

# For the Party <sup>1</sup>

*March 1912*

---

Source : *Works*, Vol. 2, 1907 - 1913

Publisher : Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1954

Transcription/Markup : Salil Sen for MIA, 2008

Public Domain : Marxists Internet Archive (2008). You may freely copy, distribute, display and perform this work; as well as make derivative and commercial works. Please credit "Marxists Internet Archive" as your source.

---

Interest in political life is reviving in the country and, simultaneously with it, the crisis in our Party is coming to an end. The dead point is past, the torpor is beginning to pass off. The general Party conference which took place recently <sup>2</sup> is a clear symptom of the Party's regeneration. Our Party gained strength with the growth of the Russian revolution and was shattered with its fall; it was therefore inevitable that the Party should rise to its feet with the political awakening of the country. The revival in the principal branches of industry and the growth of the capitalists' profits, along with the drop in the real wages of the workers; the free development of the economic and political organisations of the bourgeoisie along with the forcible suppression of the legal and illegal organisations of the proletariat; the rise in the prices of the necessities of life and the rise in landlords' profits, along with the ruination of peasant farming; the famine which has affected over 25,000,000 of the population and has demonstrated the helplessness of the "renovated" counter-revolutionary regime—all this was bound to affect the toiling strata, and primarily the proletariat, by awakening their interest in political life. One of the striking expressions of this awakening is the conference of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party held last January.

But the awakening of minds and hearts cannot be self-contained — under present political conditions it must inevitably develop into open mass action.

The conditions of life of the workers must be improved, wages must be raised, the working day must be shortened, the conditions of the workers in the mills, factories and mines must be radically changed. But how can all this be done if not by means of still prohibited partial and general economic actions?

We must win the right freely to wage a struggle against the employers, the right to strike, freedom of association, assembly, speech, press, etc.: otherwise the workers' struggle to improve their conditions of life will be hampered to the utmost degree. But how can all this be won if not by open political actions, by means of demonstrations, political strikes, etc.?

We must bring about the recovery of the country, which is suffering from chronic starvation; we must put a stop to the present state of affairs under which tens of millions of tillers of the soil are compelled periodically to suffer famine with all its horrors; it is impossible to look on with folded arms and see starving fathers and mothers, with tears in their eyes, "selling for a mere song" their daughters and sons! We must uproot the present rapacious financial policy which is ruining the poverty-stricken peasant farms and which with every crop failure inevitably pushes millions of peasants on to the path of devastating famine! The country must be saved from pauperisation and demoralisation! But can all this be done without overthrowing the entire edifice of tsarism from top to bottom? And how can the tsarist government, with all its feudal survivals, be overthrown, if not by a wide, popular revolutionary movement, led by its historically recognised leader, the socialist proletariat? . . .

But in order that the future actions shall not be isolated and sporadic, in order that the proletariat may honourably fulfil its lofty task of uniting and leading the future actions—for all this it is necessary to have—in addition to the revolutionary consciousness of broad strata of the people and the class consciousness of the proletariat—a strong and flexible proletarian party that will be able to unite the separate efforts of the local organisations in one common effort and thereby direct the mass revolutionary movement against the main fortifications of the enemy.

To set to rights the party of the proletariat, the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party—that is what is particularly necessary in order that the proletariat may worthily meet the coming revolutionary actions.

The imperative necessity of uniting the Party becomes still more strikingly evident in view of the approaching elections to the Fourth State Duma.

But how can the Party be set to rights?

First of all, the local party organisations must be strengthened. Broken up into small and tiny groups, surrounded by a slough of despondency and lack of confidence in the cause, destitute of intellectual forces and not infrequently disrupted by provocateurs—is not this dismal picture of the life of the local organisations familiar to all? This dispersion of forces can and must be brought to an end! The incipient awakening of the masses of the workers on the one hand, and the recent conference as an expression of this awakening on the other, greatly facilitate the task of putting an end to this dispersion. Let us, then, do all in our power to put an end to organisational dispersion! Let the Social-Democratic workers in every town and in every industrial centre, all those, irrespective of group, who believe that an illegal Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party is needed, join together in local Party organisations! Let the machines which unite the workers in a single army of exploited—let those very machines unite them in a single party of fighters against exploitation and violence! . . . There is no need to strive after a large membership: under present conditions of work this may even be dangerous. The whole point is the quality of the comrades, the whole point is that the influential comrades grouped in local organisations should appreciate the importance of the cause they are serving and steadfastly carry on their work on revolutionary Social-Democratic lines. And let the local organisations thus formed not shut themselves off in isolation, let them constantly intervene in all the affairs connected with the struggle of the proletariat, from the most "petty," ordinary affairs to the biggest and most "extraordinary"; let not a single clash between labour and capital, not a single protest of the masses of the workers against the brutalities of the tsarist government escape their influence. It must always be borne in mind that only in this way will it be possible to strengthen and bring about the recovery of the local organisations. That is why, among other things, they must maintain the most lively connections with the open mass organisations of the workers, with the unions and clubs, and facilitate their development in every way.

