

J. V. Stalin

# Reply to the Discussion on the Report on “The Social-Democratic Deviation in our Party”

November 3, 1926

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## I

### Some General Questions

#### 1. Marxism is not a Dogma, but a Guide to Action

Comrades, I said in my report that Marxism is not a dogma, but a guide to action, that Engels’s well-known formula of the forties of the last century was correct in its time, but has become inadequate today. I said that, in view of this, it must be replaced by Lenin’s formula, which says that in the new conditions of the development of capitalism and of the class struggle of the proletariat, the victory of socialism in individual countries is quite possible and probable.

That statement of mine was challenged during the discussion. Zinoviev was particularly assiduous in this respect. I am therefore compelled to revert to this question and deal with it in greater detail.

I think that Zinoviev has not read Engels’s [“The Principles of Communism,”](#) or if he has, he has not understood them. Otherwise, he would not have raised objections; he would have realised that Social-Democracy is now clutching at Engels’s old formula in its fight against Leninism; he would have understood that, in following in the footsteps of the Social-Democrats, he might be laying himself open to a certain danger of “degeneration.”

Here is what Engels says in “The Principles of Communism,”<sup>1</sup> which is an exposition of individual propositions in the form of questions and answers.

“*Question:* Will it be possible to abolish private property at one stroke?”

“*Answer:* No, just as little as it will be possible at one stroke to multiply the existing productive forces to the extent required for the establishment of communal production. Consequently, the proletarian revolution,<sup>\*</sup> which in all probability is coming, will only gradually remodel present society, and only after that can it abolish private property, when the necessary quantity of means of production has been created.

“*Question*: What will be the course of development of this revolution?”

“*Answer*: First of all it will establish a democratic system and thereby, directly or indirectly, the political rule of the proletariat.”

What is evidently meant here is the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. You know, comrades, that this point has already been carried out in our country, and pretty thoroughly. (*Voices*: “True!” “Quite right!”)

Further:

“Democracy would be quite useless to the proletariat if it were not used forthwith as a means of carrying out further measures for launching a direct assault on private property and safeguarding the existence of the proletariat. The chief of these measures, which already necessarily follow from the existing conditions, are:

“1) Restriction of private property by means of a progressive tax, a heavy inheritance tax, abolition of inheritance by collateral lines (brothers, nephews, etc.), compulsory loans, etc.”

You know that these measures have been, or are being, carried out in our country pretty thoroughly.

Further:

“2) Gradual expropriation of the owners of land, factories, railways and shipping, partly through competition on the part of state industry, partly directly with compensation paid in assignats.”

You know that these measures too were carried out by us in the early years of our revolution.

Further:

“3) Confiscation of the property of all émigrés and of rebels against the majority of the people.”

As you know, we have confiscated and confiscated—so much so that there is nothing more to be done. (*Laughter*.)

Further:

“4) Organisation of labour or the providing of employment to proletarians on national estates and in national factories and workshops, so that competition among the workers will be abolished, and the factory-owners, as far as any of them are left, will be compelled to pay just as high wages as the state.”

As you know, we are following this course and we are achieving a number of victories by it, and in the main we are carrying out this point quite successfully.

Further:

“5) Equal obligation to labour for all members of society until private property is completely abolished. Formation of industrial armies, especially for agriculture.”

You know that we tried this course in the period of War Communism, in the form of organising labour armies. But we did not achieve great results by it. We then proceeded to attain the same object by roundabout ways, and there is no reason to doubt that we shall achieve decisive successes in this field.

Further:

“6) Centralisation of the credit system and the money market in the hands of the state through a National Bank with state capital, and the suppression of all private banks and bankers.”

This too, comrades, we have already carried out in the main, as you very well know.

Further:

“7) Multiplication of national factories, workshops, railways and shipping, cultivation of all untilled land and improved cultivation of already tilled land, as the capital and labour power at the disposal of the nation multiply.”

You know that this also is being carried out and that we are making good progress, which is being substantially furthered by the fact that we have nationalised the land and the main branches of industry.

Further:

“8) Education of all children, from the moment they can dispense with their mothers’ care, in national institutions and at the cost of the nation.”

This we are accomplishing, but are still very far from having accomplished, since, owing to the ruinous effects of war and intervention, we are not yet in a position to place the education of all the children in the country under the care of the state.

Further:

“9) Erection of great palaces on the national estates to serve as common homes for communes of citizens, which engage both in industry and in agriculture, and which combine the advantages of both urban and rural life, without the one-sidedness and disadvantages of either.”

This evidently refers to a large-scale solution of the housing problem. You know that we are going ahead with this work, and if it has not yet been carried out in the main, and probably will not be speedily carried out, it is because, owing to the ruined state of industry we inherited, we have not yet succeeded, and could not possibly have succeeded, in accumulating sufficient funds for extensive housing construction.

Further:

“10) Demolition of all insanitary and badly built houses and city areas.”

This point is an integral part of the previous one, and therefore what was said of the latter also applies to it.

Further

“11) Equal inheritance rights for children whether born in or out of wedlock.”

I think it may be said that we are carrying out this point satisfactorily.

And, the last point:

“12) Concentration of all means of transport in the hands of the nation.”

You know that this point we have already carried out in full.

That, comrades, is the programme of proletarian revolution set forth by Engels in his “The Principles of Communism.”

You will see, comrades, that nine-tenths of this programme has *already* been accomplished by our revolution.

Further:

“*Question*: Can this revolution (i.e., the revolution mentioned above—*J. St.*) take place in one country alone?

“*Answer*: No. Large-scale industry has, by the very fact that it has created a world market, bound all the nations of the earth, and notably the civilised nations, so closely together, that each depends on what is happening in the others. Further, in all the civilised countries it has evened up social development to such an extent that in all of them the bourgeoisie and the proletariat have become the two decisive classes of society, and the struggle between them the major struggle of our times. *Therefore, the communist revolution will not be simply a national revolution, but will take place simultaneously in all the civilised countries, that is, at least in England, America, France and Germany*” . . .<sup>\*</sup> (see F. Engels, “The Principles of Communism”).

That is how the matter stands, comrades.

Engels said that a proletarian revolution with the programme set forth above *could not* take place in one separate country. But the fact is that, in the new conditions of the class struggle of the proletariat, the conditions of imperialism, we have in the main already accomplished such a revolution in one separate country, in our country, having carried out nine-tenths of its programme.

Zinoviev may say that we made a mistake in carrying out this programme, in carrying out these points. (*Laughter.*) It may well be that in carrying out these points, we have been guilty of a certain “national narrow-mindedness.” (*Laughter.*) That may very well be. But one thing is nevertheless clear, namely, that what Engels in the forties of the last century, in the conditions of pre-monopoly capitalism, considered impracticable and impossible for one country, became practicable and possible in our country in the conditions of imperialism.

Of course, if Engels were alive, he would not cling to the old formula. On the contrary, he would heartily welcome our revolution, and would say: “To the devil with all old formulas! Long live the victorious revolution in the U.S.S.R.!” (*Applause.*)

But that is not the way the gentry of the Social-Democratic camp see it. They cling to Engels’s old formula in order to use it as a screen and facilitate their fight against our revolution, against the Bolsheviks. That is their affair, of course. Only the sad thing is that Zinoviev is trying to ape these gentry, and in the present case is taking the Social-Democratic path.

In quoting Engels’s formula and examining it in detail I had three considerations in mind:

firstly, to make the question as clear as possible by contrasting Lenin’s formula on the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country to Engels’s formula, which was the most extreme and sharp expression of the view held by the Marxists of the old period;

secondly, to expose the reformism and anti-revolutionary character of Social-Democracy, which tries to hide its opportunism by referring to Engels’s old formula;

thirdly, to show that Lenin was the *first* to settle the question of the victory of socialism in one country.

It has to be admitted, comrades, that it was Lenin, and no one else, who discovered the truth that the victory of socialism in one country is possible. Lenin must not be robbed of what belongs to him by right. One must not fear the truth, one must have the courage to tell the truth, one must have the courage to say frankly that Lenin was the *first* of the Marxists to present the question of the victory of socialism in one country in a new way, and to answer it in the affirmative.

By this I do not mean that Lenin, as a thinker, was superior to Marx or Engels. By this I mean only two things:

firstly, that it cannot be expected of Engels or Marx, however great their genius as thinkers, that they should have foreseen in the period of pre-monopoly capitalism all the potentialities of the class struggle of the proletariat and the proletarian revolution that were revealed more than half a century later, in the period of developed monopoly capitalism;

secondly, that there is nothing surprising in the fact that Lenin, as a brilliant disciple of Engels and Marx, was able to note the new potentialities of the proletarian revolution in the new conditions of capitalist development, and thus discovered the truth that the victory of socialism in one country is possible.

One must know how to distinguish between the letter and the essence of Marxism, between its various propositions and its method. Lenin succeeded in discovering the truth that the victory of socialism is possible in one country because he did not regard Marxism as a dogma, but as a guide to action, because he was not a slave of the letter and was able to grasp what was primary and basic in Marxism.

Here is what Lenin said on this score in his pamphlet *“Left-Wing” Communism, an Infantile Disorder*:

“Our theory is not a dogma, but, a guide to action, said Marx and Engels; and it is the greatest mistake, the greatest crime on the part of such ‘patented’ Marxists as Karl Kautsky, Otto Bauer, etc., that they have not understood this, have been unable to apply it at crucial moments of the proletarian revolution” (see Vol. XXV, p. 211).

That is the path, the path of Marx, Engels and Lenin, which we are following, and which we must continue to follow if we want to remain revolutionaries to the end.

It is because Leninism has kept to this path, and continues to do so, that it has held its own as the Marxism of the era of imperialism and proletarian revolution. To depart from this path means to land in the quagmire of opportunism. To deviate from this path means to drag at the tail of Social-Democracy—which is exactly what has happened in this instance to Zinoviev.

