LENIN

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

LENIN

COLLECTED WORKS

7

THE RUSSIAN EDITION WAS PRINTED
IN ACCORDANCE WITH A DECISION
OF THE NINTH CONGRESS OF THE R.C.P.(B.)
AND THE SECOND CONGRESS OF SOVIETS
OF THE U.S.S.R.

ИНСТИТУТ МАРКСИЗМА—ЛЕНИНИЗМА при ЦК КНСС

В. И. ЛЕНИН

СОЧИНЕНИЯ

Издание четвертое

ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЕ ИЗДАТЕЛЬСТВО
ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОЙ ЛИТЕРАТУРЫ
МОСКВА

V. I. LENIN

COLLECTED WORKS

VOLUME 7

September 1903–December 1904

PROGRESS PUBLISHERS
MOSCOW

TRANSLATED BY THE LATE ABRAHAM FINEBERG
AND BY NAOMI JOCHEL

EDITED BY CLEMENS DUTT

From Marx to Mao

© Digital Reprints
2009
www.marx2mao.com

First printing 1961
Second printing 1965
Third printing 1974
Fourth printing 1977

Printed in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Л $\frac{10102-203}{014(01)-77}$ без объявл.

CONTENTS

Preface 13

1 9 0 3

ACCOUNT OF THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE R.S.D.L.P. 15

FOILED!. 35

PLAN OF LETTERS ON TASKS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH 41

THE TASKS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH. *First Letter* . . 43

SECOND PARTY CONGRESS. *Plan of Article* 57

MAXIMUM BRAZENNESS AND MINIMUM LOGIC 59

DRAFT OF A LETTER FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF THE CENTRAL ORGAN TO THE MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITION 66

SECOND CONGRESS OF THE LEAGUE OF RUSSIAN REVOLUTIONARY SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY ABROAD, October 13-18 (*26-31*), *1903* 69

1. PREFATORY REMARKS TO THE REPORT ON THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE R.S.D.L.P., OCTOBER 13 (26) 71

I 71

II 71

III 72

IV 72

2. REPORT ON THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE R.S.D.L.P., OCTOBER 14 (27) 73

3. STATEMENT CONCERNING MARTOV'S REPORT, OCTOBER 15 (28). 84

4. SPEECH ON THE RULES OF THE LEAGUE, OCTOBER 17 (30) 85

AN UNSUBMITTED STATEMENT 86

STATEMENT OF RESIGNATION FROM THE PARTY COUNCIL AND FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF THE CENTRAL ORGAN 91

THE POSITION OF THE BUND IN THE PARTY 92

THE NARODNIK-LIKE BOURGEOISIE AND DISTRAUGHT NARODISM 103

TO THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF THE CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE R.S.D.L.P. 112

AN UNISSUED STATEMENT 113

LETTER TO *ISKRA* 114

WHY I RESIGNED FROM THE *ISKRA* EDITORIAL BOARD. *A Letter to the Editors of "Iskra"* 118

LETTER FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.D.L.P. TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE LEAGUE ABROAD, THE PARTY AID GROUPS, AND TO ALL PARTY MEMBERS ABROAD 125

NOTE ON THE POSITION OF THE NEW *ISKRA* 129

1904

PREFACE TO THE PAMPHLET *A LETTER TO A COMRADE ON OUR ORGANISATIONAL TASKS* 131

POSTSCRIPT TO THE PAMPHLET *A LETTER TO A COMRADE ON OUR ORGANISATIONAL TASKS* 133

TO THE PARTY MEMBERSHIP 139

SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE R.S.D.L.P., January 15-17 (28-30), 1904 143

1. DRAFT RESOLUTION ON MEASURES TO RESTORE PEACE IN THE PARTY, MOVED ON JANUARY 15 (28) 145
2. DISSENTING OPINION RECORDED BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE, JANUARY 17 (30) 148
3. DRAFT RESOLUTION ON CONVENING THE THIRD PARTY CONGRESS, JANUARY 17 (30) 152
4. DRAFT RESOLUTIONS MOVED ON JANUARY 17 (30) 153
   - I 153
   - II 153
   - III 153
5. SPEECHES ON MEASURES TO RESTORE PEACE IN THE PARTY, JANUARY 15 (28) 154
   - I 154
   - II 155
   - III 157
   - IV 158
   - V 161

FROM MARX TO MAO NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

6. SPEECHES ON MEASURES TO RESTORE PEACE IN THE PARTY, JANUARY 16 (29) 164
VI 164
VII 168
VIII 171
IX 175
7. SPEECHES ON CONVENING THE THIRD PARTY CONGRESS, JANUARY 17 (30) 177
I 177
II 177
III 178
8. SPEECHES ON THE PUBLICATION OF PARTY LITERATURE, JANUARY 17 (30) 179
I 179
II 182
III 184
IV 185

TO THE PARTY 186

CIRCUMSTANCES OF RESIGNATION FROM THE *ISKRA* EDITORIAL BOARD 191

MAY DAY 197

ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK (*The Crisis in Our Party*) 201
Preface 203
A. The Preparations for the Congress 207
B. Significance of the Various Groupings at the Congress 209
C. Beginning of the Congress. The Organising Committee Incident 212
D. Dissolution of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* Group 221
E. The Equality of Languages Incident 224
F. The Agrarian Programme. 231
G. The Party Rules. Comrade Martov's Draft 239
H. Discussion on Centralism *Prior* to the Split Among the *Iskra*-ists 248
I. Paragraph One of the Rules 253
J. Innocent Victims of a False Accusation of Opportunism 276
K. Continuation of the Debate on the Rules. Composition of the Council 286
L. Conclusion of the Debate on the Rules. Co-optation to the Central Bodies. Withdrawal of the *Rabocheye Dyelo* Delegates 292

M. The Elections. End of the Congress 306
N. General Picture of the Struggle at the Congress. The Revolutionary and Opportunist Wings of the Party 332
O. After the Congress. Two Methods of Struggle 347
P. Little Annoyances Should Not Stand in the Way of a Big Pleasure 366
Q. The New *Iskra*. Opportunism in Questions of Organisation. 377
R. A Few Words on Dialectics. Two Revolutions 407
Appendix. The Incident of Comrade Gusev and Comrade Deutsch 414

LETTER TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE 424

STATEMENT BY THREE MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE 428

TO THE PARTY 430

SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE R.S.D.L.P., May 31 (June 13) and June 5 (18), 1904 433
1. SPEECHES CONCERNING AN INTER-PARTY CONFERENCE, MAY 31 (JUNE 13) 435
I 435
II 437
2. SPEECHES ON CO-OPTATION TO THE COMMITTEES AND THE RIGHT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE TO APPOINT NEW MEMBERS TO THEM, JUNE 5 (18) 438
I 438
II 439
III 440
3. SPEECH ON THE NEWSPAPER *RASSVET*, JUNE 5 (18) 442

WHAT WE ARE WORKING FOR (*To the Party*) 443

TO THE PARTY 452

TO FIVE MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE. *For Russia* 460

LETTER TO CENTRAL COMMITTEE AGENTS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS OF THE R.S.D.L.P. SIDING WITH THE SECOND PARTY CONGRESS MAJORITY 462

LETTER TO GLEBOV (V. A. NOSKOV) 464

ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK. *Reply by N. Lenin to Rosa Luxemburg* 472

AN OBLIGING LIBERAL. 484

PREFACE TO N. SHAKHOV'S PAMPHLET *THE FIGHT FOR A CONGRESS* 488

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FORMATION OF A BUREAU OF MAJORITY COMMITTEES. *Draft* 489

THE ZEMSTVO CAMPAIGN AND *ISKRA*'S PLAN 495

I 499
II 502
III 507
IV 513

OUTLINE OF A TALK ON THE SITUATION WITHIN THE PARTY. *Outline of My Talk* 519

A LETTER TO THE COMRADES (*With Reference to the Forthcoming Publication of the Organ of the Party Majority*) 521

STATEMENT AND DOCUMENTS ON THE BREAK OF THE CENTRAL INSTITUTIONS WITH THE PARTY 527

Appendix 534

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FORMATION OF AN ORGANISING COMMITTEE AND THE CONVENING OF THE THIRD REGULAR CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY 538

Notes 541

The Life and Work of V. I. Lenin. Chronology 575

ILLUSTRATIONS

First page of the manuscript of Lenin's "Account of the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.". 1903 17

First page of the manuscript of the "Dissenting Opinion Recorded by the Representatives of the Central Committee in the Party Council". January 17 (30), 1904. 149

Cover of the original edition of *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*. 1904 200-201

Page 71 of the manuscript of *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*. 1904 251

First page of the manuscript of Lenin's "Announcement of the Formation of a Bureau of Majority Committees". 1904 491

Manuscript of the "Outline of a Talk on the Situation Within the Party". 1904 517

PREFACE

This seventh volume of Lenin's works covers the period from September 1903 to December 1904.

The major item in it is his book, *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*, which elaborated the organisational principles of the Bolshevik Party.

Many of the works in the present volume—the "Account of the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.", the article "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back. Reply by N. Lenin to Rosa Luxemburg", the speeches at the Congress of the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad and the sessions of the Party Council, and the resolutions moved there, the draft appeal "To the Party", and the pamphlet "The Zemstvo Campaign and *Iskra*'s Plan"—are directed against the Mensheviks' opportunism in organisational and tactical questions and against their splitting activities.

The letters included in this volume—"Letter to the Members of the Central Committee", "To Five Members of the Central Committee", "Letter to Central Committee Agents and Committee Members of the R.S.D.L.P. Siding with the Second Party Congress Majority" and the "Letter to Glebov (V. A. Noskov)"—illustrate Lenin's fight against the conciliators.

"What We Are Working For", "To the Party", "A Letter to the Comrades", and the "Announcement of the Formation of an Organising Committee and the Convening of the Third Regular Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party" show how Lenin directed the preparations for the third Party Congress and the establishment of the Bureau

of Majority Committees and the Bolshevik newspaper *Vperyod*.

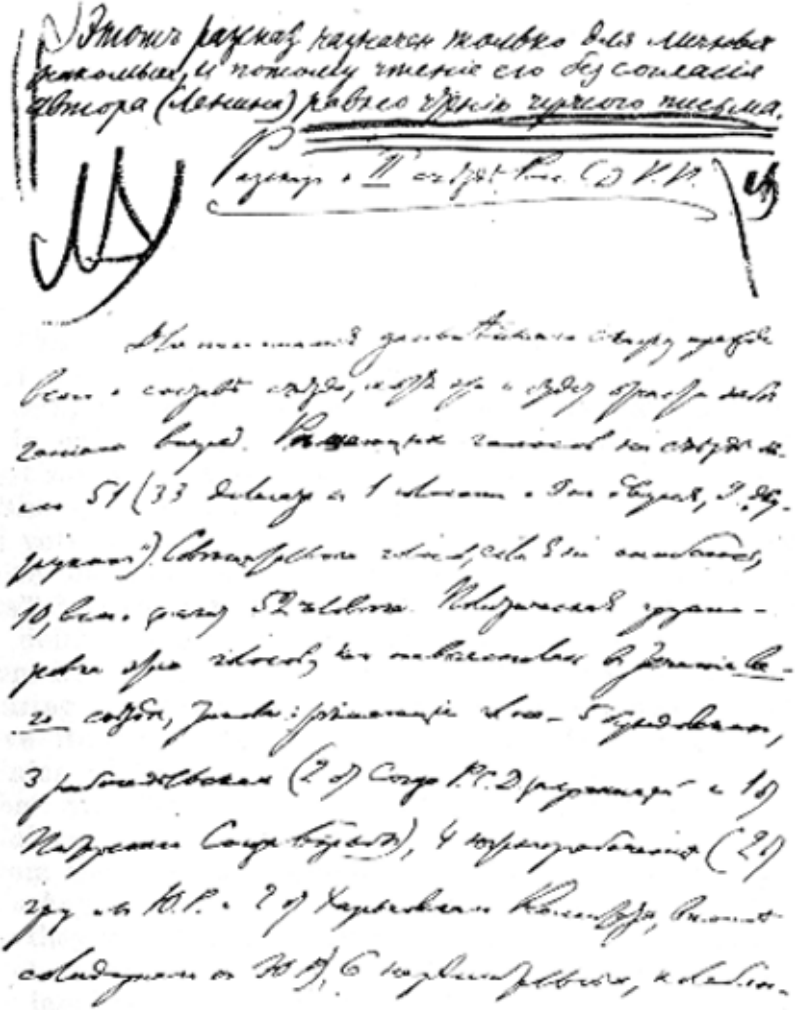
The following documents published in this volume are included in the *Collected Works* for the first time: the "Statement Concerning Martov's Report", the letter "To the Editorial Board of the Central Organ of the R.S.D.L.P." concerning Lenin's resignation from the editorial board of *Iskra*, the draft resolution moved in the Party Council on the convening of the Third Party Congress, and Lenin's fourth speech there on the publication of Party literature, and the "Announcement of the Formation of a Bureau of Majority Committees".

ACCOUNT OF THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE R.S.D.L.P.[1]

Written in the early part of September 1903

First published in 1927 in *Lenin Miscellany VI*

Published according to the manuscript



First page of the manuscript of Lenin's "Account of the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.". 1903
Reduced

This account is intended for personal acquaintances only, and therefore to read it without the consent of the author (*Lenin*) **is tantamount to reading other people's letters**.

In order to make what follows more intelligible, I shall first say a few words about the composition of the Congress, although it will mean anticipating somewhat. The number of votes at the Congress was fifty-one (thirty-three delegates with one vote each, and nine with two, nine "double-handers").[2] There were ten delegates, if I am not mistaken, with a deliberative voice but no vote; that is, fifty-two persons in all. The political grouping of these votes, as revealed during the *entire* course of the Congress, was as follows: five Bundists,[3] three *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists[4] (two from the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad[5] and one from the St. Petersburg League of Struggle[6]), four *Yuzhny Rabochy*-ists (two from the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group[7] and two from the Kharkov Committee, which sided solidly with *Yuzhny Rabochy*), six indecisives or waverers (the "Marsh", as they were called by **all** the *Iskra*-ists[8]—in jest, of course), and, lastly, about thirty-three *Iskra*-ists who were more or less firm and consistent in their *Iskra*-ism. These thirty-three *Iskra*-ists, who when they stood together decided every issue at the Congress, split in their turn into two subgroups—a split that took shape finally only towards the end of the Congress: one subgroup, with approximately nine votes, consisting of *Iskra*-ists of the "soft or rather zigzag line" (or the female line, as certain wits called it, and not without reason)—*Iskra*-ists who stood (as will be seen later) for justice, for a middle course, etc.; and the other, with about twenty-four votes, consisting of *Iskra*-ists of the firm line, who upheld consistent *Iskra*-ism both as

regards tactics and as regards the personal composition of the central institutions of the Party.

I repeat that this grouping took final shape and became quite clear only *post factum*, towards the end of the Congress (which held close on forty sittings!), and I am anticipating when I outline it at the start. I must also make the reservation that this grouping only represents the *approximate* numbers of votes, for on various minor issues (and on one occasion—on the question of "equality of languages", of which I shall speak later—on a major issue too) the votes not infrequently split, some delegates abstaining, the groups intermingling, and so on.

The composition of the Congress had been preliminarily determined by the Organising Committee,[9] which, under the Regulations for the Congress, had the right to invite to it in a deliberative capacity such persons as it might think fit. The Congress itself at the very beginning elected a Credentials Committee, which thereafter took charge of all matters relating to its composition. (Let me say in parenthesis that on this committee too there was a Bundist, who tried to take all the other members of it by siege, keeping them up until three o'clock in the morning, and who, even so, entered a "dissenting opinion" *on every issue*.) The Congress was marked at the beginning by the peaceful and harmonious co-operation of all the *Iskra*-ists; there had always been different shades of opinion among them, of course, but they had never manifested themselves as political differences. Incidentally, let us state in advance that the split among the *Iskra*-ists was one of the major political results of the Congress, and anyone who wants to acquaint himself with the matter should therefore pay special attention to all episodes even remotely connected with that split.

One rather important event at the very beginning of the Congress was the election of the *Bureau*, or *Presidium*. Martov was for electing nine persons, who would select three from their number to act as the Bureau at each sitting, and he even suggested a Bundist as one of the nine. I was for electing only three persons for the whole duration of the Congress, and three, moreover, who would "keep order". The Bureau elected consisted of Plekhanov, myself and

Comrade T[10] (a firm-line *Iskra*-ist and member of the Organising Committee, of whom we shall have frequent occasion to speak later). The last-named, I might remark, was elected by only a narrow margin in preference to a *Yuzhny Rabochy*-ist (also a member of the Organising Committee). My difference with Martov over the question of the Bureau (a difference significant in the light of subsequent events) did not, however, lead to any split or conflict: the matter was somehow settled in a peaceful, natural, "homely" way, as most questions generally were settled in the *Iskra* organisation and the *Iskra* editorial board.

Also at the beginning of the Congress, there was a meeting of the *Iskra* organisation (confidential and informal, of course) on the subject of its Congress mandates. This meeting likewise settled its business in a peaceful and amicable manner. I only mention this meeting because I think it significant, firstly, that at the beginning of the Congress the *Iskra*-ists worked together harmoniously, and, secondly, that they had decided to appeal, in doubtful and debatable cases, to the authority of the *Iskra* organisation (or, rather, of the *Iskra* organisation members present at the Congress); although the decisions of these meetings-were not binding, of course, for the rule that "binding instructions are abolished" and that it was everyone's right, and indeed duty, to vote at the Congress according to his own free convictions, without owing obedience to any organisation—this rule, I say, was recognised by all the *Iskra*-ists, and was loudly proclaimed by the chairman at the beginning of practically every meeting of the *Iskra* organisation.

To proceed. The first incident at the Congress to disclose that all was not well among the *Iskra*-ists, an incident that "set the scene" for the final drama (or tragicomedy?), was the celebrated "*incident of the Organising Committee*". This must be dealt with at length. It occurred while the Congress was still engaged in constituting itself and discussing its Standing Orders (which, by the way, consumed a tremendous amount of time on account of the obstruction of the Bundists, who, deliberately or otherwise, never missed an opportunity to cause delay). The substance of the Organising Committee incident was that, on the one hand, that body had, even before the Congress opened, rejected the protest of the Borba

group,[11] which demanded representation at the Congress, and had stood by this decision in the Credentials Committee; and, on the other hand, *on the floor of the Congress* this same Organising Committee suddenly declared that it was inviting Ryazanov in a deliberative capacity. The course of events in regard to this incident was as follows.

Before the sittings of the Congress began, Martov confidentially informed me that a certain member of the *Iskra* organisation and of the Organising Committee (whom we shall call N[12]) had decided to insist in the Organising Committee that it invite to the Congress in a deliberative capacity a certain individual whom Martov himself could not describe otherwise than as a "renegade".[13] (And it was true that this individual had inclined at one time towards *Iskra* but afterwards, within a few weeks, in fact, had gone over to *Rabocheye Dyelo*, even though the latter was already in a state of complete degeneration.) Martov and I discussed the matter and we were both indignant that a member of the *Iskra* organisation should do such a thing, knowing, of course (for Martov had warned Comrade N), that it was a direct slap in the face for *Iskra*, yet not considering it necessary even to consult the organisation. N did in fact put forward his proposal in the Organising Committee, but it was rejected owing to the vigorous protest of Comrade T, who described the wholly unstable political character of the "renegade". It is worth noting that Martov, as he said, could not even speak any longer to N, although they had previously been on friendly personal terms, so shocked was he by this action. N's wish to put spokes in *Iskra*'s wheel was further revealed in his supporting a vote of censure passed by the Organising Committee on the *Iskra* editorial board; a censure which, to be sure, concerned a very minor matter, but which nevertheless aroused Martov's profound indignation. Furthermore, information from Russia, also communicated to me by Martov, indicated a tendency on N's part to circulate rumours of dissension between the *Iskra*-ists in Russia and the *Iskra*-ists abroad. All this disposed the *Iskra*-ists to be very distrustful of N; and on top of it all came the following. The Organising Committee had rejected the protest of Borba; the Organising Committee members attending the meeting of the Credentials Committee (T and N) had

both (*including* N!!!) likewise spoken in the most emphatic terms against Borba. Yet during an adjournment at one of the morning sittings of the Congress, the Organising Committee suddenly held a meeting of their own "by the window" and decided to invite Ryazanov in a deliberative capacity! *N was in favour of inviting him*. T, of course, was categorically against, declaring moreover that the Organising Committee had no right to make such a decision inasmuch as everything relating to the composition of the Congress had already been referred to the Credentials Committee specially elected by the Congress for the purpose. Of course, the *Yuzhny Rabochy* members of the Organising Committee + the Bundist + N outvoted Comrade T, and the decision went through.

T reported this decision to the *Iskra* editorial board, which (not all its members were present, but Martov and Zasulich were) unanimously decided, of course, to take the field at the Congress against the Organising Committee, for many *Iskra*-ists had already spoken publicly at the Congress against Borba and it was impossible to yield on this issue.

When the Organising Committee (after the dinner interval) informed the Congress of its decision, T, in his turn, informed it of his protest. Thereupon a *Yuzhny Rabochy* member of the Organising Committee fell upon T and accused him of violating discipline (1), on the grounds that the Organising Committee had resolved not to disclose (*sic*!) this fact to the Congress. Naturally, we (Plekhanov, *Martov* and I) came down hard on the Organising Committee at that, accusing it of reviving binding instructions, violating the sovereignty of the Congress, and so on. The Congress supported us, the Organising Committee was defeated, and a resolution was adopted depriving the Organising Committee as a body of the right to influence the composition of the Congress.

Such was the "Organising Committee incident". Firstly, it finally undermined the political confidence of many *Iskra*-ists in N (and strengthened their confidence in T); secondly, it not only proved, but palpably *demonstrated* how shaky the *Iskra* trend still was even in a central and, as it seemed, super-*Iskra*-ist institution like the Organising Committee. It became clear that, besides the Bundist,

the Organising Committee included 1) *Yuzhny Rabochy*-ists with their own specific policy, and 2) "*Iskra*-ists who were ashamed of being *Iskra*-ists", and that only *some* of its members were 3) *Iskra*-ists who were not ashamed of being such. When the *Yuzhny Rabochy*-ists expressed a desire to discuss this deplorable incident with the *Iskra* editorial board (privately, of course)—*Comrade N, it is very important to note, expressed no desire at that time to do so*—the editorial board did discuss it with them, and I plainly told them that the Congress had definitely revealed an important political fact, namely, that there were many *Iskra*-ists in the Party who were ashamed of being *Iskra*-ists and were capable, just to spite *Iskra*, of playing such a trick as inviting Ryazanov. So angry was I at this trick on N's part, after he had spoken *against* Borba in the committee, that I publicly declared at the Congress that "comrades who have attended foreign congresses know what a storm of indignation is always aroused when people say one thing at committees and another on the floor of the Congress".* "*Iskra*-ists" who were afraid of being "reproached" by the Bundists with being "*Iskra* puppets", and who *for this reason alone* played *political tricks* on *Iskra*, naturally could not inspire any confidence.

The *Iskra*-ists' general distrust of N grew immensely when Martov's attempt to discuss the matter with him resulted in *N's announcing his resignation from the "Iskra" organisation*! Thereafter the N "affair" was taken up in the *Iskra* organisation, whose members were outraged by *such* a resignation, and the organisation held *four meetings* on the subject. These meetings, especially the last, are extremely important, for it was there that the split among the *Iskra*-ists, *chiefly* over the composition of the Central Committee, definitely took shape.

But before embarking on an account of these meetings of the *Iskra* organisation (which, I once more repeat, were private and informal), let me say something about the work of the Congress. That work proceeded harmoniously for the time being, in the sense of all the *Iskra*-ists acting together,

---

* See present edition, Vol. 6, p. 484.—*Ed.*

both on the first agenda item (the position of the Bund in the Party), and on the second (the programme), and on the third (endorsement of the Central Organ of the Party). The united stand of the *Iskra*-ists ensured a big and solid majority at the Congress (a compact majority, as the Bund ists ruefully called it!), although here too the "indecisives" (or "Marsh") and *Yuzhny Rabochy*-ists more than once displayed, on minor issues, their utter instability. The political grouping of not fully *Iskra*-ist elements at the Congress stood out more and more clearly.

To return to the meetings of the *Iskra* organisation. At the first of them it was resolved to request N to give an explanation, leaving it to him to say before whom of the members of the *Iskra* organisation he wished to do so. I protested emphatically against this approach, demanding that the political issue (the *Iskra*-ists' lack of political confidence in N at this Congress) be separated from the personal issue (the appointment of a commission to investigate the reasons for N's strange conduct). At the second meeting it was announced that N wished to give his explanation *without T present*, although he did not intend, he intimated, to say anything about T personally. I again protested and refused to be present at an explanation at which a non-member of the organisation could demand the withdrawal, even for a moment, of a member, when it was not that member he was going to discuss. I considered this an unworthy manoeuvre and a slap in the face for the organisation on N's part: N did not even trust the organisation so far as to leave it to it to determine under what conditions the explanation should be given! At the third meeting, N gave his "explanation", which *failed to satisfy* the majority of those present. The fourth meeting was attended by all the *Iskra*-ists; but it was *p r e c e d e d* by a number of important episodes at the Congress itself.

First of all, mention should be made of the "equality of languages" episode. It concerned the adoption of the programme—the formulation of the demand for equality and equal rights in regard to language. (The programme was discussed and voted on point by point, the Bundists engaged in **desperate** obstruction, and practically two-thirds of the time of the Congress was spent on the programme!) On

this issue the Bundists succeeded in shaking the unity of the *Iskra*-ists, leading some of them to believe that *Iskra* objected to "equality of languages", when actually all the *Iskra* editorial board objected to was this illiterate, in its opinion, bizarre and superfluous formula. A desperate struggle ensued, and the Congress was split *in half*, into *two equal halves* (with a few abstentions): about twenty-three votes (perhaps 23-25, I do not remember exactly) were on the side of *Iskra* (and the *Iskra* editorial board), and as many were against. The question had to be postponed, it was referred back to the committee, which found a formula that the Congress adopted *u n a n i m o u s l y*. The equality of languages incident is important because it once more revealed the shakiness of *Iskra*-ism, plainly and definitely revealed the shakiness both of the indecisives (it was then, if I am not mistaken, that they were dubbed the *Marsh*, and by *none other than* the *Iskra*-ists of the Martov persuasion!) and of the *Yuzhny Rabochy*-ists, who were all against *Iskra*. Passions ran high and *innumerable cutting* remarks were flung at the *Yuzhny Rabochy*-ists by the *Iskra*-ists, *especially the Martovites*. One "leader" of the Martovites nearly came to blows with the *Yuzhny Rabochy*-ists during the interval, and I hastened to resume the sitting (at the urgent request of Plekhanov, who feared a scuffle). It is important to note that among these twenty-three staunchest of the *Iskra*-ists too, the Martovites (i.e., the *Iskra*-ists who subsequently followed Martov) constituted a *m i n o r i t y*.

Another episode was the struggle over Paragraph 1 of the "Party Rules". This was already the fifth item of the *Tagesordnung*,* towards the end of the Congress. (Under Item 1, a resolution against federalism was adopted; under Item 2, the programme; under Item 3, *Iskra* was adopted as the Central Organ of the Party;** under Item 4, the "dele-

* Agenda.—*Ed*.

** It is highly important to note that the Congress *Tagesordnung*, adopted, on my report, *by the Organising Committee* and *endorsed by the Congress*, contained two separate items: *Item 3*: "Establishment of the Central Organ of the Party, or endorsement of such", and *Item 24*: "Election of the central institutions of the Party". When one of the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists asked (in connection with Item 3) what it was

gates' reports" were heard, part of them, that is, the rest being referred to a committee, for the time at the disposal of the Congress was already too short—both funds and endurance had been exhausted.)

Paragraph 1 of the Rules defines a Party member. The definition given in my draft was: "A member of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party is one who accepts its programme and who supports the Party both financially and by personal *participation in one of the Party organisations*." In place of the words I have underlined, Martov proposed: "*work under the control and direction of one of the Party organisations*". My formulation was supported by Plekhanov, Martov's by the rest of the editorial board (Axelrod was their spokesman at the Congress). We argued that the concept Party member must be *narrowed* so as to separate those who worked from those who merely talked, to eliminate organisational chaos, to eliminate the monstrous and absurd possibility of there being organisations which consisted of Party members but which were not Party organisations, and so on. Martov stood for *broadening* the Party and spoke of a broad class movement needing a broad—i.e., diffuse—organisation, and so forth. It is amusing to note that in defence of their views nearly all Martov's supporters cited *What Is To Be Done?** Plekhanov hotly opposed Martov, pointing out that his Jaurèsist formulation would fling open the doors to the opportunists, who just longed for such a position of being inside the Party but outside its organisation. "Under the control and direction", I said, would in

---

we were endorsing, just a name?—we didn't even know who the editors were to be!—*M a r t o v* took the floor and explained that what was being submitted for endorsement was the *Iskra t r e n d*, irrespective of persons, and that this would in no way predetermine the composition of the editorial board, for the election of the central institutions would follow under Item 24, and all binding instructions had been abolished.

These words of Martov's (on Item 3, *before the* "*Iskra*"*-ists had split*) are of the utmost importance.

The explanation Martov gave fully accorded with our *common* understanding of the meaning of Item 3 and Item 24 of the *Tagesordnung*.

After Item 3 Martov in his speeches at the Congress actually employed, time and again, the expression: the ex-members of the *Iskra* editorial board.

* See present edition, Vol. 5, pp. 347-529.—*Ed*.

practice mean nothing more nor less than *without any control or direction*. Martov *won*: his formulation was adopted (by about twenty-eight votes to twenty-three, or something like that—I cannot recall exactly), *thanks* to the Bund, which, of course, at once sensed a loophole and brought all its *five* votes to bear to secure the adoption of "the worse alternative" (that is precisely how a *Rabocheye Dyelo* delegate explained his motive for voting for Martov!). The heated controversy and the voting on Paragraph 1 of the Rules once more revealed the political grouping at the Congress and demonstrated that the Bund + *Rabocheye Dyelo* could *decide the fate* of any issue by supporting the minority of the *Iskra*-ists against the majority.

It was *after* the debate and voting on Paragraph 1 of the Rules that the fourth (and *last*) meeting of the *Iskra* organisation took place. The disagreement among the *Iskra*-ists over the personal composition of the Central Committee had already become quite clear and had caused a split in their ranks: one section stood for an *Iskra*-ist Central Committee (in view of the dissolution of the *Iskra* organisation and the Emancipation of Labour group[14] and the need to complete *Iskra*'s work), the other—for admitting the *Yuzhny Rabochy*-ists too and for predominance of *Iskra*-ists of the "zigzag line". The first section was categorically against N's candidature, the other in favour of it. It was in a last attempt to reach agreement that this *meeting of the sixteen* (members of the *Iskra* organisation, including, I repeat, those present in a deliberative capacity) was called. The result of the voting was: nine against N, four in favour, the rest abstaining. The majority, anxious nonetheless to avoid war with the minority, thereupon proposed a compromise list of five, including one *Yuzhny Rabochy*-ist (acceptable to the minority) and one militant member of the minority, while the rest were consistent *Iskra*-ists (of whom—it is important to note—one joined in the fight at the Congress only towards the end and was to all intents and purposes impartial, while the other two took no part at all in the fight and were absolutely impartial as regards personalities). Ten hands were raised for this list (then one more was added, making eleven) and one against (only Martov's!), the rest abstained! Thus the compromise

list was wrecked by *Martov*. After this, two "militant" lists, one from each side, were put to the vote, but neither secured more than a minority.

And so, at the last meeting of the *Iskra* organisation the Martovites *proved in the minority on both issues*; nevertheless, when a member of the majority (the above-mentioned impartial member, or chairman) approached them after the meeting in a last attempt to reach agreement, they declared war.

The Martovites' calculation was clear and sure: the Bundists and *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists would undoubtedly have supported the list of the *zigzag line*, for during the month the Congress had been sitting all issues had become so plain and all personalities so clearly delineated that *not one* of the Congress delegates would have had any difficulty in deciding which was the better alternative, or the lesser evil. And for the Bund + *Rabocheye Dyelo*, of course, the zigzag *Iskra*-ists were the lesser evil, and always will be.

After the meeting of the sixteen, when the *Iskra*-ists had definitely divided and war had been declared among them, meetings began of the two parties into which the Congress had split, that is, private and unofficial gatherings of all who thought alike. The *Iskra*-ists of the consistent line assembled at first to the number of nine (out of sixteen), then fifteen, and finally ***twenty-four***, counting *votes*, *not persons*. This rapid increase was due to the fact that the lists of candidates (for the Central Committee) were already beginning to circulate, and the vast majority of the *Iskra*-ists were immediately and permanently repelled by the Martovite lists because of their flabbiness: Martov's candidates were people who had made a definitely bad impression on the Congress (by paltering, inconsistency, tactlessness, etc.). That in the first place; in the second place, when it was explained to the *Iskra*-ists what had taken place in the *Iskra* organisation, the bulk of them were drawn towards the majority, and Martov's inability to stick to a definite political line became apparent to all and sundry. So it was that twenty-four votes were quickly and easily mustered for the consistent *Iskra*-ist tactics, for the list of Central Committee candidates, and for electing a trio to the

editorial board (instead of endorsing the old, ineffectual and amorphous board of six).

By this time the Congress had finished discussing the Rules, and Martov and Co. had once again (and not once, in fact, but several times) *defeated* the majority of the *Iskra*-ists *with the generous assistance of the Bund* + "*Rabocheye Dyelo*"—as, for example, over the question of co-optation to the central bodies (this question was decided by the Congress *along Martov's lines*).

In spite of having been thus impaired, the Rules as a whole were endorsed by all the *Iskra*-ists and by the entire Congress. But after the general Rules, the Congress passed on to the Rules of the Bund, and by an *overwhelming* majority rejected the Bund's proposal (to recognise the Bund as the *sole* representative of the Jewish proletariat in the Party). I think on this issue the Bund stood alone against practically the whole Congress. Thereupon *the Bundists withdrew from the Congress*, *announcing their withdrawal from the Party*. The Martovites had lost five of their faithful allies! Then the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists too withdrew, after the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad[15] was recognised as the *sole* Party organisation abroad. The Martovites had lost another two of their faithful allies! The total number of votes at the Congress was now forty-four (51—7), of which the *majority* (twenty-four) were those of consistent *Iskra*-ists; the coalition of the Martovites with the *Yuzhny Rabochy*-ists and the "Marsh" resulted in only twenty votes.

The *Iskra*-ists of the zigzag line were faced with the prospect of submitting—just as the *Iskra*-ists of the firm line had submitted without a murmur when Martov *set out to beat* and did beat them in coalition with the Bund. But the Martovites were so unbridled that instead of submitting they set out to cause a row and a split.

It was causing a row to raise the question of endorsing the old editorial board, for the request of even one of the editors would be enough to oblige the Congress to *scrutinise* the question of the composition of the Central Organ in its entirety, instead of confining itself to mere endorsement. It was a step towards a split to *refuse* to take part in the elections to the Central Organ and the Central Committee.

First as regards the election of the editorial board. As I have already mentioned, what the *Tagesordnung* said, in Item 24, was: *election* of the central institutions of the Party. And *my* commentary on the *Tagesordnung*[16] (which commentary was known *to a l l the "Iskra"-ists long before the Congress* and *to all the delegates* at the Congress) said marginally: election of *t h r e e p e r s o n s t o t h e C e n t r a l O r g a n* and three to the Central Committee. Hence it is beyond all doubt that the demand for the election of a trio originated within the editorial board itself and none of the editors protested against it. Even Martov and another Martovite leader defended the proposal for "two trios" prior to the Congress, before *a number of delegates*.

Several weeks before the Congress, I personally informed Starover[17] and Martov that at the Congress I would demand the *election* of the editorial board; I agreed to the election of two trios, the idea being that the editorial trio would *either* co-opt seven (or even more) persons or would remain as it was (I specially stipulated this latter possibility). Starover even said outright that the trio would mean Plekhanov + Martov + Lenin, and I *agreed* with him—so clear had it been to everyone all along that these alone could be elected to the leadership. One had to be actuated by resentment and pique and lose one's head after the struggle at the Congress to proceed after the event to attack the trio as inexpedient and ineffectual. The old board of six was so ineffectual that *never once in all its three years* did it meet in full force. That may seem incredible, but it is a fact. *Not one* of the forty-five issues of *Iskra* was made up (in the editorial and technical sense) by anyone but Martov or Lenin. And *never once* was any *major* theoretical issue raised by anyone but Plekhanov. Axelrod did no work at all (he contributed literally nothing to *Zarya*[18] and only three or four articles to all the forty-five issues of *Iskra*). Zasulich and Starover only contributed and advised, they *never* did any actual editorial work. Who ought to be elected to the *political leadership*, to the *c e n t r e*, was as clear as daylight to every delegate at the Congress, after the month it had been in session.

To propose at the Congress to endorse the old editorial board was *a stupid attempt to provoke a row*.

It was stupid because it was futile. Even if the board of six had been endorsed, one member of it (myself, for example) would have demanded that it be reviewed, that the relations within it be examined, and the Congress would have been obliged to go into the matter all over again.

It was an attempt to provoke a row because *non-endorsement* was bound to be taken *as an insult*—whereas in a new election there was nothing insulting whatever. The Central Committee was being elected—why not the Central Organ too? There was no question of endorsing the Organising Committee—why should there be any of endorsing the old editorial board?

Naturally, however, by *demanding* endorsement the Martovites *provoked* a protest at the Congress, the protest was taken as an *insult*, as an affront, as an attempt to *oust* them, to shut them out ... and all the bogy-tales began to be invented on which the fancy of idle gossips is now feeding!

The editorial board left the hall while the Congress discussed the election-or-endorsement issue. After a desperately hot debate, *the Congress decided not to endorse the old editorial board.**

Only after this decision was taken did the *ex*-members of the editorial board return to the hall. Martov then got up and, in *his own name* and that of his colleagues, declined to stand for election, uttering all sorts of dreadful and wretched words about a "state of siege in the Party" (for blackballed Ministers?) and "emergency laws against particular individuals and groups" (such as those who, in the name of *Iskra*, try to palm off Ryazanov on it, and who say one thing at committees and another on the floor of the Congress?).

I replied to him by pointing to the *incredible confusion of political ideas* which had led to this protest against election, against the Congress making changes in official Party bodies.**

---

* One Martovite made *such* a speech on this occasion that when he had finished a delegate called out to the secretary: "Don't put a full stop, put a tear-drop!" Particularly fervent in their championship of the old editorial board were the most inveterate "*Marsh*" men.

** See present edition, Vol. 6, pp. 505-06.—*Ed.*

Plekhanov, Martov, and Lenin were elected. *Martov again declined*. Koltsov (who received three votes) likewise declined. Thereupon the Congress passed a resolution instructing the two members of the editorial board of the Central Organ to co-opt a third, *when they should find a suitable person.*

Next came the election of three members to the Central Committee—*the name of only one of whom was disclosed to the Congress* by the teller of the votes—and of the fifth member of the Party Council[19] (likewise by secret ballot).

The Martovites, followed by the whole of the "Marsh", *would not hand in their ballots* and submitted a written statement to the Bureau to that effect.

This was manifestly a step towards a split, towards *wrecking the Congress* and refusing to recognise the Party. Yet when one of the *Yuzhny Rabochy*-ists said in so many words that he *doubted* (*sic*!) the validity of the Congress decisions, Martov, overcome by shame, controverted him, *publicly declaring that he had no doubt as to their validity.*

Unfortunately, these well-spoken and loyal words have been contradicted by the actions and behaviour of Martov (and of the Martovites)....

The Congress then entrusted the publication of the minutes to a Minutes Committee, and adopted eleven resolutions on tactical questions, viz.:

1) On Demonstrations;
2) On the Trade Union Movement;
3) On Work Among the Sects;
4) On Work Among the Student Youth;
5) On How To Behave Under Interrogation;
6) On Shop Stewards;
7) On the 1904 International Congress in Amsterdam;
8) On the Liberals (Starover's resolution);
9) On the Liberals (Plekhanov's resolution),
10) On the Socialist-Revolutionaries[20];
11) On Party Literature.

Then, after a brief speech reminding the delegates that the decisions of the Congress were binding, the chairman closed the Congress.

Examining the behaviour of the Martovites since the Congress, their refusal to collaborate on the Central Organ (*although officially invited by the editorial board to do so*), their *refusal* to work on the Central Committee, and their propaganda of a boycott—all I can say is that this is an insensate attempt, unworthy of Party members, to disrupt the Party—and why? *Only* because they are dissatisfied with the composition of the central bodies; for, speaking *objectively*, it was *o n l y* over this that our ways parted, while their subjective verdicts (insult, affront, slurs, ousting, shutting out, etc., etc.) *are nothing but the fruits of offended vanity and a morbid imagination.*

This morbid imagination and offended vanity are leading directly to the most disgraceful *scandal-mongering*, when, *without yet knowing or seeing anything of the activities of the new central bodies*, people spread rumours about their being "ineffectual", about Ivan Ivanovich "ruling with a rod of iron" or Ivan Nikiforovich[21] with an "iron hand", and so on.

To try to prove that the central bodies are "ineffectual" *by boycotting them* is an unprecedented and unparalleled violation of *Party duty*, and no sophistry can conceal the fact: *the boycott is a step towards disrupting the Party.*

The Russian Social-Democratic movement is in the throes of the last difficult transition from the circles to a *Party*, from philistinism to a *realisation of revolutionary duty*, from acting by means of scandal-mongering and circle pressure to *discipline.*

Anyone who values Party work and *action* in the interests of the Social-Democratic labour movement will refuse to tolerate such wretched sophistries as a "legitimate" and "loyal" boycott of the central bodies; he will not allow the cause to suffer and the work to be brought to a standstill because a dozen or so individuals are displeased that they and their friends were not elected to the central bodies; he will not allow Party officials to be subjected to private and secret pressure through threats of non-collaboration, through boycotts, through cutting off of funds, through scandal-mongering and lying tales.

FOILED!

"Well, and what if your sonorous, bombastic and florid assurances should inspire distrust because of their very nature?"

"I should like to see who would dare doubt my word!"

"But still, suppose it is doubted?"

"I repeat, I will not allow anyone to doubt the word of a revolutionary, I shall stop at nothing, I shall go to any length, I shall demand either a direct expression of disbelief or a direct withdrawal, I...."

"What if your demand for a direct expression of disbelief is accepted?"

"What do you mean?"

"What if you are told plainly and bluntly that you are not believed?"

"I shall proclaim the man who dares say that a gross slanderer, I shall publicly brand his unparalleled conduct...."

"But what if in reply he begins to show point by point that your whole behaviour has long since made it impossible to trust you?"

"I shall go about everywhere collecting protests against this fratricidal controversy, I shall make emotional speeches about truth and justice, about crystal purity soiled by unclean hands, about the coarse and sordid husk of petty vanity, about the purifying flame which fills my soul with a supreme enthusiasm. I shall liken my enemies to Pontius Pilate...."

"And suppose they liken you to Tartuffe for such talk?"

"In that case I shall demand a court of arbitration!"

"You will at once be told that your challenge is gladly accepted, and asked to agree that the court examine whether

your adversary had legitimate grounds for doubting your *statements.*"

"In that case ... in that case ... I shall declare that '*after all that has happened*' it is ridiculous to talk of any '*agreement*' between the '*parties concerned*'!"

* *
*

Such was what *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya*[22] calls "the unparalleled campaign over the affair of April 2".[23] For very understandable reasons, that worthy publication hates to admit that that is what happened. It takes refuge in a whole series of subterfuges, which we shall have to examine in detail.

Firstly, *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* is surprised that, "instead of the organised Russian Social-Democratic movement", to which Balmashov's friends addressed their statement, it is the *Iskra* editorial board that replies. Balmashov's friends, we are told, "have received no answer to their quite definite offer, addressed to a quite definite quarter".

That is not so, gentlemen. Like everyone else, you know very well what the organised Russian Social-Democratic movement consists of, you know *all* the organisations we have. Unlike some other people, we do not have new organisations springing up overnight. We have our Party committees, we have *Iskra*, we have the Organising Committee, which has for some time been making preparations for the Second Congress of the Party. Just to which "definite quarter" did you address yourselves? To the Second Congress? To the Organising Committee? No, though you talk of a *definite* quarter, you said *absolutely nothing* to define that quarter. You yourselves say that *Iskra* is recognised by the majority of the committees; consequently, no one could answer you but *Iskra*. If the Second Congress of our Party adopts *Iskra* as the Party organ, then *Iskra*'s reply will be the reply of the Party. If not, you will have some other organ to deal with. That is simple enough for a child of six to understand.

Revolutsionnaya Rossiya is "surprised that, instead of a plain answer to the plain offer of Balmashov's friends" (an offer, supposedly, to give the Social-Democrats the

opportunity to acquaint themselves with the true facts of the affair of April 2), "it is proposed that they should regard themselves and *Iskra* as two parties between whom there could, after all that has happened, be some kind of preliminary negotiations or 'agreements' as to the presentation of the issue". And so, *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* now asserts that we were not offered a court of arbitration, but only an opportunity of acquainting ourselves. That is not so. The "Statement" in No. 27 of *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* speaks literally of an "uninvestigated charge of slander" (against *Iskra*), of having an *investigation* of the charge, of *submitting* "the following evidence to a person on whose integrity and secrecy both we and the Central Organ [mark that!] of the Russian Social-Democratic Party could rely". "Investigation of the charge", "examination of evidence" by a person on whom both accuser and accused can rely—what is that but a court of arbitration? Is that only an offer to acquaint ourselves with the facts?? You are a comic lot, gentlemen. After calling upon us to agree about selecting a person of integrity, you now declare with the inimitable lofty air of a Nozdrev[24] caught red-handed that no agreement is possible!

Revolutsionnaya Rossiya "further asks whom *Iskra* is trying to make a fool of when it talks about an agreement as to the presentation of the issue, and in the same breath decrees its own presentation and categorically asserts that no other is possible". In court, everyone categorically asserts his own opinion and claims that it is the only correct one. Instead of in turn giving his own *definite* presentation of the issue, our haughty opponent begins to bluster and make fine speeches!

After a certain amount of bluster, however, *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* condescends to make also a few remarks about our presentation of the issue. In its opinion, *Iskra* is dodging and retreating. It isn't, we are told, as if "the Combatant Organisation denied *Iskra*'s right to have its own free opinion [!], to judge political acts from its own point of view, or even [*sic*!] to have its private doubts about anything it liked". This "private doubts" is really priceless! The "Combatant Organisation" is so extraordinarily broad-minded as to be prepared (now, after a year and more of

warfare!) to permit us *even* to doubt—but only privately, that is, presumably, in such a way that no one but the doubter shall know anything about it.... Perhaps when these combatant people allow us to hold our own "free opinion" they also mean us to do so privately?

