

Y. M. Sverdlov

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There are people, leaders of the proletariat, about whom no noise is made in the press—perhaps because they do not like to make a noise about themselves—but who are, nevertheless, the vital sap and genuine leaders of the revolutionary movement. Y. M. Sverdlov was a leader of this type.

An organiser to the marrow of his bones, an organiser by nature, by habit, by revolutionary training, by instinct, an organiser in all his abounding activity—such is the portrait of Y. M. Sverdlov.

What does being a leader and organiser mean under our conditions, when the proletariat is in power? It does not mean choosing assistants, setting up an office and issuing orders through it. Being a leader and organiser, under our conditions, means, firstly, knowledge of the cadres, ability to discern their merits and shortcomings, ability to handle them; and secondly, ability to arrange them in such a way that:

- 1) each one feels that he is in the right place;
- 2) each one is able to serve the revolution to the utmost of his ability;
- 3) this arrangement of cadres results not in hitches, but in harmony, unity and the general progress of the work as a whole;
- 4) the general trend of the work organised in this way serves as the expression and implementation of the political idea for the sake of which the cadres are assigned to their posts.

Y. M. Sverdlov was precisely that kind of leader and organiser of our Party and of our state.

The period of 1917-18 marked a turning point for the Party and the state. In that period the Party, for the first time, became a ruling force. For the first time in human history a new kind of power came into being, the power of the Soviets, the power of the workers and peasants. To transfer the Party, which hitherto had been underground, to the new lines, to create the organisational foundations of the new proletarian state, to devise the organisational forms of the inter-relations between the Party and the Soviets that would ensure leadership by the Party and normal development for the Soviet—such was the extremely complicated organisational problem that then confronted the Party. Nobody in the Party will dare to deny that Y. M. Sverdlov was one of the first, if not the first, skilfully and painlessly to solve that organisational problem of building the new Russia.

The ideologists and agents of the bourgeoisie are fond of repeating threadbare assertions that the Bolsheviks are unable to build, that they are only able to destroy. Y. M. Sverdlov, all his activities, are a living refutation of these falsehoods. Y. M. Sverdlov and his work in our Party were not the result of chance. The Party that produced a great builder like Y. M. Sverdlov can boldly say that it can build the new as well as it can destroy the old.

I do not by any means claim that I am fully acquainted with all the organisers and builders of our Party, but I must say that of all the outstanding organisers I am acquainted with, I know only two, of whom, next to Lenin, our Party can and should be proud: I. F. Dubrovinsky, who died in exile in Turukbansk, and Y. M. Sverdlov, who worked himself to death in building the Party and the state.

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