Zinoviev declared here that Marx and Engels subsequently toned down Engels’s old formula and granted the possibility of the proletarian revolution beginning in individual countries. He quoted the words of Engels that “the Frenchman will begin it and the German will finish it.”<sup>4</sup> All that is true. That is something which nowadays every Soviet-Party School student knows. But it is not the point at issue just now. It is one thing to say: Begin the revolution, for in the very near future you will be supported by a victorious revolution in other countries, and in the event of such a victory in other countries, you may count on victory. That is one thing. It is another thing to say: Begin the revolution and go ahead with it in the knowledge that even if a victory of the revolution in other countries does not come to your aid in the near future, the conditions of the struggle now, in the period of developed imperialism, are such that you can be victorious all the same, and so later start the fire of revolution in other countries. That is another thing.

And if I quoted Engels’s old formula, it was not in order to evade the fact that Engels and Marx subsequently toned down this sharp and extreme formula, but in order:

- a) to make the question clear by contrasting the two opposite formulas;
- b) to reveal the opportunism of Social-Democracy, which tries to hide behind Engels’s old formula;
- c) to show that Lenin was the first to present the question of the victory of socialism in one country in a new way and to answer it in the affirmative.

So you see, comrades, that I was right when I said that Zinoviev had not read “The Principles of Communism” or that, if he had, he had not understood them, since he interpreted Engels’s old formula in the SocialDemocratic manner, and had thus slid into opportunism.

## **2. Some Remarks of Lenin on the Dictatorship of the Proletariat**

Further, I said in my report that we have a more or less similar instance in connection with the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the conditions of developed imperialism. I said that as regards the dictatorship of

the proletariat, understood as the smashing of the old bourgeois state apparatus and the building of a new, proletarian one, Marx in his day (the seventies of the nineteenth century) made an exception in the case of Britain, and probably also of America, where militarism and bureaucracy were little developed at that time, and where at that time there was a possibility of achieving the political rule of the proletariat by other means, “peaceful” means. I said that this exception, or reservation, made by Marx in the case of Britain and America was correct at the time, but, in Lenin’s opinion, has become incorrect and superfluous in the present conditions of developed imperialism, when militarism and bureaucracy are flourishing in Britain and America in the same way as in other countries.

Permit me, comrades, to turn to Marx. Here is what he wrote in his letter to Kugelmann in April 1871:

“. . . If you look at the last chapter of my *Eighteenth Brumaire*, you will find that I say that the next attempt of the French revolution will be no longer, as before, to transfer the bureaucratic-military machine from one hand to another, but *to smash* it . . . , and this is the preliminary condition for every real people’s revolution on the continent.\* And this is what our heroic party comrades in Paris are attempting.” (I quote from Lenin’s [\*The State and Revolution\*](#), Vol. XXI, p. 394.)

That is what Marx wrote in 1871.

As we know, this passage was pounced upon by Social-Democrats of every brand, and by Kautsky in the first place, who asserted that a forcible revolution of the proletariat was not necessarily the method of advance towards socialism, that the dictatorship of the proletariat must not necessarily be understood as meaning the smashing of the old bourgeois state apparatus and the building of a new, proletarian one, and that therefore what the proletariat had to strive for was a peaceful path of transition from capitalism to socialism.

How did Comrade Lenin. react to this? Here is what he wrote on this score in his book *The State and Revolution*:

“It is interesting to note, in particular, two points in the above-quoted argument of Marx. First, he confines his conclusion to the continent. This was understandable in 1871, when England was still the model of a purely capitalist country, but without militarism and, to a considerable degree, without a bureaucracy. Hence, Marx excluded England, where a revolution, even a people’s revolution, then seemed possible, and indeed was possible, *without* the preliminary condition of destroying the ‘ready-made state machinery.’

“*Today,\** in 1917, in the epoch of the first great imperialist war, *this qualification made by Marx is no longer valid.\** Both Britain and America, the biggest and the last representatives—in the whole world—of Anglo-Saxon ‘liberty’ in the sense that they had no militarism and bureaucracy, have completely sunk into the all-European filthy, bloody morass of bureaucratic-military institutions which subordinate everything to themselves and trample everything underfoot. Today, in Britain and in America, too, ‘the preliminary condition for every real people’s revolution.’ is the *smashing, the destruction* of the ‘ready-made state machinery’ (perfected in those countries, between 1914 and 1917, up to the ‘European’ general imperialist standard)” (see Vol. XXI, p. 395).

As you see, we have here an instance which is more or less similar to the one I spoke of in my report in connection with Engels’s old formula about the victory of socialism.

The reservation, or exception, made by Marx in the case of England and America was justified so long as there was no developed militarism and no developed bureaucracy in those countries. This reservation, in Lenin’s opinion, became invalid in the new conditions of monopoly capitalism, when militarism and bureaucracy had developed in Britain and America to at least as great a degree as in the countries of the European Continent. Hence, a forcible revolution of the proletariat, the dictatorship of the proletariat, is an inevitable and indispensable condition for the advance towards socialism in all imperialist countries without exception.

Hence, when the opportunists of all countries cling to this reservation made by Marx conditionally and campaign against the dictatorship of the proletariat, it is not Marxism they are advocating, but, their own opportunist cause.

Lenin arrived at this conclusion because he knew how to distinguish between the letter and the essence of Marxism, because he regarded Marxism not as a dogma, but as a guide to action.

It would be strange to expect that Marx should have foreseen several decades in advance all the diverse potentialities of the future development of capitalism and the class struggle. But it would be stranger still to wonder at the fact that Lenin observed and drew general conclusions about those potentialities in the new conditions of the development of capitalism, when those potentialities had appeared and developed to a more than sufficient degree.

An interjection was made here by somebody, in the audience, I think it was Ryazanov, to the effect that the reservation made by Marx in the case of England and America is not only incorrect in the present conditions of the class struggle, but was incorrect even in the conditions prevailing at the time Marx made it. I do not agree with Ryazanov. I think that Ryazanov is mistaken. At all events, Lenin is of a different opinion, and declares quite positively that Marx was right in making this reservation in the case of England and America in the seventies.

Here is what Lenin writes about in his this pamphlet *The Tax in Kind*:

“In our controversy with Bukharin in the Central Executive Committee, he remarked, among other things, that on the question of high salaries for specialists ‘we’ are ‘more to the Right than Lenin,’ for we see here no deviation from principle, bearing in mind the words of Marx that under certain conditions it would be more expedient for the working class to ‘buy off this gang’ (that is, the gang of capitalists, i.e., to *buy out* from the bourgeoisie the land, factories, mills and other means of production). This is an extremely interesting remark.” “. . . Consider Marx’s idea carefully. Marx was discussing England of the seventies of the last century, of the culminating period in the development of pre-monopoly capitalism, he was discussing a country in which there was less militarism and bureaucracy than in any other, a country in which there was then the greatest possibility of a ‘peaceful’ victory for socialism in the sense of the workers ‘buying off’ the bourgeoisie. And Marx said: Under certain conditions the workers will certainly not refuse to buy off the bourgeoisie. Marx did not commit himself—or the future leaders of the socialist revolution—as regards the forms, methods and ways of bringing about the revolution; for he understood perfectly well what a vast number of new problems would arise, how the whole situation would change in the course of the revolution, and how *often* and *considerably* it would change in the course of the revolution. Well, and in Soviet Russia *after* power has been seized by the proletariat, *after* the armed resistance and sabotage of the exploiters have been crushed—is it not obvious that *certain* conditions have arisen that are similar to those which might have arisen in Britain half a century ago had it then begun a peaceful transition to socialism? The submission of the capitalists to the workers in Britain could have been assured then owing to the following circumstances: 1) the absolute preponderance of workers, proletarians, among the population owing to the absence of a peasantry (in Britain in the seventies there were signs which allowed one to hope for an extremely rapid spread of socialism among the agricultural labourers); 2) the excellent organisation of the proletariat in trade unions (Britain was at that time the leading country in the world in this respect); 3) the comparatively high level of culture of the proletariat, which had been trained by centuries of development of political liberty; 4) the old habit of the splendidly organised British capitalists of settling political and economic questions by compromise—at that time the British capitalists were better organised than the capitalists of any country in the world (this superiority has now passed to Germany). Those were the circumstances at that time in which the idea could arise that *the peaceful submission\** of the British capitalists to the workers *was possible*. . . . Marx was profoundly right when he taught the workers that it was important to preserve the organisation of large-scale production precisely for the purpose of facilitating the transition to socialism, and that the idea of *paying the capitalists well*, of buying them off, was quite permissible if (by way of an *exception*, and Britain then was an exception) circumstances should so develop as to *compel\** the capitalists to submit peacefully and to come over to socialism in a cultured and organised fashion, on condition that they were paid compensation” (see Vol. XXVI, pp. 327-29).

Obviously, it is Lenin that is right here, and not Ryazanov.

### 3. The Unevenness of Development of the Capitalist Countries

I said in my report that Lenin discovered and demonstrated the law of the unevenness of economic and political development of the capitalist countries, and that on the basis of this law, and of the fact that the unevenness was developing and becoming more pronounced, Lenin arrived at the idea that the victory of socialism in one country is possible. This thesis of Lenin's was contested by Trotsky and Zinoviev. Trotsky said that it is incorrect theoretically. And Zinoviev, together with Trotsky, asserted that formerly, in the period of pre-monopoly capitalism, the unevenness of development was greater than it is now, in the period of monopoly capitalism, and that therefore the idea of the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country cannot be linked with the law of the unevenness of capitalist development.

That Trotsky objects to Lenin's theoretical thesis concerning the law of uneven development is not at all surprising, for it is well known. that this law refutes Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution.