"One might think," *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* says, "that it was only *Iskra*'s refusal to accede to this demand that was the reason for accusing it of slander." Then follow quotations from the article "Tartuffes of Revolutionary Morality" and the remark that "what we have here is not modest and indefinite doubts, but very immodest and very definite charges".

We invite our readers to recall certain generally known facts. In No. 20 of *Iskra* (May 1, 1902), we give our opinion of Balmashov's act, without having the slightest idea of the existence of any combatant organisation. The latter thereupon writes us a letter demanding that we seek the motives for Balmashov's decision in its official statements. We silently drop this letter from an unknown organisation into the wastepaper basket. The letter is then published in *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya*, No. 7 (June 1902), the editors of which, for no other reason than our silence, begin to cry that a slur has been cast on the moral aspect, that the significance of the act is being belittled, and so on. We reply with an article entitled "An Enforced Controversy" (*Iskra*, No. 23, August 1, 1902), in which we laugh at this angry Jupiter, uphold our opinion of the act of April 2, and declare that in our view it is "more than doubtful" whether Balmashov belonged to any "combatant organisation". Thereupon Messieurs the Socialist-Revolutionaries, having extorted from us a public expression of our private doubts, raise an hysterical outcry about "unparalleled conduct" and talk about nothing less than "mud-slinging" and "insinuations" (*Revolutsionnaya Rossiya*, No. 11, September 1902).

Such, in the briefest outline, are the main facts of our press controversy. Someone who knows very well that his opponent regards his utterances with silent distrust publicly forces him to the wall and demands an open expression of either belief or disbelief, and when he gets the latter answer, beats his breast and complains *urbi et orbi** what a

* To the world at large.—*Ed.*

noble creature he is and how shamefully he has been insulted. What is this but Nozdrev conduct? What is it but revolutionary swashbuckling? Did not such a person deserve to be called a Tartuffe?

Where does *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* get the idea that we are retreating and refuse to answer for our article and for the articles about Tartuffes? Is it from the fact that in our presentation of the issue we do not set forth the theses of these articles? But was the arbitration offer issued in connection with any particular articles—was it not rather in connection with *Iskra*'s general attitude towards the assurances of the "Socialist-Revolutionary Party"? Do not Balmashov's friends, at the very beginning of their statement in No. 27 of *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya*, cite precisely the starting-point of the whole controversy, namely, *Iskra*'s remark, in No. 23, that in its view it was more than doubtful whether Balmashov belonged to any "combatant organisation"? We make so bold as to assure *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* that we answer for *all* our articles; that we are prepared to supplement our questions for the arbitration court by references to *any* issue of *Iskra*; that we are ready to prove to anyone that we had every moral right and valid reason to describe as Tartuffes those on *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* who, on account of our presumptuous doubts as to the veracity of that paper's utterances, indulged in the expressions we have quoted.

"Dodging and retreating"—yes, but on whose part? Is it not on the part of those who are *now* magnanimously prepared to recognise our right to a free opinion and to private doubts, after indulging for *over a year* in disgusting bombast against *Iskra* for stubbornly persisting in its doubts and maintaining that every serious person was in duty bound to have doubts about revolutionary romancing? When you saw that your emotional talk about probity and honour actually moved your hearers to laughter, not tears, you decided you must have a new sensation, and came out with your demand for an arbitration court. The scandal-loving element in the colonies abroad rubbed their hands with glee and went about eagerly whispering: "They have summoned them to court ... at last! Now we shall see!" And now they have seen—have seen the last act of a vaudeville,

whose hero, with an ineffable air of injured innocence, declares that "after all that has happened" no agreements as to the presentation of the issue to the court are possible.

Just carry on in the same spirit, gentlemen! But bear in mind that no torrents of wretched words will prevent us from discharging our duty of exposing phrase-mongering and mystification wherever they may occur—whether in the "programmes" of revolutionary adventurers, or in the tinsel of their romancing, or in grandiloquent sermons about truth and justice, purifying flames, crystal purity, and all the rest.

Iskra, No. 48,
September 15, 1903

Published according
to the *Iskra* text

PLAN OF LETTERS ON TASKS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH

Letters on *tasks of the revolutionary youth* could be arranged on the following plan:

I. What the present-day student body consists of and what the task of achieving its ideological unity involves.

II. Importance of Marxism in revolutionising the students (in the revolutionary movement).

III. Social-Democrats and Socialist-Revolutionaries in Russia. Theoretical and tactical differences between them. Terrorism.

IV. Problems of student organisation from the standpoint of "revolutionising the students".

V. Students and the working class (?).

Ideological unity = a certain lack of ideological principles.
General argument—different groups among the students.
Analyse—what groups, their accidental or inevitable character.

Uplifters in different classes of society.
" as basis of liberals.

Class character of the six groups insufficiently distinct: autocracy the chief determining factor (reactionaries—uplifters—liberals). Petty bourgeoisie, workers, bourgeoisie—*c l a s s* groupings* already beginning to take shape.

Progressive significance of class (and political) differentiation. *Example. Academics and their differentiation from*

* Not "newly emerged" (the socialist intelligentsia), but going back half a century, beginning with the Petrashevsky circle,[25] approximately.

"*liberals*". This differentiation does not hinder but helps political utilisation (development, growth).

"Ideological unity". *Quid est*?* Between whom? Academics + liberals? Liberals + socialists?

Only Socialist-Revolutionaries and Social-Democrats? Achieving ideological unity = propagating definite ideas, *clarifying* class differences, effecting ideological demarcation.

Achieving ideological unity = propagating ideas *that can lead forward*, the ideas of the progressive class.

Revolutionary Marxism, its emergence in Europe before 1848, its role in Western Europe and Russia.

{*i n s e r t*: about the "*superkluge*"** contention that bourgeois students cannot become imbued with socialism.}

Written in August-September 1903

First published in 1924 in the *Krasnaya Molodyozh* magazine, No. 1

Published according to the manuscript

---

* What is it?—*Ed.*

** "Over-clever."—*Ed.*

THE TASKS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH

FIRST LETTER[26]

The editorial statement of the newspaper *Student*,[27] which, if we are not mistaken, was first published in No. 4 (28) of *Osvobozhdeniye*,[28] and which was also received by *Iskra*, is indicative in our opinion of a considerable advance in the editors' views since the appearance of the first issue of *Student*. Mr. Struve was not mistaken when he hastened to express his disagreement with the views set forth in the statement: those views do indeed differ radically from the trend of opportunism so consistently and zealously maintained by the bourgeois-liberal organ. By recognising that "revolutionary sentiment *alone* cannot bring about ideological unity among the students", that "this requires a socialist ideal based upon one or another socialist world outlook" and, moreover, "a definite and integral" outlook, the editors of *Student* have broken in principle with ideological indifference and theoretical opportunism, and have put the question of the way to revolutionise the students on a proper footing.

True, from the current standpoint of vulgar "revolutionism", the achievement of ideological unity among the students does not require an integral world outlook, but rather precludes it, involving a "tolerant" attitude towards the various kinds of revolutionary ideas and abstention from positive commitment to some one definite set of ideas; in short, in the opinion of these political wiseacres, ideological unity presupposes a certain lack of ideological principles (more or less skilfully disguised, of course, by hackneyed formulas about breadth of views, the importance of unity at all costs and immediately, and so on and so forth).

A rather plausible and, at first glance, convincing argument always produced in support of this line of reasoning is to point to the generally known and incontrovertible fact that among the students there are, and are bound to be, groups differing greatly in their political and social views, and to declare that the demand for an integral and definite world outlook would therefore inevitably repel some of these groups and, consequently, hinder unity, produce dissension instead of concerted action, and hence weaken the power of the common political onslaught, and so on and so forth, without end.

Let us examine this plausible argument. Let us take, for example, the division of students into groups given in No. 1 of *Student*. In this first issue the editors did not yet advance the demand for a definite and integral world outlook, and it would therefore be difficult to suspect them of a leaning towards Social-Democratic "narrowness". The editorial in the first issue of *Student* distinguishes four major groups among the present-day students: 1) the indifferent crowd—"persons completely indifferent to the student movement"; 2) the "academics"—those who favour student movements of an exclusively academic type; 3) "opponents of student movements in general—nationalists, anti-Semites, etc."; and 4) the "politically minded"—those who believe in fighting for the overthrow of tsarist despotism. "This group, in turn, consists of two antithetical elements—those belonging to the purely bourgeois political opposition with a revolutionary tendency, and those who belong to the newly emerged [only newly emerged?—*N. Lenin*] socialistically minded revolutionary intellectual proletariat." Seeing that the latter subgroup is divided in its turn, as we all know, into Socialist-Revolutionary students and Social-Democratic students, we find that there are among the present-day students *six* political groups: reactionaries, indifferents, academics, liberals, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Social-Democrats.

The question arises: is this perhaps an accidental grouping, a temporary alignment of views? That question has only to be raised for anyone at all acquainted with the matter to answer it in the negative. And, indeed, there could not be any other grouping among our students, because

they are the most responsive section of the intelligentsia, and the intelligentsia are so called just because they most consciously, most resolutely and most accurately reflect and express the development of class interests and political groupings in society as a whole. The students would not be what they are if their political grouping did not correspond to the political grouping of society as a whole—"correspond" not in the sense of the student groups and the social groups being absolutely proportionate in strength and numbers, but in the sense of the necessary and inevitable existence among the students of the same groups as in society. And Russian society as a whole, with its (relatively) embryonic development of class antagonisms, its political virginity, and the crushed and downtrodden condition of the vast, overwhelming majority of the population under the rule of police despotism, is characterised by precisely these six groups, namely: reactionaries, indifferents, *uplifters*, liberals, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Social-Democrats. For "academics" I have here substituted "uplifters", i.e., believers in law-abiding progress without a political struggle, progress under the autocracy. Such uplifters are to be found in all sections of Russian society, and everywhere, like the student "academics", they confine themselves to the narrow range of professional interests, the improvement of their particular branches of the national economy or of state and local administration; everywhere they fearfully shun "politics", making no distinction (as the academics make none) between the "politically minded" of different trends, and implying by the term politics everything that concerns ... the form of government. The uplifters have always constituted, and still constitute, the broad foundation of our liberalism: in "peaceful" times (i.e., translated into "Russian", in times of political reaction) the concepts uplifter and liberal become practically synonymous; and even in times of war, times of rising public feeling, times of mounting onslaught on the autocracy, the distinction between them often remains vague. The Russian liberal, even when he comes out in a free foreign publication with a direct and open protest against the autocracy, never ceases to feel that he is an uplifter first and foremost, and every now and again he will start talking like a slave, or,

if you prefer, like a law-abiding, loyal and dutiful subject—*vide Osvobozhdeniye*.

The absence of a definite and clearly discernible borderline between uplifters and liberals is a general characteristic of the whole political grouping in Russian society. We might be told that the above division into six groups is incorrect because it does not correspond to the class division of Russian society. But such an objection would be unfounded. The class division is, of course, the ultimate basis of the political grouping; *in the final analysis*, of course, it always determines that grouping. But this ultimate basis becomes revealed only in the process of historical development and as the consciousness of the participants in and makers of that process grows. This "final analysis" is arrived at only by political struggle, sometimes a long, stubborn struggle lasting years and decades, at times breaking out stormily in the form of political crises, at others dying down and, as it were, coming temporarily to a standstill. Not for nothing is it that in Germany, for example, where the political struggle assumes particularly acute forms and where the progressive class—the proletariat—is particularly class-conscious, there still exist such parties (and powerful parties at that) as the Centre, whose denominational banner serves to conceal its heterogeneous (but on the whole decidedly anti-proletarian) class nature. The less reason is there to be surprised that the class origin of the present-day political groups in Russia is strongly overshadowed by the politically disfranchised condition of the people as a whole, by the domination over them of a remarkably well organised, ideologically united and traditionally exclusive bureaucracy. What is surprising, rather, is that Russia's development along European capitalist lines should already, despite her Asiatic political system, have made so strong a mark on the political grouping of society.

In our country too, the industrial proletariat, the progressive class of every capitalist country, has already entered on the path of a mass, organised movement led by Social-Democracy, under the banner of a programme which has long since become the programme of the class-conscious proletariat of the whole world. The category of people who are indifferent to politics is of course incomparably

larger in Russia than in any European country, but even in Russia one can no longer speak of the primitive and primeval virginity of this category: the indifference of the non-class-conscious workers—and partly of the peasants too—is giving place more and more often to outbursts of political unrest and active protest, which clearly demonstrate that this indifference has nothing in common with the indifference of the well-fed bourgeois and petty bourgeois. This latter class, which is particularly numerous in Russia owing to her still relatively small degree of capitalist development, is already unquestionably beginning, on the one hand, to produce some conscious and consistent reactionaries; but on the other hand, and immeasurably more often, it is still little to be distinguished from the mass of ignorant and downtrodden "toiling folk" and draws its ideologues from among the large group of *raznochintsy*[29] intellectuals, with their absolutely unsettled world outlook and unconscious jumble of democratic and primitive-socialist ideas. It is just this ideology that is characteristic of the old Russian intelligentsia, both of the Right wing of its liberal-Narodnik section and of the most Leftward wing: the "Socialist-Revolutionaries".

I said the "old" Russian intelligentsia. For a *new* intelligentsia, whose liberalism has almost entirely sloughed off primitive Narodism and vague socialism (not without the help of Russian Marxism, of course), is already making its appearance in our country. The formation of a real bourgeois-liberal intelligentsia is proceeding in Russia with giant strides, especially owing to the participation in this process of people so nimble and responsive to every opportunist vogue as Messrs. Struve, Berdyaev, Bulgakov & Co. As regards, lastly, those liberal and reactionary elements of Russian society who do not belong to the intelligentsia, their connection with the class interests of one or another group of our bourgeoisie or landowners is clear enough to anyone at all acquainted, say, with the activities of our Zemstvos,[30] Dumas, stock-exchange committees, fair committees, etc.

And so, we have arrived at the indubitable conclusion that the political grouping of our students is not accidental, but is bound to be such as we have depicted above, in concurrence with the first issue of *Student*. Having established that fact, we can easily cope with the controversial question of what, actually, should be understood by "achieving ideological unity among the students", "revolutionising" the students, and so on. It even seems very strange at first glance that so simple a question should have proved controversial. If the political grouping of the students corresponds to the political grouping of society, does it not follow of itself that "achieving ideological unity" among the students can mean only one of two things: either winning over the largest possible number of students to a quite definite set of social and political ideas, or establishing the closest possible bond between the students of a definite political group and the members of that group outside the student body. Is it not self-evident that one can speak of revolutionising the students only having in mind a perfectly definite content and character of this revolutionising process? To the Social-Democrat, for example, it means, firstly, spreading Social-Democratic ideas among the students and combating ideas which, though called "Socialist-Revolutionary", have nothing in common with revolutionary socialism; and, secondly, endeavouring to broaden every democratic student movement, the academic kind included, and make it more conscious and determined.

How so clear and simple a question was confused and rendered controversial is a very interesting and very characteristic story. A controversy arose between *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* (Nos. 13 and 17) and *Iskra* (Nos. 31 and 35) over the "Open Letter" of the Kiev Joint Council of United Fraternities and Student Organisations (printed in *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya*, No. 13, and in *Student*, No. 1). The Kiev Joint Council characterised as "narrow" the decision of the Second All-Russian Student Congress of 1902 that student organisations should maintain relations with the committees of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party; and the quite obvious fact that a certain section of the students in certain localities sympathise with the "Socialist-Revolutionary Party" was nicely covered up by the very

"impartial" and very unsound argument that "the students as such cannot associate themselves in their entirety with either the Socialist-Revolutionary Party or the Social-Democratic Party". *Iskra* pointed to the unsoundness of this argument, but *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya*, of course, flew to arms in its defence, calling the *Iskra*-ists "fanatics for divisions and splits" and accusing them of "tactlessness" and lack of political maturity.

After what has been said above, the absurdity of such an argument is only too apparent. The question at issue is the particular political role the students should play. And, don't you see, you must first shut your eyes to the fact that the students are not cut off from the rest of society and therefore always and inevitably reflect the political grouping of society as a whole, and then, with eyes thus shut, proceed to chatter about the students as such, or the students in general. The conclusion arrived at is ... the harmfulness of divisions and splits resulting from association with a particular political party. It is clear as daylight that in order to carry this curious argument to its conclusion, the arguer had to leap from the political plane to the occupational or educational plane. And it is just such a flying leap that *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* makes in the article "The Students and Revolution" (No. 17), talking, firstly, about general student interests and the general student struggle and, secondly, about the educational aims of the students, the task of training themselves for future social activity and developing into conscious political fighters. Both these points are very just—but they have nothing to do with the case and only confuse the issue. The question under discussion is *political* activity, which by its very nature is connected inseparably with the struggle of parties and inevitably involves the *choice* of one definite party. How, then, can one evade this choice on the grounds that *all* political activity requires very serious scientific training, the "development" of firm convictions, or that *no* political work can be confined to circles of politically minded people of a particular trend, but must be directed to ever broader sections of the population, must link up with the occupational interests of every section, must unite the occupational movement with the political movement and raise the former to the level of the

latter?? Why, the very fact that people have to resort to such devices in order to defend their position shows how sadly they themselves are wanting both in definite scientific convictions and in a firm political line! From whatever side you approach the matter, you find fresh confirmation of the old truth which the Social-Democrats have long propounded in condemning the efforts of the Socialist-Revolutionaries to balance themselves—as regards both scientific theory and practical politics—between Marxism, West-European "critical" opportunism and Russian petty-bourgeois Narodism.*

Indeed, imagine a state of things where political relations are at all developed and see how our "controversial question" looks in practice. Suppose there is a clerical party, a liberal party and a Social-Democratic party. In certain localities they function among certain sections of the students, let us say, and, perhaps, of the working class. They try to win over as many as possible of the influential representatives of both. Is it conceivable that they would object to these representatives choosing one definite party on the grounds that there are certain general educational and occupational interests common to all the students and to the entire working class? That would be like disputing the fact that parties must contend on the grounds that the art of printing is useful to all parties without distinction. There is no party in the civilised countries that does not realise the tremendous value of the widest and most firmly established educational and trade unions; but each seeks to have its own influence predominate in them. Who does not know that talk about this or that institution being non-partisan is generally nothing but the humbug of the ruling classes, who want to gloss over the fact that existing institutions are already imbued, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, with a very definite political spirit? Yet what our Socialist-Revolutionaries do is, in effect, to sing dithyrambs to "non-partisanship". Take, for example, the following moving tirade

* It need hardly be said that the thesis that the programme and tactics of the Socialist-Revolutionaries are inconsistent and inherently contradictory requires special detailed elucidation. We hope to go into this in detail in a subsequent letter.

in *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* (No. 17): "What short-sighted tactics it is when a revolutionary organisation is determined to regard every other independent, non-subordinate organisation as a *competitor* that must be destroyed and into whose ranks division, disunity, and disorganisation must at all costs be introduced!" This was said in reference to the 1896 appeal of the Moscow Social-Democratic organisation, which reproached the students for having in recent years withdrawn into the narrow confines of their university interests, and which *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* admonished, saying that the existence of student organisations never prevented those who had "crystallised as revolutionaries" from devoting their energies to the workers' cause.

Just see how much confusion there is here. Competition is possible (and inevitable) only between a political organisation and another political organisation, a political tendency and another political tendency. There can be no competition between a mutual aid society and a revolutionary circle; and when *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* ascribes to the latter the determination to destroy the former, it is talking sheer nonsense. But if in this same mutual aid society there develops a certain political tendency—not to aid revolutionaries, for instance, or to exclude illegal books from the library—then every honest "politically minded" person is *in duty bound* to compete with it and combat it outright. If there are people who confine the circles to narrow university interests (and there undoubtedly are such people, and in 1896 there were far more!), then a *struggle* between them and the advocates of broadening, not narrowing, the interests is similarly imperative and obligatory. And, mind you, in the open letter of the Kiev Council, which evoked the controversy between *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* and *Iskra*, the question was of a choice not between student organisations *and* revolutionary organisations, but between revolutionary organisations of different trends. Consequently, it is people already "crystallised as revolutionaries" that have begun to *choose*, while our "Socialist-Revolutionaries" are dragging them *back*, on the pretext that competition between a revolutionary organisation and a purely student organisation is short-sighted.... That is really too senseless, gentlemen!

FROM MARX TO MAO NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

The *revolutionary* section of the students begin to choose between two revolutionary parties, and are treated to this lecture: "It was not by imposing a definite [indefiniteness is preferable, of course...] party label [a label to some, a banner to others], it was not by violating the intellectual conscience of their fellow-students [the entire bourgeois press of all countries always attributes the growth of Social-Democracy to ringleaders and trouble-makers violating the conscience of their peaceable fellows...] that this influence was achieved", i.e., the influence of the socialist section of the students over the rest. Assuredly, every honest-minded student will know what to think of this charge against the socialists of "imposing" labels and "violating consciences". And these spineless, flabby and unprincipled utterances are made in Russia, where ideas of party organisation, of party consistency and honour, of the party banner are still so immeasurably weak!

Our "Socialist-Revolutionaries" hold up as an example to the revolutionary students the earlier student congresses, which proclaimed their "solidarity with the general political movement, leaving quite aside the factional dissensions in the revolutionary camp". What is this "general political" movement? The socialist movement plus the liberal movement. Leaving that distinction aside means siding with the movement immediately nearest, that is, the liberal movement. And it is the "Socialist-Revolutionaries" who urge doing that! People who call themselves a *separate* party urge dissociation from party struggle! Does not this show that that party cannot convey its political wares under its own colours and is obliged to resort to contraband? Is it not clear that that party lacks any definite programmatic basis *of its own*? That we shall soon see.

The errors in the Socialist-Revolutionaries' arguments about the students and revolution cannot be attributed merely to the lack of logic that we have tried to demonstrate above. In a certain sense it is the other way round: the illogicality of their arguments follows from their basic error. As a "party" they from the first adopted so inherently contradictory, so slippery a stand that people who

were quite honest and quite capable of political thinking could not maintain it without constantly wobbling and falling. It should always be remembered that the Social-Democrats do not ascribe the harm done by the "Socialist-Revolutionaries" to the socialist cause to various mistakes on the part of individual writers or leaders. On the contrary, they regard all these mistakes as the inevitable consequence of a false programme and political position. In a matter like the student question this falsity is particularly apparent and the contradiction between a *bourgeois-democratic* viewpoint and a tinselled covering of revolutionary socialism becomes manifest. Indeed, examine the train of thought in *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya*'s programmatic article "The Students and Revolution". The author's main emphasis is on the "unselfishness and purity of aims", the "force of idealistic motives" of the "youth". It is here that he seeks the explanation of their "innovatory" political strivings, and not in the actual conditions of social life in Russia, which, on the one hand, produce an irreconcilable antagonism between the autocracy and very broad and very heterogeneous sections of the population and, on the other, render (soon we shall have to be saying: rendered) extremely difficult any manifestation of political discontent except through the universities.

The author then turns his guns on the attempts of the Social-Democrats to react consciously to the existence of different political groups among the students, to bring about closer unity of like political groups and to separate the politically unlike. It is not that he criticises as incorrect any of these attempts in particular—it would be absurd to maintain that all of them were always wholly successful. No, he is a stranger to the very idea that differing class interests are bound to be reflected in the political grouping too, that the students cannot be an exception to society as a whole, however unselfish, pure, idealistic, etc., they may be, and that the task of the socialist is not to gloss over this difference but, on the contrary, to explain it as widely as possible and to embody it in a political organisation. The author views things from the idealist standpoint of a bourgeois democrat, not the materialist standpoint of a Social-Democrat.

He is therefore not ashamed to issue and reiterate the appeal to the revolutionary students to adhere to the "general political movement". The main thing for him is precisely the general political, i.e., the general democratic, movement, which must be united. This unity must not be impaired by the "purely revolutionary circles", which must align themselves "parallel to the general student organisation". From the standpoint of the interests of this broad and united democratic movement, it would be criminal, of course, to "impose" party labels and to violate the intellectual conscience of your fellows. This was just the view of the bourgeois democrats in 1848, when attempts to point to the conflicting class interests of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat evoked "general" condemnation of the "fanatics for divisions and splits". And this too is the view of the latest variety of bourgeois democrats—the opportunists and revisionists, who yearn for a great united democratic party proceeding peaceably by way of reforms, the way of class collaboration. They have always been, and must necessarily be, opponents of "factional" dissensions and supporters of the "general political" movement.

As you see, the arguments of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, which from the standpoint of a socialist are illogical and contradictory to the point of absurdity, become quite understandable and consistent when viewed from the standpoint of the bourgeois democrat. That is because the Socialist-Revolutionary Party is, actually, nothing but a *subdivision* of the bourgeois democrats, a subdivision which in its composition is primarily intellectual, in its standpoint is primarily petty-bourgeois, and in its theoretical ideas eclectically combines latter-day opportunism with old-time Narodism.

The best refutation of the bourgeois democrat's phrases about unity is the course of political development and of the political struggle itself. And in Russia the growth of the actual movement has already led to this kind of refutation. I am referring to the emergence of the "academics" as a separate group among the students. As long as there was no real struggle, the academics did not stand out from the "general student" mass, and the "unity" of the whole "thinking section" of the students appeared inviolable. But as

soon as it came to *action*, the divergence of unlike elements became inevitable.*

The progress of the political movement and of the direct onslaught on the autocracy was immediately marked by greater definiteness of political grouping—despite all the empty talk about uniting anybody and everybody. That the separation of the academics and the politically minded is a big step forward, hardly anyone, surely, will doubt. But does this separation mean that the Social-Democratic students will "break" with the academics? *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* thinks that it does (see No. 17, p. 3).

But it thinks so only because of the confusion of ideas which we have brought out above. A complete demarcation of political trends in no wise signifies a "break-up" of the occupational and educational unions. A Social-Democrat who sets out to work among the students will *unfailingly* endeavour to penetrate, either himself or through his agents, into the largest possible number of the broadest possible "purely student" and educational circles; he will try to broaden the outlook of those who demand only academic freedom, and to propagate precisely the Social-Democratic programme among those who are still looking for a programme.

To sum up. A certain section of the students want to acquire a definite and integral socialist world outlook. The ultimate aim of this preparatory work can only be—for students who want to take practical part in the revolutionary movement—the conscious and irrevocable choice of one of the two trends that have now taken shape among the revolutionaries. Whoever protests against such a choice on the plea of effecting ideological unity among the students, of revolutionising them in general, and so forth, is obscuring socialist consciousness and is in actual fact preaching absence of ideological principles. The political grouping of the students cannot but reflect the political grouping of society as a whole, and it is the duty of every

* If certain reports are to be credited, a further divergence of the unlike elements among the students is becoming increasingly marked, namely, dissociation of the socialists from political *revolutionaries* who refuse to hear of socialism. It is said that this latter trend is very pronounced among the students exiled to Siberia. We shall see if these reports are confirmed.

socialist to strive for the most conscious and consistent demarcation of politically unlike groups. The Socialist-Revolutionary Party's appeal to the students to "proclaim their solidarity with the general political movement and leave quite aside the factional dissensions in the revolutionary camp" is, essentially, an appeal to go *back*, from the socialist to the bourgeois-democratic standpoint. This is not surprising, for the "Socialist-Revolutionary Party" is only a subdivision of the bourgeois democrats in Russia. When the Social-Democratic student breaks with the revolutionaries and politically minded people of all other trends, this by no means implies the break-up of the general student and educational organisations. On the contrary, only on the basis of a perfectly definite programme can and should one work among the widest student circles to broaden their academic outlook and to propagate scientific socialism, i.e., Marxism.

P. S. In subsequent letters I should like to discuss with the readers of *Student* the importance of Marxism in moulding an integral world outlook, the differences between the principles and tactics of the Social-Democratic Party and the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, the problems of student organisation, and the relation of the students to the working class generally.

Published in September 1903
in *Student*, No. 2-3
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Published according
to the text in *Student*

SECOND PARTY CONGRESS

PLAN OF ARTICLE[31]

Long awaited.

Why slow? (Socialist-Revolutionaries and Social-Democrats. Really mass movement. Philistinism and politics.)

Chief task of Congress: to give formal shape.

1α Programme. Its significance. End of "nomad" period.[32] Bulwark in fight against liberals, Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc.

Guide in propaganda.

" " agitation.

2β Organisational Rules. Their significance. Centralism. Local autonomy. (2 central bodies.) Comradely attitude towards leaders. Personal and political relations. Working out interpretation and methods of applying the Rules.

3γ Resolutions.

liberals (two)	demonstrations
Socialist-Revolutionaries	trade union struggle

Party literature

1. liberals
2. liberals
3. Socialist-Revolutionaries
4. Party literature
5. demonstrations
6. trade union struggle

} important

7. shop stewards
8. 1904 Congress
9. Kishinev pogrom
10. sects
11. students
12. behaviour under interrogation

} not important

4 δ Withdrawal of Bund. Better openly. Tactics: explain harmfulness of isolation. (The Bundists' nationalism and organisational scurrilities.)

5 *Minutes.*

Written at the end of September-beginning of October 1903

First published in 1927 in *Lenin Miscellany VI*

Published according to the manuscript

MAXIMUM BRAZENNESS AND MINIMUM LOGIC

In our 46th issue we reprinted the resolution of the Fifth Congress of the Bund on the position of the Bund in the R.S.D.L.P., and gave our opinion of it. The Foreign Committee of the Bund replies at great length and with great heat in its leaflet of September 9 (22). The most material part of this angry reply is the following phenomenal revelation: "*In addition to its maximum Rules* [*sic*!], *the Fifth Congress of the Bund also drew up minimum Rules*"; and these minimum Rules are quoted in full, it being explained in two notes, moreover, that "the rejection of autonomy" and the demand that other sections of the Party appeal to the Jewish proletariat only with the sanction of the Bund Central Committee "*must be put forward as an ultimatum*". Thus decided the Fifth Congress of the Bund.

Charming, is it not? The Bund Congress draws up two sets of Rules *simultaneously*, defining simultaneously both its maximum and minimum desires or demands. The minimum it prudently (oh, so prudently!) tucks away in its pocket. Only the maximum is published (in the leaflet of August 7 [20]), and it is *publicly* announced, clearly and explicitly, that this maximum draft is "to be submitted to the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party as the *basis* for the discussion [mark that!] of the Bund's position in the Party". The Bund's opponents, naturally, attack this maximum with the utmost vehemence, just because it is the maximum, the "last word"* of the

* By the way, it is extremely characteristic of the Bund's methods of controversy that this expression called down on our heads the particular wrath of *Posledniye Izvestia*.[33] Why the last word, it demanded, when it (the demand for federation) had been uttered over two years

trend they condemn. Thereupon, *a month later*, these people, without the slightest embarrassment, pull the "minimum" out of their pocket, and add the ominous word: "*ultimatum*"! That is a positive *last price*, not a "last word".... Only is it really your last, gentlemen? Perhaps you've got a minimal minimum in another pocket? Perhaps in another month or so we shall be seeing that?

We very much fear that the Bundists do not quite realise all the "beauty" of this maximum and minimum. Why, how else can you haggle than by asking an exorbitant price, then knocking off 75 per cent and declaring, "That's my last price"? Why, is there any difference between haggling and politics?

There is, gentlemen, we make bold to assure you. Firstly, in politics some parties adhere systematically to certain *principles*, and it is indecent to haggle over principles. Secondly, when people who claim to belong to a party regard certain of their demands as an ultimatum, that is, as the very condition of their membership in the party, political honesty requires that they should not conceal the fact, should not tuck it away "*for the time being*" in their pocket, but, on the contrary, should say so openly and definitely right from the start.

We have been preaching these simple truths to the Bundists for a long time. As early as February (in our 33rd issue) we wrote that it was stupid and unbefitting to play hide-and-seek, and that the Bund had acted separately (in issuing its statement about the Organising Committee) because it wanted to act *as a contracting party* and present *terms* to the Party as a whole.* For this opinion we were drenched with a whole bucketful of specifically Bundist (one might with equal justice say, specifically fish-market) abuse, yet *events have now shown that we were right*. It is indeed as a *contracting party* that the Bund comes forward

---

ago? *Iskra* was counting on the short memory of its readers!... Calm yourselves, calm yourselves, gentlemen! The author of the article called your maximum Rules the last word because *that word* was uttered two days (approximately) before No. 46 of *Iskra*, and not two years ago.

* See present edition, Vol. 6, pp. 319-25.—*Ed.*

in the decisions of its Fifth Congress, presenting outright ultimatums to the Party as a whole! That is just what we have been trying all along to get the Bundists to admit, by showing that it followed inevitably from the position they had taken up; they angrily protested, dodged and wriggled, but in the end were obliged after all to produce their "minimum".

That is funny; but funnier still is the fact that the Bund continues to wriggle even now, continues to talk about the "falsity" of "*Iskra*'s old, generally known fabrication to the effect that the Bund wants to form a federal alliance with the Russian Party". That is a lying fabrication, it claims, because Paragraph 1 of the Rules proposed by the Bund distinctly speaks of its desire to be a component element of the Party, not to form an alliance with it.

Very good, gentlemen! But does not this same paragraph say that the Bund is a *federated* component of the Party? Don't your maximum Rules refer throughout to contracting parties? Don't the minimum Rules speak of an *ultimatum*, and make any change in their "fundamental clauses" contingent on the mutual consent of the component elements of the Party, neither the local nor the district organisations, moreover, being recognised as such for this purpose? You yourselves say that neither local nor district organisations, but only "integral elements of the same nature as the Bund" can be contracting parties. You yourselves mention by way of example that "the Polish, Lithuanian or Lettish Social-Democrats" might be regarded as such integral elements, "*if they belonged to the Party*", as you sensibly add. But what if they do not belong to the Party? And what if the federation of national organisations which you find desirable is found undesirable and emphatically rejected by all the rest of the Party? You know very well that that is how matters stand; you yourselves expressly say you no longer demand that the whole Party be built on the basis of a federation of nationalities. *To whom*, then, are you addressing your *ultimatum*? Is it not obvious that you are addressing it to the whole Party, minus the Bund? Instead of convicting *Iskra* of a lying fabrication, you only convict yourselves of a minimum of logic in your subterfuges.

But look, the Bundists protest, in our minimum Rules we have even deleted the federation demand! This deletion of the "dreadful" word is indeed the most interesting episode in the famous transition from maximum to minimum. Nowhere else, perhaps, has the Bund's unconcern for principles betrayed itself so naïvely. You are dogmatists, hopeless dogmatists, we are told; nothing in the world will induce you to recognise the federal "principle of organisation". We, on the other hand, are not dogmatists, we "put the matter on a purely practical footing". Is it some principle you don't like? Queer fellows! Why, then we'll do without any principle at all, we'll "formulate Paragraph 1 in such a way that it shall not be a declaration of a definite principle of organisation". "The crux of the matter does not lie in the statement of principle prefacing the Rules, but in their concrete clauses, which are derived from an examination of the needs of the Jewish working-class movement, on the one hand, and of the movement as a whole, on the other" (leaflet of September 9 [22], p. 1).

The naïveté of this argument is so delightful that one just wants to hug the author. The Bundist seriously believes that it is only certain dreadful words the dogmatists fear, and so he decides that if these words are deleted, the dogmatist will see nothing objectionable in the concrete clauses themselves! And so he toils in the sweat of his brow, draws up his maximum Rules; gets in reserve his minimum Rules (against a rainy day), draws up ultimatum No. 1, ultimatum No. 2.... *Oleum et operam perdidisti*, *amice*!—you are wasting time and effort, my friend. In spite of the cunning (oh, wonderfully cunning!) removal of the label, the dogmatist detects the federal principle in the minimum's "concrete clauses" too. That principle is to be seen in the demand that a component element of the Party should not be limited by any territorial bounds, and in the claim to be the "sole"*

* "This word is of no significance," the Bund now assures us. Strange! Why should a word that has no significance have been inserted in both minimum and maximum? In the Russian language the word has a perfectly definite significance. What it signifies in the present instance is a "declaration" of both federalism and nationalism. We would advise the Bundists, who can see no connection between nationalism and federation, to ponder this point.

representative of the Jewish proletariat, and in the demand for "representation" on the Party Central Committee; in the denial to the Party Central Committee of the right to communicate with any part of the Bund without the consent of the Bund Central Committee; in the demand that fundamental clauses should not be changed without the consent of the *component elements* of the Party.

No, gentlemen, the crux of this matter of the Bund's position in the Party does lie in the declaration of a definite principle of organisation, and not at all in the concrete clauses. The crux of the matter is a *choice* of ways. Is the historically evolved isolation of the Bund to be legitimised, or is it to be rejected on principle, and the course openly, definitely, firmly and honestly adopted of ever closer and closer union and fusion with the Party as a whole? Is this isolation to be preserved, or a *turn made towards fusion*? That is the question.

The answer will depend on the free will of the Bund, for, as we already said in our 33rd issue, "love cannot be forced". If you *want* to move towards fusion, you will reject federation and accept autonomy. You will understand in that case that autonomy guarantees a process of fusion so gradual that the reorganisation would proceed with the minimum of dislocation, and in such a way, moreover, that the Jewish working-class movement would lose nothing and gain everything by this reorganisation and fusion.

If you do not want to move towards fusion, you will stand for federation (whether in its maximum or minimum form, whether with or without a declaration); you will be afraid of being "steam-rollered", you will turn the regrettable isolation of the Bund into a fetish, and will cry that the abolition of this isolation means the destruction of the Bund; you will begin to seek grounds justifying your isolation, and in this search will now grasp at the Zionist idea of a Jewish "*nation*", now resort to demagogy and scurrilities.

Federalism can be justified theoretically only on the basis of nationalist ideas, and it would be strange if we had to prove to the Bundists that it was no mere accident that the declaration of federalism was made at that very Fourth Congress which proclaimed the Jews to be a nation.

The idea of fusion can be discredited in practice only by inciting politically unenlightened and timid people against the "monstrous", "Arakcheyev"[34] organisational plan of *Iskra*, which supposedly wants to "regiment" the committees and not allow them to "take a single step without orders from above". How terrible! We have no doubt that all the committees will now hasten to revolt against the iron glove, the Arakcheyev fist, etc.... But where, gentlemen, did you get your information about this brutal organisational plan? From our literature? Then why not quote it? Or from the tales of idle Party gossips, who can tell you on the very best authority all, absolutely all the details regarding this Arakcheyevism? The latter supposition is probably the more correct, for even people with a minimum of logic could hardly confuse the very necessary demand that the Central Committee should "*be able* to communicate with every Party member"* with the patently scurrilous bugbear that the Central Committee will "do everything itself" and "lay down the law on everything". Or another thing: what is this nonsense that "between the periphery and the centre" there will be "*lose Organisationen*"?** We can guess: our worthy Bundists heard something, but did not know what it was all about. We shall have to explain it to them at length on some suitable occasion.

But, worst of all, it is not only the local committees that will have to revolt, but the Central Committee too. True, it has not been born yet,[35] but the gossips know for certain not only the birthday of the infant but its whole subsequent career. It appears it will be a Central Committee "*directed by a group of writers*". Such a tried and cheap method of warfare, this. The Bundists are not the first to employ it and most likely will not be the last. To convict this Central Committee, or the Organising Committee, of any mistake, you have to find proof. To convict people of not acting as they themselves think necessary, but of being *directed* by others, you must have the courage to bring charges openly and be ready to answer for them to the whole Party! All that is too dear, too dear in every respect. Gossips'

* See present edition, Vol. 6, p. 487.—*Ed.*
** Loose, broad organisations.—*Ed.*

tales, on the other hand, are cheap.... And perhaps the fish will bite. It is not pleasant, after all, to be considered a man (or institution) who is "directed", who is in leading strings, who is a pawn, a creature, a puppet of *Iskra*.... Our poor, poor future Central Committee! Where will it find a protector against the Arakcheyev yoke? Perhaps in the "independently acting" Bundists, those strangers to all "suspiciousness"?

Iskra, No. 49,
October 1, 1903

Published according
to the *Iskra* text

DRAFT OF A LETTER FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF THE CENTRAL ORGAN TO THE MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITION

After a number of unsuccessful attempts to reach an understanding in private conversations, the Central Committee of the Party and the editorial board of the Central Organ deem it their duty to address you officially in the name of the Party which they represent. The refusal of Comrade Martov to take his seat on the editorial board or to collaborate on *Iskra*, the refusal of the ex-members of the *Iskra* editorial board to collaborate, and the hostile attitude of several comrades engaged in practical work towards the central institutions of our Party are creating an absolutely abnormal attitude on the part of this "opposition", so called, towards the Party as a whole. Their passive aloofness from Party work, their attempts to "boycott" the central Party institutions (as expressed, for example, in ceasing to contribute to *Iskra* beginning from its 46th issue and in the resignation of Comrade Blumenfeld from the printing establishment), their persistence, in conversation with a member of the Central Committee,[36] in calling themselves a "group", in defiance of the Party Rules, their violent attacks on the Congress-approved personal composition of the central bodies and their demand to have it changed as a condition for ending the boycott—all this is conduct which cannot be regarded as consistent with Party duty. Such conduct borders on a direct breach of discipline and nullifies the decision adopted by the Congress (in the Party Rules) that the

allocation of the Party's forces and resources is the function of the Central Committee.

The Central Committee and the editorial board of the Central Organ therefore remind all members of the so-called "opposition" of their Party duty. Dissatisfaction with the personal composition of the central bodies, whether due to personal resentment or to differences of opinion which particular Party members may consider serious, cannot and must not lead to disloyal actions. If, in the opinion of any person, the central bodies are committing mistakes, it is his duty as a Party member to point to these mistakes in the full view of the entire Party membership, and, above all, to point them out to the central bodies themselves. It is likewise the Party duty of the Central Committee and the editorial board of the Central Organ to examine all such intimations with the utmost care, no matter from whom received. Yet neither the editorial board of the Central Organ nor the Central Committee has received from the so-called opposition any clear and definite intimations of mistakes or expressions of dissatisfaction or disagreement on any score whatever. Comrade Martov even refuses to take his seat on the editorial board of the Central Organ and on the supreme Party Council, though only in that post would he be able to lay bare before the Party all such mistakes as he may descry in the activities of the central bodies.

The Central Committee and the editorial board of the Central Organ are firmly convinced that the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party will not allow the institutions it has set up to be influenced by the illegitimate, covert (in relation to the Party) and disloyal method of pressure and boycott. The Central Committee and the editorial board of the Central Organ declare that they will remain at their posts come what may, until such time as the Party shall remove them, and that they will do their duty and spare no effort to perform the functions with which they have been charged. The attempts at "boycott" will not induce either the editorial board of the Central Organ or the Central Committee to swerve one hair's breadth from the path they are following, in pursuance of the will of the Congress; such attempts will only cause minor unpleasantnesses and

major damage to individual branches of Party work, and will convict those who persist in them of failing to understand their Party duty and of violating it.

Written in the early part of October 1903

First published in 1927, in *Lenin Miscellany VI*

Published according to the manuscript

SECOND CONGRESS OF THE LEAGUE OF RUSSIAN REVOLUTIONARY SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY ABROAD[37]

OCTOBER 13-18 (26-31), 1903

Published in January 1904
in the *Minutes of the Second Regular Congress of the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad*. Geneva

Published according
to the text of the *Minutes*

1

PREFATORY REMARKS TO THE REPORT ON THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE R.S.D.L.P., OCTOBER 13 (26)

I

Lenin made a few prefatory remarks to his report. I propose, in the first place, he said, to keep to the pseudonyms used at the Congress, because I am accustomed to them and it will be easier for me to use them than to stop and think each time what organisation the delegate represented. Secondly, I propose to touch also on the meetings of the *Iskra* organisation which took place, privately, so to speak, in the intervals between sittings of the Congress. I think this is in order, firstly, because the League was the foreign branch of the *Iskra* organisation, secondly, because the *Iskra* organisation has now been dissolved, and, thirdly, because without these facts it will be more difficult for me to bring out the true meaning of the events at the Party Congress.

II

Comrade Martov is against any reference being made to the private meetings of the *Iskra* organisation on the grounds that no minutes were kept. But neither are the minutes of the Party Congress available yet, and I cannot cite them either. After all, Comrade Martov is present here and will be able to correct any inaccuracies that may creep in. If the private meetings of *Iskra* have a bearing on the matter, I shall bring them to the knowledge of an even wider audience—Comrade Martov will not be able to hush them up anyway. ("*Oho*!") I remember perfectly whom I kept out of these meetings, and who withdrew from them, and I shall have a lot to say on this score. Of course, mistakes may occur, and I shall not be able to reconstruct everything from memory. The important thing is the political grouping.

What it was as shown by each particular vote taken, I can, of course, recall only approximately, but in general it is perfectly clear to me. It is not in the interest of the work to conceal from the League what pertains to the *Iskra* organisation, which has now been dissolved, and what has already become the common concern of the Party. As to the pseudonyms used in the minutes, they would be better, of course, but I have not read the minutes and am therefore unacquainted with them.

III

Comrade Martov is afraid that discussing the private meetings of *Iskra* may land us in the domain of tittle-tattle. I had no intention of entering the domain of tittle-tattle, and we shall see who will be able to keep the argument on the plane of principle, and who will have to descend into that murky domain. ("*Oho*!") We shall see, we shall see! I consider myself fully at liberty to touch on the meetings of the editorial board, and will not object if Comrade Martov does likewise; nevertheless, I must point out that during the Congress there was not a single meeting of the editorial board as such.

IV

The chief purpose of my report is to show that Comrade Martov made a mistake; but in his hint regarding Comrade Plekhanov I detect something quite different. Let me remind you of what I said on one occasion at the Party Congress: "What a storm of indignation is usually aroused when people say one thing at committees and another on the floor of the Congress."* To hint at such behaviour is no longer discussing political conduct but indulging in personalities. As regards P. B. Axelrod's statement that X. went away completely uninformed, let me say that that was not so at all. He himself wrote me a letter saying that in his opinion there was a lot that was personal about this whole divergence and not much that related to principle. From that I conclude that he was already informed. And in answer to his request for my opinion regarding the Congress, I wrote to him on several occasions too.

* See present edition, Vol. 6, p. 484.—*Ed.*

2
REPORT ON THE SECOND CONGRESS OF THE R.S.D.L.P., OCTOBER 14 (27)

Before beginning his report, Lenin referred to the discussion at the previous sitting as to how far mention might be made of the private meetings held by the *Iskra*-ists during the Party Congress. He interpreted yesterday's decision of the Congress as meaning that facts not recorded in the minutes must be touched on as little as possible, and therefore intended, in referring to the meetings of the *Iskra* organisation, to deal only with the voting results.