Let our comrades the workers not be daunted by the difficulties and complexity of the tasks that fall exclusively on them owing to the absence of intellectual forces; totally unnecessary modesty and fear of "unaccustomed" work must be cast aside once and for all; one must have the courage to undertake complex Party tasks! It does not matter if a few mistakes are discovered in the course of this; you will stumble once or twice, and then you will get accustomed to stepping out freely. Bebels do not drop from the skies, they grow up from the ranks in the course of Party activity in all its spheres. . . .

But the local organisations taken separately, even if they are strong and influential, do not constitute the Party. To constitute the Party they must be gathered together, linked up in a single whole that lives a common life. Scattered local organisations, not only isolated from one another, but not even aware of one another's existence, organisations left entirely to their own devices, acting entirely on their own initiative and not infrequently conducting their work on opposite lines—all this constitutes the familiar picture of amateurish methods in the Party. To link the local organisations together and rally them around the Central Committee of the Party means, precisely, putting an end to amateurish methods and preparing the ground for setting the proletarian party to rights. An influential Central Committee connected by living roots with the local organisations, systematically keeping the latter informed and linking them up together; a Central Committee which constantly intervenes in all matters concerning general proletarian actions; a Central Committee which possesses an illegal newspaper published in Russia for the purpose of conducting wide political agitation—such is the direction in which the renovation and consolidation of the Party must proceed.

Needless to say, the Central Committee will be unable to cope with this difficult task unaided: the comrades in the local organisations must bear in mind that unless it receives their systematic support from the localities, the Central Committee will inevitably be converted into a cipher, and the Party will be reduced to a fiction. Hence, joint work of the Central Committee and the local organisations—such is the essential condition for renovating the Party, that is what we call upon the comrades to do.

And so, for the Party, comrades, for a regenerated, underground, Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party!

Long Live the United Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party!

***The Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.***

Published in leaflet form in March 1912

---

**Notes**

1. The leaflet headed "For the Party!" was written by J. V. Stalin at the beginning of March 1912 and was widely distributed all over the country together with the leaflet entitled "The Election Platform of the R.S.D.L.P." written by V. I. Lenin. No. 26 of *Sotsial-Demokrat* published a communication from the Bureau of the Central Committee stating: "The Central Committee has published in Russia the leaflets: 1) 'For the Party!' (6,000); 2) 'The Election Platform' (10,000). These leaflets have been delivered to 18 centres, including a number of the largest ones. . . . The Central Committee's leaflets were eagerly welcomed everywhere, the only complaint being that there were so few of them." On March 29, 1912, G. K. Ordjonikidze wrote from Kiev that both leaflets "created a very good impression, and readers went into raptures over them." Somewhat later N. K. Krupskaya wrote on V. I. Lenin's instructions: "We have received your two letters (about local affairs and the plans in view) and the two leaflets: 'For the Party!' and the 'Platform.' We heartily welcome them."

2. The leaflet referred to the Sixth All-Russian Party Conference that was held in Prague on January 5-17 (18-30), 1912. This conference united the Bolshevik organisations and registered the independent existence of the Bolshevik Party. By a decision of the conference the Mensheviks were expelled from the Party and the formal unity of the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks within one party was ended forever. The Prague Conference inaugurated a Party of a new type (see *History of the C.P.S.U.(B.)*, *Short Course*, Moscow 1952, pp. 217-25).

---

[Collected Works Index](#) | [Volume 2 Index](#)  
[Works by Decade](#) | [J. V. Stalin Archive](#)  
[Marxists Internet Archive](#)