Furthermore, Trotsky is obviously tending to a philistine point of view here. He confuses the *economic inequality* of the various countries in the past—an inequality which did not always, and could not, lead to their spasmodic development—with *the unevenness of economic and political development* in the period of imperialism, when the economic inequality of countries is less than it was in the past, but the unevenness of economic and political development is incomparably greater than before and manifests itself more sharply than before; moreover it necessarily and inevitably leads to spasmodic development, to a situation in which countries which were industrially backward in a more or less short period overtake countries which had gone ahead, and this cannot but create the pre-conditions for gigantic imperialist wars and the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country.

It scarcely needs proof that this muddling of two different concepts does not, and cannot, testify to a high level of "theoretical" knowledge on Trotsky's part.

But I cannot understand Zinoviev, who after all was a Bolshevnik and had some inkling of Bolshevism. How can it be asserted that the unevenness of development was formerly greater than it is now, in the conditions of monopoly capitalism, without running the risk of landing in the quagmire of ultra-imperialism and Kautskyism? How can it be asserted that the idea of the victory of socialism in one country is not linked with the law of uneven development? Is it not known that it was precisely from the law of uneven development that Lenin deduced this idea? What, for example, do the following words of Lenin indicate?

"Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence,\* the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country taken separately" (see Vol. XVIII, p. 232).

What does the law of uneven development proceed from?

It proceeds from the fact that:

- 1) the old, pre-monopoly capitalism has grown into and developed into monopoly capitalism, into imperialism;
- 2) the division of the world into spheres of influence of imperialist groups and states is already completed;
- 3) world economic development is proceeding in the midst of a desperate, a mortal struggle of the imperialist groups for markets, raw materials, and the expansion of old spheres of influence;
- 4) this development is not even, but spasmodic; states that have run on ahead being ousted from the markets; and new states coming to the fore;
- 5) this manner of development results from some imperialist groups being able rapidly to develop technique, lower the cost of commodities and seize markets to the detriment of other imperialist groups;
- 6) periodical redivisions of the already divided world thus become an absolute necessity;



7) such redivisions may therefore be effected only by forcible means, by the testing of the strength of this or that imperialist group by force;

8) this cannot but lead to sharp conflicts and gigantic wars between the imperialist groups;

9) this state of affairs inevitably leads to the mutual weakening of the imperialists and creates the possibility of the imperialist front being breached in individual countries;

10) the possibility of the imperialist front being breached in individual countries cannot but create favourable conditions for the victory of socialism in one country.

What is it that accentuates the unevenness and lends decisive significance to the uneven development in the conditions of imperialism?

Two main circumstances:

Firstly, that the division of the world among the imperialist groups is completed, that such a thing as “vacant” territory no longer exists anywhere, and that redivision of the already divided world through imperialist wars is an absolute necessity for the achievement of economic “equilibrium.”

Secondly, that the colossal and hitherto unparalleled development of technique, in the broad meaning of the word, makes it easier for certain imperialist groups to overtake and outstrip others in the struggle; for markets, for seizing sources of raw material, etc.

But these circumstances developed and reached their climax only in the period of developed imperialism. And it could not be otherwise, because only in the period of imperialism could the division of the world be completed, and only in the period of developed imperialism did the colossal technical possibilities show themselves.

It is to this that must be attributed the fact that, whereas formerly Britain was able to keep ahead of all other countries industrially and to leave them lagging behind for more than a hundred years, later, in the period of monopoly capitalism, Germany required only about a couple of decades to begin to outstrip Britain, while America required even less to overtake the European countries.

How, after this, can it be asserted that the unevenness of development was formerly greater than it is now, and that the idea of the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country is not linked with the law of uneven development of capitalism in the period of imperialism?

Is it not clear that only philistines in matters of theory can confuse the economic inequality of the industrial countries in the past with the law of uneven economic and political development, which assumed particular force and acuteness only in the period of developed monopoly capitalism?

Is it not clear that only complete ignorance in the field of Leninism could have prompted Zinoviev and his friends to put forward their more than strange objections to Lenin’s propositions connected with the law of uneven economic and political development of the capitalist countries?

## **II Kamenev Clears the Way for Trotsky**

What was the basic intention of Kamenev’s speech at this conference? Disregarding certain minor points and Kamenev’s usual diplomacy, it will be seen that its intention was to help Trotsky to defend his position, to help

him in his fight against Leninism on the basic question of the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country.

With this aim in view, Kamenev took upon himself the “job” of proving that the principal article (1915) in which Lenin dealt with the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country had no reference to Russia; that when Lenin spoke of such a possibility, it was not Russia he had in mind but other capitalist countries. Kamenev took upon himself this dubious “job” in order thereby to clear the way for Trotsky, whose “scheme” is, and cannot but be, shot to pieces by Lenin’s article written in 1915.

To put it crudely, Kamenev assumed the role of Trotsky’s yardman (*laughter*), sweeping the way clear for him. It is sad, of course, to see the director of the Lenin Institute in the role of Trotsky’s yardman—not because there is anything demeaning in the work of a yardman, but because Kamenev, who is undoubtedly a skilled man, might, I think, have taken upon himself a more highly skilled job. (*Laughter.*) But he assumed this role voluntarily; and, of course, he had every right to do so, so there is nothing to be done about it.

Let us now see how Kamenev performed this more than strange job.

Kamenev asserted in his speech that Lenin’s basic proposition in his article of 1915, affirming the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country, a proposition which defined the whole line of our revolution and of our constructive work, did not and could not relate to Russia; that when Lenin spoke of the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country, it was not Russia he had in mind but only other capitalist countries. That is incredible and monstrous. It sounds very much like downright slander of Comrade Lenin. But Kamenev, apparently, cares very little what the Party may think of this falsification of Lenin. His one concern is to clear the way for Trotsky at any price.

How does he try to substantiate this strange assertion?

He says that Comrade Lenin, two weeks after this article of his, issued his well-known theses<sup>3</sup> on the character of the impending revolution in Russia, in which he said that the task of the Marxists was confined to securing the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia; and that Lenin said this because he supposedly held the view that the revolution in Russia was bound to stop short at its bourgeois phase and not grow over into a socialist revolution. Well, and since Lenin’s article on the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country dealt not with the bourgeois, but with the socialist revolution, it is obvious that Lenin could not have had Russia in mind in that article.

Hence, according to Kamenev it follows that Lenin understood the scope of the Russian revolution in the way that a Left bourgeois revolutionary does, or a reformist of the Social-Democratic type, who hold the opinion that the bourgeois revolution should not grow over into a socialist revolution, and that between the bourgeois revolution and the socialist revolution there should be a long historical gap, a long interruption, an interval, lasting several decades at least, during which capitalism will flourish and the proletariat languish in misery.

It follows that when Lenin wrote his article in 1915, he was not thinking of, did not desire, and was not striving for an *immediate* transition from the victory of the bourgeois revolution to a socialist revolution.

You will say that this is incredible and monstrous. Yes, Kamenev’s assertion really is incredible and monstrous. But Kamenev is not to be put out by that.

Allow me to quote a few documents which show that Kamenev is grossly falsifying Comrade Lenin in regard to this question.

Here is what Comrade Lenin wrote of the character of the Russian revolution as early as 1905, when its scope was not, and could not be, so powerful as it became later, as a result of the imperialist war, by February 1917:

“From the democratic revolution we shall *at once*,\* and just to the extent of our strength, the strength of the class-conscious and organised proletariat, begin to pass to the socialist revolution” (see Vol. VIII, p. 186).

This passage is quoted from an article of Lenin's which appeared in September 1905.

Does Kamenev know of the existence of this article? I consider that the director of the Lenin Institute ought to know of its existence.

It therefore follows that Lenin conceived the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution not as the end of the proletariat's struggle and of the revolution in general, but as the first stage and a transitional step to the socialist revolution.

But perhaps Lenin subsequently changed his opinion of the character and scope of the Russian revolution? Let us take another document. I am referring to an article of Lenin's which appeared in 1915, in November, three months after the publication of his basic article on the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country. This is what he says there:

“The proletariat is fighting, and will fight valiantly, to capture power, for a republic, for the confiscation of the land, *that is*, for the enlistment of the peasantry and the *utilisation to the utmost* of its revolutionary forces, for the participation of the ‘non-proletarian masses of the people’ in liberating *bourgeois* Russia from *military-feudal* ‘imperialism’ (=tsarism). And the proletariat will *immediately\** take advantage of this liberation of bourgeois Russia from tsarism, from the agrarian power of the landlords, not to aid the rich peasants in their struggle against the rural worker, but *to bring about the socialist revolution*<sup>14</sup> in alliance with the proletarians of Europe” (see Vol. XVIII, p. 313).

You see that here, as in the previous quotation, in 1905 and in 1915 alike, Lenin held that the bourgeois revolution in Russia must grow over into a socialist revolution, that the victory of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia would be the first stage of the Russian revolution, necessary in order to pass *immediately* to its second stage, the socialist revolution.

Well, and what about Lenin's theses of 1915, to which Kamenev referred in his speech, and which speak of the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia? Do not these theses contradict the idea of the growing over of the bourgeois revolution into a socialist revolution? Of course not. On the contrary, the underlying idea of these theses is precisely the growing over of the bourgeois revolution into a socialist revolution, the passing of the first stage of the Russian revolution into the second stage. In the first place, Lenin did not say in these theses that the scope of the Russian revolution and the tasks of the Marxists in Russia *were confined* to overthrowing the tsar and the landlords, that is, to the tasks of a bourgeois-democratic revolution. In the second place, Lenin limited himself in these theses to describing the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution because he regarded that revolution as the *first* stage and the *immediate* task of the Russian Marxists. In the third place, Lenin held that the Russian Marxists should *begin* the accomplishment of their tasks not with the second stage (as Trotsky proposed with his scheme of “no tsar, but a workers' government.”), but with the first stage, the bourgeois-democratic stage of the revolution.

Is there any contradiction here, even the shadow of a contradiction, with the idea of the growing over of the bourgeois revolution into a socialist revolution? Obviously, not.