After this introduction, he went on to speak of the period immediately preceding the Party Congress. In the Organising Committee, whose business it was to arrange the Congress, the *Iskra*-ists predominated, and its work was carried on along *Iskra*-ist lines. But even while the Congress arrangements were still in progress it became apparent that the Organising Committee was far from being completely at one. To begin with, it included a Bundist, who did everything he could to prevent the convocation of an *Iskra*-ist Congress; this member of the Organising Committee always pursued a separate line of his own. There were also two *Yuzhny Rabochy* members on it, and although they considered themselves *Iskra*-ists, and even announced their adherence to *Iskra*, on which subject there were lengthy negotiations, they could not be wholly regarded as such. Lastly, even the *Iskra*-ist members of the Organising Committee were not completely at one; they had differences among themselves. It is also important to mention the Organising Committee's decision on the subject of binding instructions. This question came up long before the Congress,

and the decision arrived at was that binding instructions be abolished. The editorial board too pronounced emphatically in favour of this. The decision applied to itself also. It was decided that at the Congress, since it was the supreme Party authority, no member of the Party, or of the editorial board, should consider himself bound by any commitments to the organisation that had delegated him. It was in view of this decision that I drafted a *Tagesordnung** for the Congress, together with a commentary, which I decided to submit to the Congress in my own name. Item 23 of this draft had the comment in the margin that three persons should be elected to the editorial board and as many to the Central Committee. There is one other point in this connection. As the editorial board consisted of six persons, it was decided by common consent that, if it were found necessary to hold a meeting of the board during the Congress and the votes divided equally, Comrade Pavlovich would be invited to the meeting with full voting rights.

The delegates began to arrive long before the opening of the Congress. The Organising Committee gave them an opportunity to get acquainted with the editors beforehand. Very naturally, the *Iskra*-ists wanted to present themselves at the Congress united and in harmony on all points, and with this in view private conversations were held with the delegates as they arrived, and meetings were arranged to work out a common viewpoint. At these meetings the political complexion of some of the delegates became pretty clear. At one such meeting, for instance, where I read a paper on the national question,[38] the delegate from the Mining Area expressed views akin to those of the Polish Socialist Party,[39] and in general betrayed extreme confusion of ideas.

Such were the circumstances that preceded the Congress.

I shall now explain how I came to be the only delegate from the League, although it had elected two. It turned out that no delegate had arrived from the *Iskra* organisation in Russia,[40] which was also to have sent two delegates. Thereupon a meeting of the *Iskra*-ists, held just before the Congress opened, decided that one of the two League dele-

* Agenda.—*Ed.*

gates should turn over his mandate to the other and himself act as the delegate of the *Iskra* organisation with its two mandates, with the provision that if an elected delegate should arrive from Russia, one of these two mandates would be turned over to him. Naturally, both Martov and I wanted to be the delegate from *Iskra*, in view of the minor role played by the League. We settled the point by drawing lots.

The first preliminary question—the election of the Congress Bureau—gave rise to something of a difference, true, a minor one, between Martov and me. He insisted on the election of nine persons, these even to include a Bundist. I, on the other hand, considered that we should elect a Bureau capable of pursuing a firm, consistent policy and, if necessary, even of applying what is called the "iron glove". The Bureau elected consisted of Plekhanov, Lenin, and Pavlovich.

In addition to five Bundists, there were at the Congress two delegates from the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad and a delegate from the St. Petersburg League of Struggle, who nearly always voted with them. From the very outset these persons greatly dragged out the proceedings. The discussion of the Congress Standing Orders alone took up an incredible amount of time. There were endless arguments, lasting several sittings, over the position of the Bund in the Party. Similar delays were caused by the Bundist who got on to the Credentials Committee. He practised obstruction at every turn, would not agree with the other members of the committee, of which I was one, on a single point, and invariably recorded a "dissenting opinion". When it was remarked that this sort of thing was likely to drag out the Congress, he replied? "Well, let it", and said he was ready to have the committee sit for any length of time. It was not till long after midnight that the work of verifying the credentials was finished.

Also in the opening days of the Congress we had an incident over the Organising Committee. Under the Regulations it had drawn up, only "prominent Party personalities" could be invited to the Congress in a deliberative capacity, and the Credentials Committee had rejected the request of the Borba group to be granted representation. Two members

of the Organising Committee had attended the Credentials Committee meeting, and they had categorically opposed admitting a Borba representative to the Congress. When the spokesman for the committee informed the Congress of this decision, a long debate "for" and "against" developed, in which one of the *Iskra*-ists declared that a representative of Borba should on no account be invited to the Congress, as that group did nothing but intrigue, try to insinuate itself into every chink, sow dissension everywhere, and so on. (*Trotsky*: "Why don't you give the speaker's name? It was I who said it." *P. Axelrod*: "The speaker evidently does not think it would be in his interest.") Yes, it was Comrade Trotsky who spoke so harshly of the Borba group. At the very height of this argument about whether a Borba representative should be admitted to the Congress, one of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* delegates, who had been late in arriving and had only just turned up, asked for a five-minute adjournment to allow him to acquaint himself with all the circumstances of the case. When the adjournment was granted, the members of the Organising Committee held a meeting then and there, by the window. I should mention that even before the Congress opened certain Organising Committee members had shown some dissatisfaction with the editorial board. For example, the Bundist member was highly indignant that the editorial board had sent its contribution of five hundred marks to the election fund of the German Social-Democrats in its own name and that of the Organising Committee without first obtaining the latter's sanction. This innocent action, which was quite natural considering the impossibility of communicating promptly with the comrades in Russia, was interpreted by the Bundist as meaning that the editors, living abroad, made free with the name of the Organising Committee without asking its consent. A motion was even tabled in the Organising Committee to censure the editors for this, and it was passed, because the Bundist was supported by Comrade NN, a member of the *Iskra* organisation. When I told Martov of this, he was much incensed, and said it was "infamous". (*Martov*: "I did not use the word 'infamous'.") I do not remember the exact expression he used. Martov added that he "would not let the matter rest there". I, for my part, tried to persuade him that the incident was

of no great significance, and that it would be better to say nothing and attach no importance to it. When the meeting of the Organising Committee by the window was over, Comrade Pavlovich, who was a member of it, informed the other two members of the Bureau that on the motion of the belated *Yuzhny Rabochy* delegate, who was also a member of the Organising Committee, the latter had decided by a majority of all against Pavlovich himself to invite the Borba representative Ryazanov to the Congress, in a deliberative capacity. Comrade Pavlovich had objected strongly to this decision, and, as binding instructions had been abolished, he considered himself at liberty to protest against it to the Congress. We Bureau members, and also the editors and other *Iskra*-ists, were outraged at this decision of the Organising Committee. Comrade NN, the Organising Committee member I have mentioned, had himself spoken in the Credentials Committee against admitting a Borba representative to the Congress, yet now, at this meeting of the Organising Committee, he had agreed to invite one. He was himself trying now to smuggle Ryazanov into the Congress. We had thus been caught in a trap. And we decided to fight with might and main against this disgraceful Organising Committee decision. Many delegates rose and opposed it. In my own speech on the subject I spoke of "the storm of indignation that is aroused at European congresses when people say one thing at committees and another on the floor of the congress". In saying this I had in mind NN, who was a member of the *Iskra* organisation. When Comrade Pavlovich made his protest to the Congress against this decision of the Organising Committee, the *Yuzhny Rabochy* member found this to be a breach of discipline, a disruptive move, and so on, and demanded that the Congress inflict suitable punishment on Comrade Pavlovich for his action. But we were able to smash all these arguments. The Organising Committee majority was defeated. A resolution was passed to the effect that after the Congress had appointed a Credentials Committee the Organising Committee as a body no longer had any right to influence the composition of the Congress. The motion to invite Ryazanov was rejected. But even since the Congress I have heard some *Iskra*-ists question: why not have admitted a Borba member to the Congress? (*Deutsch*:

"I said that at the Congress itself too.") Quite so, and on other questions also, as I shall have occasion to point out, Comrade Deutsch did not always vote with the rest of the *Iskra*-ists, as, for instance, on equality of languages. Some *Iskra*-ists have even been expressing the very singular view that the activities of the Central Committee should reflect all vacillations and primitive conceptions existing in the Party. And at the Congress certain irresolute, wavering *Iskra*-ists spoke in this same spirit. Thus, the idea that all who claim to be *Iskra*-ists really are *Iskra*-ists turns out to be quite mistaken. There are *Iskra*-ists who are even ashamed of the name—that is a fact. There are *Iskra*-ists who fight *Iskra*, who obstruct it in all kinds of ways and hinder its activities. *Iskra* has become popular, it has become the fashion to call oneself an *Iskra*-ist, but that does not prevent many people from remaining what they were before *Iskra* was recognised by many of the committees. These unreliable *Iskra*-ists have done it a great deal of harm. If at least they would fight it openly and squarely.... But no, they do it in a sneaking, underhand, surreptitious, secret manner.

The second item on the *Tagesordnung* of the Party Congress was the Party programme. The supporters of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, the Bundists, and diverse delegates who during the Congress were nicknamed the "Marsh" practised incredible obstruction. The debate on the programme dragged out beyond all belief. Akimov alone moved several dozen amendments. There were arguments literally over single words, over what conjunction to use. So many amendments had to be discussed that one Bundist, a member of the Programme Committee, asked, and with reason, whose draft we were considering, the one submitted by the editors of *Iskra*, or one submitted by Akimov. The amendments were trifling, and the programme was adopted without any changes of importance whatever; nevertheless, the debates took up about twenty sittings, so unproductive was the work of the Congress owing to the opposition of various anti-*Iskra*-ist and quasi-*Iskra*-ist elements.

The next major incident to arise at the Congress after the Organising Committee incident was in connection with equality of languages, or, as it was ironically called at the Congress, "freedom of tongues". (*Martov*: "Or the 'asses'."

Laughter.) Yes, and the "asses". The point was this. The draft Party programme spoke of equal rights for all citizens irrespective of sex, nationality, religion, etc. This was not enough for the Bundists, and they wanted to write into the programme the right of every nationality to receive tuition in its own language and to use it in addressing public and state institutions. When a garrulous Bundist referred, by way of example, to state stud farms, Comrade Plekhanov remarked that stud farms had nothing to do with it, as horses do not talk—"only asses do". The Bundists took offence at this, evidently thinking the jest was meant for them.

It was over the equality of languages question that the first signs of a split appeared. In addition to the Bundists, the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists, and the "Marsh", certain *Iskra*-ists too pronounced in favour of "freedom of tongues". Comrade Deutsch's votes on this issue evoked our astonishment, indignation, and disgust; in some cases he abstained, in others voted against us. In the end the question was decided amicably and unanimously.

On the whole, during the first half of the Congress all the *Iskra*-ists stood together. The Bundists claimed there was a conspiracy against them. One Bundist described the Congress as a "compact majority". In reply, I expressed the wish that our whole Party might become one compact majority.

But the second half of the Congress presented an entirely different picture. From that time began Martov's historic change of front. The disagreements that developed between us were by no means insignificant. They were due to Martov's erroneous appraisal of the present situation. Comrade Martov deviated from the line he had previously adhered to.

The fifth item on the *Tagesordnung* was the Rules. An argument between Martov and myself over Paragraph 1 of them had already arisen in the committee. We each upheld a different formulation. Whereas I proposed defining a Party member as one who accepted the Party programme, supported the Party financially and belonged to one of its organisations, Martov thought it sufficient if, in addition to the first two conditions, a person worked under the control of one of the Party organisations. I insisted on my formulation and pointed out that we could not adopt a different

definition of a Party member without departing from the principle of centralism. To recognise as a Party member one who did not belong to any Party organisation would mean being against all control by the Party. Martov was introducing here a new principle that was entirely contrary to the principles of *Iskra*. His formulation widened the boundaries of the Party. He tried to justify this by saying that our Party must be a party of the masses. What he was doing was to open the door to every kind of opportunist, to widen the boundaries of the Party until they became entirely blurred. In the conditions under which we have to work this is very dangerous, because it is very difficult to draw the line between a revolutionary and a windbag; that made it necessary to narrow the concept "Party". Martov's mistake was that he was throwing the door of the Party wide open to every adventurer, when it had become apparent that even at the Congress fully one-third of those present were given to intriguing. Martov on this occasion acted as an opportunist. His formulation introduced a false, discordant note into the Rules: every Party member should be under the control of an organisation, so that the Central Committee should be able to communicate with every single member. My formulation provided an incentive to organise. Comrade Martov was cheapening the concept "Party member", while it should, I consider, stand high, very high. Martov got the support of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, the Bund and the "Marsh", and with their aid he secured the adoption of his Paragraph 1 of the Rules.

Then Martov began to say that "defamatory rumours" were being circulated about him. But there was nothing offensive in pointing out with whom Martov found himself in alliance. I was the object of a similar reproof when I found myself in alliance with Comrade Brouckère. And I took no offence when Martov sent me a note saying: "Look who is voting with you." True, my alliance with Brouckère was a temporary and accidental one, while Martov's alliance with the Bund turned out to be lasting. I was against Marov's formulation because it meant *Versumpfung*.* I warned Martov of that, and our opponents, by following him to a man, provided eloquent illustration of his error. The most

* Sinking into the marsh.—*Ed.*

dangerous thing, however, was not that Martov had landed in the marsh, but that, having accidentally done so, he made no attempt to get out of it, but sank in deeper and deeper. The Bundists felt they were now the masters of the situation, and put their mark on the Party Rules.

During the second half of the Congress, too, a compact majority was formed, only it now consisted of a coalition of the Martovites plus the "Marsh" plus the *Rabocheye Dyelo* and Bund compact minority. And this compact majority stood against the *Iskra*-ists. One Bundist, seeing the *Iskra*-ists quarrelling among themselves, said: "It's nice to spar when the leaders are at loggerheads." I cannot understand why the Bund should have withdrawn, things being as they were. They were actually the masters of the situation, and could have had a lot their own way. Most probably, they had binding instructions.

After Paragraph 1 of the Rules had been spoilt in this way, we had to bind the broken pot as tightly as possible, with a double knot. Naturally, we began to fear that we would be intrigued against, let down. Hence it was necessary to introduce mutual co-optation to the central bodies, so that the Party might be assured of their unity of action. Over this a struggle developed too. Things had to be so arranged that in the period leading to the Third Party Congress we should not get a repetition of what had happened with the Organising Committee. A consistent, honest *Iskra*-ist cabinet had to be formed. On this point we were again defeated. The clause on mutual co-optation to the central bodies was voted down. The mistake of Martov, who was supported by the "Marsh", stood out more saliently than ever. From that moment the coalition was definitely formed and, on pain of defeat, we had to load our guns with double charges. There sat the Bund and *Rabocheye Dyelo*, their votes deciding the fate of the Congress. That caused the stubborn, bitter struggle that ensued.

I shall now pass to the private meetings of the *Iskra* organisation. At these we chiefly discussed the composition of the Central Committee. At all four meetings of the *Iskra* organisation, there were debates on the subject of Comrade NN, on whom a section of the *Iskra*-ists wanted to pass a vote of political non-confidence, though not in the

literal sense of the term, for no one imputed to NN anything that disgraced him, but in the specific sense that he was unfit to be a member of the *Iskra*-ist cabinet. This led to a desperate scrap. At the last meeting, the meeting of the sixteen, nine voted against NN, four in favour, while the rest abstained. At this meeting, too, we discussed who was now to be included in our cabinet.

Martov and I proposed different "trios"; we could not agree on them. Not wanting to split the vote at the Congress, we decided to propose a compromise list. We were prepared to make every concession: I agreed to a list that included two Martovites. The minority rejected this. Incidentally, a *Yuzhny Rabochy* delegate refused to be included in our list while consenting to be included in the Martovite list. It was *Yuzhny Rabochy*—an outside element—that was deciding the question of the Central Committee. After the *Iskra*-ists had split, we had to muster our supporters, and we started a vigorous agitation. The unexpected withdrawal of the Bund reversed the whole situation. With its withdrawal, there was again a compact majority and minority. We were now in the majority, and we secured the election to the Central Committee of the people we wanted.

Such were the circumstances that led to the split. It was exceedingly tactless of Martov to raise at the Congress the question of endorsing all the six editors of *Iskra*, when he knew that I would insist on the editors having to be elected. It meant turning the election of the editorial board into an expression of non-confidence in individual editors.

The elections ended at five o'clock on Saturday. We then proceeded to discuss the resolutions. We had only a few hours left for this. Owing to the obstruction and delays caused by the "Marsh", many important items had to be dropped from the *Tagesordnung*; not enough time was left, for instance, to discuss all the tactical questions.

Over the resolutions the Congress was so unanimous that we formed the impression that a conciliatory mood had developed; it seemed to us that Martov was not going to make the disagreements that had arisen an issue of state. He even said, when one of the *Yuzhny Rabochy*-ists questioned the validity of the elections, that the minority accepted all the Congress decisions. All the resolutions were passed in a peace-

ful and amicable spirit; differences arose only over Starover's resolution on the liberals. It was vague, and it, too, was marked by opportunism; we fought it and secured the adoption of an additional resolution on the same subject.

The general impression one got of the Congress was that we had to fight against intrigue. It was made impossible for us to work. The natural conclusion was: "Heaven preserve us from friends like these!"—i.e., the quasi-*Iskra*-ists. Martov completely failed to understand this situation. He elevated his mistaken position to a principle. His assertion that the majority had instituted a "state of siege" ran glaringly counter to the Party's real needs. For the work to be more effective, it was necessary to eliminate the obstructing elements and make it impossible for them to damage the Party; only if that were done could our work at the next Congress be fruitful. That is why it was necessary to establish complete unity between the central bodies of the Party.

The first half of the Congress was the complete opposite of the second. The cardinal, major points of the Congress as a whole were the following four: 1) the Organising Committee incident; 2) the debate on equality of languages; 3) the debate on Paragraph 1 of the Rules, and 4) the struggle over the elections to the Party central bodies.

During the first half of the Congress, Martov stood with us against the Organising Committee, the Bund, *Rabocheye Dyelo* and the "Marsh"; during the second half he landed accidentally in the marsh. Now, after the Congress, this accidental *Versumpfung* is turning into a real *Versumpfung*. (*Applause*.)

3

STATEMENT CONCERNING MARTOV'S REPORT
OCTOBER 15 (28)[41]

I protest most emphatically, as against a *contemptible* method of struggle, against Martov's asking who was lying or intriguing in reporting the private conversation between him, Starover and myself. I wish to point out that this conflicts glaringly with Martov's own statements of yesterday to the effect that he would disdain to raise the unanswerable question of how truthfully private conversations had been reproduced! I declare that Martov's account of the private conversation *en question* is *altogether incorrect*. I declare that I agree to any arbitration and that I challenge Martov to it if he chooses to accuse me of conduct incompatible with holding a responsible post in the Party. I declare that it is the moral duty of Martov, who is not levelling any explicit accusations but only throwing out dark hints—that it is his duty to have the courage to make his accusations openly and over his signature before the entire Party, and that I, as a member of the editorial board of the Party's Central Organ, propose to him on behalf of the whole editorial board that he immediately *publish* a pamphlet containing *all* his accusations. By failing to do this, Martov will only prove that all he wanted was a row at the League Congress, not the moral cleansing of the Party.

4

SPEECH ON THE RULES OF THE LEAGUE
OCTOBER 17 (30)

I shall dwell chiefly on one point, namely, the main speaker's idea that the League is autonomous in drawing up its Rules. That, in my opinion, is absolutely wrong, for the Central Committee, in which, under Paragraph 6 of the Party Rules, is vested the right to organise committees, is the only body that can draw up Rules for the League; for organising means first and foremost drawing up Rules. And until the Central Committee endorses the Rules of the League, the League *has no* Rules. The idea of autonomy is absolutely inapplicable here, for it runs counter to the Party Rules. I once again stress emphatically that, pending their endorsement by the Central Committee, the League has no Rules. As to the League having been endorsed by the Party Congress, that was not in recognition of its activities, but rather, I should say, in spite of all its defects—exclusively because of its consistency of principles.

AN UNSUBMITTED STATEMENT[42]

October 29, 1903

Comrades,

I withdrew from the sitting of the Congress yesterday (October 28) because I found it too disgusting to be present at that raking up of sordid tittle-tattle, rumours and private conversations which Martov undertook and performed with hysterical squealing to the delight of all scandal-lovers. It was as though in self-derision that this same Martov spoke eloquently the day before yesterday about the unseemliness of such references to private conversations, which cannot be verified and which lead one to wonder which of the parties to the conversation is *lying*. It was just such unseemly conduct that Martov indulged in yesterday when he hysterically pressed me to say *which of us was lying*, he or I, in reporting the famous private conversation on the subject of the famous trio.

This method of provoking a row by asking *who is lying* is worthy only of a swashbuckler looking for a pretext to pick a quarrel, or else of a man wound up to hysterical pitch and incapable of weighing the absurdity of his conduct. For a political leader accused of definite political errors to use such a method proves unmistakably that he has no other means of defence and that he is descending from the level of political differences to the miserable level of squabbling and scandal-mongering.

The question now arises, what means of defence can be employed against this swashbuckler's and rowdy's trick of hurling *unprovable* charges based on private conversations?

I say "unprovable" charges, because private conversations of which no record is kept preclude, by their very nature, *all* possibility of proof, and charges based on them lead merely to reiteration of the word "lie" in all its declensions. In the art of such reiteration Martov yesterday reached a pitch of real virtuosity, and I have no intention of following his example.

In my statement yesterday I already indicated *one* means of defence, and I categorically insist upon it. I challenge my adversary to publish immediately a pamphlet setting forth all his accusations against me, which in his speech were levelled in the form of endless and countless dark hints about lying, intriguing, and so on and so forth. I *demand* that my adversary bring his charges, over his signature, before the *whole* Party, because he cast a slur on my reputation as a member of the editorial board of the Party Central Organ and said that certain individuals could not be allowed to hold responsible posts in the Party. I undertake to publish *all* my adversary's accusations, for a public airing of the squabbles and scandal will—I know quite positively—be my best defence before the Party. I repeat that if my adversary evades my challenge, it will prove that his accusations are nothing but dark innuendoes, the product either of the slanderous propensities of a scoundrel, or of the hysterical irresponsibility of a politician who has blundered.

However, I have another means of defence, an indirect one. In my statement yesterday, I said that Martov's account of the private conversation *en question* was altogether incorrect. I am not going to go into that again, just because of the hopelessness and uselessness of *unprovable* assertions. But let everyone ponder over the "document" which I handed to Martov yesterday and which he read to the Congress. That document was the programme for the Congress and my commentary to it, a commentary written *after* the "private" conversation, *sent by me to Martov* and returned by him with his amendments.

This document *indisputably* represents the quintessence of our conversation, and I have only to analyse its exact text to prove that Martov's accusations are so much scandal. Here is the text in full:

"Item 23 [of the Congress *Tagesordnung*]. *Election of the Central Committee and the editorial board of the Central Organ of the Party*."

My commentary: "The Congress shall elect *three* persons to the editorial board of the Central Organ and *three* to the Central Committee. These six persons *in conjunction* shall, if necessary, co-opt by a two-thirds majority vote additional members to the editorial board of the Central Organ and to the Central Committee and report to this effect to the Congress. After the report has been endorsed by the Congress, subsequent co-optation shall be effected by the editorial board of the Central Organ and by the Central Committee separately."

Martov has asserted that this system was adopted *solely* in order to enlarge the editorial board of six. This assertion is *directly* contradicted by the words "if necessary". Clearly, already at that time the possibility was envisaged that it might not be necessary. Furthermore, since the consent of four out of six was required for co-optation, it is obvious that the editorial board *could not be enlarged without the consent of non-editors*, without the consent of at least one member of the Central Committee. Consequently, the enlargement of the editorial board was made contingent on the consent of a person as to whose identity there could at that time (a month, if not six weeks, before the Congress) be only the vaguest conjectures. Consequently, it is obvious that *at that time* Martov too considered the editorial board of six, as then constituted, incapable of *further independent existence*, since the deciding voice in the matter of enlarging the elected trio was to belong to a *non-editor*, also to be elected. Martov too considered it impossible to convert the old editorial board of *Iskra* into the editorial board of the Party Central Organ without outside, non-editorial assistance.

To proceed. If it had been a matter *solely* of enlarging the board of six, what would have been the point of talking about a trio? It would have sufficed to substitute for unanimous co-optation, co-optation by some specified majority. In fact, there would in general have been no point in talking about the editorial board, it would have been enough to talk about co-optation to Party institutions in

general, or to the central Party institutions in particular. Consequently, it is clear that the idea was not simply enlargement. It is equally clear that it was *not* one member of the old editorial board, *but perhaps two*, *or even three*, who stood in the way of possible enlargement, seeing that, in order to *enlarge* the board of six, it was first considered desirable to *reduce* it to three.

Lastly, compare the procedure for introducing "additional members", i.e., for enlarging the central bodies, as now laid down in the Party Rules adopted by the Congress and as envisaged in the original plan which Martov and I together set down in the above-quoted commentary to Item 23 of the agenda. According to the original plan, the consent of *f o u r against two* was required (for enlargement of the *editorial board of the Central Organ* or of the Central Committee), while the present Rules require, in the final analysis, the consent of *t h r e e against two*; for the final authority in deciding about co-optation to the central bodies is now the Council, and if two of the editors plus one other member of the Council want to enlarge the editorial board, they can, consequently, do it against the wishes of the third.

Hence, there cannot be the slightest doubt (from the precise meaning of a precise document) that an alteration in the composition of the editorial board was contemplated (by Martov and myself, without any protest from any of the other editors) long before the Congress, and that this alteration was to be effected irrespective of the wishes or consent of any one member, or possibly even two or three members, of the board of six. One may therefore judge how much validity now attaches to the wretched talk about unofficial binding instructions having tied the six, about moral bonds between them, about the importance of keeping the team intact, and the other such subterfuges in which Martov's speech abounded. All these subterfuges run directly counter to the explicit text of the commentary, which calls for a *reconstitution* of the editorial board, a reconstitution to be effected by a rather intricate and, consequently, carefully considered procedure.

Still more unquestionably does it follow from this commentary that alteration of the composition of the editorial board was made contingent on the *consent* of at least two

comrades from Russia, elected by the Congress to membership of the Central Committee. It is therefore indubitable that both I and Martov *hoped to persuade* these future members of the Central Committee that a definite alteration in the composition of the editorial board was necessary. Thus, we were leaving the composition of the editorial board to be decided by members of the Central Committee, without yet knowing exactly who they would be. Consequently, we entered the struggle *hoping to win these Central Committee members to our side*; and now that the majority of the influential comrades from Russia have sided at the Congress with me, and not with Martov (in regard to the differences that have arisen between us), for him to wail hysterically over his defeat and indulge in scurrilities and allegations which by their very nature do not admit of proof is a positively indecent and contemptible method of struggle.

N. Lenin (*V. I. Ulyanov*)

First published in 1928
in *Lenin Miscellany VII*

Published according
to the manuscript

STATEMENT OF RESIGNATION FROM THE PARTY COUNCIL AND FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF THE CENTRAL ORGAN[43]

Inasmuch as I do not share the opinion of G. V. Plekhanov, member of the Party Council and of the editorial board of the Central Organ, that it will be in the interest of Party unity at the present time to make a concession to the Martovites and co-opt the board of six, I hereby resign from the Party Council and from the editorial board of the Central Organ.

N. Lenin

Geneva
November 1, 1903

P.S. At all events, I by no means refuse to support the new central Party institutions by my work, to the best of my ability.

Handed to Plekhanov November 1, 1903

Published in 1904

Published according to the manuscript

THE POSITION OF THE BUND IN THE PARTY

Under this title the Bund has published a translation of an article from No. 34 of the *Arbeiterstimme*.[44] This article, accompanying the decisions of the Fifth Bund Congress, represents as it were an official commentary on those decisions. It attempts to give a systematic exposition of all the arguments which lead to the conclusion that the Bund "must be a federated component of the Party". It will be interesting to examine these arguments.

The author begins by stating that the most burning question facing the Russian Social-Democratic movement is the question of unity. On what basis can it be effected? The Manifesto of 1898[45] took the principle of autonomy as the basis. The author examines this principle and finds it to be logically false and inherently contradictory. If by questions which specifically concern the Jewish proletariat are meant only such as relate to methods of agitation (with reference to the specific language, mentality and culture of the Jews), that will be technical (?) autonomy. But such autonomy will mean the destruction of all independence, for it is an autonomy enjoyed by every Party committee, and to put the Bund on a par with the committees will be a denial of autonomy. If, on the other hand, autonomy is understood to mean autonomy in some questions of the programme, it is unreasonable to deprive the Bund of all independence in the other questions of the programme; and independence in questions of programme necessarily involves representation of the Bund, as such, on the central bodies of the Party—that is, not autonomy, but federation. A sound basis for the position of the Bund in the Party must

be sought in the history of the Jewish revolutionary movement in Russia, and what that history shows is that all organisations active among the Jewish workers joined to form a single union—the Bund—and that its activities spread from Lithuania to Poland and then to the South of Russia. Consequently, history broke down all regional barriers and brought forward the Bund as the sole representative of the Jewish proletariat. And there you have a principle which is not the fruit of an idle brain (?) but follows from the whole history of the Jewish working-class movement: the Bund is the sole representative of the interests of the Jewish proletariat. And, naturally, the organisation of the proletariat of a whole nationality can enter the Party only if the latter has a federal structure: the Jewish proletariat is not only part of the world family of proletarians, but also part of the Jewish nation, which occupies a special position among the nations. Lastly, it is federation that denotes close unity between the component elements of the Party, for its chief feature is direct participation by each of them in Party affairs, and they all feel they have equal rights. Under autonomy, on the other hand, the components of the Party have no rights, and there is indifference to its common affairs, and mutual distrust, friction and conflict.

Such is the author's line of argument, which we have presented almost entirely in his own words. It boils down to three things: considerations of a general nature as to the inherent contradictoriness of autonomy and its unsuitability from the standpoint of close unity between the components of the Party; lessons from history, which has made the Bund the sole representative of the Jewish proletariat; and, lastly, the affirmation that the Jewish proletariat is the proletariat of a whole nationality, a nationality occupying a special position. Thus the author endeavours to build his case on general principles of organisation, on the lessons of history, and on the idea of nationality. He tries—we must give him his due—to examine the matter from all angles. And for that very reason his statement of the case brings out so saliently the attitude of the Bund on this question which is of deep concern to all of us.

Under federation, we are told, the components of the Party have equal rights and share directly in its common

affairs; under autonomy they have no rights, and as such do not share in the general life of the Party. This argument belongs entirely to the realm of obvious fallacies; it is as like as two peas to those arguments which mathematicians call mathematical sophistries, and which prove—quite logically, at first glance—that twice two are five, that the part is greater than the whole, and so on. There are collections of such mathematical sophistries, and they are of some value to school children. But it is even embarrassing to have to explain to people who claim to be the sole representatives of the Jewish proletariat so elementary a sophistry as the attribution of different meanings to the term "component of the Party" in two parts of one and the same argument. When they speak of federation, they mean by a component of the Party a sum-total of organisations in different localities; but when they speak of autonomy, they mean by it each local organisation separately. Put these supposedly identical concepts side by side in the same syllogism, and you will arrive inevitably at the conclusion that twice two are five. And if the Bundists are still unclear as to the nature of their sophistry, let them consult their own maximum Rules and they will see that it is under federation that the local organisations communicate with the Party centre *in*directly, and under autonomy—directly. No, our federalists would do better not to talk about "close unity"! By trying to disprove that federation means the *isolation*, and autonomy the *fusion* of the different components of the Party, they only provoke hilarity.

Hardly more successful is the attempt to prove the "logical falsity" of autonomy by dividing the latter into programme autonomy and technical autonomy. The division itself is utterly absurd. Why should the specific methods of agitation among Jewish workers be classed under technical questions? What has technique to do with it, when it is a matter of peculiarities of language, mentality, conditions of life? How can you talk of independence in questions of programme in connection, for example, with the demand for civil equality for the Jews? The Social-Democratic programme only sets forth the basic demands, common to the entire proletariat, irrespective of occupational, local, national, or racial distinctions. The effect of these distinctions is that

one and the same demand for complete equality of citizens before the law gives rise to agitation against one form of inequality in one locality and against another form of inequality in another locality or in relation to other groups of the proletariat, and so on. One and the same point in the programme will be applied differently depending on differences in conditions of life, differences of culture, differences in the relation of social forces in different parts of the country, and so forth. Agitation on behalf of one and the same demand in the programme will be carried on in different ways and in different languages taking into account all these differences. Consequently, autonomy in questions specifically concerning the proletariat of a given race, nation, or district implies that it is left to the discretion of the organisation concerned to determine the specific demands to be advanced in pursuance of the common programme, and the methods of agitation to be employed. The Party as a whole, its central institutions, lay down the common fundamental principles of programme and tactics; as to the different methods of carrying out these principles in practice and agitating for them, they are laid down by the various Party organisations subordinate to the centre, depending on local, racial, national, cultural, and other differences.

Is there anything unclear about this conception of autonomy? And is it not the sheerest scholasticism to make a division into programme autonomy and technical autonomy?

Just see how the concept autonomy is "logically analysed" in the pamphlet we are examining. "From the total body of questions with which the Social-Democrats have to deal," the pamphlet says in connection with the autonomy principle taken as the basis in the 1898 Manifesto, "there are singled out [*sic*!!] some questions, which, it is recognised, specifically concern the Jewish proletariat.... Where the realm of general questions begins, the autonomy of the Bund ends.... This gives rise to a duality in the position of the Bund in the Party: in specific questions it acts as the Bund ... in general questions it loses its distinctive character and is put on a par with an ordinary committee of the Party...." The Social-Democratic programme demands complete equality of all citizens before the law. *In pursuance* of that programme the Jewish worker in Vilna puts

forward one specific demand, and the Bashkir worker in Ufa an entirely different specific demand. Does that mean that "from the total body of questions" "some are *singled out*"? If the general demand for equality is embodied in a number of specific demands for the abolition of specific forms of inequality, is that a *singling out* of the specific from the general questions? The specific demands are not singled out from the general demands of the programme, but are advanced *in pursuance* of them. What is singled out is what specifically concerns the Jew in Vilna as distinct from what specifically concerns the Bashkir in Ufa. The generalisation of their demands, the representation of their *common class interests* (and not of their specific occupational, racial, local, national, or other interests) is the affair of the whole Party, of the Party centre. That would surely seem clear enough! The reason the Bundists have muddled it is that, instead of logical analysis, they have again and again given us specimens of logical fallacies. They have entirely failed to grasp the relation between the Social-Democrats' general and specific demands. They imagine that "from the total body of questions with which the Social-Democrats have to deal, some questions are singled out", when actually *every* question dealt with in our programme is a generalisation of a number of specific questions and demands; *every* point in the programme is common to the *entire* proletariat, while at the same time it is subdivided into specific questions depending on the proletarians' different occupations, their different conditions of life, differences of language, and so on and so forth. The Bundists are disturbed by the contradictoriness and duality of the position of the Bund, consisting, don't you see, in the fact that in specific questions it acts as the Bund, while in general questions it loses its distinctive character. A little reflection would show them that such a "duality" exists in the position of *absolutely every* Social-Democratic worker, who in specific questions acts as a worker in a particular trade, a member of a particular nation, an inhabitant of a particular locality, while in general questions he "loses his distinctive character" and is put on a par with *every other* Social-Democrat. The autonomy of the Bund, under the Rules of 1898, is of exactly the same nature as the autonomy of the Tula Committee; only the limits of this auton-

omy are somewhat different and somewhat wider in the former case than in the latter. And there is nothing but a crying logical fallacy in the following argument, by which the Bund tries to refute this conclusion: "If the Bund is allowed independence in some questions of the *programme*, on what grounds is it deprived of *all* independence in the other questions of the programme?" This contrasting of specific and general questions as "some" and "*the others*" is an inimitable specimen of Bundist "logical analysis"! These people simply cannot understand that it is like contrasting the different colours, tastes, and fragrances of particular apples to the *number* of "other" apples. We make bold to inform you, gentlemen, that not only some, but every apple has its special taste, colour, and fragrance. Not only in "some" questions of the programme, but *in all without exception*, you are allowed independence, gentlemen, but only as far as concerns their application to the specific features of the Jewish proletariat. "*Mein teuerer Freund, ich rat' Euch drum zuerst Collegium logicum!*"*

The second argument of the Bundists is an appeal to history, which is supposed to have brought forward the Bund as the sole representative of the Jewish proletariat.

In the first place, this is not true. The author of the pamphlet himself says that "the work of other organisations [besides the Bund] in this direction [i.e., among the Jewish proletariat] either yielded no results at all, or results too insignificant to merit attention". Hence, on his own admission, there was such work, and consequently the Bund *was not* the *sole* representative of the Jewish proletariat; as regards the results of this work, no one, of course, will rely on the Bund's opinion; and, lastly, it is a known fact that the Bund *interfered* with the work of other organisations among the Jewish proletariat (we have only to mention the well-known incident of its campaign against the Ekaterinoslav Party Committee for daring to issue a proclamation to the Jewish workers[47]), so that even if the results did indeed merit no attention, the Bund itself would be partly to blame.

---

* "Hence, my dear friend, I would advise you to begin with college logic."[46]—*Ed.*

Further, the measure of truth contained in the Bund's historical reference does not in the least prove the soundness of its arguments. The facts which did take place and which the Bund has in mind speak against it, not for it. These facts are that the Bund existed and developed—during the five years since the First Congress—quite separately and independently from the other organisations of the Party. In general, the actual ties between all Party organisations during this period were very weak, but the ties between the Bund and the rest of the Party were not only far weaker than those between the other organisations, but they kept growing weaker all the time. That the Bund itself *weakened* these ties is directly proved by the history of our Party's organisations abroad. In 1898, the Bund members abroad belonged to the one common Party organisation; but by 1903 they had left it to form a completely separate and independent organisation. The separateness and independence of the Bund is beyond question, as is also the fact that it has steadily become more pronounced.

What follows from this unquestionable fact? What follows in the opinion of the Bundists is that one must bow to this fact, slavishly submit to it, turn it into a principle, into the sole principle providing a sound basis for the position of the Bund, and legitimise this principle in the Rules, which should recognise the Bund as the sole representative of the Jewish proletariat in the Party. In our opinion, on the other hand, such a conclusion is the sheerest opportunism, "tail-ism"[48] of the worst kind. The conclusion to be drawn from the five years of disunity is not that this disunity should be legitimised, but that an end should be put to it once and for all. And will anybody still venture to deny that it really was disunity? *All* component parts of the Party developed separately and independently during this period—are we perhaps to deduce from this the "principle" of federation between Siberia, the Caucasus, the Urals, the South, and the rest?? The Bundists themselves say that, as regards organisational unity of its components, the Party virtually did not exist—and how can what evolved when the Party did not exist be taken as a pattern for the *restoration* of organisational unity? No, gentlemen, your reference to the history of the disunity that gave rise to isolation proves

nothing whatever except that this isolation is abnormal. To deduce a "principle" of *organisation* from several years of *disorganisation* in the Party is to act like those representatives of the historical school who, as Marx sarcastically observed, were prepared to defend the knout on the grounds that it was historical.

Hence, neither the "logical analysis" of autonomy nor the appeals to history can provide even the shadow of a "principle" justifying the isolation of the Bund. But the Bund's third argument, which invokes the idea of a Jewish nation, is undoubtedly of the nature of a principle. Unfortunately, however, this Zionist idea is absolutely false and essentially reactionary. "The Jews have ceased to be a nation, for a nation without a territory is unthinkable," says one of the most prominent of Marxist theoreticians, Karl Kautsky (see No. 42 of *Iskra* and the separate reprint from it *The Kishinev Massacre and the Jewish Question*, p. 3). And quite recently, examining the problem of nationalities in Austria, the same writer endeavoured to give a scientific definition of the concept nationality and established two principal criteria of a nationality: language and territory (*Neue Zeit*,[49] 1903, No. 2). A French Jew, the radical Alfred Naquet, says practically the same thing, word for word, in his controversy with the anti-Semites and the Zionists.[50] "If it pleased Bernard Lazare," he writes of the well-known Zionist, "to consider himself a citizen of a separate nation, that is his affair; but I declare that, although I was born a Jew ... I do not recognise Jewish nationality.... I belong to no other nation but the French.... Are the Jews a nation? Although they were one in the remote past, my reply is a categorical *negative*. The concept nation implies certain conditions which do not exist in this case. A nation must have a territory on which to develop, and, in our time at least, until a world confederation has extended this basis, a nation must have a common language . And the Jews no longer have either a territory or a common language.... Like myself, Bernard Lazare probably did not know a word of Hebrew, and would have found it no easy matter, if Zionism had achieved its purpose, to make himself understood to his co-racials [*congénères*] from other parts of the world" (*La Petite République*, September 24, 1903). "German and French

Jews are quite unlike Polish and Russian Jews. The characteristic features of the Jews include nothing that bears the imprint [*empreinte*] of nationality. If it were permissible to recognise the Jews as a nation, as Drumont does, it would be an artificial nation. The modern Jew is a product of the unnatural selection to which his forebears were subjected for nearly eighteen centuries." All that remains for the Bundists is to develop the theory of a separate Russian-Jewish nation, whose language is Yiddish and their territory the Pale of Settlement.[51]

Absolutely untenable scientifically,* the idea that the Jews form a separate nation is reactionary politically. Irrefutable practical proof of that is furnished by generally known facts of recent history and of present-day political realities. All over Europe, the decline of medievalism and the development of political liberty went hand in hand with the political emancipation of the Jews, their abandonment of Yiddish for the language of the people among whom they lived, and, in general, their undeniable progressive assimilation with the surrounding population. Are we again to revert to the exceptionalist theories and proclaim that Russia will be the one exception, although the Jewish emancipation movement is far broader and deeper-rooted here, thanks to the awakening of a heroic class-consciousness among the Jewish proletariat? Can we possibly attribute to chance the fact that it is the reactionary forces all over Europe, and especially in Russia, who *oppose* the assimilation of the Jews and try to perpetuate their isolation?

That is precisely what the Jewish problem *amounts to*: assimilation or isolation?— and the idea of a Jewish "na-

* Not only national, but even racial peculiarities are denied to the Jew by modern scientific investigators, who give prime prominence to the peculiarities of the *history* of the Jews. "Do the peculiarities of Jewry spring from its racial character?" Karl Kautsky asks, and replies that we do not even know with precision what race means. "There is no need to bring in the concept race, which provides no real answer but only poses new problems. It is enough to trace the history of the Jews to ascertain the reasons, for their characteristics." And such an expert in this history as Renan says: "The characteristic features of the Jews and their manner of life are far more a product of the social conditions, [*nécessités sociales*] by which they have been influenced for centuries than a racial distinction [*phénomène de race*].[52]

tionality" is definitely reactionary not only when expounded by its consistent advocates (the Zionists), but likewise on the lips of those who try to combine it with the ideas of Social-Democracy (the Bundists). The idea of a Jewish nationality runs counter to the interests of the Jewish proletariat, for it fosters among them, directly or indirectly, a spirit hostile to assimilation, the spirit of the "ghetto". "When the National Assembly of 1791 decreed the emancipation of the Jews," writes Renan, "it was very little concerned with the question of race.... It is the business of the nineteenth century to abolish all 'ghettos', and I cannot compliment those who seek to restore them. The Jewish race has rendered the world the greatest services. Assimilated with the various nations, harmoniously blended with the various national units, it will render no lesser services in the future than in the past." And Karl Kautsky, in particular reference to the Russian Jews, expresses himself even more vigorously. Hostility towards non-native sections of the population can only be eliminated "when the non-native sections of the population cease to be alien and blend with the general mass of the population. *That is the only possible solution of the Jewish problem*, *and we should support everything that makes for the ending of Jewish isolation*." Yet the Bund is resisting this only possible solution, for it is helping, not to end but to increase and legitimise Jewish isolation, by propagating the idea of a Jewish "nation" and a plan of federating Jewish and non-Jewish proletarians. That is the basic mistake of "Bundism", which consistent Jewish Social-Democrats must and will correct. This mistake drives the Bundists to actions unheard-of in the international Social-Democratic movement, such as stirring up distrust among Jewish towards non-Jewish proletarians, fostering suspicion of the latter and disseminating falsehoods about them. Here is proof, taken from this same pamphlet: "Such an absurdity [as that the organisation of the proletariat of a whole nationality should be denied representation on the central Party bodies] could be openly advocated only [mark that!] in regard to the Jewish proletariat, which, owing to the peculiar historical fortunes of the Jewish people, still has to fight for equality [!!] in the world family of the proletariat." We recently came across just such a trick in a Zionist

leaflet, whose authors raved and fumed against *Iskra*, purporting to detect in its struggle with the Bund a refusal to recognise the "equality" of Jew and non-Jew. And now we find the Bundists repeating the tricks of the Zionists! This is disseminating an outright falsehood, for we have "advocated" "denying representation" not "only" to the Jews, but also to the Armenians, the Georgians and so on, and in the case of the Poles, too, we called for the closest union and fusion of the entire proletariat fighting against the tsarist autocracy. It was not for nothing that the P.S.P. (Polish Socialist Party) raged and fulminated against us! To call a fight for the Zionist *idea* of a Jewish nation, for the federal *principle* of Party organisation, a "fight for the equality of the Jews *in the world family of the proletariat*" is to degrade the struggle from the plane of ideas and principles to that of suspicion, incitement and fanning of historically-evolved prejudices. It glaringly reveals a lack of real ideas and principles as weapons of struggle.

* *
*

We thus arrive at the conclusion that neither the logical, nor the historical, nor yet the nationalist arguments of the Bund will stand criticism. The period of disunity, which aggravated waverings among the Russian Social-Democrats and the isolation of the various organisations, had the same effect, to an even more marked degree, in the case of the Bundists. Instead of proclaiming war on this historically evolved isolation (further increased by the general disunity), they elevated it to a principle, seizing for this purpose on the sophistry that autonomy is inherently contradictory, and on the Zionist idea of a Jewish nation. Only if it frankly and resolutely admits its mistake and sets out to *move towards fusion* can the Bund turn away from the false path it has taken. And we are convinced that the finest adherents of Social-Democratic ideas among the Jewish proletariat will sooner or later compel the Bund to turn from the path of isolation to that of fusion.

