee that in Germany, for instance, the war between the classes will be extremely acute. The German officers are already shooting their soldiers and sailors by hundreds for the slightest attempt of rebellion. It is only through civil war and the *iron dictatorship of the workers* that Socialism can be attained. Such is the programme of the Communists.

The demolition of the bourgeois Government, organisation of production by the working class, a wide road to Communism – such is the programme of the Communist Party.

When we call ourselves Communists we not only draw a line to distinguish ourselves from the social traitors, such as Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries, and followers of Scheidemann, and other bourgeois agents. We revert to the old name of the revolutionary party, at the head of which stood Karl Marx. His was the *Communist Party*. The testament of modern revolution up to the present moment is still the **Manifesto of the Communists** written by Marx and Engels. Some eighteen months before his death old Engels protested against the name of “Social Democrat.” He said,

“This name is not a suitable one for a party which is striving towards Communism and which finally aims at destroying *every form* of government, including a democratic one.”

What would these great old men, glowing with hatred towards the bourgeois State apparatus, say if they were shown such Social Democrats as Dan, Tzeretelli, Scheidemann? They would have branded them with contempt, as they did those “democrats” who, in tragic and difficult moments of the revolution, directed the muzzles of their revolvers against the working class.

There are many obstacles in our way; and there is at present much that is evil in our midst. For many outsiders have joined us who are selling themselves for money to the highest bidder, intending to fish in troubled waters. And the working class is young and inexperienced. And the fiercest enemies are surrounding the young Soviet Republic on all sides. But we Communists know that the working class is learning wisdom by its own mistakes. We know that it will clear its ranks of all the impurity that has crept in; we know that it will be joined by its loyal and desired ally the world proletariat. No old womanish wails, no hysterical shrieks will confuse our party, for it has put upon its banner the golden words written by Marx in the **Communist Manifesto**:

**“Let the governing classes tremble before the communist revolution. The proletariat has nothing to lose but its chains; it has a world to win. Proletarians of all countries, unite!”**

May 1918