It follows, then, that Kamenev has flagrantly misrepresented Lenin's position.

But we have witnesses against Kamenev not only in the shape of documents of Lenin's. We also have witnesses in the shape of living persons, such as Trotsky, for instance, or the Fourteenth Conference of our Party, or, lastly, strange as it, may seem, Kamenev and Zinoviev themselves.

We know that Lenin's article on the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country was published in 1915. We know that Trotsky, who at that time carried on a controversy with Comrade Lenin on the question of the victory of socialism in one country, immediately, that is, in the same year 1915, replied to this article with a special critical article. What did Trotsky say then, in 1915, in his critical article? How did he assess Comrade Lenin's article? Did he understand it to mean that when speaking of the victory of socialism in one country,

Lenin did not have Russia in mind, or did he understand it differently, in the way, say, that all of us understand it now? Here is a passage from Trotsky's article:

“The only more or less concrete historical argument advanced against the slogan of a United States of Europe was formulated in the Swiss *Sotsial-Demokrat* (at that time the central organ of the Bolsheviks, where Lenin's above-mentioned article was printed—*J. St.*) in the following sentence. ‘Uneven economic and political development is an absolute law of capitalism.’ From this the *Sotsial-Demokrat* draws the conclusion that the victory of socialism is possible in one country, and that therefore there is no reason to make the dictatorship of the proletariat in each separate country contingent upon the establishment of a United States of Europe. . . . That no country in its struggle must ‘wait’ for others, is an elementary thought; which it is useful and necessary to reiterate in order that the idea of concurrent international action may not be replaced by the idea of temporising international inaction. Without waiting for the others, we begin and continue the struggle nationally, in the full confidence that our initiative will give an impetus to the struggle in other countries; but if this should not occur, it would be hopeless to think—as historical experience and theoretical considerations testify—that, for example, *a revolutionary Russia could hold out in the face of a conservative Europe*,\* or that a socialist Germany could exist in isolation in a capitalist world” (see Trotsky's *Works*, Vol, III, Part 1, pp. 89-90).

It follows that Trotsky at that time understood Lenin's article not in the way that Kamenev is now trying to “understand” it, but as Lenin understood it, as the Party understands it, and as we all understand it, otherwise Trotsky would not have fortified himself in his controversy with Lenin by an argument based *on Russia*.

It follows that Trotsky is here, in this passage, testifying against his present ally, Kamenev.

Why, then, did he not speak against Kamenev at this conference? Why did Trotsky not declare here publicly and honestly that Kamenev was flagrantly distorting Lenin? Does Trotsky think that his silence in this matter can be described as a model of honest controversy? The reason why Trotsky did not speak here against Kamenev is that he evidently did not want to get himself involved in the dubious “business” of directly slandering Lenin—be preferred to leave this sordid work to Kamenev.

And how does the Party, as represented, for instance, by its Fourteenth Conference, regard the matter? Here is what is said in the Fourteenth Conference resolution dealing with the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country:

“From, the ‘unevenness of economic and political development, which is an absolute law of capitalism,’ Comrade Lenin rightly deduced two things: a) the possibility of ‘the victory of socialism first, in a few or even in one capitalist country taken separately,’ and b) the possibility that these few countries, or even one country, will not necessarily be the countries of the most developed capitalism (see, in particular, the notes on Sukhanov). *The experience of the Russian revolution has demonstrated*\* that not only is such a first victory in one country possible, but, given a number of favourable circumstances, this first country where the proletarian revolution is victorious may (if it receives a certain amount of support from the international proletariat) maintain itself and consolidate its position for a long time, even if this support should not assume the form of direct proletarian revolutions in other countries.” (From the resolution of the fourteenth Party Conference on “The Tasks of the Gornintern and the R.C.P.(B.) in Connection with the Enlarged Plenum of the E.C.C.I.”<sup>4</sup>)

It follows that the Party as a whole, as represented by its Fourteenth Conference, testifies against Kamenev, against his assertion that Lenin, in his article on the victory of socialism in one country, did not have Russia in mind. Otherwise, the conference would not have said that “the experience of the Russian revolution has demonstrated” the correctness of Lenin's article on the victory of socialism in one country.

It follows that the Fourteenth Conference understood Comrade Lenin's article as he himself understood it, as Trotsky understood it, and as we all understand it.

And what was the attitude of Kamenev and Zinoviev to this resolution of the Fourteenth Conference? Is it not a fact that the resolution was drafted and approved *unanimously* by a commission which included Zinoviev and

Kamenev? Is it not a fact that Kamenev was the chairman at the Fourteenth Conference, which adopted this resolution *unanimously*, and that it was Zinoviev who made the report on the resolution? How is it to be explained that Kamenev and Zinoviev voted for this resolution, for all its clauses? Is it not obvious that at that time Kamenev understood Lenin's article, a quotation from which was directly included in the Fourteenth Conference resolution, differently from the way he is trying to "understand" it now? Which Kamenev are we to believe, the one who was chairman at the Fourteenth Conference and voted for the Fourteenth Conference resolution, or the one who comes forward here, at the Fifteenth Conference, as Trotsky's yardman?

It follows that the Kamenev of the period of the Fourteenth Conference testifies against the Kamenev of the period of the Fifteenth Conference.

And why does Zinoviev keep silent and make no attempt to correct Kamenev who flagrantly misrepresents both Lenin's article of 1915 and the resolution of the Fourteenth Conference? Is it not a fact that none other than Zinoviev put the case for the Fourteenth Conference resolution on the victory of socialism in one country?

It follows that Zinoviev's hands are not quite clean. (*Voices*: "Quite unclean!") Can this be called honest controversy?

It follows that Kamenev and Zinoviev are now beyond honest controversy.

And the conclusion? The conclusion is that Kamenev has failed in the role of Trotsky's yardman. He has not justified Trotsky's hopes.

### III

#### **An Incredible Muddle, or Zinoviev on Revolutionary Spirit and Internationalism**

I pass now to Zinoviev. If Kamenev's whole speech was an attempt to clear the way for Trotsky, Zinoviev made it his task to prove that the opposition leaders are the only revolutionaries and the only internationalists in the whole world.

Let us analyse his "arguments."

He takes Bukharin's statement that when examining questions of an internal order (the building of socialism) one must abstract oneself methodologically from questions of an external order, compares this proposition of Bukharin's with what the theses on the opposition bloc say about the possibility of the victory of socialism in our country, and arrives at the conclusion that Bukharin and the Central Committee, which in the main approved the theses, are forgetting the international tasks of our revolution, the interests of the international revolution.

Is all that true? It is all nonsense, comrades. The secret is that methodology is one of Zinoviev's weak points; he gets muddled over the simplest things, and makes out his own muddle to be the real state of affairs. Bukharin says that the question of building socialism must not be confused with the question of creating a guarantee as regards intervention against our country, that internal questions must not be confused with external questions. Bukharin does not say that internal questions are not connected with external, international questions. All he says is that the former must not be confused with the latter. That is a primary and elementary requirement of methodology. Who is to blame, if Zinoviev does not understand elementary questions of methodology?

We hold that our country exhibits two categories of contradictions: contradictions of an internal order and contradictions of an external order. The internal contradictions consist primarily of the struggle between the socialist, and the capitalist elements. We say that we can overcome these contradictions by our own efforts, that we can defeat the capitalist elements in our economy, draw the main mass of the peasantry into the work of socialist construction, and completely build a socialist society.

The external contradictions consist of the struggle between the land of socialism and its capitalist encirclement. We say that we cannot resolve these contradictions by our own efforts alone, that in order to resolve them the victory of socialism is necessary in several countries at least. It is precisely for this reason that we say that the victory of socialism in one country is not an end in itself, but an aid, a means and an instrument for the victory of the proletarian revolution in all countries.

Is all that true? Let Zinoviev prove that it is not.

Zinoviev's trouble is that he does not see the difference between these two categories of contradictions, that he muddles the two preposterously and slakes out his own muddle to be "genuine" internationalism, believing that whoever abstracts himself methodologically from questions of an external order when examining questions of an internal order is forgetting the interests of the international revolution.

That is very funny, but he really ought to understand that it is unconvincing.

As to the theses, which allegedly ignore the international element in our revolution, one has only to read them to realise that Zinoviev has again got into a muddle. Here is what is said in the theses:

"The Party holds that our revolution is a socialist. revolution, that, the October Revolution is not merely a signal, an impulse, a point of departure for the socialist revolution in the West, but that at the same time it is, firstly, a base for the further development of the world revolutionary movement, and, secondly, it ushers in a period of transition from capitalism to socialism in the U.S.S.R. (dictatorship of the proletariat), during which the proletariat, if it pursues a correct policy towards the peasantry, can, and will, successfully build a complete socialist society, *provided, of course, the power of the international revolutionary movement, on the one hand, and the power of the proletariat of the U.S.S.R. on the other, are great enough to protect the U.S.S.R. from armed imperialist intervention.*"\*\*

As you see, the international element has been fully and completely taken into account in the theses.

Further, Zinoviev, and Trotsky as well, quote passages from the works of Lenin to the effect that "the *complete* victory of the socialist revolution in one country is inconceivable, and requires the most active cooperation of several advanced countries at least," and in some strange way they arrive at the conclusion that it is beyond the power of our proletariat to completely build socialism in one country. But that is a sheer muddle, comrades! Has the Party ever said that the *complete* victory, the *final* victory of socialism is possible in our country, that, it is within the power of the proletariat of one country? Let, them tell us where and when it has said so. Does not the Party say, has it not always said, together with Lenin, that the complete and final victory of socialism is possible only if socialism is victorious in several countries? Has not the Party explained scores and hundreds of times that the victory of socialism in one country must: not be confused with the complete and final victory of socialism?