Iskra, No. 51, October 22, 1903

Published according to the *Iskra* text

THE NARODNIK-LIKE BOURGEOISIE AND DISTRAUGHT NARODISM

Russian Marxists have long been pointing to the degeneration of the old, classical, revolutionary Russian Narodism that has been going on steadily since the eighties. Faith declined in a special system of peasant economy, in the village commune as the germ and basis of socialism, in the possibility of avoiding the path of capitalism by an immediate social revolution, for which the people were supposed to be already prepared. The demands for all kinds of measures to bolster up peasant economy and "small people's production" in general were the only ones to retain any political significance. Essentially, this was already nothing but bourgeois reformism; Narodism melted into liberalism; a liberal-Narodnik trend arose that would not or could not see that the measures envisaged (credits, co-operative societies, land improvement, enlargement of land holdings, and all the rest) did not go beyond the framework of *existing* bourgeois society. The Narodnik theories of Mr. V. V., Mr. Nikolai—on[53] and their numerous echoers only served as a quasi-scientific cloak for this unpleasant but indubitable fact. Marxist criticism tore off this cloak, and the influence of Narodnik ideas on Russian revolutionary circles began to ebb with amazing rapidity. These ideas were already becoming in fact the exclusive possession of the stratum to which they were kin in spirit—Russian liberal "society".

West-European Bernsteinism was a new current that strengthened and at the same time modified the above-mentioned trend. There is truth, it seems, in the saying that "a prophet is not without honour, save in his own country".

Bernstein had no luck in his own country, but, on the other hand, his ideas were "taken seriously" and applied in practice by certain socialists in France, Italy and Russia, who rapidly evolved into exponents of bourgeois reformism. Fructified by these ideas, our liberal-Narodnik trend acquired new followers of the ex-Marxist variety and at the same time matured inwardly, discarding certain primitive illusions and reactionary accretions. Bernsteinism served its purpose—not by transforming socialism, but by giving articulation to the new phase of bourgeois liberalism and removing the socialist mask from certain quasi-socialists.

A highly interesting and instructive example of the mingling and fusion of European opportunist and Russian Narodnik ideas is to be found in Mr. L.'s article "The Agrarian Question" in No. 9 (33) of *Osvobozhdeniye*. This is a truly programmatic article; it diligently sets forth the general *credo* of the author and systematically applies it to a definite sphere of problems. This article will become a landmark in the history of Russian liberalism, denoting a big step forward in its shaping and consolidation.

The author dresses his bourgeois liberalism in a coat cut according to the latest fashion. Repeating Bernstein almost word for word, he tries with an amusing earnestness to persuade the reader that "liberalism and socialism can by no means be separated from each other, let alone contrasted to each other: they are identical and inseparable in their fundamental ideal. Socialism offers no menace to liberalism, as many fear; it comes not to destroy, but to fulfil the commandments of liberalism." The wish, as we know, is father to the thought; and Mr. L. and his like would very much wish the Social-Democrats not to separate themselves from the liberals, and to have them understand socialism "not as ready-made dogmas and petrified doctrines claiming to take account in advance of the whole course of historical development" (and so on, quite in the spirit of *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya*), but "as a general ethical ideal" (which, as we know, all philistines, the liberals included, regard as unrealisable in this earthly vale and as belonging to the realm of the hereafter and of "things-in-themselves").

The liberals, naturally, want—excuse the vulgarism!—to show off their wares to the best advantage, to identify political liberalism in Russia with social-economic democracy. It is a very "well-meaning" idea, but at the same time very muddled and very artful. Well-meaning because it expresses the kind intention of a certain section of the liberals to work for broad social reforms. Muddled, because it is based on contrasting democratic to bourgeois liberalism (again quite in the spirit of *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya*!); the author apparently has no inkling of the fact that in any capitalist society there are bound to be some *bourgeois*-democratic elements who stand for broad democratic and social-economic reforms; like all the Russian Millerands,[54] he would like to identify *bourgeois* reformism with socialism, understood, of course, "not as ready-made dogmas", etc. Lastly, it is a very artful idea because the author assures himself and others that the sympathy with reform—"concern for the needs and interests of the people, 'Narodism' in the true and fine ethical sense of the term"—which is entertained by a certain section of the liberals a certain historical moment is, or could be, a permanent attribute of liberalism as such. That is so naïve as almost to be touching. Who does not know that every bourgeois ex-government, every "His Majesty's Opposition" always clamours about its true, fine and ethical "Narodism"—as long as it remains in opposition? The Russian bourgeoisie plays at Narodism (and sometimes sincerely) just because it is in opposition, and not yet at the helm of state. The Russian proletariat's reply to the artful blandishments of the *Osvobozhdeniye* gentry will be: "*Pas si bête, messieurs!* We are not such fools, gentlemen, as to believe that."

From these general arguments as to the identity of liberalism and socialism, Mr. L. passes to the general theory of the agrarian question. In a matter of a dozen lines he demolishes Marxism (once again in the spirit of *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya*), presenting it for this purpose, as is customary, in a vulgarly simplified form and proclaiming it to be contrary to experience, scientifically unproved, and generally false! It is highly characteristic that the only confirmation he adduces is a reference to European *socialist* (his own italics) literature—Bernsteinian, evidently. A very convincing

reference. If European (*European*!) socialists are beginning to think and argue like bourgeois, why should not Russian bourgeois proclaim themselves both Narodniks and socialists? If the Marxist view of the peasant question "were incontestable and the only possible one, it would," Mr. L. assures us, "place all of Zemstvo [*sic*!] Russia in a terrible, a tragic position and doom it to inaction, in view of the demonstrated impossibility of a progressive agrarian policy and of rational and effective aid to peasant economy in general." The argument, as you see, is unanswerable: *because* Marxism demonstrates the impossibility under capitalism of any degree of lasting prosperity for at all broad sections of the peasantry, it *therefore* places "Zemstvo" (a slip of the pen for "landowning"?) Russia—the Russia, that is, that lives by ruining and proletarising the peasantry—in a terrible, a tragic position. Why, yes, that is one of the historic services of Marxism: it has once and for all placed in a terrible, a tragicomic position—the ideologists of the bourgeoisie who deck themselves in the toga of Narodism, social-economic democracy, etc.

To finish with Mr. L.'s theoretical exercises we have now only to quote the following gem. "Here" (in agriculture), we are told, "there is not and cannot be that automatic [!] progress which is to a certain extent possible in industry, depending on the objective [!] development of technology." This inimitable profundity has been borrowed in its entirety from Messieurs the Kablukovs, Bulgakovs, E. Davids and *tutti quanti*, who in their "learned" works justify the backwardness of their own ideas by the technical, economic and social backwardness of agriculture. The backwardness of agriculture is indubitable, it has long been recognised by Marxists and is fully explainable; but as for this "automatic [if only to a certain extent] progress in industry", and the objective development of technology—it is just sheer gibberish.

However, excursions into the realm of science are no more than an architectural ornament to Mr. L.'s article. True practical politician that he is, he offers us, along with sheer muddle-headedness in general reasoning, an extremely sober and business-like practical programme. True, he makes the modest reservation—in his stilted official Russian—that

he disclaims all intention of adumbrating a programme and confines himself to intimating his attitude—but that is just his modesty. Actually, we have in Mr. L.'s article a very complete and detailed agrarian programme for the Russian liberals, which only lacks stylistic editing and paragraphing by clauses. It is a programme in a consistent liberal spirit: political liberty, democratic tax reform, freedom of movement, a peasant democratic agrarian policy aiming at the democratisation of landownership. With a view to this democratisation, it demands freedom to leave the village commune, the conversion of the latter from a compulsory into a voluntary association similar to any economic association, and democratic rent laws. The "state" should facilitate "the transfer of land to the labouring masses" by means of a number of measures, namely: extension of the activities of the Peasant Bank, conversion of the royal demesne into state demesne, "the creation of small farms, individual or co-operative, not using hired labour", and, lastly, compulsory alienation or redemption of lands essential to the peasants. "Of course, this compulsory redemption must be placed on a firm basis of law and attended in each particular case by reliable guarantees", but in some cases it must be effected "almost [*sic*!] unconditionally"—for example, in relation to the "cut-off lands",[55] which create something in the nature of feudal relations. In order to abolish semi-feudal relations, the state should be given the right of compulsory alienation and compulsory demarcation of the plots in question.

Such is the agrarian programme of the liberals. A parallel between it and the Social-Democratic agrarian programme naturally suggests itself. Where they resemble each other is in the identity of the immediate tendency and the similarity of most of the demands. Where they differ is in the two following cardinally important points. Firstly, the Social-Democrats want to effect the abolition of the remnants of feudalism (which both programmes directly advance as the aim) by revolutionary means and with revolutionary determination, the liberals—by reformist means and half-heartedly. Secondly, the Social-Democrats' stress that the system to be purged of the remnants of feudalism is a bourgeois system; they already now, in advance, expose all its contra-

dictions, and strive immediately to extend and render more conscious the class struggle that is inherent in this new system and is already coming to the surface. The liberals ignore the bourgeois character of the system purged of feudalism, gloss over its contradictions and try to damp down the class struggle inherent in it.

Let us consider these differences.

The reformist and half-hearted character of the liberal agrarian programme is clearly apparent first of all from the fact that it does not go beyond "compulsory redemption", and only "almost" unconditional at that, whereas the Social-Democratic agrarian programme demands the alienation of the cut-off lands from their old owners without compensation, and countenances compensation only in special cases, and then at the expense of the land of the nobility. Nor, as is well known,* do the Social-Democrats reject expropriation of the landed estates in their entirety, but only regard it as impermissible and irresponsible to include this demand, which is not appropriate under all circumstances, in the programme. The Social-Democrats from the very start call on the proletariat to take the first revolutionary step in conjunction with the well-to-do peasants in order then at once to go farther, either in conjunction with the peasant bourgeoisie against the landlord class, or against the peasant bourgeoisie and the landlord class if they have joined forces. The liberals even at this stage, in the struggle against semi-feudal relations, shrink from class action and struggle. They want to entrust the reform to the "state" (forgetting the class character of the state) with the help of local self-government bodies and "*ad hoc*" commissions, drawing a parallel—nothing could be more characteristic—between the compulsory alienation of the cut-off lands and the compulsory alienation of land for building railways!! Our liberals could not have more clearly expressed, or rather *betrayed*, their cherished wish of surrounding the new reform with the same "conveniences" for the ruling classes as always and everywhere attend the sale of land to the railways. And this in the same breath with the fine phrases about substituting a peasant democratic

* See Plekhanov's statement in No. 4 of *Zarya* and mine in the reply to X. (See present edition, Vol. 6, pp. 446-47.—*Ed.*)

agrarian policy for the agrarian policy of an aristocratic caste! In order to effect that substitution in practice, you have to appeal, not to the "public interest", but to the oppressed class—the peasantry—against the oppressing class—the nobility; you have to *rouse* the former against the latter, have to call for revolutionary action by the peasantry, not for reformist activity by the state. Further, when they talk about abolishing semi-feudal relations, the liberals refuse to see the precise nature of the relations that they propose to purge of feudalism. Mr. L., for example, repeats the catchphrases of Mr. Nikolai—on, Mr. V. V. and the rest about "the principle of recognising the tiller's right to the land he cultivates" and about the "virility" of the peasantry, but is modestly silent about the "principle" of bourgeois farming and the exploitation of wage-labour by these virile peasants. That it is the position of the petty-bourgeois members of the peasantry which would inevitably be strengthened and consolidated by the consistent application of democracy in the agrarian sphere, the bourgeois democrats do not and will not realise. In the proletarisation of the peasantry Mr. L. (again like the Narodniks and in the spirit of *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya*) refuses to see a "type of development", declaring it to be due to "the survivals of serfdom" and "the general pathological condition of the countryside"! Presumably after we get a constitution we shall see the end of the growth of the towns, of the flight of the poor peasants from the countryside, of the change-over of the landlords from the labour-rent system to the use of wage-labour, and so on! Depicting the beneficent effect of the French Revolution on the French peasantry, Mr. L. speaks glowingly of the disappearance of famines and the improvement and progress of agriculture; but about the fact that this was bourgeois progress, based on the formation of a "stable" class of agricultural wage-labourers and on chronic pauperism of the mass of the *lower* strata of the peasantry, this Narodnik-like bourgeois, of course, says never a word.

In short, the difference between Mr. L.'s agrarian programme and the Social-Democratic agrarian programme reproduces in miniature with remarkable fidelity all the general differences between the minimum programmes of liberal

and proletarian democracy. Whether you consider these programmes as theoretically expounded by their respective ideologists or as practically applied by their respective parties and trends, or whether you look at the history of, say, 1848, you will find just these two fundamental differences between the liberal and the Social-Democratic approach to the immediate practical aims: on the one hand, reformist half-heartedness in the struggle against the survivals of feudalism and a glossing over of the class antagonisms of "modern" society; on the other, a revolutionary struggle against the remnants of the old order with a view to extending, developing and intensifying the struggle of classes in the new society. Of course, these fundamental differences, which spring from the very nature of developing capitalist society, assume very different forms in different national states and at different times. An inability to recognise the "old" bourgeois democracy behind the new and peculiar forms is characteristic of its ideologists, consistent and inconsistent. Under the latter head we must, for example, class Mr. P. Novobrantsev (see *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya*, Nos. 32 and 33), that representative of "distraught Narodism" who, in reference to *Iskra*'s attacks on *Osvobozhdeniye* for being a bourgeois class publication, ironically remarks: "A fine bourgeoisie, we must say!" "Mr. Struve," *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* condescends to inform us, "is a representative of the 'intelligentsia', and not of the 'bourgeoisie as a class', for he does not set out to unite or lead any classes or social estates." That is all very well, gentlemen! But had you given a little thought to the matter you would have seen that Mr. Struve is a representative of the *bourgeois* intelligentsia. As to the bourgeoisie as a class, the Russian proletariat will see it as such on the historical scene only when there is political freedom and the government is almost directly a "committee" of one or another section of the bourgeoisie. And only "socialists by mistake" can fail to know that it is their duty to teach the working class to recognise the bourgeoisie both in its activities and in its ideas, both in its mature state and in its dreamy youth.

As for dreaminess, Mr. Novobrantsev is your man for that. But our article is already so long, and Mr. Novobrantsev's world outlook and agrarian-historical views pre-

sent so much that is interesting, especially when taken parallel with those of Mr. L., that we must postpone their discussion until another time.

Written on November 5 (18), 1903
Published in *Iskra*, No. 54, December 1, 1903
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Published according to the *Iskra* text

TO THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF THE CENTRAL ORGAN OF THE R.S.D.L.P.

Dear Comrade,

Please insert the following announcement in *Iskra*: "As from November 1 (New Style), 1903, N. Lenin is no longer a member of the *Iskra* editorial board."

With Social-Democratic greetings,

N. Lenin

Written on November 5 (18), 1903
Published in 1904

Published according to the manuscript

AN UNISSUED STATEMENT[56]

The Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., meeting in Geneva on November 27, 1903, unanimously adopted the following decision.

Comrade Plekhanov's co-optation of the Martovites to the editorial board constitutes outright defection on his part to the side of the Party Congress minority, a minority that Plekhanov himself more than once publicly characterised as inclining towards opportunism and anarchism. From the minutes of the Party Congress and the Congress of the League this will be seen quite clearly. This defection is a direct violation of the will of the Party Congress under the influence of the League Abroad and in defiance of the emphatically stated decision of the majority of the Party committees in Russia. The Central Committee cannot allow such a violation of the will of the Congress, particularly since in taking advantage of Comrade Lenin's resignation to commit this act, Comrade Plekhanov was guilty of a direct breach of trust; for Comrade Lenin resigned on certain conditions, in the interests of peace and good will in the Party, whereas the Martovites, by turning down the Central Committee's ultimatum of November 25,[57] rejected peace and thereby declared war.

The Central Committee therefore, by revolutionary action, takes the Party Central Organ into its own hands and declares that it will do everything in its power to secure that the will of the Party as a whole, not the will of the League Abroad or the treachery of an individual, shall determine the Party's future.

Central Committee

Written on November 14 (27), 1903

First published in 1928
in *Lenin Miscellany VII*

Published according
to the manuscript

LETTER TO *ISKRA*[58]

The article "What Should Not Be Done" raises issues in our Party life that are so important, and at this particular juncture so urgent, that it is difficult to repress the desire to respond immediately to the editorial board's kind and hospitable offer to throw open the columns of their paper; and it is all the more difficult for one who has been a constant contributor to *Iskra*, especially at a time when to delay voicing one's opinion for a week may mean forfeiting the opportunity altogether.

And I would like to contribute my opinion in order to prevent certain possible, if not inevitable, misunderstandings.

Let me say, first of all, that I think the author of the article is a thousand times right when he insists that it is essential to safeguard the unity of the Party and avoid new splits—especially over differences which cannot be considered important. To appeal for peaceableness, mildness, and readiness to make concessions is highly praiseworthy in a leader at all times, and at the present moment in particular. To anathemise or expel from the Party, not only former Economists,[59] but even little groups of Social-Democrats who suffer from "a certain inconsistency" would certainly be unreasonable, so unreasonable that we quite understand the irritable tone of the author of the article towards those whom he considers arbitrary, stiff-necked and stupid Sobakeviches[60] capable of advocating expulsion. We even go further: when we have a Party programme and a Party organisation, we must not only hospitably throw open the columns of the Party organ for exchanges of opinion, but must afford those groups—or grouplets, as the author calls

them—which from inconsistency support some of the dogmas of revisionism, or for one reason or another insist upon their separate and individual existence as groups, the opportunity of systematically setting forth their differences, however slight these may be. Precisely in order to avoid being too harsh and stiff-necked *à la* Sobakevich towards "anarchistic individualism", it is necessary, in our opinion, to do the utmost—even if it involves a certain departure from tidy patterns of centralism and from absolute obedience to discipline—to enable these grouplets to speak out and give the whole Party the opportunity to weigh the importance or unimportance of these differences and determine just where, how and *on whose part inconsistency* is shown.

Indeed, it is high time to make a clean sweep of the traditions of circle sectarianism and—in a party which rests on the *masses*—resolutely advance the slogan: *More light!*—let the Party know *everything*, let it have *all*, *absolutely all the material* required for a judgement of all and sundry differences, reversions to revisionism, departures from discipline, etc. More confidence in the independent judgement of the whole body of Party workers!—they, and they alone, will be able to curb the excessive hotheadedness of grouplets inclined to splits, will be able, by their slow, imperceptible but persistent influence, to imbue them with the "good will" to observe Party discipline, will be able to cool the ardour of anarchistic individualism and, by the very fact of their indifference, document, prove and demonstrate the triviality of differences exaggerated by the elements tending towards a split.

To the question—"what should not be done?" (what should not be done in general, and what, in particular, should not be done so as to avoid a split), my reply is, first of all: do not conceal from the Party the appearance and growth of potential causes of a split, do not conceal any of the circumstances and events that constitute such causes; and, what is more, do not conceal them not only from the Party, but, as far as possible, from the outside public either. I say "as far as possible" having in mind the things that, in a secret organisation, must necessarily be concealed—but in our splits things of this kind play next to no part. Broad publicity—that is the surest, the only reliable means of avoiding

such splits as can be avoided, and of reducing to a minimum the harm of splits that are no longer avoidable.

For indeed, just reflect on the obligations devolving on the Party from the fact that it is dealing now with the *masses*, not with mere circles. To be a party of the masses not only in name, we must get ever wider masses to share In all Party affairs, steadily elevating them from political indifference to protest and struggle, from a general spirit of protest to the conscious adoption of Social-Democratic views, from the adoption of these views to support of the movement, from support to organised membership in the Party. Can we achieve this result without giving the widest publicity to matters on whose decision the nature of our influence on the masses will depend? The workers will cease to understand us and will desert us, as a general staff without an army, if splits take place in our ranks over trivial differences, says the author; and it is quite true. And in order that the workers *may not* cease to understand us, in order that their fighting experience and proletarian instinct may *teach us* "leaders" *something too*, the organised workers must learn to keep an eye on any potential causes of splits (in any mass party such causes have always arisen and will always recur), to properly evaluate these causes, to appraise what happens in some "backwater", in Russia or abroad, from the standpoint of the interests of the entire Party, of the entire movement.

The author is thrice justified when he stresses that much will be given to our central bodies and much will be asked of them. Just so. And for that very reason *the whole Party* must constantly, steadily and systematically *train* suitable persons for the central bodies, must see clearly, as in the palm of its hand, *all the activities* of every candidate for these high posts, must come to know even their personal characteristics, their strong and weak points, their victories and "defeats". The author makes some remarkably acute observations, evidently based on extensive experience, about some of the causes of such defeats. And just because these observations are so acute, it is necessary that the whole Party should benefit by them, that it should *always see* every "defeat", even if partial, of one or other of its "leaders". No political leader has a career that is without its defeats,

and if we are serious when we talk about influencing the masses, about winning their "good will", we must strive with all our might not to let these defeats be hushed up in the musty atmosphere of circles and grouplets, but to have them submitted to the judgement of all. That may appear embarrassing at first sight, it may seem "offensive" sometimes to individual leaders—but we must overcome this false feeling of embarrassment, it is our duty to the Party and to the working class. In this way, and in this way alone, shall we enable the whole body of influential Party workers (and not the chance assortment of persons in a circle or grouplet) to know their leaders and to *put each of them in his proper category*. Only broad publicity will correct all bigoted, one-sided, capricious deviations, it alone will convert the at times absurd and ridiculous "squalls" between "grouplets" into useful and essential material for the self-education of the Party.

Light, more light! We need a vast orchestra; and we must acquire experience in order correctly to distribute the parts, in order to know to whom to assign the sentimental violin, to whom the gruff double-bass, to whom the conductor's baton. Let the columns of the Party organ and of all Party publications indeed be thrown open hospitably to all opinions, in keeping with the author's admirable appeal; let all and sundry judge our "janglings and wranglings" over any "note" sounded too sharp, in the opinion of some, too flat, in the opinion of others, too raggedly, in the opinion of others still. Only through a series of such open discussions can we get a really harmonious ensemble of leaders; only given this condition will it be *impossible* for the workers to cease to understand us; only then will our "general staff" really be backed by the *good* and *conscious* will of an army that follows and at the same time directs its general staff!

Lenin

Iskra, No. 53,
November 25, 1903

Published according
to the *Iskra* text

WHY I RESIGNED FROM THE *ISKRA* EDITORIAL BOARD*

A LETTER TO THE EDITORS OF *ISKRA*[61]

This is by no means a personal question. It concerns the relations between the majority and minority of our Party Congress, and I am bound to answer it at once, and openly, not only because the majority delegates are bombarding me with questions, but because the article "Our Congress" in No. 53 of *Iskra* gives an *entirely false* picture of the not very profound but very disruptive division among the *Iskra*-ists to which the Congress led.

The account the article gives of the matter is such that even with a magnifying glass no one could discover in it *a single* really serious cause for the division, could find so much as a shadow of an explanation of such a phenomenon as the altered composition of the editorial board of the Central Organ, or a semblance of valid reasons for my resignation from the board. We parted company over the organisation of the Party's central bodies, the writer of the article says, over the relations between the Central Organ and the Central Committee, over the way to apply centralism, over the limits and nature of a possible and useful centralisation, over the harm of bureaucratic formalism.

Is that so? Did we not rather *part company* over the personal composition of the central bodies, over whether it was permissible, because one did not like the membership elected to them by the Congress, to boycott these central bodies, to disrupt the practical work, to revise the decisions of the Party Congress at the bidding of a *circle* of Social-Democrats abroad, such as the majority of the League?

* I sent this letter to *Iskra* immediately after No. 53 appeared. The editors refused to print it in No. 54, so I am compelled to publish it as a leaflet.

You know perfectly well, comrades, that this was indeed the case. But the great majority of the most influential and most active Party workers do not know it yet, and so I shall briefly outline the main facts—briefly because, judging by an announcement in No. 53 of *Iskra*, all the material relating to the history of our divergence will shortly be published.

At our Congress—as both the writer of the article we are discussing and the Bund delegation in their newly published report rightly point out—the "*Iskra*-ists" were in a considerable majority, about three-fifths, according to my calculation, even before the withdrawal of the Bund and *Rabocheye Dyelo* delegates. During the first half of the Congress these *Iskra*-ists stood together against all the anti-*Iskra*-ists and inconsistent *Iskra*-ists. This was very plainly revealed in connection with two incidents during the first half of the Congress which are important for an understanding of our divergence: the Organising Committee incident and the equality of languages incident (the latter was the only occasion when the *Iskra*-ist compact majority dropped—from three-fifths to one-half). During the second half of the Congress the *Iskra*-ists *began* to diverge, and by the end of the Congress the divergence was *complete*. The controversies over Paragraph 1 of the Party Rules and over the elections to the central bodies clearly reveal the nature of this divergence: a minority of the *Iskra*-ists (headed by Martov) became the rallying point for a steadily increasing number of non-*Iskra*-ists and indecisive elements, in opposition to the majority of the *Iskra*-ists (which included Plekhanov and myself). Over the question of Paragraph 1 of the Rules this grouping did not yet take final shape, but even so the Bundist votes and two of the three *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ist votes gave the *Iskra*-ist minority the upper hand. In the elections to the central bodies the *Iskra*-ist majority (owing to the withdrawal from the Congress of the five Bundist and two *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ist votes) became the majority at the Party Congress. And *it was only at this point that we parted company* in the real sense of the term.

We disagreed profoundly, first of all, over the composition of the Central Committee. After the Organising Committee incident, at the very beginning of the Congress, the *Iskra*-ists

hotly discussed various members (*and non-members*) of the Organising Committee as candidates for the Central Committee, and at unofficial meetings of the *Iskra* organisation, after prolonged and heated debates, rejected one of the candidates supported by Martov by nine votes to four, with three abstentions; by ten votes to two, with four abstentions, a list of five was adopted which, *on my proposal*, included one leader of the non-*Iskra*-ist elements and one leader of the *Iskra*-ist minority. But the minority insisted on having three out of five, and as a result suffered complete defeat at the Party Congress. The great battle at the Congress over whether to endorse the old editorial board of six for the Central Organ or to elect a new trio* ended in the same way.

Only from this moment did the divergence become so complete as to suggest a split; only from this moment did the minority (now already become a real "compact" minority) take the course of abstaining from voting—a thing until then unwitnessed at the Congress. And after the Congress this divergence grew ever more acute. The discontented minority resorted to a boycott, lasting for months. It is quite obvious that the charges of bureaucratic formalism, of demanding unquestioning, automatic obedience, and suchlike nonsense, which sprang from this soil, were merely an attempt to lay the blame at the wrong door; and this is sufficiently borne out by the following typical case. The new editorial board (i.e., Plekhanov and myself) invited all the former editors to contribute, which invitation, of course, was at first made without any "formalism", by word of mouth. It met with a refusal. We then wrote an "official

* In view of the endless talk and misrepresentation that there has been regarding this celebrated "trio", let me point out at once that long before the Congress all comrades who were at all closely in touch were acquainted with my commentary to the draft *Tagesordnung* of the Congress. This commentary, which was circulated at the Congress, contained the following point: "The Congress shall elect three persons to the editorial board of the Central Organ and three to the Central Committee. These six persons *in conjunction* shall, if necessary, co-opt by a two-thirds majority vote additional members to the editorial board of the Central Organ and to the Central Committee and report to this effect to the Congress. After the report has been endorsed by the Congress, subsequent co-optation shall be effected by the editorial board of the Central Organ and by the Central Committee separately."

document" (what bureaucrats!), addressed "dear comrades", requesting them to contribute in general, and in particular to *set forth their differences in the columns of the publications of which we were the editors*. The reply was a "formal" statement to the effect that they did not wish to *have anything to do with* "*Iskra*". And, in fact, for months on end none of the non-editors did any work for *Iskra*. Relations became exclusively formal and bureaucratic—but on whose "initiative"?

Underground literature began to be produced; people abroad were flooded with it, it was disseminated among the committees, and is now already beginning in part to return from Russia. The report of the delegate for Siberia, —n's letter on the slogans of the "opposition", and Martov's *Once More in the Minority* are all full of the most amusing charges against Lenin of being an "autocrat", of instituting a Robespierre guillotine regime (*sic*!), of having staged the political burial of old comrades (non-election to the central bodies is burial!), and the like. By the very logic of things the opposition is drawn to seeking such differences of "principle" on matters of organisation as entirely preclude collaboration. An especially loud outcry is raised over the celebrated "fifth member" of the Party Council. In all these writings, the Council is made out to be a piece of diplomacy or trickery on Lenin's part, an instrument for the suppression of the Central Committee in Russia by the Central Organ abroad—which is exactly the way the matter is depicted by the Bund delegation in their report on the Congress. It need hardly be said that this difference of principle is just as nonsensical as the famous bureaucratic formalism. The fifth member is elected by the Congress; consequently, it is all a matter of the *person* who enjoys the greatest confidence of the majority; and the will of the majority of a Party Congress will always, however the central Party bodies may be constituted, be manifested in the choice of definite persons.

How widely this kind of literature has been circulated abroad is evident from the fact that even the good Parvus has taken the war-path against the attempt to grasp all the threads in one hand and to "boss" (*sic*!) the workers from some such place as Geneva (*Aus der Weltpolitik*,[62] V. Jahrgang, No. 48, November 30, 1903). In a month or two, when

he reads the minutes of the Party Congress and the League Congress, our new enemy of autocracy will discover how easy it is to make a fool of oneself by accepting all manner of *Parteiklatsch** at its face value.

The climax of the opposition's campaign against the central bodies was the Congress of the League. From its minutes the reader will be able to see whether those who called it an arena for settling Party Congress scores were right or not, and whether or not there was anything in the onslaught of the opposition to provoke the Central Committee to altogether exceptional measures (as the Central Committee itself put it when alteration of the composition of the editorial board held out the hope of peace in the Party). The resolutions of this Congress reveal the true nature of the differences of "principle" over the question of autocratic bureaucracy.

After the League Congress a split loomed so threateningly that Plekhanov decided to co-opt the ex-editors. I foresaw that the opposition would not rest satisfied with this, and I did not think it permissible to revise a decision of the Party Congress to please a *circle*. But still less did I think it permissible to stand in the way of possible peace in the Party, and I therefore resigned from the editorial board, after the 51st issue of *Iskra*, stating at the same time that I did not refuse to continue as a contributor, and that I did not even insist, if peace and good will were established in the Party, on having my resignation made public. The opposition demanded (not transformation of the non-existent system of bureaucracy, formalism, autocracy, automatism, etc., but) reinstatement of the old editorial board, the co-optation of opposition representatives to the Central Committee, two seats on the Council, and recognition of the League Congress as lawful. The Central Committee made an offer of peace by consenting to co-opt two of them, to turn over one seat on the Council, to have the reorganisation of the League carried out gradually. These terms too the opposition rejected. The editors were co-opted, but peace remained an open question. That was the state of affairs when No. 53 of *Iskra* appeared.

* Party tittle-tattle.—*Ed.*

That the Party wants peace and positive work is hardly open to question. But articles like "Our Congress" are an obstacle to peace, an obstacle because they bring up hints and fragments of issues which are not and cannot be comprehensible unless the story of the divergence is told in full; an obstacle because they shift the blame from a foreign circle to the centre in charge of our practical work, which is engaged in the difficult and arduous task of actually uniting the Party, and which in any case has been having to wrestle with too many hindrances to the application of centralism. The committees in Russia are fighting against the disruptive activities and boycott tactics of the minority, which are obstructing the work all along the line. Resolutions to this effect have already come in from the St. Petersburg, Moscow, Nizhni-Novgorod, Tver, Odessa, and Tula committees and from the Northern League.

Enough of this émigré *Literatengezänk*!* Let it now become an example to the practical workers in Russia of "*what should not be done*"! Let the editors of the Party's Central Organ call for a stop to all boycotts, no matter on whose part, and for concerted effort under the leadership of the Central Committee of the Party!

* *
*

But what about the difference in shades of opinion among the *Iskra*-ists? the reader may ask. Our answer will be: in the first place, the difference is that in the opinion of the majority one can and should advocate one's views in the Party apart from any alteration in the personal composition of the central bodies. Every circle, even of *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists, is entitled, on joining the Party, to demand the opportunity to express and advocate its views; but no circle, not even of generals, is entitled to demand representation on the Party's central bodies. In the second place, the difference is that in the opinion of the majority the blame for any formalism and bureaucracy falls on those who, by refusing to work under the leadership of the central bodies, made it difficult to conduct matters in a non-formalistic way. In the third place, I know of one *and only one* difference of principle

* Writers' squabbling.—*Ed.*

on matters of organisation, namely, that which found expression in the debate on Paragraph 1 of the Party Rules. We shall endeavour to return to this question when the minutes of the Congress appear. We shall then show that the fact that Martov's formulation was carried with the help of non-*Iskra*-ist and quasi-*Iskra*-ist elements was no accident, but was due to its being a step towards opportunism, and that this step is even more apparent in —n's letter and in *Once More in the Minority*.* The minutes will show that the author of "Our Congress" goes against the facts when he claims that "the controversy during the discussion of the Party Rules centred almost exclusively round the organisation of the central bodies of the Party". Quite the contrary. The only controversy that really involved principles and divided the two "sides" (i.e., the majority and minority of the *Iskra*-ists) at all definitely was over Paragraph 1 of the Party Rules. As for the controversies over the composition of the Council, co-optation to the central bodies, and so on, they were just controversies between individual delegates, between Martov and myself, etc.; they concerned what were relatively very minor details and did not give rise to any definite grouping of the *Iskra*-ists, who by their votes corrected now one, now another of us when he went too far. To make out that these controversies were the source of our disagreement on how centralism should be applied, what should be its limits, character, etc., is simply to whitewash the stand taken by the minority and the methods of the fight which they carried on to change the personal composition of the central bodies, and which alone caused us to diverge in the full sense of the term.

Written in the early part of December 1903

Published in leaflet form in December 1903
Signed: *N. Lenin*

Published according to the leaflet text

---

* We shall then also ask to have explained what the author of "Our Congress" means by talking about an undeserved disregard for the non-*Iskra*-ists, and about the strict points of the Rules not corresponding to the actual relation of forces in the Party. What do these assertions refer to?

LETTER FROM THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.D.L.P. TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE LEAGUE ABROAD, THE PARTY AID GROUPS, AND TO ALL PARTY MEMBERS ABROAD

Comrades,

The final unification of the Party now makes it essential and urgent to develop on a wide scale the activities conducted by the Social-Democrats abroad and firmly unite the efforts of all working in this field.

Under the Party Rules (Paragraph 13), all Party work abroad is divided into two major spheres, organised on different lines. On the one hand, propaganda and agitation activities abroad are under the direct charge of the League Abroad and are concentrated in its hands. The Central Committee will take all measures to facilitate the complete centralisation of this work in the hands of the League and to assure it autonomy in the exercise of this function. On the other hand, assistance by the League to the movement in Russia is rendered only through persons and groups specially appointed for the purpose by the Central Committee.

While calling upon all members of the League, all aid groups and all Party members abroad to give the League the utmost support in its work of propaganda and agitation, the Central Committee intends now to focus its efforts on the organisation of these intermediate groups through which assistance to the movement in Russia should be rendered.

The Central Committee considers its tasks in this field to be as follows.

Assistance to the Russian movement from abroad will chiefly take the form of 1) dispatching revolutionary workers to Russia; 2) dispatching to Russia funds collected abroad; 3) gathering abroad such Russian contacts, items of news, and information as need to be communicated speedily to Russia with a view to aiding the comrades active there, preventing discovery and arrest, etc.; 4) dispatching literature to Russia, etc.

While not claiming that this is an exhaustive list of all forms of direct assistance to the Russian movement from abroad, we think, however, that it is sufficient for the time being to outline the chief forms and adapt the organisation we are creating to these. Experience will show how far this organisation will need to be modified in the future.

To begin with the matter of dispatching people for work in Russia. It would, of course, be desirable for most comrades going there to contact directly the Central Committee's chief agency abroad—in Geneva—and secure from it addresses, passwords, funds and the necessary instructions. But many of the people going will naturally not be able to come to Geneva, and the Central Committee therefore intends to appoint its agents in all foreign centres of any importance: London, Paris, Brussels, Berlin, Vienna, and others. Every person intending to leave for work in Russia is invited to apply to the local agent of the Central Committee, who will take all measures to enable him to reach his destination with maximum speed and safety and to co-ordinate his first steps with the Central Committee's general plan of allocation of forces and funds, etc. The Central Committee hopes that the League Abroad will render these Central Committee agents every assistance—for example, by acquainting as many as possible of our people abroad with the functions of these agents and the conditions for contacting them, by helping to arrange for maximum secrecy of these contacts, etc.

Since the dispatch of people to Russia from large foreign centres is a very big job, and since one person may not always be able to acquaint himself adequately with those being dispatched, the Central Committee will, where required, appoint not one agent, but a group of agents, in accordance with Paragraph 13 of the Party Rules.

Further, as regards the dispatch of funds, the most desirable arrangement is for the collection of funds anywhere abroad to be completely concentrated in the hands of the League and for the Administration of the League to pass them over to the Central Committee. Only in urgent cases may we be obliged, as experience suggests, to have certain sums handed over directly by local sections of the League to local agents of the Central Committee, as when pressure of circumstances requires immediate aid in effecting an escape, in dispatching a person or literature, etc. The Central Committee hopes that the Administration of the League will give appropriate instructions to the sections and will devise the most suitable forms of accounting for sums collected and expended.

Next, it is common knowledge, of course, that persons arriving abroad from Russia very often communicate information which would be of the utmost importance to those working in Russia, as, for example, about the extent of arrests, the need to warn comrades in places remote from the scene of an arrest, the need to utilise contacts in Russia which the comrade escaping or otherwise leaving had no time or opportunity to utilise, etc. Of course, in proportion as all the Party work comes under the direction of the Central Committee, it will become increasingly possible to gather all such contacts and information in Russia itself, which is the only normal and desirable thing. But there is no doubt that for a long time yet there will be cases when comrades escaping from or legally leaving Russia will not manage, for one reason or another, to pass on their contacts in Russia, so that this will have to be done after they arrive abroad

Lastly, the Central Committee will, of course, endeavour to concentrate the transport of literature as completely as possible in the hands of a special transport group, some of whose members will be abroad all the time. Special Central Committee agents will therefore be appointed to manage the Party literature depots in various foreign centres, to maintain communication with the frontiers, etc. But however efficiently the business of transport is organised, there will always, of course, be gaps which will have to be filled by seizing such chances as may present themselves, by

(perhaps) dispatching suitcases, utilising opportunities which may be offered by commercial or shipping arrangements etc. All communications and items of information bearing on such matters should likewise be addressed to the Central Committee agents, with whom all such matters will be concentrated and who will act in accordance with the Central Committees general plan and instructions

In informing the League Administration of its plan of work, the Central Committee expresses its confidence that the League for its part will render every assistance to the Central Committee agents abroad, and in particular will take steps to enable these agents to acquaint themselves widely with the aid groups, youth circles, etc., etc.

Written in the early part of December 1903

First published in 1928 in *Lenin Miscellany VII*

Published according to the manuscript

NOTE ON THE POSITION OF THE NEW *ISKRA*

What angers me most in the position taken up by the "Martovite" *Iskra* is its *intrinsic dishonesty and falsehood*, the attempt to evade the essence of the matter, the attempt to falsify Party opinion and judgement, to *misrepresent* concepts and facts. And I think that the obtuseness and indifference shown by some comrades, their insensitiveness to this falsehood, can only be due to their ignorance of the facts. Ignorance must be combated by explanation, and I shall certainly keep to my intention of explaining the whole matter in the greatest detail (if necessary, with *all* the documents) in a special pamphlet, which I shall undertake as soon as the minutes of the Party and League Congresses come out, that is to say, very soon.[63]

The chief *distortion* by which the Martovites try to *deceive* the Party (in their hysterical state very possibly, and even probably, primarily deceiving themselves) is, firstly, *misrepresentation* of the true sources and causes of the divergence among the *Iskra*-ists, and, secondly, *misrepresentation* of the concepts of circle spirit and disruption, of sectarianism and party spirit.

The first misrepresentation is that they represent as a difference of "principle" the *recriminations*—for that is what they actually were—exchanged by the two sides after the Congress, during the struggle between the central bodies and the opposition. These recriminations consisted in the opposition calling the majority autocrats, formalists, bureaucrats, etc., while the majority called the opposition *hysterical place-seekers*, a party of rejected Ministers or hysterical rowdies (*vide* the Congress of the League). And now *o n e* side of these mutual "compliments" is being held

up in the Central Organ as a difference of *principle*! Isn't that despicable?

In reality the cause of the divergence was the *Martovites*' *swing-over towards the Marsh*. That swing-over was clearly to be seen at the Congress in the matter of Paragraph 1 of the Rules and in the grouping in the elections to the central bodies. *This* difference, which in a measure certainly was one of *principle*, is evaded and hushed up.

The second misrepresentation is that, when it is they who have *for three months* been *disrupting* the whole Party and all the work in the interests of a *circle*, in order to worm themselves into the central bodies (for no one ever restricted genuine controversy or the free expression of opinion; on the contrary, the Martovites were invited and urged to write), the Martovites now, after getting into the editorial board by the back door, bring forward the ludicrous accusation that the majority is disruptively formalistic, bureaucratic, etc., *saying nothing* about their own boycott, their place-seeking, etc. Isn't that despicable? Either—or; either consign the whole "squabble" to *oblivion*, and in that case don't talk about it *at all*, do not countenance in the Central Organ any *recrudescence of the squabble*—for this outcry about bureaucracy is precisely a *recrudescence* of wretched place-seeking; or raise the question of the divergence, and in that case *disclose* **everything**.

Written December in 1903

First published in 1929
in *Lenin Miscellany X*

Published according
to the manuscript

PREFACE TO THE PAMPHLET *A LETTER TO A COMRADE ON OUR ORGANISATIONAL TASKS*

A Letter to a Comrade,* here reprinted, was written over a year ago—in September 1902, if my memory does not deceive me. At first it passed from hand to hand in manuscript copies and circulated in Russia as a statement of *Iskra*'s views on organisation. Then, last June, the Siberian League printed and distributed it in quite a large number of copies. It is thus already fully a matter of public knowledge and there are no longer any grounds for withholding its publication. The reason I had for not publishing it before—its very unfinished literary form, it being only a "rough draft" in the fullest sense of the term—now lapses, for it is in this rough state that many practical workers in Russia have read it. Furthermore, an even weightier reason for reprinting it in its rough form (I have made only the most essential stylistic corrections) is that it has now acquired the significance of a "document".** As we know, the new editorial board of *Iskra* already announced in No. 53 the existence of differences over questions of *organisation*. Unfortunately, the editors are in no hurry to specify just what these differences are, confining themselves for the most part to hinting at things unknown.

Something must be done to help the new editorial board in its difficult task. Let the *old* organisational views of *Iskra* be made known in all their details, down even to

---

* See present edition, Vol. 6, pp. 229-50.—*Ed.*

** My opponents having repeatedly expressed the wish to avail themselves of this letter as a document, I would consider it positively—how shall I put it mildly?—awkward to introduce any changes when reprinting it.

rough drafts; perhaps the new editorial board will then finally reveal its *new* organisational views to the Party under its "ideological direction". Perhaps it will then finally confide to us the *precise formulation* of the fundamental changes it would like to have made in our Party's Rules of Organisation. For, indeed, who does not understand that it is these Rules of Organisation that embody the organisational plans we have always had?

If the reader compares *What Is To Be Done?** and the *Iskra* articles on organisational matters with the *Letter to a Comrade*, and the latter with the Rules adopted at the Second Congress, he will be able to form a clear idea of how consistently we, the majority of the *Iskra*-ists and the majority at the Party Congress, have pursued our organisational "line". As to the new editorial board of *Iskra*, we shall be waiting, and with the greatest impatience, for a statement of its new organisational views; we shall be waiting for it to indicate just what it has been disillusioned in, and since when, and why it has begun to "burn the idols it worshipped".

N. Lenin

January 1904

Published in the pamphlet:
N. Lenin, *A Letter to a Comrade on Our Organisational Tasks*, Geneva, 1904

Published according to the pamphlet text

* See present edition, Vol. 5, pp. 347-527.—*Ed.*

POSTSCRIPT TO THE PAMPHLET *A LETTER TO A COMRADE ON OUR ORGANISATIONAL TASKS*

The editors of *Iskra* state in its 55th issue that the Central Committee and the opposition "agreed to consign to oblivion" the facts mentioned in my "Letter to the Editors of *Iskra*" ("Why I Resigned from the *Iskra* Editorial Board").* This statement of the editors is an evasion which (to use Comrade Axelrod's admirable style) really is formalistic, official and bureaucratic. In reality there was *no* such agreement, as the Central Committee's foreign representative has plainly stated in a leaflet published immediately following the appearance of the 55th issue of *Iskra*. And there *could not have been* any such agreement, as should be clear to anyone who reads my letter attentively; for the opposition *rejected* the "peace and good will" offered by the Central Committee, one condition of which would *certainly* have been to consign to oblivion everything that deserved it. When the editors rejected the peace offer and *declared war on the famous bureaucracy in No. 53*, can they have been so naïve as to hope that the other side would keep quiet about the *real* origin of these fables about bureaucracy?

The editors were very much displeased when I described the real origin of these fables as *squabbling* (*Literatengezänk*—writers' squabbling). And no wonder! But, after all, you cannot dispose of this truly unpleasant fact by mouthing sorry phrases about it.

We will take the liberty of asking our worthy editors two questions.

---

* See pp. 118-24 of this volume.—*Ed.*

First question. Why is *one person* merely *amused* by the most violent charges of being an autocrat, of instituting a Robespierre regime, of staging a coup, and so on and so forth, while *others* are mortally *offended* by a calm statement reciting the facts and telling of a demand for generals' posts that actually was put forward—so offended as to indulge in absolutely "rubbishy" talk about "personalities", "moral aspersions", and even "low" (where did they get that from??) "motives"? Why this difference, my good friends? Not because the "post" of general is "lower" than that of autocrat, surely?

Second question. Why don't the editors explain to the reader *why* (in that remote past when they belonged to the opposition and really were "in the minority") they expressed the desire to have certain facts *consigned to oblivion*? Do not the editors think that the very idea of desiring to "consign to oblivion" differences of *principle* is absurd and could not have occurred to any right-minded person?

So you see how clumsy you are, my dear "political opponents"! You wanted to annihilate me with the charge that it was I who was reducing a dispute over principles to the level of a squabble; instead, you have only *confirmed* my contention as to the real origin of some of your "differences of opinion".

Further, while admitting, out of clumsiness, that there were squabbles, the editors do not trouble to explain to the reader where, in their opinion, the difference of principle ends and the squabbling begins. They pass over the fact that in my letter I endeavour to draw a *perfectly clear* line between the two. I show there that the difference of principle (which was by no means so profound as to cause a real *divergence*) arose over Paragraph 1 of the Rules and was widened by the *Iskra*-ist minority joining forces with the non-*Iskra*-ist elements towards the end of the Congress. I further show that the talk about bureaucracy, formalism and the rest is chiefly just an *echo* of squabbles that occurred *after the Congress*.

The editors probably do not agree with *this* demarcation between what relates to "principle" and what should be "consigned to oblivion". Then why have they not troubled to give *their own* opinion as to what a "correct" demarcation

between them would be? Is it not because they have not yet drawn (and cannot draw) any line between the two things in their own minds?

From the article by our esteemed Comrade Axelrod in this same 55th issue of *Iskra* the reader may judge what this ... inability to discriminate leads to and what our Central Party Organ is turning into. Comrade Axelrod does not say *a single word* about the substance of our controversy over Paragraph 1 of the Rules, but confines himself to hints about "peripheral societies" that mean absolutely nothing to anyone who was not at the Congress. Comrade Axelrod has probably forgotten how long and closely we argued over Paragraph 1!—but, on the other hand, he has evolved a "theory" to the effect that "the majority of the *Iskra*-ists at the Congress were convinced that their main task was ... to fight the internal enemy". "In the face of this mission", our esteemed Comrade Axelrod is firmly convinced, "the immediate positive task became overshadowed" in the eyes of the majority. "The prospects of positive work were relegated to the dim remoteness of an indefinite future"; the Party was faced with the more urgent "military task of pacifying the internal enemy". And Comrade Axelrod cannot find words severe enough to brand this "bureaucratic* [or mechanical] centralism", these "Jacobin" (!!?) plans, these "disrupters" who "repress and persecute" people as "mutineers".

In order to demonstrate the true worth of this theory—or, rather, of these accusations against the Congress majority of a disruptive tendency to repress mutiny (*imaginary* mutiny, it is to be supposed) and of ignoring positive work, I have only to remind the forgetful Comrade Axelrod of one (to begin with) little fact. On October 6, 1903, after repeatedly pleading with the members of the minority on account of the stupidity and disruptiveness of their boycott, Plekhanov and I *officially* invited the "mutinous" writers (Comrade

* By the way, I should like the editors to note that my pamphlet is appearing with the "established imprint". As a convinced centralist, I obey the "principles" laid down by our Central Organ which in its 55th issue has instituted a section where Party publications are reviewed from the standpoint of their "imprints" (as a contribution to the fight against formalism).

Axelrod among them) to get down to positive work; we officially told them that it was unreasonable to withdraw from this work, whether because of personal irritation or of differences of opinion (for an exposition of which we were *throwing open* the columns of our publications).*

Comrade Axelrod has forgotten this. He has forgotten that his reply then was a flat refusal, without any reasons stated. He has forgotten that in his view at that time, in those distant days, "positive work was relegated to the dim remoteness of an indefinite future", which future became a much-desired present only on November 26, 1903.[64]

Comrade Axelrod has not only "forgotten" this, but generally would like, would he not, to have such "personalities" "consigned to oblivion".

To point out to the minority that *for months on end* they have been disrupting the Party, neglecting positive work, and taking up *an immense amount of the energies* of the Central Committee by their squabbling is to indulge in "personalities", cast moral aspersions, and reduce a struggle between trends to the level of a squabble. There is no place in the columns of the Central Organ for that.

But to accuse the Party Congress majority of having dared to waste time by pleading with the "mutineers", of having disrupted the Party by their fight against (*imaginary*) disrupters—that is a difference of principle, for which the columns of *Iskra* should be "reserved". Isn't that your view, most esteemed Comrade Axelrod?

It is possible that even today, if Comrade Axelrod looks around him, he will find plenty of examples of the minority's practical workers, too, relegating "positive work" to the dim remoteness of an also desirable but still indefinite future.

No, it would have been wiser for you not to say anything about the attitude of the majority and the minority to positive work! It would have been wiser not to bring up a subject about which, for instance, a factory worker in the town of——writes to me as follows:

Dear Comrade,

"We have been informed lately, that is, since the Second Party Congress, that the Central Committee was not elected by the Congress

* See pp. 352-53 of this volume.—*Ed.*

unanimously, that the Congress split in two over the relations between the Central Organ and the Central Committee, and that a so-called majority and minority arose. This came down on our heads as a terrible crushing blow, because this whole question of the relations between the Central Organ and the Central Committee was something absolutely new and unexpected for us: before the Congress it had never been raised, not only at any circles or meetings, but, as far as I can remember, in the literature either. This fact of nothing being said about it before the Congress is what I cannot understand. If we are to assume that the issue did not exist at all, then it has to be admitted that the comrades who worked so hard to unite the Party did not have a clear idea as to its organisation, that is, its structure. But that is quite out of the question, because the issue which has now split the Party shows clearly that opinions as to the Party structure did exist, and were not unanimous. But if that was so, why was the fact concealed? That is the first thing I want to say. The second is that when it comes to the question itself, I ask myself: what structure of the Party will ensure its trend being orthodox? And at once it strikes me that another important thing, besides the Party's structure, is the personnel of its leadership; that is, if the leaders are orthodox, then the Party trend will be orthodox, but if they are opportunists, then the Party will be opportunist too. Now, with that in mind, and knowing the personnel of the Party leadership, I am definitely in favour of the Central Organ predominating over the Central Committee in the ideological direction of the Party. What makes me all the more positive about it is the conditions in Russia: however orthodox the Central Committee may be, since it functions in Russia it cannot be secure against arrests, and hence against losing its orthodoxy regardless of its own wishes, because successors don't always resemble the people they succeed. Any comrade who has worked on the committees for any time at all will know of cases when even the best committee is replaced, through one of the many possible chance circumstances, by a bad committee, and vice versa. But with the Central Organ it's quite another matter: it functions under different conditions (since it will be located abroad), which ensure it a longer existence, and hence an opportunity of preparing worthy successors. But I don't know, comrade, if this question can be decided once and for all, that is, by having the Central Organ always predominate over the Central Committee, or the Central Committee over the Central Organ. I don't think it is possible. Take a case like this: suppose the personnel of the Central Organ changes and from being orthodox becomes opportunist, as in the case of the *Vorwärts*[65] in Germany; could it be allowed to predominate in the ideological leadership? What would we who have been schooled in the orthodox spirit do if that happened, would we have to agree with it? No, it would be our duty to take away its right to predominate and give that right to a different body; and if that were not done for any reason, whether a sense of Party discipline or anything else, we would all deserve to be called traitors to the Social-Democratic workers' movement. That's how I see it, and I can't agree at all to a decision being made once and for all as some comrades do.

"Now, what I cannot understand at all is the fight that's going on now between the majority and the minority, and to a great many of us it seems wrong. Look, comrade, is it a natural state of affairs when all energies are spent on travelling around the committees for the one purpose of talking about the majority and minority? Really I don't know. Is this issue really so important that all energies should be devoted to it and because of it people should look on each other practically as enemies? For that's what it comes down to: if a committee is let's say, made up of followers of one camp, then nobody from the other camp will ever get into it, no matter how fit he may be for the work; in fact, he won't get in even if he is essential to the work and it suffers badly without him. I don't mean to say, of course, that the struggle over this issue should be given up altogether, no, only I think it should be of a different kind and should not lead us to forget our principal duty, which is to propagate Social-Democratic ideas among the masses for if we forget that we shall rob our Party of its strength. I don't know if it is fair or not, but when I see people trampling the interests of the work in the mud and completely forgetting them, I call them all political intriguers. It really hurts and fills you with alarm for the work when you see the people at the head of it spending their time on something else. When you see that, you ask yourself is our Party doomed to perpetual splits over such trifles, are we incapable of waging the internal and the external struggle at the same time? What's the use of having congresses if their decisions are ignored and everybody does just what he pleases, saying that the Congress decision is wrong, that the Central Committee is ineffectual, and so on. And this is being done by people who before the Congress were always clamouring for centralisation, Party discipline and so on, but who now want to show it seems, that discipline is only meant for ordinary mortals, and not for them at the top. They seem to forget that their example has a terrible demoralising effect on inexperienced comrades; already we hear the workers complaining again that the intellectuals are forgetting them because of their own dissensions; already the more impulsive are dropping their hands in despair, not knowing what to do. So far all this centralisation has turned out to be nothing but words. All one can hope is that the future will bring a change for the better."[66]

Written in January 1904

Published in the pamphlet:
N. Lenin, *A Letter to a Comrade on Our Organisational Tasks*, Geneva, 1904

Published according to the pamphlet text

TO THE PARTY MEMBERSHIP[67]

A circle or a party? That is the question our Central Organ has posed for discussion.

We consider discussion of this question to be exceedingly timely. We invite the editorial board of our Central Organ to begin by taking a look at itself. What is this editorial board? Is it a circle of persons who have been together for so-and-so many years and who have now forced their way on to the editorial board by means of a boycott, disruptive activities and the threat of a split, or is it a body of officials of our Party?

Do not try to evade the point by saying that you were co-opted legally, in accordance with the Rules. We do not question the legality of it; but we invite you not to confine yourselves to the formal aspect, but to answer the substance of our question. We want, not merely a juridical, but a political answer. And we want that answer from *you*, gentlemen, "editors" who were never elected by the Congress, never appointed by the Party, and not from Comrade Plekhanov, who, perhaps, had no alternative but to co-opt you in order to avoid a split.

Are you a circle or a body of Party officials?

If you are a circle, then why this hypocrisy and sham, these phrases about a party? Have you not, in reality, disrupted that Party, mocking for weeks and months at its institutions and its Rules? Have you not, in reality, repudiated the decisions of the Second Congress of that Party, have you not brought matters to the point of a split, have you not refused to submit to the Central Committee and the Council? Have you not placed yourselves outside the Party

by saying that for you Party congresses are not divine, i.e., not binding? You trample upon the institutions and laws of the Party and at the same time are pleased to use the imprint "Central Party Organ"!

But if you are Party officials, would you mind explaining to the Party why, and in the name of what, persons who were not appointed by the Congress insisted on ensconcing themselves in a central Party institution? Perhaps in the name of the "continuity" of the old family circle of editors? To think that people who at the League Congress passed resolutions about this philistine "continuity" now want to bamboozle us with talk of the Party! Why, what right have you to talk of a party?

You describe as formalists those who take their stand on the formal decisions of the Second Congress—because you must blur and gloss over the fact that you have *betrayed the trust* of your comrades, who, every one of them, pledged themselves over and over again to obey the decisions of the Congress. You do not submit to formal decisions when they are against you, but at the same time you unblushingly invoke the formal rights of the League when those rights are to your advantage, you invoke the formal decisions of the Party Council now that you have managed, against the Party's will, to insinuate yourselves into this, the supreme Party institution.

You describe as bureaucrats those who hold Party posts by the will of the Party Congress, not the caprice of an émigré circle of writers. You have to do this to cover up the disagreeable fact that it is indeed a spirit of bureaucracy, a spirit of place-hunting that obsesses those who just could not bring themselves to work in the Party except as members of its central institutions. Yes, your behaviour has indeed clearly shown us that our Party suffers from a spirit of bureaucracy that puts office above work and shuns neither boycott nor disruption in the effort to get into office.

You describe as grossly mechanical decisions passed by a majority vote at the Party Congress, but you do not consider grossly mechanical and scandalous the methods of struggle in the colonies abroad and at the League Congress which gained you your shameful victory over our Party editorial board! You do not see anything hypocritical in

protestations of recognising the Party being made by people who have fought for and obtained control of the Central Party Organ although they were a *minority* at the Party Congress!

And you call these hypocritical efforts to whitewash your indecent, anti-Party behaviour, this preaching of anarchy, this mockery of the Party Congress, this opportunist justifying of circle philistinism—you call this your new organisational standpoint!

Comrades! Those who are serious in counting themselves members of the Party must raise an emphatic voice of protest and put a stop to this shameful state of affairs! Those who are serious about *Iskra*'s three years of work and the Party Congress which it prepared, and which expressed the will of those Russian Social-Democrats who are really convinced on the basis of principle and are really working, will never allow an émigré circle to trample underfoot all that this Party Congress achieved.

Either—or.

Either we have no party and are completely in the power of an émigré writers' editorial circle that our Congress rejected—and in that case, away with this hypocritical talk of a party, away with the false imprints of "Party" publications, organs and institutions! We are not the Socialist-Revolutionaries, we have no need of painted scenery. The party of the proletariat demands the truth. The party of the proletariat demands the ruthlessly outspoken exposure of the obsolete circle spirit. We must have the courage to admit that there is no party and set to work from the beginning, from the very beginning, to create and build up a real party. We shall not be daunted by the temporary victory of the circle spirit, we believe and know that the class-conscious Russian proletariat will be able to build itself a party in fact, and not just in name, a party in the sense of genuine party institutions, not in the sense of false imprints.

Or we do have a party—and in that case, away with all circle interests, away with gatherings of émigré rowdies! In that case, let our *Party* editorial board be vacated at once by those not appointed to it by the Party Congress. In that case, let the editorial board of the Central Organ be

restored as elected by the Congress. In that case, let *our* Party organ advocate the views of the Party majority, let *our* Party organ defend Party organisation and the Party institutions instead of trampling them in the mud.

Down with the circle spirit, and, first of all, down with it on our Party editorial board!

Down with disrupters!

Long live the party of the proletariat, a party able to observe in practice the decisions of the Party Congress and to respect Party discipline and organisation!

Down with hypocritical talk and false imprints!

Written in the latter half of January 1904

First published in 1929 in *Lenin Miscellany X*

Published according to the manuscript

SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE R.S.D.L.P.

JANUARY 15-17 (28-30), 1904[68]

Published in the pamphlet
The Fight for a Congress,
by N. Shakhov, Geneva, 1904

Speeches and draft resolutions
moved on January 17 (30), 1904;
first published in 1929
in *Lenin Miscellany X*

Draft resolutions
published according
to the manuscript

Speeches and the draft
resolution on convening
the Third Party Congress
published according to
the text of the Council
Minutes

1

DRAFT RESOLUTION ON MEASURES TO RESTORE PEACE IN THE PARTY, MOVED ON JANUARY 15 (28)

In view of the character and forms of manifestation of the divergence among the Party membership in connection with the Second Regular Congress, the Party Council deems it urgently necessary to call vigorously on all Party members to work together in harmony under the direction of both central institutions of the Party: the Central Organ and the Central Committee.

The historical juncture through which Russia is now passing—the tremendous intensification of revolutionary ferment within the country and the international complications, which may lead to war—imposes particularly serious duties on the party of the class-conscious proletarians, who are fighting in the front ranks for the emancipation of the entire people from the yoke of the autocracy. The need to work together in harmony, under the direction of both the central bodies of the Party, at strengthening our organisation and developing the class-consciousness and solidarity of the widest possible masses of the working class has never been so urgent as it is now.

Individual differences over all manner of questions have always arisen and inevitably will arise in a party which rests on a vast popular movement and sets out to be the conscious spokesman of that movement, emphatically rejecting all circle spirit and narrow sectarian views. But if our Party members are to be worthy representatives of the class-conscious militant proletariat, worthy participants in the world working-class movement, they must do their utmost to en-

sure that no individual differences over the interpretation and methods of realising the principles of our Party programme shall interfere, or be capable of interfering, with harmonious joint work under the direction of our central institutions. The deeper and broader our understanding of our programme and of the tasks of the international proletariat, the more we value positive work in developing propaganda, agitation, and organisation, and the farther removed we are from sectarianism, the petty circle spirit, and considerations of place and position, the more must we strive to have differences among Party members discussed calmly and on their merits and not to let these differences interfere with our work, disrupt our activities, impede the proper functioning of our central institutions.

The Party Council, as the supreme institution of the Party, vigorously condemns all disruptive moves, no matter on whose part, all refusals to work, all withdrawals of financial support for the central Party treasury, all boycotts, which are only calculated to lower a purely ideological struggle of opinions, views and shades to the level of methods of gross mechanical pressure, the level of an unseemly scuffle. The Party is worn out by the dissensions, which have already lasted nearly six months, and insistently demands peace. No differences among Party members, no dissatisfaction with the personal composition of one or other central body can justify boycotts or similar methods of struggle, which denote a lack of principles and ideals and show that the interests of the Party are being sacrificed to the interests of a circle, and the interests of the working-class movement to narrow considerations of place and position. Cases occur, of course, in our Party, as they always will in every big party, when some of the members are dissatisfied with some nuance in the activities of one or other of the central bodies, with some features of its line, or with its personal composition, etc. Such members can, and should, state the causes and nature of their dissatisfaction in a comradely exchange of opinions, or by a controversy in the columns of the Party press; but it would be absolutely impermissible and unworthy of revolutionaries to express their dissatisfaction by resorting to boycotts or refusing to support in every way they can all the positive work co-ordinated and

directed by both the central Party bodies. To support both central bodies and work together under their direct guidance is our common and plain duty as Party members.

Such unprincipled, grossly mechanical methods of struggle as have been mentioned above are deserving of unqualified condemnation, for they could completely wreck the whole Party, whose unity depends solely and entirely on the free will of the revolutionaries. And the Party Council reminds all Party members that that free will was quite definitely expressed in our common decision—to which no protest was raised—to regard all the decisions of the Second Congress and all its elections as binding on all Party members. Already the Organising Committee in its time, which earned a general vote of thanks for its work in arranging the Congress, adopted in Point 18 of the Regulations for the Second Congress the following decision, which was approved by all the Party committees:

"All decisions of the Congress and all the elections it carries out are decisions of the Party and binding on all Party organisations. They cannot be challenged by any one on any pretext whatever and can be rescinded or amended only by the next Party Congress."

This decision, accepted by the entire Party before the Congress and reaffirmed several times at the Congress itself, was equivalent to a word of honour freely pledged by all Social-Democrats to each other. Let them not forget this word of honour! Let them at once abandon all petty mutual grievances! Let them once and for all confine the struggle of ideas within such bounds that it does not lead to breaches of the Rules or hamper practical activities and positive work!

2

DISSENTING OPINION RECORDED BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE JANUARY 17 (30)

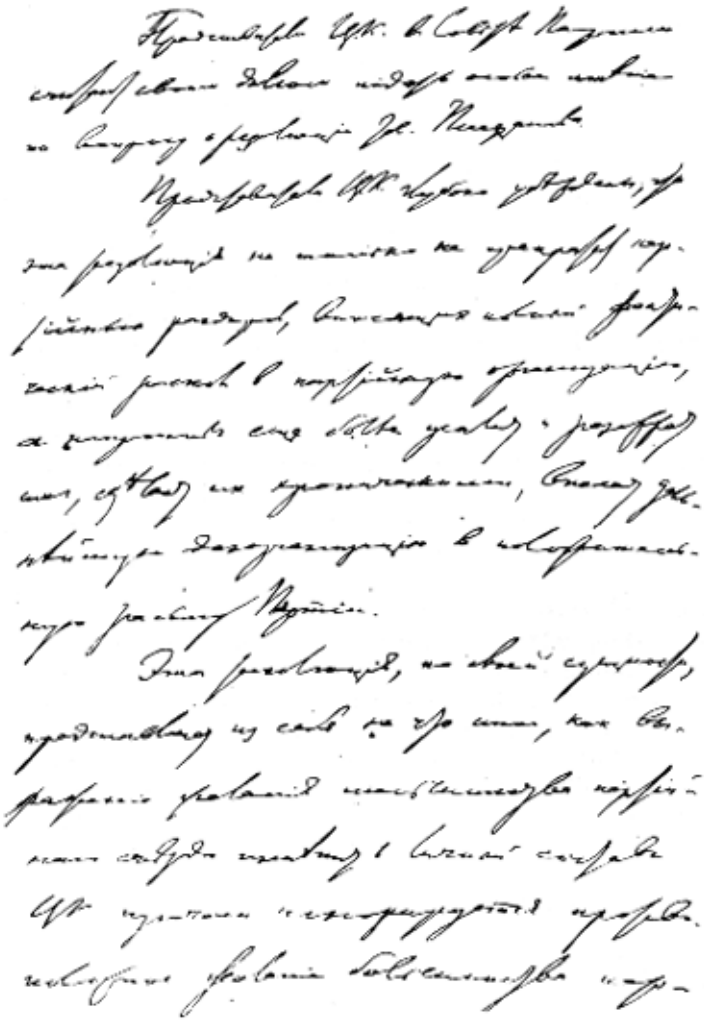
The representatives of the Central Committee in the Party Council consider it their duty to record a dissenting opinion on Comrade Plekhanov's resolution.

The representatives of the Central Committee are profoundly convinced that, far from putting an end to the Party dissensions, which actually mean a complete split in the Party organisation, this resolution will, on the contrary, inflame and aggravate them still further, make them chronic, and further disrupt the Party's positive work.

This resolution is, essentially, nothing but an expression of the wish of the Party Congress minority to alter the personal composition of the Central Committee, ignoring the contrary wish of the Party Congress majority.

This resolution, as we are firmly convinced, is essentially a continuation within the Council of the policy pursued by the opposition ever since the Party Congress; and that policy has been one of boycott, disruption and anarchy, with the aim of altering the composition of the Party's central bodies by methods which do not conform in any degree to the standards of normal Party life, and which have now been condemned, too, by revolutionary public opinion as expressed in resolutions by the majority of the committees.

This resolution expresses the wish that the Central Committee should again enter into negotiations with the opposition. Negotiations have already been going on for over five months, causing complete demoralisation in the Party's ranks. The Central Committee has already stated that it



First page of the manuscript of the "Dissenting Opinion Recorded by the Representatives of the Central Committee in the Party Council", January 17 (30), 1904

Reduced

First page of the manuscript of the "Dissenting Opinion Recorded by the Representatives of the Central Committee in the Party Council", January 17 (30), 1904

Reduced

said its last word when it consented, as far back as November 25, 1903, to the co-optation of two in token of comradely confidence.

The negotiations have already entailed a tremendous expenditure of funds for travelling and an even more serious expenditure of the time and energy of revolutionaries, who have been diverted from their work.

The representatives of the Central Committee do not feel justified in again renewing these interminable negotiations, which produce fresh dissatisfaction on both sides and fresh contention over posts, hampering positive work in the most appalling way.

We most earnestly draw attention to the fact that such negotiations involve a complete interruption of the normal course of Party life.

We declare that the Central Committee lays the entire responsibility for these interruptions at the door of the minority.

We declare that we positively and absolutely fail to see any other honest and proper solution to the present dissensions in the Party, any other way of terminating this unpardonable struggle over the composition of the central bodies, than by the immediate convening of a Party Congress.

At the same time we feel that, now that Comrade Plekhanov's resolution has been adopted, our own earlier resolution has in effect been nullified and has become quite pointless, for which reason we withdraw it.

Council members
N. Lenin
F. Vasilyev

3

DRAFT RESOLUTION ON CONVENING THE THIRD PARTY CONGRESS JANUARY 17 (30)

Being convinced that the central Party institutions are powerless to terminate the absolutely abnormal and disorganising relations which have developed in the Party since the Second Congress and have continued for over five months, the Party Council resolves to convene the Third Party Congress.

4

DRAFT RESOLUTIONS MOVED ON JANUARY 17 (30)

I

The Party Council requests the editorial board of the Central Organ speedily to take all measures in its power to make available to the Central Committee at a very early date the 5,000-6,000 rubles about which the Central Organ and the Central Committee have been in correspondence and which the central Party treasury now urgently requires owing to the emergency created by the latest arrests in Russia.

II

The Party Council considers it improper for the editorial board of the Central Organ to dispatch representatives to the committees without the knowledge and consent of the Central Committee, for such action brings disorganisation into the Party and is a violation of the division of functions between the two central bodies as clearly laid down by the Second Congress.

III

The Party Council considers it improper for the editorial board of the Central Organ to communicate to the committees information on the composition of the Central Committee without the consent of the latter.

5

SPEECHES ON MEASURES TO RESTORE PEACE IN THE PARTY JANUARY 15 (28)

I

I have raised the question of measures to restore peace and normal relations in the Party because the amount of misunderstandings among Party workers has reached threatening proportions. I do not think fruitful Party work is possible unless there is some common basis which Party members who become involved for any reason in mutual misunderstandings could adhere to in their activities. It is nobody's secret that the relations between individual members and sections of the Party have become so abnormal that it would be difficult to speak now of a *united* Social-Democratic workers' party and mean it. I could, of course, if necessary, furnish detailed proof of this (recall, for instance, many of the episodes in the business correspondence between the Central Committee and the Central Organ); but perhaps, since everybody knows it to be so, it would be better not to resort just now to such ticklish illustrations. And so, we must try to adopt more vigorous measures to remove the basic evil. Otherwise we shall have a position where the simplest, most routine Party acts will give rise to highly undesirable exchanges with systematic indulgence in very strong language and in the choicest—how shall I put it mildly?—compliments, shall we say.... It may seem that I am disposed to encroach in some way on "freedom of speech"; but after all, the trouble is that in the sphere of action all is not well either. As members of the Council, whose chief function is to work for unity in the Party, against tendencies towards disunity, we must make

an effort to remove the friction that is hindering the Party's work; and given the desire, this would not be impossible. And so, I ask whether some sort of measures could not be adopted against certain methods of struggle within the Party which reduce the latter to the condition of a disorganised group and turn it into a sheer fiction. Perhaps the Council could, in the interests of the common work, pass a resolution which I have drafted and will read to you in a moment. I consider it important in principle to have a Council decision that would aim at eliminating and condemning impermissible forms of struggle between individuals or groups in the Party who are at variance on any point. I repeat, the position now is much too abnormal and needs to be corrected. (*Axelrod*: "We all agree on that.") I ask the secretaries to enter Comrade Axelrod's remark in the minutes.

I shall now read the draft of the resolution I am submit ing.*

That is the resolution which I am moving on behalf of the Central Committee, over the signatures of both its representatives, and which could serve, not to settle any specific issues or differences between Party members, but to create a common basis for Russian Social-Democrats, who are working in the interests of one common cause.

II

I saw with pleasure from the speeches of both representatives of the Central Organ that they agree in principle that vigorous measures ought to be taken to establish actual unity in the Party. That already creates a certain common basis between us. As regards Comrade Plekhanov's suggestion, I consider it necessary to say the following. Comrade Plekhanov suggests that I should single out from my draft resolution the most essential practical measures for removing the evils noted in Party life; the present resolution, he points out, has the character of an appeal. Yes, my proposal does have the character of an appeal—but then, that is just what it is meant to be. The idea of this "appeal" is that the Council should, in the name of both the central bodies, draw

* See pp. 145-47 of this volume.—*Ed.*

a dividing line between what are permissible forms of struggle in the Party and what are not. I know that generally speaking—as such—the struggle is unavoidable; but there are different methods of struggle, after all. Some methods are absolutely abnormal and cannot be tolerated in any at all healthy party. And Comrade Martov was right in saying that besides a struggle of ideas there had also been what he called "organisational complications".

We, gathered here not to engage in strife but to remove abnormal conditions in the Party's life, can and should influence our other comrades by authoritatively indicating the bounds of struggle permissible in the Party. But I know no other ways of influencing people than by appealing to them. Singling out the practical suggestions would be pointless here. As regards the statement of the Central Organ representatives that I merely point to the abnormal state of Party life, but do not go into its causes, I must say that this approach of mine is not accidental but quite deliberate, for I fear that if we touched this very tangled skein even ever so slightly, the result, instead of untangling it, would be to tangle it up still more. You have to remember, after all, that where that skein is concerned we are two equally interested and very subjective parties, so that any attempt to untangle it would certainly not be for us to make, but only for people who had nothing to do with the tangling. If we were to attempt it, we should find ourselves raking up various documents all over again, which, with the Council constituted as it is, would only lead to more ... scuffles.

Let us take as our starting-point the position as it exists, for there is no getting away from realities, and I am quite ready to agree with Comrade Martov that all the differences and conflicts are not to be removed by some pious homily. That is so; but then, who could act as arbiter in these regrettable aspects of our Party life? Not we ourselves at any rate, I am persuaded; no, it would have to be a wide circle of people—devoted practical revolutionaries who have had no part in the scuffles. While carefully steering clear of the causes of our dissensions, I shall, however, venture to illustrate my idea with one example from our recent past. The struggle has now been going on for five months. During this time there have been, I should think, as many as fifty mediators

who tried to put an end to the dissensions in the Party, but I only know of one whose efforts in this respect produced relatively useful, if very modest, results. I am referring to Comrade Travinsky,[69] a person who, let me point out, is up to the ears, so to speak, in positive practical revolutionary work, so that his attention has been occupied almost exclusively by that work and he has had no share in the dissensions. It is only these fortunate circumstances, I would say, that account for his peace-making attempts having had some modicum of success. I think that if people like that were to take a hand in analysing the causes of the unfortunate position in the Party, it would be possible to untangle the skein which now has us perplexed. We, however, should beware of going into the causes of the dissensions, for this could lead, against our own will, to our dealing one another new wounds (to use Comrade Martov's expression) in addition to the many old ones still very far from healed. That is why I am against analysing the causes and favour looking for means that would at least keep the methods of struggle within more or less permissible bounds. There are only two alternatives: if it is possible to do something along these lines, then we must try to do it; but if not, if the contending sides are not to be influenced by authoritative suasion, the only remaining possibility is to apply to those third persons, uninvolved in the hostilities and engaged on their positive practical tasks, of whom I spoke before. I doubt whether we could ourselves convince one another of one or the other side being right. I don't think that is possible.

III

I do not quite understand Comrade Plekhanov's proposal. He says there should be some sort of practical measures; but surely, my draft already envisages such a practical measure. We have only to declare, to declare with authority, that a normal struggle, a struggle of ideas, a struggle carried on within definite bounds, is permissible, but that boycotts, refusal to work under the Central Committee's direction, refusal of financial support for the central Party treasury, and so on, are not permissible. We are told that mere words will not convince anyone. I will not be so bold either as to

assert that this will be enough to establish good will between the two sides in the Party, because the disease that has to be cured has indeed gone very far and a very solid wall, as Comrade Martov puts it, has indeed grown up between the two sides. We may not succeed in breaking down that wall, since we ourselves erected it; but that we who dealt one another the severest wounds may by an authoritative appeal in our capacity of Council members restrain comrades from unworthy forms of struggle is not at all impossible. And as regards demolishing the wall, I think time will then do its work and everything will tend to abate. As to the point that some passages in the appeal may be interpreted by each side in its own way, I think that the same thing could apply to anything that we might say. (*Axelrod*: "That is why it is necessary not just to talk, but to act.") Further, I fail to understand why Comrade Axelrod thinks that what I propose might only prove a fresh source of strife. I repeat, we may not break down the wall between the two sides in the Party, since we have ourselves done a great deal to erect it; but those of our comrades who, being engaged in practical work, have kept aloof from our dissensions could break it down. Comrade Martov, as I saw with pleasure today, agrees in principle with this idea of the useful role in settling our dissensions that might be played by other comrades, who have not been involved in the dissensions. But apart from that it seems to me that the very fact of representatives of the central bodies agreeing that such-and-such methods of struggle were allowable and such-and-such were not—that that in itself could make the initial breach in the wall dividing the two sides, after which the present abnormality of Party life could diminish.

IV

Comrade Plekhanov's proposal arouses in me very mixed feelings. By talking about the causes of the struggle, he comes straight back to the wounds which Comrade Martov has pointed out we have been dealing each other. What I try to do in my draft is draw a line between what is permissible in our struggle and what is not, no matter who makes the attacks. If we started going into who did what and when, it would be the beginning of the end, that is, of the end of our discus-

sion. For us to be our own arbiters is, just psychologically, morally, quite impossible. If we again proceed here to discuss what has produced the strained relations among the Party membership, shall we ourselves be able to rise above the level of petty squabbling? (*Axelrod*: "Yes, we shall!") I do not share Comrade Axelrod's optimism. Comrade Plekhanov in his analysis of the causes of the split in the Party gave his own interpretation of the facts, with which I do not agree. But if we start arguing, we shall have to fetch out the minutes and turn to them for information. For example, Comrade Plekhanov says that over the election of the central bodies the Congress divided into two practically equal parts, that a single delegate who crossed over from the majority to the minority thereby equalised the numbers of the two halves of the Congress, that therefore the Central Committee only represents one part of the Party, and so on. But you cannot argue like that; it just isn't possible, after all, to talk of the Central Committee only having been elected by one part of the Party. Many, perhaps, would now vote on various matters otherwise than they did at the Congress; I might vote differently on many points myself; but that is not to say that the possible changes and new combinations in this respect in any way invalidate the results of the earlier voting. When it is a question of a struggle, there is always a division of the whole into parts. Yes, the Central Committee *now*—but not at the Congress—is the representative of a part; but I know very well that in the opinion of the comrades the Central Organ too is, in the same way, the representative only of a part. From one standpoint only could I acknowledge Comrade Plekhanov's expression correct, namely, from the standpoint of the split that does in fact exist. It is not because the Congress did something wrong that one can speak of the composition of one or other of the central bodies being "abnormal", but solely because, there being such-and-such circumstances, people refuse to work together.... Thus, no sooner do we touch on the causes of the abnormality than we again get involved in unravelling a skein which we, far from being able to untangle, will only tangle the more. That many are dissatisfied with the composition of the Central Committee is true; but it is equally true that a good many

people are dissatisfied with the present composition of the Central Organ. To Comrade Martov's question of whether it is permissible to "break up" existing organisations, I would reply: "Yes, to reconstruct organisations is entirely permissible!" Is it permissible for a competent Party authority to remove a particular person from a particular kind of revolutionary work? My answer is: "Yes, it is!" But if I were to ask why and how a given "encroachment" on the integrity and inviolability of an organisation arose, why so-and-so was not assigned to such-and-such a sphere of Party work, and so forth, I should again be reaching out towards that skein which it is beyond us to untangle. Thus, the matter of whether or not it is permissible to "break up" organisations also brings us back to the disagreements. All of which goes to prove that to argue now about the causes of our dissensions would be a completely useless and even harmful waste of time. Now let me come back to the question of proportional representation. One could speak of that only by starting from recognition of an already existing split. We are here representatives of two contending sides.... (*Plekhanov*: "We have met here as members of the Council, not as contending sides.") Comrade Plekhanov's remark conflicts with his own resolution, which speaks of the dissensions in the Party having split the Party into two halves, one of the halves, according to the resolution, being completely unrepresented on such a central body as the Central Committee. Of course, officially we are not the representatives of two contending sides, but since that representation emerges from the course of our debates, I had a logical right to speak of it. (*Plekhanov*: "The expression you used was that we had met here as the representatives of two contending sides, and that is what caused my remark.") I will not deny that perhaps the expression I used was not quite accurate.... (*Plekhanov*: "It was incorrect.") Perhaps it was even incorrect, I shan't argue the point. I am only saying that Comrade Plekhanov's resolution shifts the argument to the basis of *de facto* recognition of the split. We have split, that is the fact I am noting. If it were not the case, the resolution would be out of order. The Party majority is dissatisfied, too, with the composition of the Central Organ, in which four out of the five editors belong to the minority. The Central Committee could put forward

the same claim for a change in the composition of the Central Organ as is now being made in relation to the Central Committee. Essentially, Comrade Plekhanov's resolution amounts to a statement of the terms of only one side.... (*Plekhanov*: "I do not belong to either majority or minority.") Comrade Plekhanov tells us he does not belong to either majority or minority, but no one else in the Council will say that. Looked at formally, from the standpoint of the Rules, the resolution moved by Comrade Plekhanov is out of order. But, I repeat, actually one can understand it insofar as it proceeds from the fact of the split. But if one side is stating its "terms", the other would be similarly entitled to present "terms". We do not stand above the "two sides", we are ourselves those "two sides". Consequently, if we are going to recognise that actually the Party has split, we must also recognise that there is only one radical way of resolving our disputes and "misunderstandings", namely, to apply to third persons. There are people in the Party, as I said before, who are engaged in positive work and have had no part in the struggle of "majority" and "minority". Those are the people to turn to.

V

I do not agree with either Martov or Plekhanov. They say there can be no question of such a resolution being out of order, and adduce two arguments. 1) Martov's argument is that the Council is the Party's supreme institution. But don't forget that the competence of the Council is limited by special provisions in the Rules—a thing which Comrade Martov himself went to no small pains to secure. 2) The second argument is that by this resolution the Council would only be voicing its opinion and recommendation. The Council can, of course, voice an opinion and recommendation, but without attempting to do more. (*Plekhanov*: "Of course! Of course!") The Council can only suggest co-optation to the Central Committee; but in that case the Central Committee will demand a change in the composition of the Central Organ. I am willing, under certain conditions, to agree to proportional representation. But I ask, is there proportional representation on the Central Organ? The composition of the

Central Organ is one to four, and even that one is a person who belongs to neither majority nor minority. The Central Committee on an earlier occasion made an offer of two to nine;[70] it made it at a time of total dissension, with a split impending. In a sense, all disagreement is a split, and when two halves will not work together, then it is an actual split. Only from the standpoint of a split could we acknowledge Comrade Plekhanov's resolution as making sense. It could be regarded as an *ultima ratio*;* but in that event both sides would be equally entitled to have the composition of the central bodies changed. I am firmly convinced that the Central Committee, for its part, is dissatisfied with the composition of the Central Organ. The moment we touch on the question of the past Congress, there will be a clash and we shall get nowhere. Thus, for example, Plekhanov claims that the Congress did not elect a third person to the editorial board because there was no suitable third person. I maintain that the Congress did not elect a third because it was convinced that Comrade Martov would join the board. The same can be said of the composition of the Council. Many people at the Congress thought that Comrade Martov would sit on the Council in the capacity of member of the editorial board. The majority can say, and will, that if there is to be proportional representation, then the Central Organ should be augmented with another six members, belonging to what is known as the majority. But that sort of argument will not help us towards the desired end, for which reason I believe Comrade Plekhanov's resolution is not as good as mine. My resolution about "the permissible and the impermissible" would have this significance, that we, as representatives of the contending sides, would be calling on the rest of the comrades to keep within the bounds of permissible forms of struggle.

We should not take a purely juridical view, for actually our common recognition of the fact that the relations in the Party are abnormal is equivalent to recognising that we are two contending sides, the Central Organ and the Central Committee. (*Plekhanov*: "This is a meeting of the Council, not of the editorial board.") Yes, I am not forgetting that.

* Last resort.—*Ed.*

From the juridical standpoint we cannot speak of proportional representation on the central bodies. But from the political standpoint, too, it is inadvisable to operate with this idea, for we should have to defer to the wishes of one side without hearing the wishes of the other. There is no third party between us who could settle our dispute. Yet only the opinion of such a third party could have weight, both political and moral. An actual split exists, and we are on the eve of a formal split if the minority persists, without caring what means it uses, in trying to make itself the majority.

6

SPEECHES ON MEASURES TO RESTORE PEACE IN THE PARTY JANUARY 16 (29)

VI

I think it necessary to reply mainly to the detailed objections advanced by Comrade Martov; but so as not to leave Comrade Plekhanov's objections unanswered either, I shall first touch briefly on these. My impression was that he was in principle in favour of proportional representation.... (*Plekhanov*: "No!") Perhaps I misunderstood him, but that was my impression. In our Party organisation the principle of proportional representation is not practised, and the sole criterion of the lawfulness of the composition of any body whose members were elected at a congress is the clearly expressed will of the congress majority. But we are told here that the lawful elections at the Congress have produced a "lawful" state of affairs that is worse than an unlawful one. That is true, but why is it so? Is it because the majority was a slight one, or because the minority has in effect brought about a split? When people talk about the Central Committee having been elected by only twenty-four votes, that is, by a tiny margin, and claim that that is the reason for all the unhappy complications in Party life since, I declare that that is not so. As to Comrade Plekhanov's remark about my "formalistic mentality" preventing me from going to the root of the matter, I must say I am at a loss to know what, properly speaking, this means. Perhaps the "root of the matter" lies in the Congress? In that case we are all formalists, for, casting our minds back to the Congress, we must go by its formal decisions. If,

on the other hand, the "root of the matter" lies outside the Congress, just where does it lie? Yes, the way things have gone, the state of affairs in the Party is worse than unlawful (a very serious thing to say), but the whole question is, why has this happened? Is the Congress to blame, or what occurred after the Congress? Unfortunately, Comrade Plekhanov does not put the matter like that.

I turn now to the remarks of Comrade Martov. He asserts that the minority does not and did not refuse to work together with us. That is not true. For three months—September, October and November—many representatives of the minority gave practical proof of not wanting to work together with us. In such cases the boycotted side only has one course open to it—to make an agreement, a deal with the "offended" opposition that refuses to work and is leading the Party towards a split, for this very fact of refusing to work together is nothing but a split. When people tell you point blank that they will not work with you, thus proving in practice that the "united organisation" is simply a fiction, that, actually, it has already been wrecked, they are certainly advancing a *shattering*, if not a convincing, argument.... I pass on to Comrade Martov's second objection—concerning the resignation of Comrade Ru[71] from the Council. This question involves two separate issues. In the first place, was it in order for Ru to be appointed to the Council from the editorial board when he was not himself a member of the board? I think it was in order. (*Martov*: "Of course it was!") Please enter Martov's interjection in the minutes. Secondly, are Council members subject to recall at the will of the bodies that delegated them? This is an intricate point, which can be interpreted both ways. In any case, the fact is that Plekhanov, who from November 1 onwards remained the sole member of the editorial board, *did not recall* Ru from the Council right up to November 26, when Martov and Co. were co-opted. Ru resigned of his own accord, it was a concession on his part so that no controversy should start over him. (*Plekhanov*: "It seems to me that arguments about Comrade Ru are out of place here. The question is not on our agenda and I don't see why we should waste precious time discussing what for us is an extraneous matter.") I must point out that at our last meeting Comrade Martov asked to have entered in the min-

utes his explanation on this point—an explanation with which I totally disagree—so that if the other side is not allowed to give its opinion on the subject too, the picture given here in the Council will be a one-sided, incorrect one. (*Plekhanov*: "I wish to emphasise that the question is not on the agenda and has no direct bearing on the main subject under discussion.")

Lenin, protesting against this formulation, appeals to the Council to decide as to his right to give his own account, as against Martov's, of a fact meeting here with such divergent interpretations. (*Plekhanov* again indicates that discussion of the question of Ru is out of place.)

Lenin insists on his right to appeal to the Council for permission to speak on a point that has already been brought up in the Council and has aroused argument. (*Martov*: "Since Comrade Lenin has raised the very important question of the right of the bodies represented on the Council to recall their delegates, let me state that I shall table a special motion to have this question settled once and for all. Perhaps this statement will satisfy Lenin and induce him to drop this matter of Ru from the present discussion.")

Comrade Martov has not only not disproved but has confirmed that I am right in my intention to present Comrade Ru's resignation from the Council in its proper light here and now. Please note that my explanations on this point have only been in answer to Comrade Martov's remarks concerning it. (Plekhanov informs Martov and Lenin that the question of Ru is not subject to present discussion, as not being among the problems on which the attention of the Council should at this session be centred.) I protest against Comrade Plekhanov's statement that it is out of place to discuss the question of Comrade Ru, who held that Council members were not recallable, so that his resignation from the Council must be viewed as a concession made to the opposition in the interests of peace and good will in the Party. (Plekhanov: "Since the Council apparently has nothing against an exchange of opinion on the subject of Comrade Ru, by all means let Lenin go on with it.") I have already finished. (Plekhanov: "If you have finished, I suggest that the Council should now discuss the resolutions moved yesterday by Comrade Lenin and myself.")

I agree with Comrade Martov that the Council resolutions would have, not juridical, but moral significance. Comrade Plekhanov has suggested that it would be desirable if I were to join the editorial board. (*Plekhanov*: "I did not say that.") At any rate, those were your words as I noted them down: "The best thing would be if Lenin joined the editorial board and the Central Committee co-opted three." (*Plekhanov*: "Yes, I said that under certain conditions, in order to secure peace in the Party, Comrade Lenin might be included on the editorial board and minority representatives co-opted to the Central Committee.")

Answering the question put to me as to just what change in the editorial board of the Central Organ would be considered desirable, it would be easy for me to cite the opinion of the "majority", who have indicated the desirability of Comrades Axelrod, Zasulich, and Starover leaving the board. Further, I must point out that in the activities of the Central Committee there has not been a single case of anyone being barred from Party work. Similarly, I cannot leave without protest Comrade Martov's statement that the Central Committee became an instrument of warfare of one side against the other. The Central Committee was appointed as an instrument for the performance of Party functions, not as an instrument of "warfare of one side against the other". This assertion of Comrade Martov's is completely contrary to the facts. No one can cite a single fact to show that the Central Committee started and waged "war" on the minority. On the contrary, it was the minority that, by its boycott, made war, which inevitably provoked resistance. Then, too, I protest against the assertion that the alleged lack of confidence in the Central Committee hinders peaceful positive work more than the lack of confidence in the Central Organ. As to the centre of the discord not lying abroad, but in Russia, as Comrade Martov insists is the case, I have to say that the Party documents will prove the reverse. Comrade Martov, referring to the document of November 25,[72] said that the Central Committee had itself admitted in principle that its composition was one-sided, since it had agreed to co-opt two of the minority. I protest against this interpretation of that document, for I myself had a share in drawing it up. The Central Committee's action had an entirely

different significance. It was not because it acknowledged its composition to be one-sided that the Central Committee agreed to this co-optation of two, but because we saw what was virtually a complete split in the Party. Whether the picture we formed of the situation was right or not is another matter.... Rumours reached us that preparations were going on for publishing a new organ.... (*Plekhanov*: "If we are going to bring in rumours, we shall get nowhere." *Axelrod*: "I for my part have heard that preparations for publishing a new organ are going on now....") I appeal to the Council: since Comrade Martov has interpreted the Central Committee document in a certain way, I am obliged to present my own interpretation of it.... I do not understand why my remark has occasioned so much excitement. (*Plekhanov*: "It is not a matter of excitement but of references to rumours being out of place.") I may be told that my motives were not valid. Perhaps not. But I put on record in any case that they were of the nature I have just indicated.

To resume: Comrade Martov has impugned the Central Committee's motives in agreeing to the co-optation of two. But I declare that the Central Committee was actuated by the conviction that a virtual split already existed in the Party and that we were on the eve of a complete formal split, in the sense of the publication of a separate organ, separate transport arrangements and a separate organisation in Russia. Now on a point of procedure: Comrade Martov's remark had to do with the substance of the question, not with procedure. And I want to ask the Council: was the chairman right in acting as he did in this case?

VII

Comrade Martov declares that I plunged straight off into polemic instead of calmly and peacefully discussing the general question of devising measures for peace in the Party. I cannot agree with that, because the polemic was *started* by none other than Comrade Martov himself. There is nothing polemical in my draft resolution. Not for nothing did Comrade Axelrod describe it as a "pastoral exhortation"—and pastoral exhortations, as we know, do not go in for polemic. And indeed, all I spoke of in it was the bounds within which

any internal struggle in the Party must be kept: what forms of such struggle can be accounted permissible, and what forms must be acknowledged impermissible and fraught with danger not only to the normal course of Party life, but to the Party's very existence. Moreover, I carefully tried to avoid an approach that might involve us in further fruitless controversy—in my proposal I endeavoured not to start from an appraisal of the methods of struggle that have actually marked the nearly six months' war between the two sides in the Party. Comrade Martov would not keep the matter on this plane and chose to indulge in polemic. Nevertheless, I shall be ready, should it be desired, to go back afterwards to where I started. As for the present, let me say the following. Comrade Martov quoted Travinsky as having welcomed the cooptation of the old editors to the editorial board. I think it necessary to emphasise here that private conversations or negotiations do not count. All official negotiations were conducted by Travinsky in writing. As to his private remarks, Comrade Martov apparently misunderstood them, and *some other time*, should it be necessary, I can prove it.