The Party has always held that the victory of socialism in one country signifies the possibility of completely building socialism in that country, and that this task can be accomplished by the efforts of one country alone, whereas the complete victory of socialism signifies a guarantee against intervention and restoration, and that this task can be accomplished only in the event of the victory of the revolution in several countries. How is it possible then to confuse the two tasks so preposterously? Who is to blame if Zinoviev, and Trotsky as well, so preposterously confuse the victory of socialism in one country with the complete and final victory of socialism? Why, they have only to read the resolution of the Fourteenth Conference, where this question is explained with an exactitude that could satisfy even a Soviet-Party School student.

Zinoviev, and Trotsky as well, put forward a number of quotations from Lenin's works of the period of the Brest Peace, where it is said that our revolution may be crushed by external enemies. But is it so bard to understand that these quotations have no bearing on the question of the possibility of building socialism in our country? Comrade Lenin says that we are not guaranteed against the possibility of intervention, and that is quite right. But has the Party ever said that we can guarantee our country against the danger of intervention by our own efforts alone? Has not our Party always affirmed, and does it not continue to affirm, that a guarantee against intervention can be provided only by the victory of the proletarian revolution in several countries? How is it

possible *on these grounds* to assert that it is beyond the power of our proletariat to completely build socialism in our country? Is it not time to stop this deliberate muddling of the external questions, questions of the direct struggle against the world bourgeoisie, with the question of building socialism in our country, with the question of victory over our capitalist elements at home?

Further, Zinoviev puts forward a quotation from the *Communist Manifesto*: “United action, of the leading civilised countries at least, is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat”—compares this quotation with a quotation from one of Comrade Lenin’s manuscripts where it is said that “the victory of socialism requires the joint efforts of the workers in several advanced countries”—and arrives at the conclusion that our Party has gone counter to these generally accepted and incontrovertible propositions, and has forgotten the international conditions for the victory of the proletarian revolution. Well, is not that ludicrous, comrades? Where and when did our Party ever under-estimate the decisive importance of the international efforts of the working class, and of the international conditions for the victory of the revolution in our country? And what is the Comintern, if not an expression of the uniting of the efforts of the proletarians not only of the advanced countries, but of all the countries of the world, both for the world revolution and for the development of our revolution? And who took the initiative in founding the Comintern, and who constitutes its advanced detachment, if not our Party? And what is the trade-union united front policy, if not the uniting of the efforts of the workers not only of the advanced countries, but of all countries in general? Who can deny the prime role of our Party in promoting the trade-union united front policy throughout the world? Is it not a fact that our revolution has always supported, and continues to support, the development of the revolution in all countries? Is it not a fact, that the workers of all countries have supported, and continue to support, our revolution by their sympathy for it and by their struggle against attempts at intervention? What is that, if not a uniting of the efforts of the workers of all countries for the sake of the victory of our revolution? And what about the struggle of the British workers against Curzon in connection with his notorious Note<sup>5</sup>? And what about the support the workers of the U.S.S.R. rendered the British coal miners? I could put forward a number of other well-known facts of a similar nature if it were necessary, comrades.

Where, then, in all this is there any forgetfulness of the international tasks of our revolution?

What then is the secret here? The secret is that Zinoviev is trying to substitute the question of joint efforts by the proletarians of all countries to achieve the victory of socialism in our country for the cardinal question of the possibility of completely building socialism in our country without the state support of the European proletariat, the cardinal question whether, under present-day international conditions, proletarian rule in Russia can hold out, in the face of a conservative Europe.

Trotsky, Zinoviev’s present teacher, says:

“It would be hopeless to think . . . that, for example, a revolutionary Russia could hold out in the face of a conservative Europe” (Trotsky, Vol. III, Part 1, p. 90).

Trotsky, Zinoviev’s present teacher, says:

“Without direct state support from the European proletariat, the working class of Russia will not be able to maintain itself in power and to transform its temporary rule into a lasting socialist dictatorship. This we cannot doubt for an instant” (see *Our Revolution*, p. 278).

Consequently, Zinoviev substitutes the question of joint efforts by the workers of Europe and Russia for the question of the victory of socialism in our country, given the victory of the proletariat in Europe (“state support from the European proletariat”).

That is the point, and that is what our dispute is about.

Zinoviev, by putting forward quotations from Lenin’s works and from the *Communist Manifesto*, is trying to substitute one question for another.

That is the secret of Zinoviev's exercises on the theme of our Party's "forgetfulness" of the international tasks of our revolution.

That is the secret of Zinoviev's tricks, confusion and muddle.

And this incredible confusion, this mish-mash and muddle in his own mind, Zinoviev has the "modesty" to palm off as the "genuine" revolutionary spirit and "genuine" internationalism of the opposition bloc.

Ludicrous, is it not, comrades?

No, to be an international revolutionary nowadays, when one is in the ranks of our Party, it is necessary in every possible way to strengthen and support our Party, which is also the advanced detachment of the Comintern. But the oppositionists are trying to disrupt and discredit our Party.

To be an internationalist nowadays, it is necessary in every possible way to strengthen and support the Communist International. But the oppositionists are trying to disintegrate and disrupt it, by supporting and instructing all kinds of Maslows and Souvarines.

It is time to realise that one cannot be a revolutionary and internationalist if one is at war with our Party, which is the advanced detachment of the Communist International. (*Applause.*)

It is time to realise that, in making war on the Comintern, the oppositionists have ceased to be revolutionaries and internationalists. (*Applause.*)

It is time to realise that the oppositionists are not revolutionaries and internationalists, but chatterers about revolution and internationalism. (*Applause.*)

It is time to realise that they are not revolutionaries in deed, but revolutionary phrasemongers and posers for the cinema screen. (*Laughter, applause.*)

It is time to realise that they are not revolutionaries in deed, but cinema revolutionaries. (*Laughter, applause.*)

#### **IV**

#### **Trotsky Falsifies Lenin**

### **1. Trotsky's Conjuring Tricks, or the Question of "Permanent Revolution"**

I pass now to Trotsky's speech.

Trotsky declared that the theory of permanent revolution has no bearing on the question under discussion—the character and prospects of our revolution.

That is very strange, to say the least of it. How does it come about? Is not the theory of permanent revolution a theory of the motive forces of the revolution? Is it not true that the theory of permanent revolution deals primarily with the motive forces of our revolution? Well, and what is the question of the character and prospects of our revolution, if not a question of its motive forces? How can it be said that the theory of permanent revolution has no bearing on the question under discussion? That is not true, comrades. It is sleight-of-hand, a conjuring trick. It is an attempt to cover up one's tracks, to dodge the issue. Vain effort! It is no use your trying to dodge the issue—you won't succeed



In another part of his speech Trotsky tried to “hint” that he had long ceased to attach any serious importance to the theory of permanent revolution. And Kamenev, in his speech, “gave it to be understood” that Trotsky is perhaps not averse to abandon the theory of permanent revolution, if he has not abandoned it already.

A miracle—nothing less!

Let us examine the matter. Is it true that the theory of permanent revolution has no bearing on the question under discussion, and if it is not true, can Kamenev be believed when he says that Trotsky attaches no importance to the theory of permanent revolution, and has almost repudiated it?

Let us turn to the documents. I have in mind, first of all, Trotsky’s letter to Comrade Olminsky in December 1921, which was published in the press in 1925—a letter which Trotsky has never attempted to repudiate and has not repudiated to this day, either directly or indirectly, and which therefore remains in full force. What does this letter say about permanent revolution?

Listen:

*“I by no means consider that in my disagreements with the Bolsheviks I was wrong on all points. I was wrong—and fundamentally wrong—in my assessment of the Menshevik faction, inasmuch as I overrated its revolutionary potentialities and hoped that it would be possible to isolate and eliminate its Right wing. However, this fundamental error arose from the fact that I approached both factions, the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, from the standpoint of the idea of permanent revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, whereas both the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks at that time adhered to the view-point of a bourgeois revolution and a democratic republic. I considered that in principle the disagreements between the two factions were not so very profound, and I hoped (and I expressed this hope repeatedly in letters and speeches) that the very course of the revolution would lead the two factions to the position of permanent revolution and conquest of power by the working class, as in fact partially happened in 1905. (Comrade Lenin’s preface to Kautsky’s article on the motive forces of the Russian revolution, and the whole line of the newspaper *Nachalo*.)*

“I consider that my assessment of the motive forces of the revolution was absolutely right, but that the inferences I drew from it in regard to the two factions were certainly wrong. Bolshevism alone, thanks to the irreconcilable line it took, concentrated in its ranks the really revolutionary elements both of the old intelligentsia and of the advanced section of the working class. Only thanks to the fact that Bolshevism succeeded in creating this revolutionarily-welded organisation was such a rapid turn from the revolutionary-democratic to the revolutionary-socialist position possible.

“Even now I could without any difficulty divide my polemical articles against the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks into two categories: those devoted to an analysis of the internal forces of the revolution and its prospects (in Rosa Luxemburg’s Polish theoretical organ, *Neue Zeit*), and those devoted to an assessment of the factions among the Russian Social-Democrats, their conflict, etc. The articles of the first category I could republish even now without amendment, since they fully and completely coincide with the position of our Party, beginning with 1917. The articles of the second category are obviously mistaken, and are not worth republishing” (see *Lenin on Trotsky*, 1925, with a foreword by Comrade Olminsky).

What do we get from this?

It turns out that Trotsky was mistaken on questions of organisation, but that on the questions of the assessment of our revolution and on the question of permanent revolution he was right and has remained right.

True, Trotsky cannot but know that Lenin fought against the theory of permanent revolution to the end of his life. But that does not worry Trotsky.

It turns out, further, that both factions, the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks, ought to have arrived at the theory of permanent revolution, but actually only the Bolsheviks did so, because they had a compact revolutionarily-

welded organisation of workers and members of the old intelligentsia; and they arrived at it not at once, but “beginning with 1917.”