Further, Comrade Martov said there were all sorts of shortcomings in the activities of the Central Committee, and thereby he again entered the domain of polemic. There may indeed be shortcomings in the Central Committee's activities, but for a representative of the Central Organ to criticise those activities is nothing but polemic. I for my part find that the activities of the Central Organ have gone off the right track; but for all that I did not start out here by criticising the line the Central Organ's activities have taken, but by stating that there is *mutual* dissatisfaction between the Central Committee and the Central Organ. I also protest against the assertion that my resolution, if adopted by the Council, would turn the latter into an "instrument of warfare". My appeal speaks only of what forms of struggle are permissible and what forms are not.... Where does an "instrument of warfare" come into that? Comrade Axelrod said I had "started with a toast and ended with a requiem", and accused me of having devoted all my efforts to proving that there was a split in the Party. But surely, we started out yesterday by acknowledging that there was a split.... Further, by way of proving that the centre of the discord does not

lie abroad, Comrade Martov quoted Comrade Vasilyev's letter of December 12, which says that in Russia things are sheer hell.[73] To that let me say that it does not necessarily take strong groups to "create a hell", for it is petty and pettifogging squabbles that oftenest and easiest create big impediments to the work. I have mentioned my letter of September 13 to one of the former editors. I am going to publish that letter.[74] Comrade Plekhanov says the word "Marsh" is an insult. Let me remind you, however, that in the German socialist press and at congresses of the German Party the term *versumpft** evokes scoffing sometimes, but never cries of having been insulted. Neither Comrade Vasilyev nor I had any thought of insulting anyone in using the word. When there are two sides, each with its definite trend, irresolute waverers between the two are described by the term "Marsh", instead of which one could, I suppose, use "golden mean."

To call the Central Committee eccentric may be witty, but it also leads to polemic. After all, I could say the same of the Central Organ. I am told that my "appeal" is a homoeopathic remedy for an allopathic evil. I do not deny that the remedy I propose is only a palliative; but then, we cannot find allopathic remedies *here*. If you are going to talk of the need for "allopathic", radical remedies for this evil, then go all the way. A remedy like that does exist, and this one radical remedy is none other than a *congress*. For five months now we have been trying vainly to come to an understanding ("That's not so!") ... yes, it is so, and I shall prove it to you with documents.... We have been at it ever since September 15 and have not achieved it yet. Wouldn't it be better in that case to appeal to the body that Comrade Martov too spoke of yesterday?—and that body can only be a congress of Party workers. The Party Congress—that is the body that decides about the "conductor's baton". One of the reasons we have congresses is to "fight" over the "conductor's baton" (not in the crude sense of the word, of course). There a struggle is waged by way of ballots, by way of negotiations with comrades, and so forth, and there this struggle over the composition of the central bodies is in order, but outside

* Of the Marsh.—*Ed.*

congresses it should have no place in Party life.

And so, while my "pastoral message" may be a palliative, no other, more radical remedy exists except a congress, if you do not want to make the evil a chronic one. Comrade Axelrod pointed out that in Western Europe the members of the central institutions paid due regard to any opposition to their policy even in the remotest corners of the Party, and tried, by negotiating with the opposition, to smooth things out.... But then, our Central Committee is doing the same. The Central Committee sent two of its members abroad for that purpose,[75] the Central Committee has negotiated with various opposition representatives *dozens* of times, proving to them the absurdity of their arguments, the groundlessness of their fears, etc., etc. Let me say that this is an impossible waste of energy, money and time, and in that sense we really do have something to answer for before history.

Coming back again to the matter of practical suggestions, I repeat that you only have one radical means of ending this unhappy period of polemic—a congress. My resolution was intended to bring the struggle in the Party within more normal bounds.... We are told that that will not remove the splinter, that the trouble lies deeper.... In that case it is only the summoning of a congress that can extract the splinter completely.

VIII

It is absurd to describe as insulting what amounts to a demand for definiteness and precision. We have seen dozens of times (and particularly at the League Congress) what countless misunderstandings and even rows result from incorrect accounts of private conversations. That is a fact which it would be strange to deny. I say that the private remarks of Comrade Travinsky have been misunderstood both by the representative of the Central Organ and in part by Comrade Plekhanov. Here is what Comrade Travinsky writes me, among other things, in a letter of December 18: "We have just learned that the editorial board has circulated to the committees an official letter of the most *invidious* [I am toning down a stronger expression] character. In it the

editorial board openly comes out against the Central Committee and threatens that through the Council it could even now compel the co-optation of anyone it chose, but that it does not wish to resort yet to such measures and calls the attention of the committees to the narrow exclusiveness and incapacity of the Central Committee and the illegitimacy of the co-optation of Lenin.... A host of sallies of a personal nature. In a word, a disgraceful and ... [I again omit a too strong expression] breach of all the promises made to me. I am thoroughly disgusted. Is it possible that Plekhanov had a part in this? The Ekaterinoslav Committee is deeply incensed at the letter and has sent a very sharp reply.... Now the minority is recklessly severing the connecting bonds. The letter circulated to the committees is, in my opinion, the last straw and an open challenge. And I for one find that Lenin has every right to publish his letter outside *Iskra*. I am sure the other comrades too will have nothing against it."

There you have proof that the idea formed of Comrade Travinsky's opinion is mistaken. Comrade Travinsky could *expect* co-optation to take place since he hoped peace and good will would be established in the Party; but his hopes entirely failed to materialise.

What happened was that, instead of peace, the editorial board of Martov and the rest started war on the majority. Whereas Travinsky had hoped, and had had a right to hope, for peace.

What happened was that Plekhanov's attempts to restrain the "anarchistic individualists" did not succeed (in spite of his efforts). Accordingly, the hopes entertained by both Travinsky and myself—hopes of Plekhanov being able to keep the new editorial board from warring on the majority—these hopes did not materialise. Which only goes to show that hopes do not always materialise; when I resigned from the editorial board, it was also in the hope that this would make for peace, but my hopes did not materialise either. No one denies that private negotiations occurred, only you have to distinguish between expressions of the hopes and expectations of individuals and decisions of official bodies. There is nothing insulting to the members of the Council in my remark that one cannot draw conclusions here from private negotiations. I emphatically deny that Comrade Travinsky

expressly promised co-optation to the Central Committee. Undoubtedly, he departed hoping for peace, and as a result of that peace he could expect co-optation, but he could not expressly promise it.

Against my appeal Comrade Martov advances the argument that it contains the attacks made by only one side. Nothing of the kind. I can, if it comes to that, move another resolution, modifying the expressions Comrade Martov does not like, but his contention that my resolution is one-sided is nonsense. Earlier it was said of my resolution that it smacked of a pastoral message, that it was full of truisms, and so on—but no one ascribed to it a tendency to inflict new wounds. Comrade Martov charges me with evading a straight answer to Comrade Plekhanov's question of whether the Central Committee is or is not willing to co-opt representatives of the "minority". But how could we give you an answer to that question if we do not know what all the rest of the nine Central Committee members think of the matter now? (*Plekhanov*: "You misunderstood Comrade Martov.") To say that I am deliberately evading is ridiculous. I simply could not give the answer for not giving which I am being accused of evasion. I have said plainly that the dissatisfaction with the composition of the central bodies is mutual. One has to reckon with the opinion of other comrades too, after all. I am told: we must try to come to an understanding; but we have been trying to do that for the past five months. Comrade Martov's suggestion that by calling for a congress the Central Committee testifies to its own bankruptcy and impotence is therefore simply laughable. Hasn't the Central Committee already made every possible effort to resolve the conflict by domestic means? "The Central Committee will be demonstrating its inability...." Inability to do what? To wage the struggle? Or to bring about peace in the Party? Yes indeed! And the attacks to which my proposal has been subjected here abundantly prove it. What your resolution talks about is gaining ground from the adversary, so to speak; but then a demand like that gives rise to counter-demands, and I will even put the question in this way: has the Central Committee the right to start negotiating again on that basis? There are committees, after all, which *censured* the Central Committee for making concessions to the

League.[76] You want us to reckon with the minority *and not reckon* with the majority. That is funny. And avoidance of a congress would under these conditions smack of fearing a congress. That is why we admit ourselves powerless, but not in the sense Comrade Martov means. The Central Committee is indeed powerless to end the dissensions in the Party, and that is why we are proposing to the Council that a congress should be convened. Next, the purely juridical point of the Council's power to convene one. Comrade Martov's interpretation of it is totally incorrect. What the Rules say is: "The congress is convened (if possible not less than once in two years) by the Party Council." Consequently, the Council has the *power* to convene a congress *at any time*. It is *obliged* to convene a congress only in one specific case. (*Martov*: "From the Rules it directly follows that the Council is obliged to convene a congress when demanded by a specified number of competent organisations, or upon the lapse of two years after the previous congress. Thus, until the two years are up or until the specified number of organisations call for a congress, the Council cannot convene one." *Plekhanov*: "I suggest that the matter of the provisions for convening a congress is out of order, as having no bearing on the business in hand.")

It was Comrade Martov who brought the matter up, and we have not taken any decision to drop it. Martov says the Council cannot convene a congress, and I say that it can. The congress is convened by the Party Council on its own responsibility at any time—if possible not less than once in two years. Comrade Martov says that holding a congress is an *ultima ratio*. Yes, it is, and the fruitlessness of our present debates goes to confirm it.

You will recall that Comrade Martov has himself admitted in principle that a body made up of people who have not been involved in our dissensions could play a useful part in bringing peace to the Party. And since our own peacemaking attempts have produced no results and even in literature we are unlikely to keep to permissible forms of polemic, I maintain that only outside comrades can speak the decisive word. We, the representatives of the Central Committee, disclaim all responsibility in respect of further attempts at reconciliation in the Party; we see no other

honest way to end our dissensions than by appealing to the congress. Now about Comrade Plekhanov's remark as to the word "Marsh". (*Plekhanov*: "I was replying to the question of Comrade Vasilyev, who applied the term to a section of the Party; I repeat, as chairman I cannot allow such expressions in the Party Council.") I am admonished here that I say nothing about the abnormal and one-sided composition of the Central Committee; but what I am stating is the fact that there are two sides in the Party and that they are fighting with impermissible weapons. On the present basis, any positive work is quite impossible.

IX

Before speaking on the substance of the matter, let me say in passing once again that no one ever takes offence at the word *Sumpf*.*

Then as to the negotiations with Travinsky. My words have been interpreted here to mean that I deny that there were negotiations with him. Nothing of the sort. I did not deny that negotiations took place, but merely pointed to the difference between the significance private negotiations can have and that attaching to official ones. I quoted here a *letter* by Comrade Travinsky himself as proof that if formerly he viewed things as Comrade Plekhanov does, afterwards he altered his view. That being the case, I would consider it quite out of place to raise the question of whom France will believe.[77] There is no need whatever to appeal to "France".

Comrade Plekhanov declares that my peaceable "appeal" has had no effect even on myself. I repeat, all I do in that "appeal" is express the desire that certain methods of struggle should not be used. I call for peace. People reply by *attacking* the Central Committee, and then wonder that I *thereupon* attack the Central Organ. *After* the Central Committee has been attacked, I am accused of lack of peaceableness for hitting back! One has only to review our whole debate here in the Council in order to see who led off by proposing peace on the basis of the status quo and who continued with

* Marsh.—*Ed*.

war against the Central Committee. It has been claimed that Lenin did nothing but tell the opposition: "Do what you're told and don't argue!..." That is not quite so. All our September and October correspondence is evidence to the contrary. Let me remind you, for instance, that at the beginning of October, I was prepared (with Plekhanov) to co-opt two to the editorial board. Then, as regards the ultimatum, which I myself helped to draw up, I was willing at that time to cede you two seats on the Central Committee. Next, I made another concession by resigning from the editorial board, which I did so as not to stand in the way of others joining. It will thus be seen that I did not only say "Do what you're told and don't argue", but made concessions too. Now to the actual matter in hand. The attitude to my resolution strikes me as very strange. For does that resolution accuse anyone, is it in the nature of an attack upon anyone? All it speaks of is whether such-and-such forms of struggle are permissible or not. That there is a struggle is a fact, and the idea is purely and solely to draw a line between permissible and impermissible forms of it. And what I'm asking is: is that idea acceptable or not? Thus the expressions "instrument of struggle", "attack on the minority", etc., in relation to my resolution are quite out of place. Possibly its form is not very happy—I would not argue particularly about that and would be prepared to modify the wording—but its essence, which is that the contending sides in the Party must keep their struggle within definite permissible bounds—that is not open to question. The kind of attitude the resolution is encountering here seems to me one-sided, for one of the sides concerned rejects it because it purports to discern in it some danger to itself. (*Plekhanov*: "I wish to offer a reminder that I have already pointed out several times that there are no two sides in this Council.") To that I can say that I am referring to the *two sides* that exist in actual fact, not to any juridical division of the Council into two. To Comrade Plekhanov's resolution, on the substance of which nothing has been said here, the representatives of the editorial board have added nothing. Yet I was waiting all the time for the one-sided character of that resolution to be modified.

7

SPEECHES ON CONVENING THE THIRD PARTY CONGRESS JANUARY 17 (30)

I

On the question of convening a congress there is little to add. The Council debates too serve to illustrate the terribly difficult position in the Party. The point has repeatedly been made that two nearly equal halves formed at the Congress, so that when one member of the "majority" dropped out, complete equality resulted. I do not see how this equality could lead to peace without a Party congress. No one doubts that the discord is giving rise to crying abnormalities. A belligerent frame of mind exists *on both sides*; that is an indubitable fact. In the light of all this, no other honest and proper solution than convening a congress appears possible. Comrade Martov has spoken of the technical, financial, and other such difficulties of carrying out my proposal for a congress, but the present state of things is worse by far than all these difficulties.

II

I cannot agree with Martov; he gives a wrong picture of the role of a congress. He says the differences are not yet clear to all the comrades and that the convening of a congress would arrest the process of demarcation and the airing of the organisational conflict in the press. I think that precisely with a view to the free clarification of differences *of principle* it is necessary to eliminate the crisis, to clear the atmosphere of squabbles, and for that we need a congress. Not in order to cut short the struggle, but to bring it within normal

bounds, a Third Congress is required. The very suggestion that it would cut short the struggle over principles is a strange one. Let me remind you of the chairman's statement at the Second Congress, to the effect that even our programme is subject to further development and elucidation. But for the struggle over principles, the conflict of opinion, to be effective and fruitful, conditions are needed which at the moment we do not have. I protest against the historical parallels that have been drawn here and the reference to *Rabocheye Dyelo*. The difference between the position now and three years ago is that then we did not yet have a united party, and now we do. Those who talk here about a breakaway half should be the last to protest against a congress to eliminate the abnormality which by our own efforts we find ourselves unable to remove. Positive work and clarification of differences of principle will only be possible when the Third Congress removes that abnormality and brings the conflict of opinion within definite bounds.

II

Comrade Plekhanov's clearly stated argument is a "forceful" but false one. If the Third Congress were to lead to a split, it would mean that people do not want to submit to majority opinion, do not want to work together, that is, that in reality we have no party. Everyone has admitted that Comrade Travinsky's attempts to settle the conflict were not without result; and there are many comrades like Travinsky, and the congress would be a gathering and colloquy among just such comrades. A bitter struggle, a desperate struggle, even to the point of excesses, does not yet signify a split. If people really want to work together, they should also be willing to submit to the will of the majority, that is, of a congress.

8

SPEECHES ON THE PUBLICATION OF PARTY LITERATURE JANUARY 17 (30)

I

I shall begin from the end. Comrade Martov has misunderstood the Central Committee's letters, particularly on the subject of funds, and given a wrong interpretation of them. He leaves out of account that these letters were a sequel to a conversation which he, Martov, had with Travinsky. Martov himself wrote about the purport of that conversation in these terms: "To Comrade Travinsky, as to yourself, I mentioned 5,000-6,000 as the expected minimum of what could *over a year* be obtained for the Party from the two sources to which the members of the editorial board have access." I must state that Travinsky spoke of this being made available as a lump sum, not over the course of a year, so that there is some misunderstanding. The fact is that we counted on these 5,000 and apportioned funds between the Russian and the foreign treasury accordingly.

Comrade Martov said that both the financial sources (incidentally, how greatly the editorial board in its irritation misrepresents the matter is evident from the fact that in letters to the Central Committee Martov actually used the word "moneybags" in quotation marks and blamed us for this expression, when in reality it was his own expression, not ours)—I repeat, Comrade Martov said that both the financial sources were known to us. Yes, they are known, but the point is not whether they are known, but whether they are accessible. I know that one of these sources could provide up to 10,000 *a year*, the other up to 40,000, but that does

not help, for to me they are *inaccessible*. And it is their conversion from accessible into *inaccessible* sources that constitutes the cutting off of funds, which is an absolutely impermissible method of waging the struggle in the Party.

There is also the fact of the recent arrests, involving people who were due to obtain money in Russia. We have no money here, getting any from Russia will be a long business, and it will cost hundreds of rubles for the dispatch of special messengers. Some money will be coming through eventually, of course, barring further mishaps, but not soon, nor, in all likelihood, really enough.

That there were threats in the Central Committee's letter is quite untrue. There was no question of any threatening, for what the Central Committee was concerned for all along was the publication of the Central Organ. The point about addresses Comrade Vasilyev will deal with. According to our information, the editorial board is sending agents of its own to Russia. This implies a separate Central Organ treasury, which means a *de facto* split in the Party. It is contrary to the Rules, which require that the Central Committee should be kept fully informed and that all *funds* and all organisation of practical activities should be *wholly* concentrated in its hands. The Central Organ is grossly violating the Rules by setting up its own centre of travelling agents, its own centre of practical leadership and intervention in the affairs of the committees. The existence of these agents, contrary to the Party Rules, introduces direct disorganisation into the work. The Central Committee cannot and will not be answerable for order in the conduct of affairs when disorder is systematically introduced by the Central Organ itself. Here are letters from Odessa and Baku which illustrate how the matter stands. The Odessa letter, of December 24, says: "We had a visit yesterday from Zagorsky,[78] who announced that he had been delegated by the editorial board to inform the committees of the latest developments, the negotiations, the present position in the editorial board and the editors' request to send in material and contributions and to commission leaflets or suggest topics for leaflets of general interest, and also for pamphlets, to issue which a special group has been set up. He repeated all the old stuff and worked hard to prove the minority

right, nobleminded and 'loyal'. The committee heard him out, then asked some questions, one of them being whether the Central Committee was informed of his mission; whereupon, instead of giving a straight yes or no, he proceeded to exonerate himself and prove that the editorial board had every right to approach the committees without the Central Committee's knowledge. He insisted that his communication should be discussed and a resolution drawn up there and then, in his presence; to which the committee replied that it took note of the communication, but that as to discussing it and passing a resolution, it would do that when it saw fit, while now it was going on to its regular business."[79] And here is what we read in a letter of January 1 from Baku: "The Baku Committee has received a visit from Martyn,[80] who came with a communication from the Central Organ and with the undisguised object of sowing distrust in the Central Committee. When, at the end of his statement, he inquired as to the committee's opinion, the answer he got was: The Central Committee has our implicit confidence. And when he retorted that he would like to know their attitude to the Central Organ, he was told without any mincing of words that after what they had just heard (the statement of his mission) confidence in the latter 'had been shaken'."[81]

Equally improper and against the rules of secrecy is it that the Central Organ gives information on the composition of the Central Committee not only to the committees, but to private individuals (as for instance to Druyan, as the Central Committee pointed out in a letter to the Central Organ). As to "waging war", the fact is that Comrade Martov here confuses two totally different things. In the sphere of positive work and procuring funds any warfare (boycotts and the like) is most certainly impermissible, and the Central Committee has never engaged in any such thing. In the sphere of literature, however, "war" is permissible, and no one has ever restricted the Central Organ's polemics. You will recall that even at a much earlier period the Central Committee expressed complete readiness to publish both Dan's letter on the slogans of the opposition and Martov's pamphlet *Once More in the Minority*, though both contain attacks upon itself.

The Central Committee has never once caused any delay in issuing the Central Organ's publications. Nor has there been a single case of the Central Committee improperly or unfairly distributing literature, of its "discriminating" against the minority committees. On the contrary, Travinsky has here testified and proved that the minority committees were first of all generously supplied; Comrade Martov has had to admit that in this respect the Central Committee's activities are above reproach. As to refusing people Party literature, the matter stands as follows. *Every* Party member without exception (if he inspires confidence as regards secrecy precautions, etc.) is given literature *free* to transport to Russia and there hand over to the Central Committee agents for distribution. But when people have the hardihood to call themselves members of the Party and at the same time refuse to hand over literature to the Central Committee agents for general distribution, then naturally the Central Committee cannot (and has not even the right to) deal with such individuals. And if these people afterwards buy up literature for their separate parochial enterprises which disorganise the common work, so much the worse for them.

II

I cannot for the life of me understand what is insolent about the distribution secretary's first or second letter.[82] He requests information which he needs for his accounts, and the editors, instead of giving a comradely answer to the point—which he never did get—engage in purely bureaucratic quill-driving. Now here is something that really is insolent, in a letter by the editors of the Central Organ to the Central Committee: "The editorial board of the Central Organ brings to the Central Committee's attention that the presence abroad of three members of the Central Committee, which is not justified by any operational considerations and which implies the establishment of a new organisational centre not envisaged in the Party Rules, inevitably brings political intrigue and disorganisation into Party life...." This is outright *vilification* (intrigue) without a shadow of facts or evidence! The Central Committee's reply to it was: "Had the editors not been acting in a state of utmost irri-

tation, they would readily have seen the utter impropriety of their remarks about the number of Central Committee members present abroad. The only reply of the Central Committee's foreign representative to this and other unseemly sallies by the editors (such as the comical allegation about things being printed 'in secret') is to call on them to remember their duty as Party members and desist from actions which out of a controversy in literature could create occasions for a split...."[83]

That even bourgeois publishers supposedly let editors have *hundreds* of copies I must confess I have not heard. Let Comrade Martov try, if his are not just idle words, to ask Dietz whether he gives Kautsky 400 copies of the *Neue Zeit* to distribute. Or ask Singer, or Fischer, whether Gradnauer demands 200 copies of the *Vorwärts* to distribute on his own. The German Social-Democrats know the difference between anarchy and organisation.

The question of funds came up before the arrests—but then, I was only speaking of the difference the arrests had made to it.

How the editors confuse permissible controversy with impermissible boycott is especially vividly seen from the following.

In their letter of January 4, replying to our inquiry about funds, they mention, as one of the "factors which make it difficult for them to appeal to acquaintances for active support of the central treasury", that "Central Committee agents and their protégés indulge at meetings in threatening talk about the illegality of the present composition of the editorial board (and the letter by Central Committee member Lenin talks about it too...)." Just look at this astounding perversion of political values! The question of providing (or cutting off) sources of funds is *tied up* with that of controversy in speeches and pamphlets! What is that but mixing up ideological struggle with squabbling and contention over posts?! The question of Party members approving or disapproving the composition (and activities) of the editorial board is *jumbled* with that of "legality"! What is that but bureaucratic formalism?! It is natural that the Central Committee's foreign representative replied: "... As representative of the Central Committee, I think it necessary

to point out to the editorial board that there is no reason to bring up the question of *legality*, etc., because of heated utterances at forums of the membership abroad or a controversy conducted in literature.... If in the controversy the editors descry attacks on themselves, they have every opportunity, after all, to reply to them. Is it reasonable to get excited over some sharp (in the editors' view) thrust in controversy when there is no suggestion, even, of boycott or any other disloyal (in the Central Committee's view) mode of action?"[84]... To talk of "protégés" is nothing if not peculiar.... What is it supposed to mean? What sort of bureaucratic language is this? What has the Central Committee to do with what people say at forums? We have no censorship, that we should restrict freedom of speech and freedom of controversy. And does not *this* kind of struggle need to be marked off from boycotts?

Comrade Martov's story of the Odessa Committee having asked the Central Committee whether to send in letters to the Central Organ I regard as, obviously, a joke. No one could seriously speak of such a thing.

I repeat, there has never been a single case of the Central Committee barring the minority from the work. And I stress that Comrade Martov himself admits that he can cite no instances of improper, one-sided or biased distribution of literature.

III

Comrade Martov espies the danger of a coup on our part. That is comical. (*Martov*: "What about the ultimatum?") The Central Committee's "ultimatum" was a reply to Starover's ultimatum.[85] The ultimatum is our last word on conditions for peace and good will that we could accept. That is all. Only a diseased imagination could discover schemes for a coup in our reply to the minority, who have, unquestionably, brought the Party to the point of a split. The majority have no need to contemplate a coup. As regards the distribution of *Iskra*, all issues of the paper have, as far as possible, been distributed regularly, and had any committee deemed itself "forgotten" in this respect, it would only have needed to inform the Central Committee in a comradely way. We have up to the present received no such

notifications. And the editorial board's letter to the committees is not a comradely action, but an act of war.

The Central Committee is of the opinion that the work of literature distribution must be carried on from a single source and that a second distribution centre is unnecessary and harmful. Now a few words about the distribution secretary. I repeat that he became a target for attack only because he wanted to do his job conscientiously and addressed a business inquiry to the editorial board. And the editorial board's peremptory answer—"Don't dare talk!" "Send along 100 or 200 copies!", etc.—bears all the earmarks of a bureaucratic approach in its purest form.

On the subject of addresses I shall only say that everything that belongs to the editorial board has been handed over to it. Only personal and organisational correspondence has been sorted out, and all the rest turned over to the editors. I might also remind you that already in the London days the Organising Committee officially took all the organisational correspondence into its own hands.

To speak of there being a new centre because some members of the Central Committee are here abroad is a patent quibble and bureaucratic meddling in matters which are the Central Committee's independent concern.

IV

Comrade Martov entirely misinterprets the Rules. The Central Organ must have full information about everything—that is required both by the Rules and by the interests of the work. But the dispatch of representatives with organisational objects—such as sending Z[86] to the Odessa Committee without the Central Committee's knowledge—manifestly upsets the natural division of functions between the two central bodies of the Party. It is quite unnecessary for purposes of information, and only introduces the plainest disorganisation, completely disrupting unity of action. What this sort of move does is to aggravate the chaos in Party affairs, and in practice it means an outright splitting of the Party in two—instead of division of functions between the two central bodies.

TO THE PARTY

Comrades! That our Party is going through a severe crisis is known by now to all, and has in fact been directly and openly stated in our Central Organ also.

We consider it our duty to call on all members of the Party to take a conscious and active part in putting an end to the crisis as speedily and painlessly as possible.

Comrade Plekhanov, who at the Party Congress and—long after it—at the Congress of the League Abroad belonged to the Party Congress majority, now comes forward in No. 57 of *Iskra* as a champion of the demands of the minority, accusing the Central Committee of "eccentricity", of an intransigence that only benefits our enemies, of refusing to co-opt minority adherents. Such co-optation is, in Comrade Plekhanov's eyes, nothing less than "the only way to deliver our Party from its state of severe crisis, which sorely weakens our positions and strengthens those of our numerous enemies and opponents". One must be guided not only by the Rules, says Comrade Plekhanov—in reference presumably to this state of severe crisis—but also by the actual position of affairs, by the existing relation of forces in the Party. One must rise above the circle and doctrinaire standpoint which pushes to the forefront what divides the workers instead of what unites them.

These general principles are undoubtedly correct, and it only remains for every Social-Democrat to acquaint himself precisely with the facts and reflect seriously on the position in order correctly to apply them.

Yes, we must without fail, at the cost of any and every effort, undaunted by the prospect of a long and arduous job, cure our Party of the circle spirit, of faction and schism

over trifles, of unseemly and unworthy wrangling over the conductor's baton! Take a good look, then, at the events that have developed in our Party since its Second Congress. Have the courage to expose our sores, in order to diagnose them without hypocrisy or official humbug and to apply the right treatment.

The minutes of the Second Congress have now been published in their entirety; the minutes of the Congress of the League Abroad have likewise been made available to the Party membership. Party literature has already laid bare many manifestations and symptoms of our crisis, and although much still remains to be done in that respect, a certain summing up already can and should be made.

The Second Congress ended with a bitter struggle over the composition of our central bodies. By a majority of 24 to 20, a Central Organ editorial board of three was elected (Plekhanov, Martov and Lenin), and a Central Committee likewise made up of three comrades. Martov refused to fill the post he had been elected to, and he and all of the minority refused to take part in the elections to the Central Committee. From the very time of the Congress the minority started a bitter fight against the central bodies, a regular war over the conductor's baton, a regular war of the circle spirit against the party spirit, a war to get the old editorial board reinstated and a due (in the view of the minority) number of their adherents co-opted to the Central Committee. This war went on for months, and was accompanied by the minority's total withdrawal from work under the direction of the central bodies, by a boycott of them, and by purely anarchistic preachings, specimens of which the Party membership will find in profusion in the minutes of the League Congress. The struggle chiefly centred abroad, among the section furthest removed from positive work and from the participation of class-conscious proletarians. It involved the central bodies set up by the Second Congress in an appalling waste of energy on trips, meetings, and negotiations intended to obviate countless petty dissatisfactions, disputes and squabbles. That the demands of the opposition utterly disregarded the relation of forces whether at the Second Congress or in the Party as a whole may be seen, for example, from the fact that while the editors of the Central

Organ (Plekhanov and Lenin) actually agreed to the co-optation of two—that is, to equal representation of the Party Congress majority and minority—the opposition demanded a huge majority (four to two) on the editorial board. Under the threat of an inevitable and immediate split, the two central bodies finally made a number of concessions to the demands regarding the conductor's baton: the editors were co-opted, Lenin resigned from the editorial board and the Council, another majority member resigned from the Council likewise, the reorganisation of the League Abroad, whose Congress had flouted everything the Party Congress had decided, was allowed to lapse, and the opposition was offered two seats on the Central Committee.

The opposition rejected this offer. It evidently demands a larger number of seats, and for persons who would not be chosen by the Central Committee, but named by the opposition. Neither the relation of forces nor the interests of the work furnish the slightest justification for such demands: all that these ultimatums are backed by is threats of a split and acts of grossly mechanical pressure, such as boycotts and withholding of funds.

The Party has been disorganised and demoralised to the utmost by this fight for posts, which diverts its forces from positive work. This demoralisation is not lessened but, if anything, heightened by the fact that the minority's so-called differences of principle lend this fight a false colouring.

We all agreed unanimously—and said so emphatically time and again—to recognise all decisions of the Second Congress and all its elections as unconditionally binding. Now the minority has in practice repudiated the entire Rules and all the elections; now those who uphold the common decisions are found to be "formalists"—those who received their powers from the Congress are labelled "bureaucrats"—those who take their stand by the vote of the majority, which (by our common consent) expressed the relation of forces in the Party, are accused of a grossly mechanical and bureaucratic point of view. Those who at the Congress, having been charged by the membership with the duty of electing the Party's officials, transferred some editors to the status of contributors and some members of the Organising

Committee to that of ordinary Party workers, are now found guilty of converting Party members into cogs and wheels, etc., etc. The unsound and unstable position the minority already adopted at the Party Congress led inevitably to this dishonesty, which we are far from attributing to anyone's subjective will.

Is it not time to put an end to this strife and faction? Let everyone who cares about our Party's future ask himself that.

Is it not time to make a determined end of this fight for control of the central bodies, of this contention over posts, which is having such a disruptive effect on all our work? Is it fitting to embark yet again, after months and months of negotiations, upon new negotiations with the opposition, or to raise the question of the Central Committee's being one-sided or eccentric? For the raising of that question, after the co-optation of the editors had already seemed to ensure peace, inevitably calls up again the question of the one-sidedness and eccentricity—the anti-Party nature, even—of our Central Organ. How long are we going to engage in this indecent wrangling over the composition of the central bodies? And how can we settle the issue as to which side is right in its demands? By what yardstick are we to measure it? Why is it the "firm-liners" that are to be counted intransigent, when they have ceded a very great deal of what the Congress decided, and not the "soft-liners", who in practice have turned out uncommonly firm in their drive for a split and direct preparation of a split?

Let the comrades consider how this abnormal position can be ended. The Central Committee had hoped that the change of cabinet at the Central Organ would bring peace. When the dispute had already gone very far, when the fight over the conductor's baton had brought us to the very verge of a split—just one hope still remained: the achievement of some sort of disengagement, so as not to interfere with each other, so as gradually, in the process of working within one Party, to reduce the friction, so as not to touch, or to touch more seldom, on "sore" points. The division of the central bodies, one would have thought, at least partially ensured the ending of the crisis: the minority had the Central Organ to itself and could freely group around

it, freely advocate its views, freely carry on its Party work, without feeling "alien" in the Party. And with the majority also controlling one of the central bodies—the Central Committee (or out numbering the minority upon it)—the majority too could feel at least some satisfaction. The fight over the central bodies could have ended and given place to a purely ideological clearing up of disagreements and shades of opinion.

This hope is shattered by *Iskra*'s raising the question of co-optation to the Central Committee. We do not deem it possible to engage anew in this bargaining over posts, which fills us with repugnance. We should actually prefer, failing any other solution, to hand over *all* the conductor's batons to the minority, if it positively cannot bring itself to work in the Party except in the top posts. Our readiness to do so increases as this ugly new malady of our movement drags on—as these petty squabbles, the more unbearable for being petty, become chronic.

But we should first wish to know with all possible certainty the opinion of the Party, to consult revolutionary public opinion, especially within Russia. We invite comrades closely to examine and study the facts relating to our "crisis", to make a thorough appraisal of the present position in the Party, and to state their views on all the questions raised.

Written in the early part of February 1904

First published in 1929 in *Lenin Miscellany X*

Published according to the manuscript

CIRCUMSTANCES OF RESIGNATION FROM THE *ISKRA* EDITORIAL BOARD

Geneva, February 20, 1904

Dear Comrades,

As your pamphlet touches on the circumstances which induced me to resign from the *Iskra* editorial board, I would request you to find space in the Appendix for this reply of mine to Comrade Plekhanov's letter of January 29, 1904, to Comrade Martov, published in Martov's pamphlet on combating the "state of siege".

Comrade Plekhanov finds that the statement of the case in my letter to the editors is *inaccurate*. However, he has not made, nor could he have made, *a single correction of fact*. He has merely supplemented my account with an *inaccurate* version of private conversations I had with him.

Generally speaking, to quote private conversations is, I consider, a sure sign that serious arguments are lacking. I still hold the opinion so recently held by Comrade Plekhanov in reference to Comrade Martov's accounts of private conversations (League Minutes, p. 134), namely, that it is scarcely possible for such conversations to be "reproduced accurately", and that "controversy" regarding them "*leads nowhere*".

But since Comrade Plekhanov does cite our private conversations, I consider myself entitled to explain them and amplify, particularly as these conversations took place in the presence of third persons.

The first conversation, in which Comrade Plekhanov said that he had decided* to resign if I absolutely refused to

* In his zeal for accuracy Comrade Plekhanov overdoes it a little when he says: Plekhanov had no right to *decide* on co-optation,

agree to co-optation, took place on the evening of the day the League Congress ended and the following morning, in the presence of two members of the Party Council. The conversation revolved around concessions to the opposition. Plekhanov insisted that concessions were essential, for he felt certain that the opposition would not obey any decision of the Party Council and that a complete split of the Party might take place at any moment. I insisted that, after what had happened at the League, after the measures taken at its Congress by the representative of the Central Committee (each of which Comrade Plekhanov had taken part in discussing and had fully approved), it was impossible to yield to anarchistic individualism, and that the formation of a separate writers' group (which I had repeatedly declared in conversation with Plekhanov, and contrary to his own opinion, to be quite permissible) need not necessarily imply a split. When the upshot of the conversation was that one of us would have to resign, I at once said that I would do so, not wishing to hamper Plekhanov in his attempts to settle the conflict and avoid what he considered would be a split.

Comrade Plekhanov is so amiable towards me now as to find no other motive for my action than the most cowardly evasiveness. In order to paint this characteristic of mine in the liveliest colours, Comrade Plekhanov quotes me as saying: "Everybody will say that Lenin must be wrong if even Plekhanov disagrees with him."

That is laying the colours on thick, no doubt about it! So thick, in fact, that, all unnoticed by Comrade Plekhanov, the result is a patent absurdity. If I had been convinced that "everybody" would consider Plekhanov right (as he modestly thinks to himself), and had thought it necessary to reckon with the opinion of this everybody, then, obviously, I would never have ventured to disagree with Plekhanov, I would have followed him in this instance too. In his desire to present my conduct in the most unprepossessing light and ascribe it to the most ignominious motives, he fathers on me

---

for according to the Rules co-optation has to be unanimous. This is not a correction, but a quibble, for what the Rules forbid in the absence of unanimity is definite organisational *actions*, and not *decisions*—which some people are all too prone to adopt for appearances' sake, without following them up with action.

a motive *devoid of all sense*. I am supposed to have been so afraid of disagreeing with Plekhanov in anything that—I did disagree with him. It doesn't hold water, this argument of Comrade Plekhanov's.

Actually, my idea was that it would be better for me to resign, for otherwise my dissenting opinion would hamper Plekhanov's *attempts* to secure peace. I did not want to hamper those attempts—perhaps we might in fact agree on peace terms—but I considered it impossible to assume responsibility for an editorial board on which an émigré circle imposed candidates *in this way*.

A few days later I did go with a certain Council member to see Plekhanov, and our talk took the following course:

"You know," said Plekhanov, "there are some wives who are so quarrelsome that it's best to give way to them in order to avoid hysterics and an unsavoury row in public."

"Perhaps so," I replied, "but in giving way you must take care to leave yourself strong enough to prevent an even bigger 'row'."

"Well, but by resigning you surrender everything," said Plekhanov.

"Not always," I rejoined, and cited the case of Chamberlain. My idea was one I have also expressed in print: should Plekhanov succeed in securing a peace acceptable to the majority, in whose ranks he had fought so long and so vigorously, then I would not start war either; if he should not succeed, I reserved to myself freedom of action, so as to denounce the "quarrelsome wife" if *even* Plekhanov could not calm and pacify her.

It was during this conversation that I told Plekhanov (who did not yet know the opposition's terms) of my "decision" to join the Central Committee (I could "decide" to do so, but of course all the members of the Central Committee would have to give their consent). Plekhanov was entirely sympathetic to this plan, as a last attempt to find some sort of mode of living with the "quarrelsome wife". When, in a letter to Plekhanov on November 6, 1903, I expressed the opinion that perhaps he was simply going to hand over the editorial board to the Martovites, he replied (on November 8): "... You seem to have a wrong idea of my intentions. I explained them again yesterday to Comrade Vasilyev" (the

Central Committee member who had attended the League Congress). Writing to this same Comrade Vasilyev on November 10 about whether to expedite or delay the 52nd issue of *Iskra*, containing a statement about the Congress, Plekhanov said: "...Publishing anything about the Congress means either 1) announcing that Martov and the others are not taking part in *Iskra*, or 2) refusing this request of Martov's—in which case he will announce it himself in a special leaflet. In either case it would bring the split to the knowledge of the public, *and that is exactly what we have to avoid just now*" (my italics—N. L.). On November 17, Plekhanov wrote to the same comrade: "... What would you say to the immediate co-optation of Martov and the others? I am beginning to think that this would be the way to settle the matter with the least difficulty. *I do not want to act without you...*" (Plekhanov's italics).

These quotations show clearly that Plekhanov was trying to act in agreement with the majority, and wanted to co-opt the editors solely for the sake of peace and on the condition of peace, and not for the purpose of war against the majority. If it has worked out the other way, that only goes to show that the cart of anarchistic individualism had got rolling too recklessly in the tactics of boycott and disruption; the strongest brakes could not hold it back. That is a great pity, of course, and Plekhanov, who sincerely wanted peace, has landed in an unpleasant position; but that is no reason for putting all the blame on me.

As to Plekhanov's statement that I was willing to keep quiet in return for a suitable "equivalent", and his proud declaration, "I did not see fit to purchase his silence", this polemical trick only makes a comical impression when compared with the words I have just quoted from his letter of November 10. It was Plekhanov who attached the utmost importance to silence, to keeping the split from the knowledge of the public.* What more natural than that I should

**A propos*, it was Plekhanov who was so insistent about withholding publication of the League Minutes and the *concluding part* of the Party Congress Minutes—the part where he says that he takes upon himself full moral responsibility for a direct vote against the old so-called editorial board, and expresses the hope that the Party has not grown poor in literary forces—a statement which one member of the minority called a pompous phrase in pseudo-classical style.

tell him I agreed to that too, provided there was peace? This talk about "equivalents" and "purchases" leads one to expect that next time Plekhanov will inform the public that Lenin is forging currency for transactions of this kind. That sort of thing has happened, after all, in our émigré quarrels—and the present atmosphere is conducive to it.

Comrade Plekhanov's letter involuntarily leads one to wonder whether he is not now having to *purchase* the right to be in the minority. The tactics of the minority in our so-called Party organ are already quite clear. What they are trying to do is obscure the controversial issues and the facts which really led to our divergence. They are trying to show that Martynov was far closer to *Iskra* than Lenin—just how, where and to what extent the muddled editors of the new *Iskra* will be a long time endeavouring to explain. They hypocritically condemn dragging personalities into the controversy, while actually their whole struggle is one big campaign against an individual, in which they do not even hesitate to ascribe to the "enemy" pernicious qualities of the most incompatible kind—from the crassest pig-headedness to the most cowardly evasiveness. Anything to make it good and strong. And those new allies, Comrades Plekhanov and Martov, make it so good and strong that they will soon be no whit behind the famous Bundists with their famous epithet—"scum". They are bombarding me so fiercely from their battleships that I am beginning to wonder whether this is not a conspiracy of two-thirds of the dreadful trio. Ought I not to pose as injured too? Ought I not to cry out about a "state of siege"? That is sometimes so convenient and so useful, you know....

To be sure, to become a true minority man Comrade Plekhanov has still, I would say, to take two little steps: first, to avow that the formulation of Paragraph 1 of the Rules advocated by Comrades Martov and Axelrod at the Congress (and so zealously hushed up by them now) constitutes, not a step towards opportunism, not a surrender to bourgeois individualism, but the germ of new, truly Social-Democratic, Akimov-Martov and Martynov-Axelrod organisational views; and, secondly, to avow that the struggle with the minority since the Congress has not been a struggle against gross violations of Party discipline, against methods

of agitation that only arouse disgust, not a struggle against anarchism and anarchistic phraseology (see pp. 17, 96, 97, 98, 101, 102, 104, etc., etc., of the League Minutes), but a struggle against a "state of siege", bureaucracy, formalism, and so forth.

I shall deal at length with controversial issues of this kind in a pamphlet I am now preparing for the press. Meanwhile ... meanwhile let us scan the gallery of Gogol types opened in the columns of our leading organ, which is making a practice of presenting its readers with conundrums. Who resembles a stiff-necked Sobakevich treading on everybody's vanity—I beg pardon, their corns? Who is like an evasive Chichikov purchasing silence as well as dead souls? Who are like Nozdrev and Khlestakov, Manilov and Skvoznik-Dmukhanovsky?[87] Interesting and edifying puzzles.... "A controversy over principles...."

N. Lenin

Published in the pamphlet *Commentary on the Minutes of the Second Congress of the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad*, Geneva, 1904

Published according to the pamphlet text

MAY DAY

Comrade workers! May Day is coming, the day when the workers of all lands celebrate their awakening to a class-conscious life, their solidarity in the struggle against all coercion and oppression of man by man, the struggle to free the toiling millions from hunger, poverty, and humiliation. Two worlds stand facing each other in this great struggle: the world of capital and the world of labour, the world of exploitation and slavery and the world of brotherhood and freedom.

On one side stand the handful of rich blood-suckers. They have seized the factories and mills, the tools and machinery, have turned millions of acres of land and mountains of money into their private property. They have made the government and the army their servants, faithful watchdogs of the wealth they have amassed.

On the other side stand the millions of the disinherited. They are forced to beg the moneybags for permission to work for them. By their labour they create all wealth; yet all their lives long they have to struggle for a crust of bread, beg for work as for charity, sap their strength and health by back-breaking toil, and starve in hovels in the villages or in the cellars and garrets of the big cities.

But now these disinherited toilers have declared war on the moneybags and exploiters. The workers of all lands are fighting to free labour from wage slavery, from poverty and want. They are fighting for a system of society where the wealth created by the common labour will go to benefit, not a handful of rich men, but all those who work. They want to make the land and the factories, mills, and machines the common property of all toilers. They want to do away

with the division into rich and poor, want the fruits of labour to go to the labourers themselves, and all the achievements of the human mind, all improvements in ways of working, to improve the lot of the man who works, and not serve as a means of oppressing him.

The great struggle of labour against capital has cost the workers of all countries immense sacrifices. They have shed rivers of blood in behalf of their right to a better life and real freedom. Those who fight for the workers' cause are subjected by the governments to untold persecution. But in spite of all persecution the solidarity of the workers of the world is growing and gaining in strength. The workers are uniting more and more closely in socialist parties, the supporters of those parties are mounting into millions and are advancing steadily, step by step, towards complete victory over the class of capitalist exploiters.

The Russian proletariat, too, has awakened to a new life. It too has joined this great struggle. Gone are the days when our worker slaved submissively, seeing no escape from his state of bondage, no glimmer of light in his bitter life. Socialism has shown him the way out, and thousands upon thousands of fighters have thronged to the red banner, as to a guiding star. Strikes have shown the workers the power of unity, have taught them to fight back, have shown how formidable to capital organised labour can be. The workers have seen that it is off their labour that the capitalists and the government live and get fat. The workers have been fired with the spirit of united struggle, with the aspiration for freedom and for socialism. The workers have realised what a dark and evil force the tsarist autocracy is. The workers need freedom for their struggle, but the tsarist government binds them hand and foot. The workers need freedom of assembly, freedom to organise, freedom for newspapers and books, but the tsarist government crushes, with knout, prison and bayonet, every striving for freedom. The cry "Down with the autocracy!" has swept through the length and breadth of Russia, it has been sounded more and more often in the streets, at great mass meetings of the workers. Last summer tens of thousands of workers throughout the South of Russia rose up to fight for a better life, for freedom from police tyranny. The bourgeoisie and government trem-

bled at the sight of the formidable army of workers, which at one stroke brought to a standstill the entire industrial life of huge cities. Dozens of fighters for the workers' cause fell beneath the bullets of the troops that tsarism sent against the internal enemy.