It turns out, lastly, that the theory of permanent revolution “fully and completely coincided with the position of our Party, beginning with 1917.”

Now judge for yourselves, does that look as if Trotsky does not attach much importance to the theory of permanent revolution? No, it does not. On the contrary, if the theory of permanent revolution really did coincide, “beginning with 1917,” with the position of the Party, then only one inference can be drawn from this, namely, that Trotsky considered this theory, and continues to consider it, of decisive importance for our whole Party.

But what is meant by the word “coincided”? How could Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution have coincided with the position of our Party, when it is known that our Party, in the person of Lenin, combated this theory all the time?

One thing or the other: either our Party did not have a theory of its own, and was later compelled by the course of events to accept Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution; or it did have a theory of its own, but that theory was imperceptibly ousted by Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution, “beginning with 1917.”

This “enigma” was later explained for us by Trotsky in his “Preface,” written in 1922, to his book *The Year 1905*. Having expounded the substance of the theory of permanent revolution and given an analysis of his assessment of our revolution from the standpoint of this theory, Trotsky arrived at the following conclusion:

“Although after a lapse of twelve years, this assessment was wholly confirmed” (Trotsky, *The Year 1905*, “Preface”).

In other words, the theory of permanent revolution, “constructed” by Trotsky in 1905, was “wholly confirmed” in 1917, twelve years later.

But how could it be confirmed? And the Bolsheviks—where did they vanish to? Did they really go in for revolution without having any theory of their own? Were they really capable only of welding together the revolutionary intelligentsia and the revolutionary workers? And then, on what foundation, on the basis of what principles did they weld the workers together? Surely, the Bolsheviks had some theory, some estimate of the revolution, some estimate of its motive forces? Did our Party really have no other theory than the theory of permanent revolution?

Judge for yourselves. We, the Bolsheviks, existed and developed without any perspective and without any revolutionary theory; we existed in that way from 1903 to 1917; and then, “beginning with 1917,” we imperceptibly swallowed the theory of permanent revolution and rose to our feet. Undoubtedly, that is a very interesting fairy-tale. But how could it have happened imperceptibly, without a struggle, without an upheaval in the Party? How could it have occurred so simply, for no apparent reason? Surely, everybody knows that Lenin and his Party fought the theory of permanent revolution from its first appearance.

Incidentally, this “enigma” is explained for us by Trotsky in another document. I have in mind the “Note,” written in 1922, to Trotsky’s article “Our Differences.”

Here is the relevant passage from this article of Trotsky’s:

“Whereas the Mensheviks, proceeding from the abstraction: ‘*our revolution is a bourgeois one*,’ arrive at the idea of adapting the whole tactics of the proletariat to the behaviour of the liberal bourgeoisie, right down to permitting the latter to conquer state power, the Bolsheviks, proceeding from an equally empty abstraction—‘*a democratic, not a socialist dictatorship*,’ arrive at the idea of the bourgeois-democratic self-limitation of the proletariat when it is in possession of state power. True, the difference between them in this matter is very considerable: whereas the anti-revolutionary aspects of Menshevism are fully apparent already, the anti-

revolutionary features of Bolshevism threaten tremendous danger only in the event of a revolutionary victory” (Trotsky, *The Year 1905*, p. 285).

It follows that not only Menshevism had its antirevolutionary aspects; Bolshevism also was not free from “anti-revolutionary features,” which threatened “tremendous danger only in the event of a revolutionary victory.”

Did the Bolsheviks later emancipate themselves from the “anti-revolutionary features” of Bolshevism? And if so, how?

This “enigma” is explained for us by Trotsky in his “Note” to the article “Our Differences.”

Listen:

“This, as we know, did not occur, because, under the guidance of Comrade Lenin, Bolshevism rearmed itself ideologically (not without an internal struggle) on this cardinal issue in the spring of 1917, that is, prior to the conquest of power” (Trotsky, *The Year 1905*, p. 285).

And so, the Bolsheviks “rearmed” themselves, “beginning with 1917,” on the basis of the theory of permanent revolution; as a result of which the Bolsheviks saved themselves from the “anti-revolutionary features of Bolshevism”; and, lastly, the theory of permanent revolution was thus “wholly confirmed.” Such is Trotsky’s conclusion.

But what happened to Leninism, to the theory of Bolshevism, to the Bolshevik estimate of our revolution and its motive forces, etc.? Either they were not “wholly confirmed,” or they were not “confirmed” at all, or else they vanished into thin air, making way for the theory of permanent revolution to “rearm” the Party.

And so, once upon a time there were people known as the Bolsheviks who somehow managed, “beginning” with 1903, to “weld” together a party, but who had no revolutionary theory. So they drifted and drifted, “beginning” with 1903, until somehow they managed to reach the year 1917. Then, having espied Trotsky with his theory of permanent revolution, they decided to “rearm themselves,” and, “having rearmed themselves,” they lost the last remnants of Leninism, of Lenin’s theory of revolution, thus bringing about the “full coincidence” of the theory of permanent revolution with the “position” of our Party.

That is a very interesting fairy-tale, comrades. It, if you like, is one of the splendid conjuring tricks you may see at the circus. But this is not a circus; it is a conference of our Party. Nor, after all, have we hired Trotsky as a circus artist. Then why these conjuring tricks?

What was Comrade Lenin’s opinion of Trotsky’s theory of permanent revolution? Here is what he wrote about it in one of his articles, where he ridiculed it as an “original” and “fine” theory:

“To elucidate the correlation of classes in the impending revolution is a major problem of the revolutionary party. . . . Trotsky solves this problem incorrectly in *Nashe Slovo*, where he reiterates his ‘original’ theory of the year 1905 and refuses to reflect on the reasons why for ten whole years actual developments have ignored this fine theory.

“This original theory of Trotsky’s borrows from the Bolsheviks their call for a resolute revolutionary struggle by the proletariat and for the conquest of political power by the latter, and from the Mensheviks the ‘denial’ of the role of the peasantry.” . . . , Thereby “Trotsky is in fact helping the liberal labour politicians in Russia who understand ‘denial’ of the role of the peasantry to mean *refusal* to rouse the peasants to revolution!” (See Vol. XVIII, pp. 317-18.)

It follows that in Lenin’s opinion the theory of permanent revolution is a semi-Menshevik theory which ignores the revolutionary role of the peasantry in the Russian revolution.

The incomprehensible thing is how this semi-Menshevik theory could “fully and completely coincide” with the position of our Party, even if “beginning with 1917.”

And what is our Party's estimate of the theory of permanent revolution? Here is what the resolution of the Fourteenth Party Conference says of it:

“An integral part of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution is the assertion that ‘real progress of a socialist economy in Russia will become possible *only after the victory* of the proletariat in the major European countries’ (Trotsky, 1922)—an assertion which in the present, period would condemn the proletariat of the U.S.S.R, to fatalistic passivity. In opposition to such ‘theories,’ Comrade Lenin wrote: ‘Infinitely hackneyed is the argument that they learned by rote during the development of West-European Social-Democracy, namely, that we are not yet ripe for socialism, that, as certain “learned” gentlemen among them express it, the objective economic prerequisites for socialism do not exist in our country” (Notes on Sukhanov). (Resolution of the Fourteenth Party Conference.<sup>6</sup>)

It follows that the theory of permanent revolution is the same as the Sukhanovism which Comrade Lenin in his notes “Our Revolution” brands as Social-Democracy.

The incomprehensible thing is how such a theory could “rearm” our Bolshevik Party.

Kamenev, in his speech, “gave it to be understood” that Trotsky is abandoning his theory of permanent revolution, and in confirmation of this he quoted the following more than ambiguous passage from Trotsky's latest letter, of September 1926, to the oppositionists:

“We hold that, as experience has incontrovertibly proved that, whenever any of us differed with Lenin on any question of principle, Vladimir Ilyich was unquestionably in the right.”

But Kamenev refrained from mentioning that after this, in the same letter, Trotsky made the following statement, which nullifies the preceding one:

“The Leningrad opposition vigorously opposed the theory of socialism in one country, *as being a theoretical justification of national narrow-mindedness*” (see Trotsky's letter of September 1926, appended to the verbatim report of the sittings of the Political Bureau of the C.C., C P.S.U.(B.), October 8 and 11, 1926)

What value can Trotsky's first, ambiguous and noncommittal statement have in face of his second statement, which nullifies the first?

What is the theory of permanent revolution? It is a denial of Lenin's “theory of socialism in one country.”

What is Lenin's “theory of socialism in one country”? It is a denial of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution.

Is it not obvious that when Kamenev quoted the first passage from Trotsky's letter and kept silent about the second, he was trying to mislead and deceive our Party?

But it is not so easy to deceive our Party.

## **2. Juggling with Quotations, or Trotsky Falsifies Leninism**

Did you notice, comrades, that Trotsky's whole speech was plentifully larded with the most diverse quotations from Lenin's works? One reads these quotations torn from various articles of Lenin, and one fails to understand what Trotsky's main object is: whether to fortify his own position by means of them, or to “catch out” Comrade Lenin as “contradicting” himself. He cited one batch of quotations from Lenin's works which say that the danger of intervention can be overcome only by the victory of the revolution in several countries, evidently thinking thereby to “expose” the Party. But he does not realise, or will not realise, that these quotations testify not against the Party's position, but for it and against his own position, because the Party's estimate of the relative importance of the danger from abroad fully agrees with Lenin's line. Trotsky cited another batch of quotations

which say that the complete victory of socialism is impossible without the victory of the revolution in several countries, and he tried to juggle with these quotations in every possible way. But he does not realise, or will not realise, that the complete victory of socialism (guarantee against intervention) must not be confused with the victory of socialism in general (the complete building of a socialist society); he does not realise, or will not realise, that these quotations from the works of Lenin testify not against the Party, but for it and against his own position.

But while citing a heap of all kinds of irrelevant quotations, Trotsky refused to deal with Lenin's basic article on the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country (1915), evidently assuming that Kamenev's speech had satisfactorily disposed of this article for him. But it can now be taken as definitely proved that Kamenev failed in the role, and that Comrade Lenin's article retains all its validity.

Trotsky, further, quoted a passage from Comrade Lenin's article which says that there was no disagreement between them over the peasant question as far as current policy was concerned. He forgot to say, however, that this article of Lenin's not only does not resolve, but does not even touch upon the disagreements between Trotsky and Lenin over the peasant question *in connection with the possibility of building a complete socialist society in our country*.

That, indeed, explains why Trotsky's operations with the quotations became empty jugglery.

Trotsky tried to prove the "coincidence" of his view with that of Lenin's on the question of the possibility of completely building a socialist society in our country through the internal forces of our revolution. But how can you prove the unprovable?

How can Lenin's thesis that "the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country taken separately"<sup>7</sup> be reconciled with Trotsky's thesis that "it would be hopeless to think . . . that, for example, a revolutionary Russia could hold out in the face of a conservative Europe"?

How, further, can Lenin's thesis that "the victorious proletariat of that country (that is, of one country—*J. St.*), having expropriated the capitalists and organised socialist production, would stand up *against* the rest of the world, the capitalist, world"<sup>8</sup> be reconciled with Trotsky's thesis that "without direct *state*<sup>\*</sup> support from the European proletariat, the working class of Russia will not be able to maintain itself in power and to transform its temporary rule into a lasting socialist dictatorship"?

How, lastly, can Lenin's thesis that "only an agreement with the peasantry can save the socialist revolution in Russia as long as the revolution in other countries has not taken place"<sup>9</sup> be reconciled with Trotsky's thesis that "the contradictions in the position of a workers' government in a backward country with an overwhelmingly peasant population can be solved only on an international scale, in the arena of the world proletarian revolution"?

Furthermore, in what way actually does Trotsky's attitude to the question of the victory of socialism in our country differ from that of the Menshevik O. Bauer, who says that:

"In Russia, where the proletariat is only a small minority of the nation, it can maintain its rule only temporarily," that "it must inevitably lose it again as soon as the peasant masses of the nation are culturally mature enough to take power into their own hands," and that "only with the conquest of political power by the proletariat of the industrial West can the rule of industrial socialism be durably established" in Russia?

Is it not clear that Trotsky is closer to Bauer than to Lenin? And is it not true that Trotsky's attitude is that of a Social-Democratic deviation, that Trotsky, in point of fact, denies the socialist character of our revolution?

Trotsky tried to vindicate his thesis—that it would be impossible for a proletarian regime to hold out in the face of a conservative Europe—by arguing that present-day Europe is not conservative but more or less liberal, and that if Europe were really conservative, it would be impossible for the proletariat of our country to retain power. But is it difficult to realise that Trotsky has got himself entangled here wholly and utterly? What shall we call, for example, present-day Italy, or Britain, or France—conservative or liberal? What is the present-day United States

of America—is it a conservative or a liberal country? And what significance can this “subtle” and ludicrous stressing of the difference between a conservative and a “liberal” Europe have for the integrity and safety of our republic? Were not republican France and democratic America as active in intervening in our country at the time of Kolchak and Denikin as monarchist and conservative Britain?

Trotsky devoted quite a considerable part of his speech to the question of the middle peasant. He quoted a passage from Lenin’s writings of the 1906 period, where Lenin predicted that after the victory of the *bourgeois* revolution a section of the middle peasantry might go over to the side of the counter-revolution, apparently trying to prove in this way that this quotation “coincides” with his own attitude towards the question of the peasantry after the victory of the *socialist* revolution. It is not difficult to realise that Trotsky here is comparing things that are incomparable. Trotsky is inclined to regard the middle peasantry as a “thing-in-itself,” as something permanent and unalterable. But that was never the way the Bolsheviks looked on the middle peasantry.

Trotsky has apparently forgotten that the Bolsheviks had three plans in relation to the main mass of the peasantry: one for the period of the bourgeois revolution, the second for the period of the proletarian revolution, and the third for the period following the consolidation of Soviet power.

In the first period the Bolsheviks said: together with all the peasantry, against the tsar and the landlords, while neutralising the liberal bourgeoisie, for a bourgeois-democratic revolution.

In the second period the Bolsheviks said: together with the poor peasantry, against the bourgeoisie and the kulaks, while neutralising the middle peasantry, for a socialist revolution. And what does neutralising the middle peasantry mean? It means keeping it under the political surveillance of the proletariat, not trusting it, and taking every measure to prevent it, from getting out of hand.

In the third period, the period we are in now, the Bolsheviks say: together with the poor peasantry, in firm alliance with the middle peasantry, and against the capitalist elements of our economy in town and countryside, for the victory of socialist construction.

Whoever confuses these three plans, these three different lines, which reflect three different periods in our revolution, understands nothing of Bolshevism.

Lenin was absolutely right when he said that after the victory of the *bourgeois* revolution part of the middle peasantry would go over to the counter-revolution. That is exactly what happened in the period, for instance, of the “Ufa Government,”<sup>10</sup> when part of the Volga middle peasants went over to the counter-revolution, to the kulaks, while the greater part vacillated between the revolution and the counter-revolution. And it could not have been otherwise. It is in the very nature of the middle peasant, just because he is a middle peasant, to temporise and vacillate and say: “Who knows who will get the upper hand; better wait and see.” Only after the first substantial victories over the internal counter-revolution, and especially after the consolidation of the Soviet regime, did the middle peasant definitely begin to swing to the side of the Soviet regime, evidently deciding that there had to be some sort of authority, that the Bolshevik regime was strong, and that the only way out was to work with it. It was precisely in that period that Comrade Lenin Lettered the prophetic words: “We have entered a phase of socialist construction in which we must draw up concrete and detailed basic rules and instructions which have been tested by the experience of our work in the countryside, and by which we must be guided in order to achieve a stable alliance with the middle peasantry” (speech at the Eighth Congress of the Party, Vol. XXIV, p. 114).

That is how matters stand with the question of the middle peasants.

Trotsky’s mistake is that he approaches the question of the middle peasantry metaphysically, that he regards the middle peasantry as a “thing-in-itself,” and therefore muddles the question and distorts and falsifies Leninism.

Lastly, the point is not at all that there still may be, and will be, contradictions and conflicts between the proletariat and a certain section of the middle peasants. The disagreement between the Party and the opposition is not at all over this. The disagreement lies in the fact that, whereas the Party considers that these contradictions

and possible conflicts can be *fully overcome* by the forces of our revolution alone, Trotsky and the opposition consider that these contradictions and conflicts can be overcome “*only* on an international scale, in the arena of the world proletarian revolution.”

Trotsky juggles with quotations in an effort to put these disagreements out of sight. But I have already said that he will not succeed in deceiving our Party.

And the conclusion? The conclusion is that one must be a dialectician, not a conjuror. You would do well, worthy oppositionists, to take a lesson in dialectics from Comrade Lenin, to read his works—it would be of benefit to you. (*Applause, laughter.*)

### 3. “Trifles” and Curiosities

Trotsky rebuked me, as the author of the theses, because they speak of the revolution as “in itself” a socialist revolution. Trotsky considers that such an attitude towards the revolution is metaphysical. I can by no means agree with that.

Why do the theses speak of the revolution as “in itself” a socialist revolution? Because this stresses the utter difference between the views of our Party and the views of the opposition in appraising our revolution.

In what does this difference consist? In the fact that our Party regards our revolution as a socialist revolution, as a revolution representing a certain independent force that is capable of waging a struggle against the capitalist world, whereas the opposition regards our revolution as a gratuitous supplement to the future proletarian revolution which has not yet won victory in the West, as an “appendage” to the future revolution in the West, as something which has no independent strength of its own. One has only to compare Lenin’s estimate of the proletarian dictatorship in our country with that given by the opposition bloc to see the vast gulf between them. Whereas Lenin regards the proletarian dictatorship as a force capable of the utmost initiative which, after organising a socialist economy, should then come forward in direct support of the world proletariat and for the struggle against the capitalist world, the opposition, on the contrary, regards the proletarian dictatorship in our country as a passive force, which lives in fear of immediately losing power “in the face of a conservative Europe.”

Is it not obvious that the word “metaphysics” was brought into play in order to cover up the deficiency of the opposition’s Social-Democratic estimate of our revolution?

Trotsky further said that I had replaced the inexact and incorrect formulation of the question of the victory of socialism in one country given in 1924 in my book *The Foundations of Leninism*, by another, more exact and correct formulation. Trotsky, apparently, is displeased with that—but why, on what grounds, he did not say. What can be wrong with my correcting an inexact formulation and replacing it by an exact one? I by no means regard myself as infallible. I think the Party only stands to gain if a comrade who has made a mistake later recognises it and corrects it. What is Trotsky really after in stressing this point? Perhaps he is anxious to follow a good example and to set about, at long last, correcting his own numerous errors? (*Applause, laughter.*) Very well, I am prepared to help him in that, if my help is needed; I am prepared to spur him on and assist him. (*Applause, laughter.*) But it is evidently some other aim that Trotsky is pursuing. If that is so, I must say that his attempt is futile.

Trotsky assured us in his speech that he is not such a bad Communist as spokesmen. of the Party majority make him out to be. He quoted a number of passages from his articles indicating that he, Trotsky, recognised and continues to recognise the “socialist character” of our work, that he does not deny the “socialist character” of our state industry, and so on and so forth. What do you think of that for news! Trotsky would not dare to go so far as to deny the socialist character of our work, of our state industry, and so on. The fact of that is now admitted by everybody, even by the New York stock exchange, even by our Nepmen, to say nothing of O. Bauer. Everyone, enemies and friends alike, now sees that we are building industry not in the way the capitalists build it, that we

are introducing certain new elements into the development of our economic and political life which have nothing in common with capitalism.