But there is no force that can vanquish this internal enemy, for the ruling classes and the government only live by its labour. There is no force on earth that could break the millions of workers, who are growing more and more class-conscious, more and more united and organised. Every defeat the workers sustain brings new fighters into the ranks, it awakens broader masses to new life and makes them prepare for fresh struggles.

And the events Russia is now passing through are such that this awakening of the worker masses is bound to be even more rapid and widespread, and we must strain every nerve to unite the ranks of the proletariat and prepare it for even more determined struggle. The war is making even the most backward sections of the proletariat take an interest in political affairs and problems. The war is showing up ever more clearly and vividly the utter rottenness of the autocratic order, the utter criminality of the police and court gang that is ruling Russia. Our people are perishing from want and starvation at home—yet they have been dragged into a ruinous and senseless war for alien territories lying thousands of miles away and inhabited by foreign races. Our people are ground down in political slavery—yet they have been dragged into a war for the enslavement of other peoples. Our people demand a change of political order at home—but it is sought to divert their attention by the thunder of guns at the other end of the world. But the tsarist government has gone too far in its gamble, in its criminal squandering of the nation's wealth and young manhood, sent to die on the shores of the Pacific. Every war puts a strain on the people, and the difficult war against cultured and free Japan is a frightful strain upon Russia. And this strain comes at a time when the structure of police despotism has already begun to totter under the blows of the awakening proletariat. The war is laying bare all the weak spots of the government, the war is tearing off all false disguises, the war is revealing all the inner rottenness; the war is making

the preposterousness of the tsarist autocracy obvious to all and is showing everyone the death-agony of the old Russia, the Russia where the people are disfranchised, ignorant and cowed, the Russia that is still in serf bondage to the police government.

The old Russia is dying. A free Russia is coming to take its place. The dark forces that guarded the tsarist autocracy are going under. But only the class-conscious and organised proletariat can deal them their death-blow. Only the class-conscious and organised proletariat can win real, not sham, freedom for the people. Only the class-conscious and organised proletariat can thwart every attempt to deceive the people, to curtail their rights, to make them a mere tool in the hands of the bourgeoisie.

Comrade workers! Let us then prepare with redoubled energy for the decisive battle that is at hand! Let the ranks of the Social-Democrat proletarians close ever firmer! Let their word spread ever farther afield! Let campaigning for the workers' demands be carried on ever more boldly! Let the celebration of May Day win thousands of new fighters to our cause and swell our forces in the great struggle for the freedom of all the people, for the liberation of all who toil from the yoke of capital!

Long live the eight-hour day!

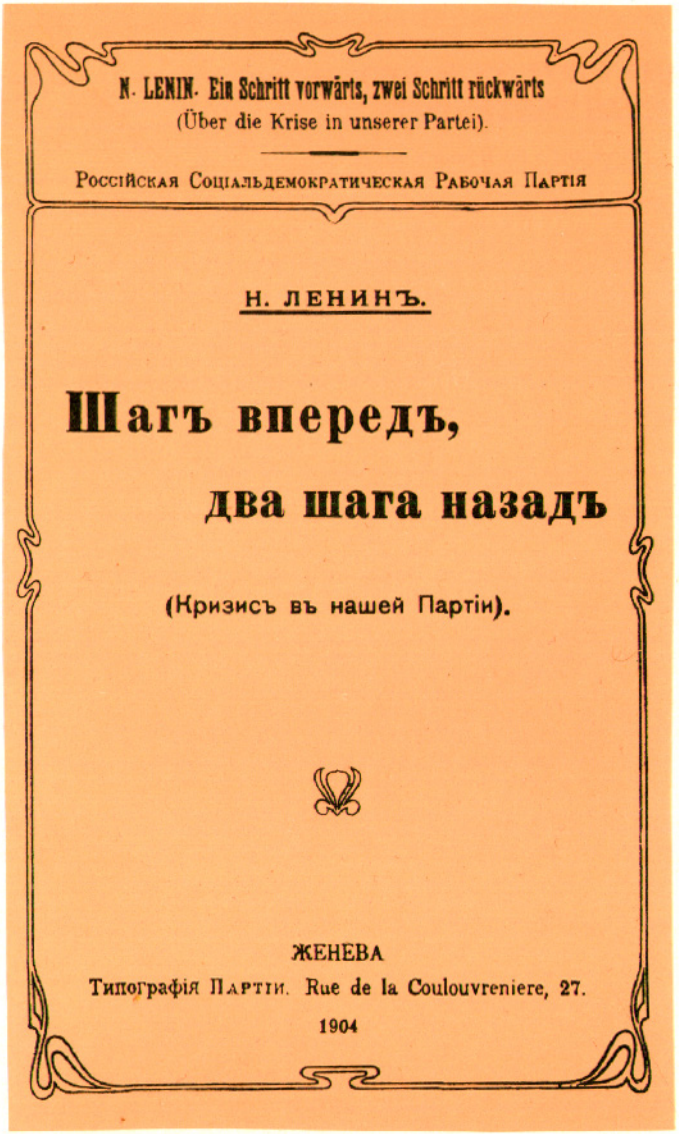
Long live international revolutionary Social-Democracy!

Down with the criminal and plundering tsarist autocracy!

Written in April 1904

Published, with alterations, in leaflet form in April 1904

Published according to the manuscript



Cover of the original edition of
One Step Forward, Two Steps Back. 1904
Reduced

ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK

(THE CRISIS IN OUR PARTY)[88]

Written in February-May 1904
Published in book form
in Geneva, May 1904

Published according to
the book text after
collation with the
manuscript and with
the text in the collection:
Vl. Ilyin. *Twelve Years*,
1907

PREFACE

When a prolonged, stubborn and heated struggle is in progress, there usually begin to emerge after a time the central and fundamental points at issue, upon the decision of which the ultimate outcome of the campaign depends, and in comparison with which all the minor and petty episodes of the struggle recede more and more into the background.

That, too, is how matters stand in the struggle within our Party, which for six months now has been riveting the attention of all members of the Party. And precisely because in the present outline of the whole struggle I have had to refer to many details which are of infinitesimal interest, and to many squabbles which at bottom are of no interest whatever, I should like from the very outset to draw the reader's attention to two really central and fundamental points, points which are of tremendous interest, of undoubted historical significance, and which are the most urgent political questions confronting our Party today.

The first question is that of the political significance of the division of our Party into "majority" and "minority" which took shape at the Second Party Congress and pushed all previous divisions among Russian Social-Democrats far into the background.

The second question is that of the significance in principle of the new *Iskra*'s position on organisational questions, insofar as this position is really based on principle.

The first question concerns the starting-point of the struggle in our Party, its source, its causes, and its fundamental political character. The second question concerns the ultimate outcome of the struggle, its finale, the sum-total of

principles that results from adding up all that pertains to the realm of principle and subtracting all that pertains to the realm of squabbling. The answer to the first question is obtained by analysing the struggle at the Party Congress; the answer to the second, by analysing what is new in the principles of the new *Iskra*. Both these analyses, which make up nine-tenths of my pamphlet, lead to the conclusion that the "majority" is the revolutionary, and the "minority" the opportunist wing of our Party; the disagreements that divide the two wings at the present time for the most part concern, not questions of programme or tactics, but only organisational questions; the new system of views that emerges the more clearly in the new *Iskra* the more it tries to lend profundity to its position, and the more that position becomes cleared of squabbles about co-optation, is opportunism in matters of organisation.

The principal shortcoming of the existing literature on the crisis in our Party is, as far as the study and elucidation of facts is concerned, the almost complete absence of an analysis of the minutes of the Party Congress; and as far as the elucidation of fundamental principles of organisation is concerned, the failure to analyse the connection which unquestionably exists between the basic error committed by Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod in their formulation of Paragraph 1 of the Rules and their defence of that formulation, on the one hand, and the whole "system" (insofar as one can speak here of a system) of *Iskra*'s present principles of organisation, on the other. The present editors of *Iskra* apparently do not even notice this connection, although the importance of the controversy over Paragraph 1 has been referred to again and again in the literature of the "majority". As a matter of fact, Comrade Axelrod and Comrade Martov are now only deepening, developing and extending their initial error with regard to Paragraph 1. As a matter of fact, the entire position of the opportunists in organisational questions already began to be revealed in the controversy over Paragraph 1: their advocacy of a diffuse, not strongly welded, Party organisation; their hostility to the idea (the "bureaucratic" idea) of building the Party from the top downwards, starting from the Party Congress and the bodies set up by it; their tendency to proceed from the

bottom upwards, allowing every professor, every high-school student and "every striker" to declare himself a member of the Party; their hostility to the "formalism" which demands that a Party member should belong to one of the organisations recognised by the Party; their leaning towards the mentality of the bourgeois intellectual, who is only prepared to "accept organisational relations platonically"; their penchant for opportunist profundity and for anarchistic phrases; their tendency towards autonomism as against centralism—in a word, all that is now blossoming so luxuriantly in the new *Iskra*, and is helping more and more to reveal fully and graphically the initial error.

As for the minutes of the Party Congress, the truly undeserved neglect of them can only be explained by the fact that our controversies have been cluttered by squabbles, and possibly by the fact that these minutes contain too large an amount of too unpalatable truth. The minutes of the Party Congress present a picture of the actual state of affairs in our Party that is unique of its kind and unparalleled for its accuracy, completeness, comprehensiveness, richness and authenticity; a picture of views, sentiments and plans drawn by the participants in the movement themselves; a picture of the political shades existing in the Party, showing their relative strength, their mutual relations and their struggles. It is the minutes of the Party Congress, and they alone, that show us how far we have really succeeded in making a clean sweep of the survivals of the old, purely circle ties and substituting for them a single great party tie. It is the duty of every Party member who wishes to take an intelligent share in the affairs of his Party to make a careful study of our Party Congress. I say study advisedly, for merely to read the mass of raw material contained in the minutes is not enough to obtain a picture of the Congress. Only by careful and independent study can one reach (as one should) a stage where the brief digests of the speeches, the dry extracts from the debates, the petty skirmishes over minor (seemingly minor) issues will combine to form one whole, enabling the Party member to conjure up the living figure of each prominent speaker and to obtain a full idea of the political complexion of each group of delegates to the Party Congress. If the writer of these lines only succeeds in stimulat-

ing the reader to make a broad and independent study of the minutes of the Party Congress, he will feel that his work was not done in vain.

One more word to the opponents of Social-Democracy They gloat and grimace over our disputes; they will, of course, try to pick isolated passages from my pamphlet, which deals with the failings and shortcomings of our Party, and to use them for their own ends. The Russian Social-Democrats are already steeled enough in battle not to be perturbed by these pinpricks and to continue, in spite of them, their work of self-criticism and ruthless exposure of their own shortcomings, which will unquestionably and inevitably be overcome as the working-class movement grows. As for our opponents, let them try to give us a picture of the *true* state of affairs in their own "parties" even remotely approximating that given by the minutes of our Second Congress!

N. Lenin

May 1904

A. THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE CONGRESS

There is a saying that everyone is entitled to curse his judges for twenty-four hours. Our Party Congress, like any congress of any party, was also the judge of certain persons, who laid claim to the position of leaders but who met with discomfiture. Today these representatives of the "minority" are, with a naïveté verging on the pathetic, "cursing their judges" and doing their best to discredit the Congress, to belittle its importance and authority. This striving has been expressed most vividly, perhaps, in an article in *Iskra*, No. 57, by "Practical Worker",[89] who feels outraged at the idea of the Congress being a sovereign "divinity". This is so characteristic a trait of the new *Iskra* that it cannot be passed over in silence. The editors, the majority of whom were *rejected* by the Congress, continue, on the one hand, to call themselves a "Party" editorial board, while, on the other, they accept with open arms people who declare that the Congress was not divine. Charming, is it not? To be sure, gentlemen, the Congress was not divine; but what must we think of people who begin to "blackguard" the Congress *after* they have met with defeat at it?

For indeed, let us recall the main facts in the history of the preparations for the Congress.

Iskra declared at the very outset, in its announcement of publication in 1900, that before we could unite, lines of demarcation must be drawn. *Iskra* endeavoured to make the Conference of 1902"[90] a private meeting and not a Party Congress.* *Iskra* acted with extreme caution in the summer and autumn of 1902 when it re-established the Organising

* See Minutes of the Second Congress, p. 20.

Committee elected at that conference. At last the work of demarcation was finished—as we all acknowledged. The Organising Committee was constituted at the very end of 1902. *Iskra* welcomed its firm establishment, and in an *editorial* article in its 32nd issue declared that the convocation of a Party Congress was a *most urgent* and pressing necessity.* Thus, the last thing we can be accused of is having been hasty in convening the Second Congress. We were, in fact, guided by the maxim: measure your cloth seven times before you cut it; and we had every moral right to expect that after the cloth had been cut our comrades would not start complaining and measuring it all over again.

The Organising Committee drew up very precise (formalistic and bureaucratic, those would say who are now using these words to cover up their political spinelessness) Regulations for the Second Congress, got them passed by all the committees, and finally endorsed them, stipulating among other things, in Point 18, that "all decisions of the Congress and all the elections it carries out are decisions of the Party and binding on all Party organisations. They cannot be challenged by anyone on any pretext whatever and can be rescinded or amended only by the next Party Congress".** How innocent in themselves, are they not, are these words, accepted at the time without a murmur, as something axiomatic; yet how strange they sound today—like a verdict against the "minority"! Why was this point included? Merely as a formality? Of course not. This provision seemed necessary, and was indeed necessary, because the Party consisted of a number of isolated and independent groups, which might refuse to recognise the Congress. This provision in fact expressed the *free will* of all the revolutionaries (which is now being talked about so much, and so irrelevantly, the term "free" being euphemistically applied to what really deserves the epithet "capricious"). It was equivalent to a *word of honour* mutually pledged by all the Russian Social-Democrats. It was intended to guarantee that all the tremendous effort, danger and expense entailed by the

---

* See present edition, Vol. 6, p. 309.—*Ed.*

** See Minutes of the Second Congress, pp. 22-23 and 380.

Congress should not be in vain, that the Congress should not be turned into a farce. It in advance qualified any refusal to recognise the decisions and *elections* at the Congress as a *breach of faith*.

Who is it, then, that the new *Iskra* is scoffing at when it makes the new discovery that the Congress was not divine and its decisions are not sacrosanct? Does that discovery imply "new views on organisation", or only new attempts to cover up old tracks?

B. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE VARIOUS GROUPINGS AT THE CONGRESS

Thus, the Congress was called after the most careful preparation and on the basis of the fullest representation. The general recognition that its composition was correct and its decisions *absolutely* binding found expression also in the statement of the chairman (Minutes, p. 54) after the Congress had been constituted.

What was the principal task of the Congress? To create a *real* party on the basis of the principles and organisational ideas that had been advanced and elaborated by *Iskra*. That this was the direction in which the Congress had to work was predetermined by the three years' activities of *Iskra* and by the recognition of the latter by the majority of the committees. *Iskra*'s programme and trend were to become the programme and trend of the Party; *Iskra*'s organisational plans were to be embodied in the Rules of Organisation of the Party. But it goes without saying that this could not be achieved without a struggle: since the Congress was so highly representative, the participants included organisations which had vigorously fought *Iskra* (the Bund and *Rabocheye Dyelo*) and organisations which, while verbally recognising *Iskra* as the leading organ, actually pursued plans of their own and were unstable in matters of principle (the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group and delegates from some of the committees who were closely associated with it). Under these circumstances, the Congress could not but become an *arena of struggle for the victory of the* "*Iskra*" *trend*. That it did become such an arena will at once be apparent to all who peruse its minutes with any degree of

attention. Our task now is to trace in detail the principal groupings revealed at the Congress on various issues and to reconstruct, on the basis of the precise data of the minutes, the political complexion of each of the main groups. What precisely were these groups, trends and shades which, at the Congress, were to unite under the guidance of *Iskra* into a single party?—that is what we must show by analysing the debates and the voting. The elucidation of this is of cardinal importance both for a study of what our Social-Democrats really are and for an understanding of the causes of the divergence among them. That is why, in my speech at the League Congress and in my letter to the editors of the new *Iskra*, I gave prime place to an analysis of the various groupings. My opponents of the "minority" (headed by Martov) utterly failed to grasp the substance of the question. At the League Congress they confined themselves to corrections of detail, trying to "vindicate" themselves from the charge of having swung towards opportunism, but not even attempting to counter my picture of the groupings at the Congress by drawing *any different one*. Now Martov tries in *Iskra* (No. 56) to represent every attempt clearly to delimit the various political groups at the Congress as mere "circle politics". Strong language, Comrade Martov! But the strong language of the new *Iskra* has this peculiar quality: one has only to reproduce all the stages of our divergence, from the Congress onwards, for all this strong language to turn *completely and primarily* against the present editorial board. Take a look at yourselves, you so-called Party editors who talk about circle politics!

Martov now finds the facts of our struggle at the Congress so unpleasant that he tries to slur over them altogether. "An *Iskra*-ist," he says, "is one who, at the Party Congress and prior to it, expressed his complete solidarity with *Iskra*, advocated its programme and its views on organisation and supported its organisational policy. There were over forty such *Iskra*-ists at the Congress—that was the number of votes cast for *Iskra*'s programme and for the resolution adopting *Iskra* as the Central Organ of the Party." Open the Congress Minutes, and you will find that the programme was adopted by the votes of *all* (p. 233) except Akimov, who abstained. Thus, Comrade Martov wants to assure us that

the Bundists, and Brouckère, and Martynov *demonstrated* their "complete solidarity" with *Iskra* and *advocated* its views on organisation! This is ridiculous. The fact that *after* the Congress *all* who took part became equal members of the Party (and not even all, for the Bundists had withdrawn) is here jumbled with the question of the grouping that evoked the struggle *at* the Congress. Instead of a study of the *elements* that went to make up the "majority" and the "minority" after the Congress, we get the official phrase, "recognised the programme"!

Take the voting on the adoption of *Iskra* as the Central Organ. You will see that it was Martynov—whom Comrade Martov, with a courage worthy of a better cause, now credits with having advocated *Iskra*'s organisational views and organisational policy—who insisted on separating the two parts of the resolution: the bare adoption of *Iskra* as the Central Organ, and the recognition of its services. When the first part of the resolution (recognising the services of *Iskra*, expressing *solidarity* with it) was put to the vote, *only thirty-five votes* were cast in favour; there were two votes against (Akimov and Brouckère) and eleven abstentions (Martynov, the five Bundists and the five votes of the editorial board: the two votes each of Martov and myself and Plekhanov's one). Consequently, the anti-*Iskra* group (five Bundists and three *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists) is quite apparent in this instance also, one most advantageous to Martov's present views and chosen by himself. Take the voting on the second part of the resolution—adopting *Iskra* as the Central Organ without any statement of motives or expression of solidarity (Minutes, p. 147): forty-four votes *in favour*, which the Martov of today classes as *Iskra*-ist. The total number of votes to be cast was fifty-one; subtracting the five votes of the editors, who abstained, we get forty-six; two voted *against* (Akimov and Brouckère); consequently, the remaining forty-four include *all five Bundist*. And so, the Bundists at the Congress "expressed complete solidarity with *Iskra*"—this is how official history is written by the official *Iskra*! Running ahead somewhat, we will explain to the reader the real reasons for this official truth: the present editorial board of *Iskra* could and would have been a real Party editorial board (and not a quasi-Party one, as it is today) *if the Bundists and*

ROSMARX
16 MAO
NOT FOR
COMMERCIAL
DISTRIBUTION

the "Rabocheye Dyelo"-ists had not withdrawn from the Congress; that is why these trusty guardians of the present, so-called Party editorial board had to be proclaimed *Iskra*-ists. But I shall speak of this in greater detail later.

The next question is: if the Congress was a struggle between the *Iskra*-ist and the anti-*Iskra*-ist elements, were there no intermediate, unstable elements who vacillated between the two? Anyone at all familiar with our Party and with the picture generally presented by congresses of every kind will be inclined *a priori* to answer the question in the affirmative. Comrade Martov is now very reluctant to recall these unstable elements, so he represents the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group and the delegates who gravitated towards it as typical *Iskra*-ists, and our differences with them as paltry and unimportant. Fortunately, we now have before us the complete text of the minutes and are able to answer the question—a question of fact, of course—on the basis of documentary evidence. What we said above about the general grouping at the Congress does not, of course, claim to answer the question, but only to present it correctly.

Without an analysis of the political groupings, without having a picture of the Congress as a struggle between definite shades, the divergence between us cannot be understood at all. Martov's attempt to gloss over the different shades by ranking even the Bundists with the *Iskra*-ists is simply an evasion of the question. Even *a priori*, on the basis of the history of the Russian Social-Democratic movement before the Congress, three main groups are to be noted (for subsequent verification and detailed study): the *Iskra*-ists, the anti-*Iskra*-ists, and the unstable, vacillating, wavering elements.

C. BEGINNING OF THE CONGRESS. THE ORGANISING COMMITTEE INCIDENT

The most convenient way to analyse the debates and the voting is to take them in the order of the Congress sittings, so as successively to note the political shades as they became more and more apparent. Only when absolutely necessary will departures from the chronological order be made for the purpose of considering together closely allied questions

or similar groupings. For the sake of impartiality, we shall endeavour to mention *all* the more important votes, omitting, of course, the innumerable votes on minor issues, which took up an inordinate amount of time at our Congress (owing partly to our inexperience and inefficiency in dividing the material between the commissions and the plenary sittings, and partly to quibbling which bordered on obstruction).

The first question to evoke a debate which began to reveal differences of shades was whether first place should be given (on the Congress "order of business") to the item: "Position of the Bund in the Party" (Minutes, pp. 29-33). From the standpoint of the *Iskra*-ists, which was advocated by Plekhanov, Martov, Trotsky, and myself, there could be no doubt on this score. The Bund's withdrawal from the Party strikingly bore out our view: if the Bund refused to go our way and accept the principles of organisation which the majority of the Party shared with *Iskra*, it was useless and senseless to "make believe" that we were going the same way and only drag out the Congress (as the Bundists did drag it out). The matter had already been fully clarified in our literature, and it was apparent to any at all thoughtful Party member that all that remained was to put the question frankly, and bluntly and honestly make the choice: autonomy (in which case we go the same way), or federation (in which case our ways part).

Evasive in their entire policy, the Bundists wanted to be evasive here too and postpone the matter. They were joined by Comrade Akimov, who, evidently on behalf of all the followers of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, at once brought up the differences with *Iskra* over questions of organisation (Minutes, p. 31). The Bund and *Rabocheye Dyelo* were supported by Comrade Makhov (representing the two votes of the Nikolayev Committee—which shortly before had expressed its solidarity with *Iskra*!). To Comrade Makhov the matter was altogether unclear, and another "sore spot", he considered, was "the question of a democratic system or, on the contrary [mark this!], centralism"—exactly like the majority of our present "Party" editorial board, who at the Congress had not yet noticed this "sore spot"!

Thus the *Iskra*-ists were opposed by the Bund, *Rabocheye Dyelo* and Comrade Makhov, who together controlled

the ten votes which were cast against us (p. 33). *Thirty votes* were cast *in favour*—this is the figure, as we shall see later, around which the votes of the *Iskra*-ists often fluctuated. Eleven abstained, apparently not taking the side of either of the contending "parties". It is interesting to note that when we took the vote on Paragraph 2 of the Rules of the Bund (it was the rejection of this Paragraph 2 that caused the Bund to withdraw from the Party), the votes in favour of it and the abstentions also amounted to ten (Minutes, p. 289), the abstainers being the three *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists (Brouckère, Martynov, and Akimov) and Comrade Makhov. Clearly, the grouping in the vote on the *place* of the Bund item on the agenda was *not fortuitous*. Clearly, all these comrades differed with *Iskra* not only on the technical question of the order of discussion, but *in essence as well*. In the case of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, this difference in essence is clear to everyone, while Comrade Makhov gave an inimitable description of his attitude in the speech he made on the withdrawal of the Bund (Minutes, pp. 289-90). It is worth while dwelling on this speech. Comrade Makhov said that after the resolution rejecting federation, "the position of the Bund in the R.S.D.L.P. ceased to be for me a question of principle and became a question of practical politics in relation to an historically evolved national organisation". "Here," the speaker continued, "I could not but take into account all the consequences that might follow from our vote, and would therefore have voted for Paragraph 2 in its entirety." Comrade Makhov has admirably imbibed the spirit of "practical politics": in principle he had *already* rejected federation, and *therefore* in practice *he would have voted* for including in the Rules a point that signified federation! And this "practical" comrade explained his profound position of principle in the following words: "But [the famous Shchedrin "but"!] since my voting one way or the other would only have significance in principle [!!] and could not be of any practical importance, in view of the almost unanimous vote of all the other Congress delegates, I preferred to abstain in order to bring out in principle [God preserve us from such principles!] the difference between my position on this question and the position of the Bund delegates, who voted in favour. Conversely, I would have voted in favour if the

Bund delegates had abstained, as they had at first insisted." Can you make head or tail of it? A man of principle abstains from loudly saying "Yes" because practically it is useless when everybody else says "No".

After the vote on the place of the Bund item on the agenda, the question of the Borba group cropped up at the Congress; it too led to an extremely interesting grouping and was closely bound up with the "sorest" point at the Congress, namely, the personal composition of the central bodies. The committee appointed to determine the composition of the Congress pronounced against inviting the Borba group, in accordance with a *twice-adopted* decision of the Organising Committee (see Minutes, pp. 383 and 375) and the report of *the latter's representatives on this committee* (p. 35).

Thereupon Comrade Egorov, *a member of the Organising Committee*, declared that "the question of Borba" (mark, of Borba, not of some particular member of it) was "new to him", and demanded an adjournment. How a question on which the Organising Committee had twice taken a decision could be new to a member of the Organising Committee remains a mystery. During the adjournment the Organising Committee held a meeting (Minutes, p. 40), attended by such of its members as happened to be at the Congress (several members of the Organising Committee, old members of the *Iskra* organisation, were not at the Congress).* Then began a debate about Borba. The *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists spoke in favour (Martynov, Akimov, and Brouckère—pp. 36-38), the *Iskra*-ists (Pavlovich, Sorokin, Lange,[92] Trotsky, Martov, and others)—against. Again the Congress split up into the grouping with which we are already familiar. The struggle over Borba was a stubborn one, and Comrade Martov made a very circumstantial (p. 38) and "militant" speech, in which he rightly referred to "inequality of representation" of the groups in Russia and abroad, and said that it would hardly be "well" to allow a foreign group any "privilege" (golden words, particularly edifying today, in the light of the events since the Congress!), and that we should not

* Concerning this meeting, see the "Letter" of Pavlovich,[91] who was A member of the Organising Committee and who before the Congress was *unanimously* elected as the editorial board's trusted representative, its seventh member (League Minutes, p. 44.).

encourage "the organisational chaos in the Party that was characterised by a disunity not justified by any considerations of principle" (one right in the eye for ... the "minority" at our Party Congress!). Except for the followers of *Rabocheye Dyelo*, *nobody* came out openly and with reasoned motives in favour of Borba until the list of speakers was closed (p. 40). It should be said in fairness to Comrade Akimov and his friends that they at least did not wriggle and hide, but frankly advocated their line, frankly said what they wanted.

After the list of speakers had been closed, when it was already out of order to speak *on the issue itself*, Comrade Egorov "insistently demanded that a decision just adopted by the Organising Committee be heard". It is not surprising that the delegates were outraged at this manoeuvre, and Comrade Plekhanov, the chairman, expressed his "astonishment that Comrade Egorov should insist upon his demand". One thing or the other, one would think: either take an open and definite stand before the whole Congress on the question at issue, or say nothing at all. But to allow the list of speakers to be closed and then, under the guise of a "reply to the debate", confront the Congress with a *new* decision of the Organising Committee on the very subject that had been under discussion, was like a stab in the back!

When the sitting was resumed after dinner, the Bureau, still in perplexity, decided to waive "formalities" and resort to the last method, adopted at congresses only in extreme cases, viz., "comradely explanation". The spokesman of the Organising Committee, Popov, announced the committee's decision, which had been adopted by all its members against one, Pavlovich (p. 43), and which recommended the Congress to invite Ryazanov.

Pavlovich declared that he had challenged and continued to challenge the lawfulness of the Organising Committee meeting, and that the Committee's new decision "*contradicts its earlier decision*". This statement caused an uproar. Comrade Egorov, also an Organising Committee member and a member of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group, evaded answering on the actual point in question and tried to make the central issue one of discipline. He claimed that Comrade Pavlovich had violated Party discipline (1), for, having heard his protest, the Organising Committee had decided "not to lay

Pavlovich's dissenting opinion before the Congress". The debate shifted to the question of Party discipline, and Plekhanov, amid the loud applause of the delegates, explained for the edification of Comrade Egorov that "*we have no such thing as binding instructions*" (p. 42; cf. p. 379, Regulations for the Congress, Point 7: "The powers of delegates must not be restricted by binding instructions. In the exercise of their powers, delegates are absolutely free and independent"). "The Congress is the supreme Party authority", and, consequently, he violates Party discipline and the Congress Regulations who in any way restricts any delegate in taking *directly* to the Congress *any* question of Party life whatsoever. The issue thus came down to this: circles or a party? Were the rights of delegates to be restricted at the Congress in the name of the imaginary rights or rules of the various bodies and circles, or were *all* lower bodies and old groups to be *completely*, and not nominally but actually, disbanded in face of the Congress, pending the creation of genuinely Party official institutions? The reader will already see from this how profoundly important from the standpoint of principle was this dispute at the very outset (the third sitting) of this Congress whose purpose was the actual restoration of the Party. Focused in this dispute, as it were, was the conflict between the old circles and small groups (such as *Yuzhny Rabochy*) and the renascent Party. And the anti-*Iskra* groups at once revealed themselves: the Bundist Abramson, Comrade Martynov, that ardent ally of the present *Iskra* editorial board, and our friend Comrade Makhov all sided with Egorov and the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group against Pavlovich. Comrade Martynov, who now vies with Martov and Axelrod in sporting "democracy" in organisation, even cited the example of ... the army, where an appeal to a superior authority can only be made through a lower one!! The true meaning of this "compact" anti-*Iskra* opposition was quite clear to everyone who was present at the Congress or who had carefully followed the internal history of our Party prior to the Congress. It was the purpose of the opposition (perhaps not always realised by all of its representatives, and sometimes pursued by force of inertia) to guard the independence, individualism and parochial interests of the small, petty groups from being

swallowed up in the broad Party that was being built on the *Iskra* principles.

It was precisely from this angle that the question was approached by Comrade Martov, who had not yet joined forces with Martynov. Comrade Martov vigorously took the field, and rightly so, against those whose "notion of Party discipline does not go beyond a revolutionary's duty to the particular group of a *lower* order to which he belongs". "No *compulsory* [Martov's italics] grouping can be tolerated within a united Party," he explained to the champions of the circle mentality, not foreseeing what a flail these words would be for his own political conduct at the end of the Congress and after.... A compulsory grouping cannot be tolerated in the case of the Organising Committee, but can quite well be tolerated in the case of the editorial board. Martov condemns a compulsory grouping when he looks at it from the centre, but Martov defends it the moment he finds himself dissatisfied with the composition of the centre....

It is interesting to note that in his speech Comrade Martov laid particular stress not only on Comrade Egorov's "profound error", but also on the political instability the Organising Committee had displayed. "A recommendation has been submitted on behalf of the Organising Committee," he exclaimed in just indignation, "which *runs counter* to the committee report [based, we will add, on the report of members of the Organising Committee—p. 43, Koltsov's remarks] and *to the Organising Committee's own earlier recommendations*." (My italics.) As we see, *at that time*, before his "swing-over", Martov clearly realised that substituting Ryazanov for Borba in no way removed the utter contradictoriness and inconsistency of the Organising Committee's actions (Party members may learn from the League Congress Minutes, p. 57, how Martov conceived the matter after his swing-over). Martov did not confine himself then to analysing the issue of discipline; he bluntly asked the Organising Committee: "What new circumstance has arisen to necessitate the *change*?" (My italics.) And, indeed, when the Organising Committee made its recommendation, it did not even have the courage to defend its opinion openly, as Akimov and the others did. Martov denies this (League Minutes, p. 56), but whoever reads the minutes of the Congress will

see that he is mistaken. Popov, in submitting the Organising Committee recommendation, *did not say a word* about the motives (Party Congress Minutes, p. 41). Egorov shifted the issue to one of discipline, and all he said on the question itself was: "The Organising Committee may have had new reasons [but whether it did, and what those new reasons were, is unknown]; it could have forgotten to nominate somebody, and so on. [This "and so on" was the speaker's sole refuge, for the Organising Committee could not have *forgotten* about Borba, which it had discussed twice before the Congress and once in the committee.] The Organising Committee did not adopt this decision not because it had changed its attitude towards the Borba group, but because it wants to remove unnecessary rocks in the path of the Party's future central organisation at the very outset of its activities." This is not a reason, but an evasion of a reason. Every sincere Social-Democrat (and we do not entertain the least doubt about the sincerity of any Congress delegate) is concerned to remove what *he considers* to be sunken rocks, and to remove them by *those methods* which *he considers* advisable. Giving reasons means explicitly stating and explaining one's view of things, and not making shift with truisms. And they *could not* give a reason without "changing their attitude towards Borba", because in its earlier and contrary decisions the Organising Committee had also been concerned to remove sunken rocks, but it had then regarded the very opposite as "rocks". And Comrade Martov very severely and very rightly attacked this argument, saying that it was "*petty*" and inspired by a wish to "*burke the issue*", and advising the Organising Committee "*not to be afraid of what people will say*". These words characterise perfectly the essential nature of the political shade which played so large a part at the Congress and which is distinguished precisely by its want of independence, its pettiness, its lack of a line of its own, its fear of what people will say, its constant vacillation between the two definite sides, its fear of plainly stating its *credo*—in a word, by all the features of a "Marsh".*

* There are people in our Party today who are horrified when they hear this word, and raise an outcry about uncomradely methods of controversy. A strange perversion of sensibility due to ... a misapplied sense of official form! There is scarcely a political party acquainted

A consequence of this political spinelessness of the unstable group was, incidentally, that *no one* except the Bundist Yudin (p. 53) did put before the Congress a resolution to invite one of the members of the Borba group. Yudin's resolution received five votes—all Bundists, apparently: the vacillating elements had changed sides again! How large was the vote of the middle group is shown approximately by the voting on the resolutions of Koltsov and Yudin on this question: the *Iskra*-ist received thirty-two votes (p. 47), the Bundist received sixteen, that is, in addition to the eight anti-*Iskra*-ist votes, the two votes of Comrade Makhov (cf. p. 46), the four votes of the members of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group, and two others. We shall show in a moment that this alignment can by no means be regarded as accidental; but first let us briefly note Martov's *present* opinion of this Organising Committee incident. Martov maintained at the League that "Pavlovich and others fanned passions". One has only to consult the Congress Minutes to see that the longest, most heated and sharpest speeches against Borba and the Organising Committee were delivered by Martov himself. By trying to lay the "blame" on Pavlovich he only demonstrates his own instability: it was Pavlovich he helped to elect prior to the Congress as the seventh member of the editorial board; at the Congress he fully associated himself with Pavlovich (p. 44) against Egorov; but afterwards, having suffered defeat at the hands of Pavlovich, he began to accuse him of "fanning passions". This is ludicrous.

Martov waxes ironical in *Iskra* (No. 56) over the importance that was attached to whether X or Y should be invited. But again the irony turns against Martov, for it was this Organising Committee incident that started the dispute over such an "important" question as inviting X or Y on to the Central Committee or the Central Organ. It is unseemly to measure with two different yardsticks, depending on whether the matter concerns *your own* "group of a lower order"

---

with internal struggles that has managed to do without this term, by which the unstable elements who vacillate between the contending sides have always been designated. Even the Germans, who know how to keep their internal struggles within very definite bounds indeed, are not offended by the word *versumpft* (sunk in the marsh—*Ed.*), are not horrified, and do not display ridiculous official prudery.

(relative to the Party) or *someone else*'s. This is precisely a philistine and circle, not a Party attitude. A simple comparison of Martov's speech at the League (p. 57) with his speech at the Congress (p. 44) sufficiently demonstrates this. "I cannot understand," Martov said, *inter alia*, at the League, "how people can insist on calling themselves *Iskra*-ists and at the same time be ashamed of being *Iskra*-ists." A strange failure to understand the difference between "calling oneself" and "being"—between word and deed. Martov himself, at the Congress, *called himself* an opponent of compulsory groupings, yet, after the Congress, came to *be* a supporter of them....

D. DISSOLUTION OF THE *YUZHNY RABOCHY* GROUP

The alignment of the delegates over the Organising Committee question may perhaps seem accidental. But such an opinion would be wrong, and in order to dispel it we shall depart from the chronological order and at once examine an incident which occurred at the end of the Congress, but which was very closely connected with the one just discussed. This incident was the dissolution of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group. The organisational trend of *Iskra*—complete amalgamation of the Party forces and removal of the chaos dividing them—came into conflict here with the interests of *one* of the groups, which had done useful work when there was no real party, but which had become superfluous now that the work was being centralised. From the standpoint of circle interests, the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group was entitled no less than the old *Iskra* editorial board to lay claim to "continuity" and inviolability. But in the interests of the Party, it was its duty to submit to the transfer of its forces to "the appropriate Party organisations" (p. 313, end of resolution adopted by the Congress). From the standpoint of circle interests and "philistinism", the dissolution of a useful group, which no more desired it than did the old *Iskra* editorial board, could not but seem a "ticklish matter" (the expression used by Comrade Rusov and Comrade Deutsch). But from the standpoint of the interests of the Party, its dissolution, its "assimilation" in the Party (Gusev's expression), was essential. The *Yuzhny Rabochy* group bluntly declared that it "did not deem it

necessary" to proclaim itself dissolved and demanded that "the Congress definitely pronounce its opinion", and pronounce it "immediately: yes or no". The *Yuzhny Rabochy* group openly invoked the same "continuity" as the old *Iskra* editorial board began to invoke ... after it was dissolved! "Although we are all individually members of one Party," Comrade Egorov said, "it nevertheless consists of a number of organisations, with which we have to reckon as *historical entities*.... If such an organisation *is not detrimental to the Party*, *there is no need to dissolve it*."

Thus an important question of *principle* was quite definitely raised, and all the *Iskra*-ists—inasmuch as their own circle interests had not yet come to the forefront—took a decisive stand against the unstable elements (the Bundists and two of the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists had already withdrawn from the Congress; they would undoubtedly have been heart and soul in favour of "reckoning with historical entities"). The result of the vote was *thirty-one for*, five against and five abstentions (the four votes of the members of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group and one other, that of Byelov, most likely, judging by his earlier pronouncements, p. 308). A group of *ten votes* distinctly opposed to *Iskra*'s consistent organisational plan and defending the circle spirit as against the party spirit can be quite definitely discerned here. During the debate the *Iskra*-ists presented the question precisely from the standpoint of principle (see Lange's speech, p. 315), opposing parochial amateurishness and disunity, refusing to pay heed to the "sympathies" of individual organisations, and plainly declaring that "if the comrades of *Yuzhny Rabochy* had adhered more strictly to principle earlier, a year or two ago, the unity of the Party and the triumph of the programme principles we have sanctioned here would have been achieved sooner" . Orlov, Gusev, Lyadov, Muravyov, Rusov, Paylovich, Glebov, and Gorin all spoke in this strain. And far from protesting against these definite and repeated references made at the Congress to the lack of principle in the policy and "line" of *Yuzhny Rabochy*, of Makhov and of others, far from making any reservation on this score, the *Iskra*-ists of the "minority", in the person of Deutsch, vigorously associated themselves with these views, condemned "chaos", and welcomed the "blunt

way the question was put" (p. 315) by that very same Comrade Rusov who, *at this same sitting*, had the audacity—oh, horror!—to "bluntly put" the question of the old editorial board too on a purely Party basis (p. 325).

On the part of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group the proposal to dissolve it evoked violent indignation, traces of which are to be found in the minutes (it should not be forgotten that the minutes offer only a pale reflection of the debates, for they do not give the full speeches, but only very condensed summaries and extracts). Comrade Egorov even described as a "lie" the bare mention of the *Rabochaya Mysl* group[93] alongside of *Yuzhny Rabochy*—a characteristic sample of the attitude that prevailed at the Congress towards consistent Economism. Even much later, at the 37th sitting, Egorov spoke of the dissolution of *Yuzhny Rabochy* with the utmost irritation (p. 356), requesting to have it recorded in the minutes that during the discussion on *Yuzhny Rabochy* the members of the group had not been asked either about publication funds or about control by the Central Organ and the Central Committee. Comrade Popov hinted, during the debate on *Yuzhny Rabochy*, at a compact majority having predetermined the fate of the group. "*Now*," he said (p. 316), "*after the speeches of Comrades Gusev and Orlov*, *everything is clear*." The meaning of these words is unmistakable: now, after the *Iskra*-ists had stated their opinion and moved a resolution, everything was clear, i.e., it was clear that *Yuzhny Rabochy* would be dissolved, against its own wishes. Here the *Yuzhny Rabochy* spokesman himself drew a distinction between the *Iskra*-ists (and, moreover, *Iskra*-ists like Gusev and Orlov) and his own supporters, as representing different "lines" of organisational policy. And when the present-day *Iskra* represents the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group (and Makhov too, most likely?) as "typical *Iskra*-ists", it only demonstrates that the new editorial board has forgotten the most important (from this group's standpoint) events of the Congress and is anxious to cover up the evidence showing what elements went to form what is known as the "minority".

Unfortunately, the question of a popular periodical was not discussed at the Congress. It was very actively discussed by all the *Iskra*-ists both before the Congress and during

the Congress itself, outside the sittings, and they agreed that it would be highly irrational at this moment in the Party's life to launch such a publication or convert any of the existing ones for the purpose. The anti-*Iskra*-ists expressed the opposite opinion at the Congress; so did the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group in their report; and the fact that a motion to this effect, with ten signatures, was not tabled can only be attributed to chance, or to a disinclination to raise a "hopeless" issue.

E. THE EQUALITY OF LANGUAGES INCIDENT

Let us return to the chronological order of the Congress sittings.

We have now convincingly seen that even before the Congress proceeded to discuss its actual business, there was clearly revealed not only a perfectly definite group of anti-*Iskra*-ists (eight votes), but also a group of intermediate and unstable elements prepared to support the eight anti-*Iskra*-ists and increase their votes to roughly sixteen or eighteen.

The question of the position of the Bund in the Party, which was discussed at the Congress in extreme, excessive detail, reduced itself to deciding about the principle, while its practical decision was postponed until the discussion on organisation. Since the points involved had been given quite a lot of space in the press prior to the Congress, the discussion at the Congress produced relatively little that was new. It must, however, be mentioned that the supporters of *Rabocheye Dyelo* (Martynov, Akimov, and Brouckère), while agreeing with Martov's resolution, made the reservation that they found it inadequate and disagreed with the conclusions drawn from it (pp. 69, 73, 83 and 86).

After discussing the position of the Bund, the Congress passed on to the programme. This discussion centred mainly around amendments of detail which present but slight interest. The opposition of the anti-*Iskra*-ists on matters of principle found expression only in Comrade Martynov's onslaught on the famous presentation of the question of spontaneity and consciousness. Martynov was, of course, backed by the Bundists and *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists to a man. The un-

soundness of his objections was pointed out, among others, by Martov and Plekhanov. It should be noted as a curiosity that the *Iskra* editorial board (on second thoughts, apparently) have now gone over to Martynov's side and are saying the opposite of what they said at the Congress! Presumably, this is in accordance with the celebrated principle of "continuity".... It only remains for us to wait until the editorial board have thoroughly cleared up the question and explain to us just how far they agree with Martynov, on what points exactly, and since when. Meanwhile, we only ask: has anyone ever seen a *party* organ whose editorial board said after a congress the very opposite of what they had said at the congress?

Passing over the arguments about the adoption of *Iskra* as the Central Organ (we dealt with that above) and the beginning of the debate on the Rules (which it will be more convenient to examine in connection with the whole discussion of the Rules), let us consider the shades of principle revealed during the discussion of the programme. First of all let us note one detail of a highly characteristic nature, namely, the debate on proportional representation. Comrade Egorov of *Yuzhny Rabochy* advocated the inclusion of this point in the programme, and did so in a way that called forth the justified remark from Posadovsky (an *Iskra*-ist of the minority) that there was a "serious difference of opinion". "There can be no doubt," said Comrade Posadovsky, "that we do not agree on the following fundamental question: *should we subordinate our future policy to certain fundamental democratic principles and attribute absolute value to them*, or should all democratic principles be exclusively subordinated to the interests of our Party? I am decidedly in favour of the latter." Plekhanov "fully associated himself" with Posadovsky, objecting in even more definite and emphatic terms to "the absolute value of democratic principles" and to regarding them "abstractly". "Hypothetically," he said, "a case is conceivable where we Social-Democrats would oppose universal suffrage. There was a time when the bourgeoisie of the Italian republics deprived members of the nobility of political rights. The revolutionary proletariat may restrict the political rights of the upper classes in the same way as the upper classes used to restrict its polit-

ical rights." Plekhanov's speech was greeted with applause and *hissing*, and when Plekhanov protested against somebody's *Zwischenruf*,* "You should not hiss," and told the comrades not to restrain their demonstrations, Comrade Egorov got up and said: "Since such speeches call forth applause, I am obliged to hiss." Together with Comrade Goldblatt (a Bund delegate), Comrade Egorov challenged the views of Posadovsky and Plekhanov. Unfortunately, the debate was closed, and this question that had cropped up in it immediately vanished from the scene. But it is useless for Comrade Martov to attempt now to belittle or even altogether deny its significance by saying at the League Congress: "These words [Plekhanov's] aroused the indignation of some of the delegates; this could easily have been avoided if Comrade Plekhanov had added that it was of course impossible to imagine so tragic a situation as that the proletariat, in order to consolidate its victory, should have to trample on such political rights as freedom of the press.... (*Plekhanov*: '*Merci*.')" (League Minutes, p. 58.) This interpretation *directly* contradicts Comrade Posadovsky's categorical statement *at the Congress* about a "serious difference of opinion" and disagreement on a "fundamental question". On this fundamental question, all the *Iskra*-ists at the Congress *opposed* the spokesmen of the anti-*Iskra* "Right" (Goldblatt) and of the Congress "Centre" (Egorov). This is a fact, and one may safely assert that if the "Centre" (I hope this word will shock the "official" supporters of mildness less than any other...) had had occasion to speak "*without restraint*" (through the mouth of Comrade Egorov or Makhov) on this or on analogous questions, the serious difference of opinion would have been revealed at once.