No, that is not the point now, worthy oppositionists.

Matters now are more serious than the opposition bloc may think them.

The point now is not the socialist character of our industry, but the complete building of a socialist economy as a whole, despite the capitalist encirclement, despite the fact that we have enemies, internal and external, who are waiting for the collapse of the proletarian dictatorship. The point is to achieve the complete triumph of Leninism in our Party.

It is not a matter now of trifles and curiosities. You cannot now fob the Party off with trifles and curiosities. The Party now demands something more of the opposition.

Either you display the courage and ability openly and sincerely to renounce your errors of principle; or you do not, and then the Party will qualify your position as it deserves—as a Social-Democratic deviation.

One or the other.

It is for the oppositionists to make their choice. (*Voices: "Quite right!" Applause.*)

## V

### **The Practical Platform of the Opposition. The Demands of the Party**

From juggling with quotations the opposition leaders tried to pass to disagreements of a practical character. Trotsky and Kamenev, as well as Zinoviev, attempted to formulate these disagreements, and they asserted that it was not the theoretical, but the practical disagreements that were important. I must say, however, that not one of the formulations of our disagreements given by the opposition at this conference is marked by objectivity or completeness.

You want to know what our practical disagreements are? You want to know what the Party demands of you?

Listen:

- 1) The Party cannot and will not tolerate any longer that every time you find yourselves in the minority you go out into the street, proclaim a crisis in the Party, and set up a commotion in it. That the Party will not tolerate any longer. (*Voices: "Quite right!" Applause.*)
- 2) The Party cannot and will not tolerate that you, having lost hope of securing a majority in our Party, rake together and assemble all kinds of disgruntled elements as material for a new party. That the Party cannot and will not tolerate. (*Applause.*)
- 3) The Party cannot and will not tolerate that, while defaming the Party's directing apparatus and breaking the regime in the Party, breaking its iron discipline, you unite all the trends condemned by the Party and form them into a new party, on the plea of freedom of factions. That the Party will not tolerate. (*Applause.*)
- 4) We know that we have great difficulties to contend with in the building of socialism. We see these difficulties, and are able to overcome them. We would welcome any assistance from the opposition in overcoming these difficulties. But the Party cannot, and will not tolerate that you make attempts to exploit these difficulties for undermining our position, for attacks and assaults on the Party. (*Applause.*)



5) The Party realises better than all the oppositions put together that industrialisation can be promoted and socialism completely built only if there is a continuous improvement in the material and cultural standards of the working class. The Party is adopting, and will continue to adopt, all possible measures to ensure that the material and cultural standards of the working class continuously improve. But the Party cannot and will not tolerate that the opposition comes out into the street with demagogic statements calling for an immediate 30-40 per cent increase in wages, since it knows for a fact that industry cannot stand such an increase at the present moment, since it knows for a fact that the purpose of these demagogic pronouncements is not to improve the condition of the working class, but to foment discontent among the backward sections of the working people and to organise discontent against the Party, against the vanguard of the working class. That the Party cannot and will not tolerate. (*Voices: "Quite right!" Applause.*)

6) The Party cannot and will not tolerate that the opposition continues to undermine the foundations of the bond between the workers and peasants, the foundations of the alliance between the workers and peasants, carrying on propaganda for an increase of wholesale prices and heavier taxation of the peasantry, and endeavouring to "construct" the relations between the proletariat and peasantry not as relations of economic *co-operation*, but as relations of *exploitation* of the peasantry by the proletarian state. That the Party cannot and will not tolerate. (*Applause.*)

7) The Party cannot and will not tolerate that the oppositionists continue to spread ideological confusion in the Party, to exaggerate our difficulties, to foster a defeatist spirit, to preach the impossibility of completely building socialism in our country, and thereby to undermine the foundations of Leninism. That the Party cannot and will not tolerate. (*Voices: "Quite right!" Applause.*)

8) The Party cannot and will not tolerate—although this is a matter not only for it, but for all the sections of the Comintern—that you continue to stir up trouble in the Comintern, to corrupt its sections and to discredit its leadership. That the Party cannot and will not tolerate. (*Applause.*)

That is what our practical disagreements are.

That is the essence of the political and practical platform of the opposition bloc, and that is what our Party is now combating.

Trotsky, while expounding certain points of this platform in his speech and carefully concealing the others, asked: what is there Social-Democratic in this? A strange question! And I ask: what is there of a communist character in this platform of the opposition bloc? What is there in it which is not Social-Democratic? Is it not obvious that the practical platform of the opposition bloc follows the line of departure from Leninism, of approach to Social-Democracy?

You wanted, worthy oppositionists, to know what the Party demands of you? Now you know what it demands of you.

Either you observe these conditions, which are at the same time the conditions for the complete unity of our Party; or you do not—and then the Party, which gave you a beating yesterday, will proceed to finish you off tomorrow. (*Applause.*)

## VI Conclusion

What are the conclusions, the results, of our inner-Party struggle?

I have here the document of September 1926 signed by Trotsky. This document is remarkable for the fact that there is in it something in the nature of an attempt to anticipate the results of the inner-Party struggle, something

in the nature of an attempt to prophesy, to outline, the prospects of our inner-Party struggle. This document states:

“The united opposition demonstrated in April and July, and will demonstrate in October, that the unity of its views only grows stronger under the influence of the gross and disloyal persecution to which it is being subjected, and the Party will come to realise that only on the basis of the views of the united opposition is there a way out of the present severe crisis” (see Trotsky’s letter to the oppositionists, September 1926, appended to the verbatim report of the sittings of the Political Bureau, October 8 and 11, 1926).

As you see, this is almost a prediction. (*A voice*: “Yes, almost!”) It is almost a prophecy of the true Marxist type, a forecast for two whole months ahead. (*Laughter*.)

Of course, there is a slight exaggeration in it. (*Laughter*.) It speaks, for instance, of the present severe crisis in our Party. But we, thank God, are alive and flourishing and haven’t even noticed any crisis. There is, of course, something in the nature of a crisis—only not in the Party, but in a certain faction known as the opposition bloc. But, after all, a crisis in a tiny faction cannot be represented as a crisis in a party a million strong.

Trotsky’s document says further that the opposition bloc is growing stronger, and will grow still stronger in the future. I think that there is a slight exaggeration here too. (*Laughter*.) The fact cannot be denied that the opposition bloc is disintegrating, that its best elements are breaking away from it, that it is suffocating in its internal contradictions. Is it not a fact that Comrade Krupskaya, for instance, is leaving the opposition bloc? (*Stormy applause*.) Is that accidental?

Trotsky’s document says, lastly, that only on the basis of the views of the united opposition is there a way out of the present crisis. I think that here also Trotsky is slightly exaggerating. (*Laughter*.) The oppositionists cannot but know that the Party has become united and firmly welded not on the basis of the views of the opposition bloc, but in a fight against those views, on the basis of the socialist prospects of our constructive work. The exaggeration in Trotsky’s document is glaring.

But if we leave aside all the exaggerations in Trotsky’s document, it does look, comrades, as if nothing remains of his prophecy. (*General laughter*.)

As you see, the conclusion proves to be the opposite of the conclusion that Trotsky outlined in his prophecy.

I am concluding, comrades.

Zinoviev once boasted that he knew how to put his ear to the ground (*laughter*), and that when he put his ear to the ground he could hear the footsteps of history. It may very well be that this is actually so. But one thing has to be admitted, and that is that Zinoviev, while able to put his ear to the ground and hear the footsteps of history, sometimes fails to hear certain “trifles.” It may be that the opposition is actually able to put its ear to the ground and hear such wonderful things as the footsteps of history. But one has to admit that, while able to hear such wonderful things, it has failed to hear such a “trifle” as that the Party has long ago turned its back on it, and that the opposition is on the rocks. That they have failed to hear. (*Voices*: “Quite right!”)

What follows from this? It follows that something is obviously wrong with the opposition’s ears. (*Laughter*.)

Hence my advice: Worthy oppositionists, get your ears attended to! (*Stormy and prolonged applause. The delegates rise from their seats, applauding as Comrade Stalin leaves the rostrum.*)

1. F. Engels, “Grundsätze des Kommunismus.” See Marx-Engels, *Gesamtausgabe*, Abt. I, Bd. 6, S. 503-22.

\* My italics.—*J. St.*

\* My italics.—*J. St.*

2. Lenin’s words are quoted from his report on “The Activities of the Council of People’s Commissars” made at the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets (see V.I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 26, p. 429). See also Engels’s letter to Paul Lafargue of June 2, 1894 (Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Works*, Russ. ed., Vol. XXIX, p. 311).

\* My italics.—*J. St.*

\* My italics.—*J. St.*

\* My italics.—*J. St.*

\* My italics.—*J. St.*

\* My italics.—*J. St.*

\* My italics.—*J. St.*

3. This refers to V. I. Lenin’s article “A Few Theses” (see *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 21, pp. 366-68).

\* My italics.—*J. St.*

\* My italics.—*J. St.*

\* My italics.—*J. St.*

\* My italics.—*J. St.*

\* My italics.—*J. St.*

4. See *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums*, Part II, 1953, p. 46.

\*\* See pp. 227-28 in this volume.—*Ed.*

5. This refers to the Note of the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon, of May 8, 1923, which contained the threat of a new intervention against the U.S.S.R.

6. See *Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U. Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums*, Part I, 1953, pp. 530-33.

7. See V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 21, p. 311.

8. See V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 21, p. 311.

\* My italics.—*J. St.*

9. See V. I. Lenin, *Works*, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 21, p. 192.

10. The “Ufa Government.” was a counter-revolutionary organisation which called itself the “All-Russian Provisional Government” (Directory). It was formed in Ufa on September 23, 1918, at a conference of

representatives of whiteguard “governments,” Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and intervening foreign powers. It existed until November 18, 1918.

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