It was revealed even more distinctly over the matter of "equality of languages" (Minutes, p. 171 et seq.). On this point it was not so much the debate that was so eloquent, but the voting: counting up the times a vote was taken, we get the incredible number of *sixteen*! Over what? Over whether it was enough to stipulate in the programme the equality of all citizens irrespective of sex, etc., *and language*, or whether it was necessary to stipulate "freedom of lan-

* Interjection from the floor.—*Ed*.

guage", or "equality of languages". Comrade Martov characterised this episode fairly accurately at the League Congress when he said that "a trifling dispute over the formulation of one point of the programme became a matter of principle because half the Congress was prepared to overthrow the Programme Committee". Precisely.* The immediate cause of the conflict was indeed trifling, yet it did become a matter of *principle* and consequently assumed terribly bitter forms, even to the point of attempts to "*overthrow*" the Programme Committee, of suspecting people of a desire to "*mislead the Congress*" (as Egorov suspected Martov!), and of personal remarks of the most ... abusive kind (p. 178). Even Comrade Popov "expressed regret that mere trifles had given rise to *such an atmosphere*" (my italics, p. 182) as prevailed during the course of three sittings (the 16th, 17th and 18th).

All these expressions very definitely and categorically point to the extremely important fact that the atmosphere of "suspicion" and of the most bitter farms of conflict ("overthrowing")—for which later, at the League Congress, the *Iskra*-ist majority were held responsible!—actually arose *long before we split into a majority and minority*. I repeat, this is a fact of enormous importance, a fundamental fact, and failure to understand it leads a great many people to very thoughtless conclusions about the majority at the end of the Congress having been artificial. From the present

* Martov added: "On this occasion much harm was done by Plekhanov's witticism about asses." (When the question of freedom of language was being discussed, a Bundist, I think it was, mentioned stud farms among other institutions, whereupon Plekhanov said in a loud undertone: "Horses don't talk, but asses sometimes do.") I cannot, of course, see anything particularly mild, accommodating, tactful or flexible about this witticism. But I find it strange that Martov, who admitted that the dispute became a *matter of principle*, made absolutely no attempt to analyse what this principle was and what shades of opinion found expression here, but confined himself to talking about the "harmfulness" of witticisms. This is indeed a bureaucratic and formalistic attitude! It is true that "much harm was done at the Congress" by cutting witticisms, levelled not only at the Bundists, but also at those whom the Bundists sometimes supported and even saved from defeat. However, once you admit that the incident involved principles, you cannot confine yourself to phrases about the "impermissibility" (League Minutes, p. 58) of certain witticisms.

point of view of Comrade Martov, who asserts that nine-tenths of the Congress delegates were *Iskra*-ists, the fact that "mere trifles", a "trivial" cause, could give rise to a conflict which became a "matter of principle" and nearly led to the overthrow of a Congress commission is absolutely inexplicable and absurd. It would be ridiculous to evade this *fact* with lamentations and regrets about "harmful" witticisms. No cutting witticisms could have made the conflict a matter of *principle*; it could become that only because of the character of the political groupings at the Congress. It was not cutting remarks and witticisms that gave rise to the conflict—they were only a *symptom* of the fact that the Congress political grouping itself harboured a "contradiction", that it harboured all the makings of a conflict, that it harboured an internal heterogeneity which burst forth with immanent force at the least cause, *even the most trifling*.

On the other hand, from the point of view from which I regard the Congress, and which I deem it my duty to uphold as a definite political interpretation of the events, even though this interpretation may seem offensive to some—from this point of view the desperately acute conflict of *principle* that arose from a "trifling" cause is quite explicable and inevitable. Since a struggle between the *Iskra*-ists and the anti-*Iskra*-ists went on *all the time* at our Congress, since between them stood unstable elements, and since the latter, together with the anti-*Iskra*-ists, controlled one-third of the votes (8 + 10 = 18, out of 51, according to my calculation, an approximate one, of course), it is perfectly clear and natural that *any falling away from the "Iskra"-ists of even a small minority* created the possibility of a victory for the anti-*Iskra* trend and therefore evoked a "frenzied" struggle. This was not the result of improper cutting remarks and attacks, but of the political combination. It was not cutting remarks that gave rise to the political conflict; it was the existence of a political conflict in the very grouping at the Congress that gave rise to cutting remarks and attacks—this contrast expresses the cardinal disagreement in principle between Martov and myself in appraising the political significance of the Congress and its results.

In all, there were during the Congress three major cases of a small number of *Iskra*-ists falling away from the major-

ity—over the equality of languages question, over Paragraph 1 of the Rules, and over the elections—and in all three cases a fierce struggle ensued, finally leading to the severe crisis we have in the Party today. For a political understanding of this crisis and this struggle, we must not confine ourselves to phrases about the impermissibility of witticisms, but must examine the political grouping of the shades that clashed at the Congress. The "equality of languages" incident is therefore doubly interesting as far as ascertaining the causes of the divergence is concerned, for here Martov was (still was!) an *Iskra*-ist and fought the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the "Centre" harder perhaps than anybody else.

The war opened with an argument between Comrade Martov and Comrade Lieber, the leader of the Bundists (pp. 171-72). Martov argued that the demand for "equality of citizens" was enough. "Freedom of language" was rejected, but "equality of languages" was forthwith proposed, and Comrade Egorov joined Lieber in the fray. Martov declared that it was *fetishism* "when speakers insist that nationalities are equal and transfer inequality to the sphere of language, whereas the question should be examined from just the opposite angle: inequality of nationalities exists, and one of its expressions is that people belonging to certain nations are deprived of the right to use their mother tongue" (p. 172). There Martov was absolutely right. The totally baseless attempt of Lieber and Egorov to insist on the correctness of their formulation and make out that we were unwilling or unable to uphold the principle of equality of nationalities was indeed a sort of fetishism. Actually, they were, like "fetish-worshippers", defending the word and not the principle, acting not from fear of committing an error of principle, but from fear of what people might say. This shaky mentality (what if "others" blame us for this?)—which we already noted in connection with the Organising Committee incident—was quite clearly displayed here by our entire "Centre". Another of its spokesmen, the Mining Area delegate Lvov, who stood close to *Yuzhny Rabochy*, declared that "the question of the suppression of languages which has been raised by the border districts is a very serious one. It is important to include a point on

language in our programme and thus obviate any possibility of the Social-Democrats being suspected of Russifying tendencies." A remarkable explanation of the "seriousness" of the question. It is very serious *because* possible suspicions on the part of the border districts must be obviated! The speaker says absolutely nothing on the substance of the question, he does not rebut the charge of fetishism but entirely confirms it, for he shows a complete lack of arguments of his own and merely talks about what the border districts may say. Everything they *may* say will be *untrue* —he is told. But instead of examining whether it is true or not, he replies: "*They may suspect.*"

Such a presentation of the question, coupled with the claim that it is serious and important, does indeed raise an issue of principle, but by no means the one the Liebers, Egorovs, and Lvovs would discern in it. The principle involved is: should we leave it to the organisations and members of the Party to apply the general and fundamental theses of the programme to their specific conditions, and to develop them for the purpose of such application, or are we, merely out of fear of suspicion, to fill the programme with petty details, minutiae, repetitions, and casuistry? The principle involved is: how can Social-Democrats discern ("suspect") in a fight against casuistry an attempt to restrict elementary democratic rights ana liberties? When are we going to wean ourselves at last from this fetishist worship of casuistry?—that was the thought that occurred to us when watching this struggle over "languages".

The grouping of the delegates in this struggle is made particularly clear by the abundant roll-call votes. There were as many as three. All the time the *Iskra* core was solidly opposed by the anti-*Iskra*-ists (eight votes) and, with very slight fluctuations, by the whole Centre (Makhov, Lvov, Egorov, Popov, Medvedev, Ivanov, Tsaryov, and Byelov—only the last two vacillated at first, now abstaining, now voting with us, and it was only during the third vote that their position became fully defined). Of the *Iskra*-ists, several fell away—chiefly the Caucasians (three with six votes)—and thanks to this the "fetishist" trend ultimately gained the upper hand. During the third vote, when the followers of both trends had clarified their position most fully,

the three Caucasians, with six votes, broke away from the majority *Iskra*-ists and went, over to the other side; two delegates—Posadovsky and Kostich—with two votes, fell away from the minority *Iskra*-ists. During the first two votes, the following had gone over to the other side or abstained: Lensky, Stepanov, and Gorsky of the *Iskra*-ist majority, and Deutsch of the minority. *The falling away of eight "Iskra"-ist votes* (*out of a total of thirty-three*) *gave the superiority to the coalition of the anti-"Iskra"-ists and the unstable elements*. It was just this *fundamental fact* of the Congress grouping that was repeated (only with *other Iskra*-ists falling away) during the vote on Paragraph 1 of the Rules and during the elections. It is not surprising that those who were defeated in the elections now carefully close their eyes to the *political reasons* for that defeat, to the *starting-points* of that conflict of shades which progressively revealed the unstable and politically spineless elements and exposed them ever more relentlessly in the eyes of the Party. The equality of languages incident shows us this conflict all the more clearly because at that time Comrade Martov had not yet earned the praises and approval of Akimov and Makhov.

F. THE AGRARIAN PROGRAMME

The inconsistency of principle of the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the "Centre" was also clearly brought out by the debate on the agrarian programme, which took up so much time at the Congress (see Minutes, pp. 190-226) and raised quite a number of extremely interesting points. As was to be expected, the campaign against the programme was launched by Comrade Martynov (after some minor remarks by Comrades Lieber and Egorov). He brought out the old argument about redressing "this particular historical injustice", whereby, he claimed, we were indirectly "sanctifying other historical injustices", and so on. He was joined by Comrade Egorov, who even found that "the significance of this programme is unclear. Is it a programme for ourselves, that is, does it define our demands, or do we want to make it popular?" (!?!?) Comrade Lieber said he "would like to make the same points as Comrade Egorov". Comrade Makhov spoke up in

his usual positive manner and declared that "the majority [?] of the speakers positively cannot understand what the programme submitted means and what its aims are". The proposed programme, you see, "can hardly be considered a Social-Democratic agrarian programme"; it ... "smacks somewhat of a game at redressing historical injustices"; it bears "the trace of demagogy and adventurism". As a theoretical justification of this profundity came the caricature and oversimplification so customary in vulgar Marxism: the *Iskra*-ists, we were told, "want to treat the peasants as something homogeneous in composition; but as the peasantry split up into classes long ago [?], advancing a single programme must inevitably render the whole programme demagogic and make it adventurist when put into practice (p. 202). Comrade Makhov here "blurted out" the real reason why our agrarian programme meets with the disapproval of many Social-Democrats, who are prepared to "recognise" *Iskra* (as Makhov himself did) but who have absolutely failed to grasp its trend, its theoretical and tactical position. It was the vulgarisation of Marxism as applied to so complex and many-sided a phenomenon as the present-day system of Russian peasant economy, and not differences over particulars, that was and is responsible for the failure to understand this programme. And on this vulgar-Marxist standpoint the leaders of the anti-*Iskra* elements (Lieber and Martynov) and of the "Centre" (Egorov and Makhov) quickly found themselves in harmony. Comrade Egorov gave frank expression also to one of the characteristic features of *Yuzhny Rabochy* and the groups and circles gravitating towards it, namely, their failure to grasp the importance of the peasant movement, their failure to grasp that it was not overestimation, but, on the contrary, underestimation of its importance (and a lack of forces to utilise it) that was the weak side of our Social-Democrats at the time of the first famous peasant revolts. "I am far from sharing the infatuation of the editorial board for the peasant movement," said Comrade Egorov, "an infatuation to which many Social-Democrats have succumbed since the peasant disturbances." But, unfortunately, Comrade Egorov did not take the trouble to give the Congress any precise idea of what this infatuation of the *editorial board* consisted in; he did not take

the trouble to make specific reference to any of the material published by *Iskra*. Moreover, he forgot that *all* the fundamental points of our agrarian programme had already been developed by *Iskra* in its third issue,* that is, *long before* the peasant disturbances. Those whose "recognition" of *Iskra* was not merely verbal might well have given a little more attention to its theoretical and tactical principles!

"No, we cannot do much among the peasants!" Comrade Egorov exclaimed, and he went on to indicate that this exclamation was not meant as a protest against any particular "infatuation", but as a denial of our entire position: "It means that our slogan cannot compete with the slogan of the adventurists." A most characteristic formulation of an unprincipled attitude, which reduces everything to "competition" between the slogans of different parties! And this was said after the speaker had pronounced himself "satisfied" with the theoretical explanations, which pointed out that we strove for lasting success in our agitation, undismayed by temporary failures, and that lasting success (as against the resounding clamour of our "competitors"... for a short time) was impossible unless the programme had a firm theoretical basis (p. 196). What confusion is disclosed by this assurance of "satisfaction" followed by a repetition of the vulgar precepts inherited from the old Economism, for which the "competition of slogans" decided everything—not only the agrarian question, but the entire programme and tactics of the economic and political struggle! "You will not induce the agricultural labourer," Comrade Egorov said, "to fight side by side with the rich peasant for the cut-off lands, which to no small extent are already in this rich peasant's hands."

There again you have the same over-simplification, undoubtedly akin to our opportunist Economism, which insisted that it was impossible to "induce" the proletarian to fight for what was to no small extent in the hands of the bourgeoisie and would fall into its hands to an even larger extent in the future. There again you have the vulgarisation that forgets the Russian peculiarities of the general capitalist relations between the agricultural labourer and the rich peas-

* See present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 420-28.—*Ed.*

ant. Actually, the cut-off lands today oppress the agricultural labourer *as well*, and he does not have to be "induced" to fight for emancipation from his state of servitude. It is certain intellectuals who have to be "induced"—induced to take a wider view of their tasks, induced to renounce stereotyped formulas when discussing specific questions, induced to take account of the historical situation, which complicates and modifies our aims. It is only the superstition that the muzhik is stupid—a superstition which, as Comrade Martov rightly remarked (p. 202), was to be detected in the speeches of Comrade Makhov and the other opponents of the agrarian programme—only this superstition explains why these opponents forget our agricultural labourer's actual conditions of life.

Having simplified the question into a naked contrast of worker and capitalist, the spokesmen of our "Centre" tried, as often happens, to ascribe their own narrow-mindedness to the muzhik. "It is precisely because I consider the muzhik, within the limits of his narrow class outlook, a clever fellow," Comrade Makhov remarked, "that I believe he will stand for the petty-bourgeois ideal of seizure and division." Two things are obviously confused here: the definition of the class outlook of the muzhik as that of a petty bourgeois, *and the restriction*, the reduction of *this* outlook to "narrow limits". It is in this reduction that the mistake of the Egorovs and Makhovs lies (just as the mistake of the Martynovs and Akimovs lay in reducing the outlook of the proletarian to "narrow limits"). For both logic and history teach us that the petty-bourgeois class outlook may be more or less narrow, and more or less progressive, precisely because of the dual status of the petty bourgeois. And far from dropping our hands in despair because of the narrowness ("stupidity") of the muzhik or because he is governed by "prejudice", we must work unremittingly to widen his outlook and help his reason to triumph over his prejudice.

The vulgar-"Marxist" view of the Russian agrarian question found its culmination in the concluding words of Comrade Makhov's speech, in which that faithful champion of the old *Iskra* editorial board set forth his principles. It was not for nothing that these words were greeted with applause ... true, it was ironical applause. "I do not know, of course,

what to call a misfortune", said Comrade Makhov, outraged by Plekhanov's statement that we were not at all alarmed by the movement for a General Redistribution,[94] and that we would not be the ones to hold back this progressive (bourgeois progressive) movement. "But this revolution, if it can be called such, would not be a revolutionary one. It would be truer to call it, not revolution, but reaction (*laughter*), a revolution that was more like a riot.... Such a revolution would throw us back, and it would require a certain amount of time to get back to the position we have today. Today we have far more than during the French Revolution (*ironical applause*), we have a Social-Democratic Party (*laughter*)...." Yes, a Social-Democratic Party which reasoned like Makhov, or which had central institutions of the Makhov persuasion, would indeed only deserve to be laughed at....

Thus we see that even on the purely theoretical questions raised by the agrarian programme, the already familiar grouping at once appeared. The anti-*Iskra*-ists (eight votes) rushed into the fray on behalf of vulgar Marxism, and the leaders of the "Centre", the Egorovs and Makhovs, trailed after them, constantly erring and straying into the same narrow outlook. It is quite natural, therefore, that the voting on certain points of the agrarian programme should have resulted in thirty and thirty-five votes in favour (pp. 225 and 226), that is, approximately the same figure as we observed in the dispute over the place of the Bund question on the agenda, in the Organising Committee incident, and in the question of shutting down *Yuzhny Rabochy*. An issue had only to arise which did not quite come within the already established and customary pattern, and which called for some independent application of Marx's theory to peculiar and new (new to the Germans) social and economic relations, and *Iskra*-ists who proved equal to the problems only made up three-fifths of the vote, while the whole "Centre" turned and followed the Liebers and Martynovs. Yet Comrade Martov strives to gloss over this obvious fact, fearfully avoiding all mention of votes where the shades of opinion were clearly revealed!

It is clearly evident from the debate on the agrarian programme that the *Iskra*-ists had to fight against a good two-fifths of the Congress. On this question the Caucasian

delegates took up an absolutely correct stand—due largely, in all probability, to the fact that first-hand knowledge of the forms taken by the numerous remnants of feudalism in their localities kept them from the schoolboyishly abstract and bare contrasts that satisfied the Makhovs. Martynov and Lieber, Makhov and Egorov were combated by Plekhanov, by Gusev (who declared that he had "frequently encountered such a pessimistic view of our work in the countryside" as Comrade Egorov's "among the comrades active in Russia"), by Kostrov,[95] by Karsky and by Trotsky. The latter rightly remarked that the "well-meant advice" of the critics of the agrarian programme "smacked too much of *philistinism*". It should only be said, since we are studying the political grouping at the Congress, that he was hardly correct when in this part of his speech (p. 208) he ranked Comrade Lange with Egorov and Makhov. Anyone who reads the minutes carefully will see that Lange and Gorin took quite a different stand from Egorov and Makhov. Lange and Gorin did not like the formulation of the point on the cut-off lands; they fully understood the idea of our agrarian programme, but tried to apply it *in a different way*, worked constructively to find what they considered a more irreproachable formulation, and in submitting their motions had in view either to convince the authors of the programme or else to side with them against all the non-*Iskra*-ists. For example, one has only to compare Makhov's motions to reject the whole agrarian programme (p. 212; *nine* for, thirty-eight against) or individual points in it (p. 216, etc.) with the position of Lange, who *moved* his own formulation of the point on the cut-off lands (p. 225), to become convinced of the radical difference between them.*

Referring to the arguments which smacked of "philistinism", Comrade Trotsky pointed out that "in the approaching revolutionary period we must link ourselves with the peasantry".... "In face of this task, the scepticism and political 'far-sightedness' of Makhov and Egorov are more harmful than any short-sightedness." Comrade Kostich, another minority *Iskra*-ist, very aptly pointed to Comrade Makhov's "unsureness of himself, of the stability of his princi-

* Cf. Gorin's speech, p. 213

ples"—a description that fits our "Centre" to a tittle. "In his pessimism Comrade Makhov is at one with Comrade Egorov, although they differ in shade," Comrade Kostich continued. "He forgets that the Social-Democrats are already working among the peasantry, are already directing their movement as far as possible. And this pessimism narrows the scope of our work" (p. 210).

To conclude our examination of the Congress discussion of the programme, it is worth while mentioning the brief debate on the subject of supporting oppositional trends. Our programme clearly states that the Social-Democratic Party supports "every *oppositional* and revolutionary movement *directed against the existing social and political order in Russia*". One would think that this last reservation made it quite clear *exactly which* oppositional trends we support. Nevertheless, the different shades that long ago developed in our Party at once revealed themselves *here too*, difficult as it was to suppose that any "perplexity or misunderstanding" was still possible on a question which had been chewed over so thoroughly! Evidently, it was not a matter of misunderstandings, but of *shades*. Makhov, Lieber, and Martynov at once sounded the alarm and again proved to be in so "compact" a minority that Comrade Martov would most likely have to attribute this too to intrigue, machination, diplomacy, and the other nice things (see his speech at the League Congress) to which people resort who are incapable of understanding the political reasons for the formation of "compact" groups of both minority and majority.

Makhov again began with a vulgar simplification of Marxism. "Our only revolutionary class is the proletariat," he declared, and from this correct premise he forthwith drew an incorrect conclusion: "The rest are of no account, they are mere hangers-on (*general laughter*).... Yes, they are mere hangers-on and only out to reap the benefits. I am against supporting them" (p. 226). Comrade Makhov's inimitable formulation of his position embarrassed many (of his supporters), but as a matter of fact Lieber and Martynov agreed with him when they proposed deleting the word "oppositional" or restricting it by an addition: "democratic-oppositional". Plekhanov quite rightly took the field against this. amendment of Martynov's. "We must criticise the liberals,"

he said, "expose their half-heartedness. That is true.... But while exposing the narrowness and limitations of all movements other than the Social-Democratic, it is our duty to explain to the proletariat that even a constitution which does not confer universal suffrage would he a step forward compared with absolutism, and that therefore it should not prefer the existing order to such a constitution." Comrades Martynov, Lieber, and Makhov would not agree with this and persisted in their position, which was attacked by Axelrod, Starover, and Trotsky and once more by Plekhanov. Comrade Makhov managed on this occasion to surpass himself. First he had said that the other classes (other than the proletariat) were "of no account" and that he was "against supporting them". Then he condescended to admit that "while essentially it is reactionary, the bourgeoisie is often revolutionary—for example, in the struggle against feudalism and its survivals". "But there are some groups," he continued, going from bad to worse, "which are always [?] reactionary—such are the handicraftsmen." Such were the gems of theory arrived at by those very leaders of our "Centre" who later foamed at the mouth in defence of the old editorial board! Even in Western Europe, where the guild system was so strong, it was the handicraftsmen, like the other petty bourgeois of the towns, who displayed an exceptionally revolutionary spirit in the era of the fall of absolutism. And it is particularly absurd of a Russian Social-Democrat to repeat without reflection what our Western comrades say about the handicraftsmen of today, that is, of an era separated by a century or half a century from the fall of absolutism. To speak of the handicraftsmen in Russia being politically reactionary as compared with the bourgeoisie is merely to repeat a set phrase learnt by rote.

Unfortunately, there is no record in the minutes of the number of votes cast for the rejected amendments of Martynov, Makhov, and Lieber on this question. All we can say is that, here too, the leaders of the anti-*Iskra* elements and one of the leaders of the "Centre"* joined forces in the already

* Another leader of this same group, the "Centre", Comrade Egorov, spoke on the question of supporting the oppositional trends on a different occasion, in connection with Axelrod's resolution on the

familiar grouping against the *Iskra*-ists. Summing up the *whole* discussion on the *programme*, one cannot help seeing that of the debates which were at all animated and evoked general interest there was *not one* that failed to reveal the difference of shades which Comrade Martov and the new *Iskra* editorial board now so carefully ignore.

G. THE PARTY RULES. COMRADE MARTOV'S DRAFT

From the programme, the Congress passed to the Party Rules (we leave out the question of the Central Organ, already touched on above, and the delegates' reports, which the majority of the delegates were unfortunately unable to present in a satisfactory form). Needless to say, the question of the Rules was of tremendous importance to all of us. After all, *Iskra* had acted from the very outset not only as a press organ but also as an *organisational* nucleus. In an editorial in its fourth issue ("Where To Begin") *Iskra* had put forward a whole plan of organisation,* which it pursued systematically and steadily over a period of *three years*. When the Second Party Congress adopted *Iskra* as the Central Organ, two of the three points of the preamble of the resolution on the subject (p. 147) were devoted *precisely to this organisational plan and to "Iskra's" organisational ideas*: its role in directing the *practical* work of the Party and the leading part it had

---

Socialist-Revolutionaries (p. 359). Comrade Egorov detected a "contradiction" between the demand in the programme for *support* of every oppositional and revolutionary movement and the *antagonistic* attitude towards both the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the liberals. In another form, and approaching the question from a somewhat different angle, Comrade Egorov here revealed the same narrow conception of Marxism, and the same unstable, semi-hostile attitude towards the position of *Iskra* (which he had "recognised"), as Comrades Makhov, Lieber, and Martynov had done.

* In his speech on the adoption of *Iskra* as the Central Organ, Comrade Popov said, *inter alia*: "I recall the article 'Where To Begin' in No. 3 or No. 4 of *Iskra*. Many of the comrades active in Russia found it a tactless article; others thought this plan was fantastic, and the majority [?—probably the majority around Comrade Popov] attributed it solely to ambition" (p. 140). As the reader sees, it is no new thing for me to hear my political views attributed to ambition—an explanation now being rehashed by Comrade Axelrod and Comrade Martov.

played in the work of attaining unity. It is quite natural, therefore, that the work of *Iskra* and the entire work of organising the Party, the entire work of *actually* restoring the Party, *could not* be regarded as finished until definite ideas of organisation had been adopted by the whole Party and formally enacted. This task was to be performed by the Party's Rules of Organisation.

The principal ideas which *Iskra* strove to make the basis of the Party's organisation amounted essentially to the following two: first, the idea of centralism, which defined in principle the method of deciding all particular and detail questions of organisation; second, the special function of an organ, a newspaper, for ideological leadership—an idea which took into account the temporary and special requirements of the Russian Social-Democratic working-class movement in the existing conditions of political slavery, with the *initial* base of operations for the revolutionary assault being set up abroad. The first idea, as the one matter of principle, had to pervade the entire Rules; the second, being a particular idea necessitated by temporary circumstances of place and mode of action, took the form of a *seeming* departure from centralism in the proposal to set up *two centres*, *a Central Organ and a Central Committee*. Both these principal *Iskra* ideas of Party organisation had been developed by me in the *Iskra* editorial (No. 4) "Where To Begin"* and in *What Is To Be Done?*** and, finally, had been explained in detail, in a form that was practically a finished set of Rules, in *A Letter to a Comrade*.*** Actually, all that remained was the work of formulating the paragraphs of the Rules, which were to embody just those ideas if the recognition of *Iskra* was not to be merely nominal, a mere conventional phrase. In the preface to the new edition of my *Letter to a Comrade* I have already pointed out that a simple comparison of the Party Rules with that pamphlet is enough to establish the complete identity of the ideas of organisation contained in the two.****

* See present edition, Vol. 5, pp. 13-24.—*Ed.*
** See present edition, Vol. 5, pp. 347-529.—*Ed.*
*** See present edition, Vol. 6, pp. 229-50.—*Ed.*
**** See pp. 131-32 of this volume.—*Ed.*

A propos of the work of formulating *Iskra*'s ideas of organisation in the Rules, I must deal with a certain incident mentioned by Comrade Martov. "...A statement of fact," said Martov at the League Congress (p. 58), "will show you how far my lapse into opportunism on this paragraph [i.e., Paragraph 1] was unexpected by Lenin. About a month and a half or two months before the Congress I showed Lenin my draft, in which Paragraph 1 was formulated just in the way I proposed it at the Congress. Lenin objected to my draft on the ground that it was too detailed, and told me that all he liked was the idea of Paragraph 1—the definition of Party membership—which he would incorporate in his Rules with certain modifications, because he did not think my formulation was a happy one. Thus, Lenin had long been acquainted with my formulation, he knew my views on this subject. You thus see that I came to the Congress with my visor up, that I did not conceal my views. I warned him that I would oppose mutual co-optation, the principle of unanimity in cases of co-optation to the Central Committee and the Central Organ, and so on."

As regards the warning about opposing mutual co-optation, we shall see in its proper place how matters really stood. At present let us deal with this "open visor" of Martov's Rules. At the League Congress, recounting from memory this episode of his unhappy draft (which he himself withdrew at the Congress because it was an unhappy one, but after the Congress, with his characteristic consistency, again brought out into the light of day), Martov, as so often happens, forgot a good deal and therefore again got things muddled. One would have thought there had already been cases enough to warn him against quoting private conversations and relying on his memory (people involuntarily recall only what is to their advantage!)—nevertheless, for want of any other, Comrade Martov used unsound material. Today even Comrade Plekhanov is beginning to imitate him—evidently, a bad example is contagious.

I could not have "liked" the "idea" of Paragraph 1 of Martov's draft, for that draft contained *no idea* that came up at the Congress. His memory played him false. I have been fortunate enough to find Martov's draft among my papers, and

in it "*Paragraph 1 is formulated n o t in the way he proposed it at the Congress*"! So much for the "open visor"!

Paragraph 1 in Martov's draft: "A member of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party is one who, accepting its programme, works actively to accomplish its aims under the control and direction of the organs [*sic*!] of the Party."

Paragraph 1 in my draft: "A member of the Party is one who accepts its programme and who supports the Party both financially and by personal participation in one of the Party organisations."

Paragraph 1 as formulated by Martov at the Congress and adopted by the Congress: "A member of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party is one who accepts its programme, supports the Party financially, and renders it regular personal assistance under the direction of one of its organisations."

It is clearly evident from this juxtaposition that there is no *idea* in Martov's draft, but only an *empty phrase*. That Party members must work under the control and direction of the *organs* of the Party goes without saying; *it cannot be otherwise*, and only those talk about it who love to talk without saying anything, who love to drown "Rules" in a flood of verbiage and bureaucratic formulas (that is, formulas useless for the work and supposed to be useful for display). The *idea* of Paragraph 1 appears only when the question is asked: can the *organs of the Party* exercise *actual* direction over Party members who *do not belong* to any of the *Party organisations*? There is not even a trace of this idea in Comrade Martov's draft. Consequently, *I could not have been acquainted* with the "views" of Comrade Martov "on this subject", for in Comrade Martov's draft there are *no views* on *this subject*. Comrade Martov's statement of fact proves to be a *muddle*.

About Comrade Martov, on the other hand, it does have to be said that from my draft "he knew my views on this subject" and did not protest against them, did not reject them, either on the editorial board, although my draft was shown to everyone two or three weeks before the Congress, or in talking to the delegates, who were acquainted *only* with my draft. More, even *at the Congress*, when I moved my

draft Rules* and defended them *before the election of the Rules Committee*, Comrade Martov distinctly stated: "I associate myself with Comrade Lenin's conclusions. *Only on two points do I disagree with him*" (my italics)—on the mode of constituting the Council and on unanimous co-optation (p. 157). *Not a word was yet said about any difference* over Paragraph 1.

In his pamphlet on the state of siege, Comrade Martov saw fit to recall his Rules once more, and in great detail. He assures us there that his Rules, to which, with the exception of certain minor particulars, he would be prepared to subscribe even now (February 1904—we cannot say how it will be three months hence), "quite clearly expressed his disapproval of hypertrophy of centralism" (p. iv). The reason he did not submit this draft to the Congress, Comrade Martov now explains, was, firstly, that "his *Iskra* training had imbued him with disdain for Rules" (when it suits Comrade Martov, the word *Iskra* means for him, not a narrow circle spirit, but the most steadfast of trends! It is a pity, however, that Comrade Martov's *Iskra* training did not imbue him in three years with disdain for the anarchistic phrases by which the unstable mentality of the intellectual is capable of justifying the violation of Rules adopted by common consent). Secondly, that, don't you see, he, Comrade Martov, wanted to avoid "introducing any dissonance into the tactics of that basic organisational nucleus which *Iskra* constituted". Wonderfully consistent, isn't it? On a question of *principle* regarding an opportunist formulation of Paragraph 1 or hypertrophy of centralism, Comrade Martov was so afraid

* Incidentally, the Minutes Committee, in Appendix XI, has published the draft Rules "*moved at the Congress by Lenin*" (p. 393). Here the Minutes Committee has also muddled things a little. It has confused my *original* draft (see present edition, Vol. 6, pp. 474-76.—*Ed.*), which was shown to all the delegates (and to many before the Congress), with the draft *moved at the Congress*, and *published the former* under the guise of the latter. Of course, I have no objection to my drafts being published, *even in all their stages of preparation*, but there was no need to cause confusion. And confusion has been caused, for Popov and Martov (pp. 154 and 157) criticised formulations in the draft I actually moved at the Congress *which are not in the draft* published by the Minutes Committee (cf. p. 394, paragraphs 7 and 11). With a little more care, the mistake could easily have been detected simply by comparing the pages I mention.

of any dissonance (which is terrible only from the narrowest circle point of view) that he did not set forth his disagreement even to a nucleus like the editorial board! On the *practical* question of the composition of the central bodies, Comrade Martov appealed for the assistance of the Bund and the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists against the vote of the majority of the *Iskra* organisation (that real *basic organisational nucleus*). The "dissonance" in his phrases, which smuggle in the circle spirit in defence of the quasi-editorial board only to repudiate the "circle spirit" in the appraisal of the question by those best qualified to judge—this dissonance Comrade Martov does not notice. To punish him, we shall quote his draft Rules *in full*, noting for our part what *views* and what *hypertrophy* they reveal*:

"Draft of Party Rules.—1. Party Membership.—1) A member of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party is one who, accepting its programme, works actively to accomplish its aims under the control and direction of the organs of the Party.—2) Expulsion of a member from the Party for conduct incompatible with the interests of the Party shall be decided by the Central Committee. [The sentence of expulsion, giving the reasons, shall be preserved in the Party files and shall be communicated, on request, to every Party committee. The Central Committee's decision to expel a member may be appealed against to the Congress on the demand of two or more committees.]" I shall indicate by square brackets the provisions in Martov's draft which are *obviously* meaningless, failing to contain not only "ideas", but even any definite conditions or requirements—like the inimitable specification in the "Rules" as to *where exactly* a sentence of expulsion is to be preserved, or the provision that the Central Committee's decision to expel a member (and not all its decisions in general?) may be appealed against to the Congress. This, indeed, is hypertrophy of verbiage, or real bureaucratic formalism, which frames superfluous, patently useless or red-tapist, points and paragraphs. "II. Local Committees.—3) In its local work, the Party is represented by the Party committees" (how new and clever!). "4) [As Party committees are recognised all those existing at the time of the Second Congress and represented at the Congress.]—5) New Party committees, in addition to those mentioned in Paragraph 4, shall be appointed by the Central Committee [which shall either endorse as a committee the existing membership of the given local organisation, or shall set up a local committee by reforming the latter].—6) The committees may add to their membership by means of co-optation.—7) The Central

* I might mention that unfortunately I could not find the first variant of Comrade Martov's draft, which consisted of some forty-eight paragraphs and suffered even more from "hypertrophy" of worthless formalism.

Committee has the right to augment the membership of a local committee with such numbers of comrades (known to it) as shall not exceed one-third of the total membership of the committee." A perfect sample of bureaucracy. Why not exceeding one-third? What is the purpose of this? What is the sense of this restriction which restricts nothing, seeing that the *augmenting* may be repeated over and over again? "8) [In the event of a local committee falling apart or being broken up by persecution" (does this mean that not all the members have been arrested?), "the Central Committee shall re-establish it.]" (Without regard to Paragraph 7? Does not Comrade Martov perceive a similarity between Paragraph 8 and those Russian laws on orderly conduct which command citizens to work on weekdays and rest on holidays?) "9) [A regular Party Congress may instruct the Central Committee to reform the composition of any local committee if the activities of the latter are found incompatible with the interests of the Party. In that event the existing committee shall be deemed dissolved and the comrades in its area of operation exempt from subordination* to it.]" The provision contained in this paragraph is as highly useful as the provision contained to this day in the Russian law which reads: "Drunkenness is forbidden to all and sundry." "10) [The local Party committees shall direct all the propagandist, agitational, and organisational activities of the Party in their localities and shall do all in their power to assist the Central Committee and the Central Organs of the Party in carrying out the general Party tasks entrusted to them.]" Phew! What in the name of all that's holy is the purpose of this? "11) [The internal arrangements of a local organisation, the mutual relations between a committee and the groups subordinate to it" (do you hear that, Comrade Axelrod?), "and the limits of the competence and autonomy" (are not the limits of competence the same as the limits of autonomy?) "of these groups shall be determined by the committee itself and communicated to the Central Committee and the editorial board of the Central Organs.]" (An omission: it is not stated where these communications are to be filed.) "12) [All groups subordinate to committees, and individual Party members, have the right to demand that their opinions and recommendations on any subject be communicated to the Central Committee of the Party and its Central Organs.]—13) The local Party committees shall contribute from their revenues to the funds of the Central Committee such sums as the Central Committee shall assign to their share.—III. Organisations for the Purpose of Agitation in Languages Other than Russian.—14) [For the purpose of carrying on agitation in any non-Russian language and of organising the workers among whom such agitation is carried on, separate organisations may be set up in places where such specialised agitation and the setting up of such organisations are deemed necessary.]—15) The question as to whether such a necessity exists shall be decided by the Central Committee of the Party.

* We would draw Comrade Axelrod's attention to this word. Why this is terrible! Here are the roots of that "Jacobinism" which goes to the length even ... even of altering the composition of an editorial board....

and in disputed cases by the Party Congress." The first part of this paragraph is superfluous in view of subsequent provisions in the Rules, and the second part, concerning disputed cases, is simply ludicrous. "16) [The local organisations mentioned in Paragraph 14 shall be autonomous in their special affairs but shall act under the control of the local committee and be subordinate to it, the forms of this control and the character of the organisational relations between the committee and the special organisation being determined by the local committee." (Well, thank God! It is now quite clear that this whole spate of empty words was superfluous.) "In respect of the general affairs of the Party, such organisations shall act as part of the committee organisation.]—17) [The local organisations mentioned in Paragraph 14 may form autonomous leagues for the effective performance of their special tasks. These leagues may have their own special press and administrative bodies, both being under the direct control of the Central Committee of the Party. The Rules of these leagues shall be drawn up by themselves, but shall be subject to endorsement by the Central Committee of the Party.]—18) [The autonomous leagues mentioned in Paragraph 17 may include local Party committees if, by reason of local conditions, these devote themselves mainly to agitation in the given language. *Note*. While forming part of the autonomous league such a committee does not cease to be a committee of the Party.]" (This entire paragraph is extremely useful and wonderfully clever, the note even more so.) "19) [The relations of local organisations belonging to an autonomous league with the central bodies of that league shall be controlled by the local committees.]—20) [The central press and administrative bodies of the autonomous leagues shall stand in the same relation to the Central Committee of the Party as the local Party committees.]—IV. Central Committee and Press Organs of the Party.—21) [The Party as a whole shall be represented by its Central Committee and its press organs, political and theoretical.]—22) The functions of the Central Committee shall be: to exercise general direction of all the practical activities of the Party; to ensure the proper utilisation and allocation of all its forces; to exercise control over the activities of all sections of the Party; to supply the local organisations with literature; to organise the technical apparatus of the Party; to convene Party congresses.—23) The functions of the press organs of the Party shall be: to exercise ideological direction of Party life, to conduct propaganda for the Party programme, and to carry out theoretical and popular elaboration of the world outlook of Social-Democracy.—24) All local Party committees and autonomous leagues shall maintain direct communication both with the Central Committee of the Party and with the editorial board of the Party organs and shall keep them periodically informed of the progress of the movement and of organisational work in their localities.—25) The editorial board of the Party press organs shall be appointed at Party congresses and shall function until the next congress.—26) [The editorial board shall be autonomous in its internal affairs] and may in the interval between congresses augment or alter its membership, informing the Central Committee in each case.—27) All statements issued by the Central Committee or receiving its sanction shall, on the demand of the

Central Committee, be published in the Party organ.—28) The Central Committee, by agreement with the editorial board of the Party organs, shall set up special writers' groups for various forms of literary work.—29) The Central Committee shall be appointed at Party congresses and shall function until the next congress. The Central Committee may augment its membership by means of co-optation, without restriction as to numbers, in each case informing the editorial board of the Central Organs of the Party.—V. The Party Organisation Abroad.—30) The Party organisation abroad shall carry on propaganda among Russians living abroad and organise the socialist elements among them. It shall be headed by an elected administrative body.—31) The autonomous leagues belonging to the Party may maintain branches abroad to assist in carrying out their special tasks. These branches shall constitute autonomous groups within the general organisation abroad.—VI. Party Congresses.—32) The supreme Party authority is the Congress.—33) [The Party Congress shall lay down the Programme, Rules and guiding principles of the activities of the Party; it shall control the work of all Party bodies and settle disputes arising between them.]—34) The right to be represented at congresses shall be enjoyed by: a) all local Party committees; b) the central administrative bodies of all the autonomous leagues belonging to the Party; c) the Central Committee of the Party and the editorial board of its Central Organs; d) the Party organisation abroad.—35) Mandates may be entrusted to proxies, but no delegate shall hold more than three valid mandates. A mandate may be divided between two representatives. Binding instructions are forbidden.—36) The Central Committee shall be empowered to invite to the congress in a deliberative capacity comrades whose presence may be useful.—37) Amendments to the Programme or Rules of the Party shall require a two-thirds majority; other questions shall be decided by a simple majority.—38) A Congress shall be deemed properly constituted if more than half the Party committees existing at the time of it are represented.—39) Congresses shall, as far as possible, be convened once every two years. [If for reasons beyond the control of the Central Committee a congress cannot be convened within this period, the Central Committee shall on its own responsibility postpone it.]"

Any reader who, by way of an exception, has had the patience to read these so-called Rules to the end assuredly will not expect me to give special reasons for the following conclusions. First conclusion: the Rules suffer from almost incurable dropsy. Second conclusion: it is impossible to discover in these Rules any special shade of organisational views evincing a disapproval of hypertrophy of centralism. Third conclusion: Comrade Martov acted very wisely indeed in concealing from the eyes of the world (and withholding from discussion at the Congress) more than $^{38}/_{39}$ of his Rules. Only it is rather odd that *à propos* of this concealment he should talk about an open visor.

H. DISCUSSION ON CENTRALISM *PRIOR* TO THE SPLIT AMONG THE *ISKRA*-ISTS

Before passing to the really interesting question of the formulation of Paragraph 1 of the Rules, a question which undoubtedly disclosed the existence of different shades of opinion, let us dwell a little on that brief general discussion of the Rules which occupied the 14th and part of the 15th Congress sittings. This discussion is of some significance inasmuch as it *preceded* the complete divergence within the *Iskra* organisation over the composition of the central bodies, whereas the subsequent debate on the Rules in general, and on co-optation in particular, took place *after* this divergence in the *Iskra* organisation. Naturally, *before* the divergence we were able to express our views more impartially, in the sense that they were more independent of views about the personal composition of the Central Committee, which became such a keen issue with us all. Comrade Martov, as I have already remarked, *associated himself* (p. 157) with my views on organisation, only making the reservation that he differed on two points of *detail*. Both the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the "Centre", on the contrary, at once took the field against both *fundamental* ideas of the whole *Iskra* organisational plan (and, consequently, against the Rules in their entirety): against centralism and against "two centres". Comrade Lieber referred to my Rules as "organised distrust" and discerned *decentralism* in the proposal for two centres (as did Comrades Popov and Egorov). Comrade Akimov wanted to broaden the jurisdiction of the local committees, and, in particular, to grant them themselves "the right to alter their composition". "They should be allowed greater freedom of action.... The local committees should be elected by the active workers in their localities, just as the Central Committee is elected by the representatives of all the active organisations in Russia. And if even this cannot be allowed, let the number of members that the Central Committee may appoint to local committees be limited...." (p. 158). Comrade Akimov, as you see, suggested an argument against "hypertrophy of centralism", but Comrade Martov remained deaf to these weighty arguments, not yet having been induced by his defeat over the composition of the central bodies

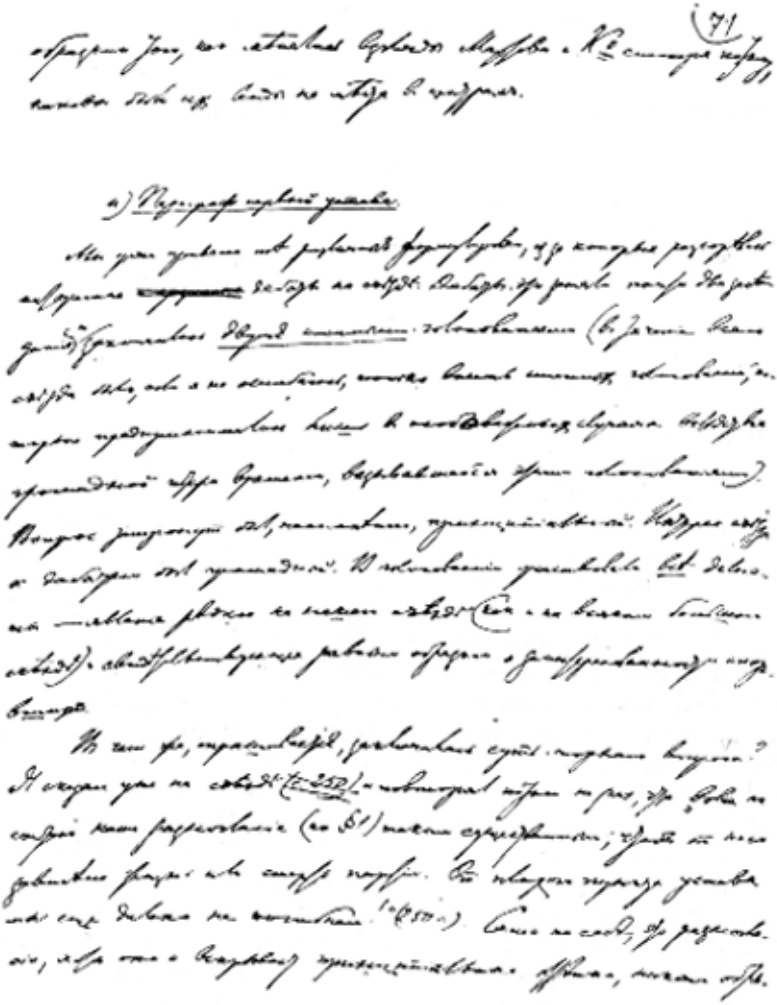
FROM MARX TO MAO NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

to follow in Akimov's wake. He remained deaf even when Comrade Akimov suggested to him the "*idea*" *of his own Rules* (Paragraph 7—restriction of the Central Committee's right to appoint members to the committees)! At that time Comrade Martov still did not want any "dissonance" with us, and for that reason tolerated a dissonance both with Comrade Akimov and with himself.... At that time the only opponents of "monstrous centralism" were those to whom *Iskra*'s centralism was clearly *disadvantageous*: it was opposed by Akimov, Lieber, and Goldblatt, *followed*, cautiously and circumspectly (so that they could always turn back), by Egorov (see pp. 156 and 276) and such like. At that time it was still clear to the vast majority of the Party that it was the parochial, circle interests of the Bund, *Yuzhny Rabochy*, etc., that evoked the protest against centralism. For that matter, now too it is clear to the majority of the Party that it is the circle interests of the old *Iskra* editorial board that cause it to protest against centralism....

Take, for example, Comrade Goldblatt's speech (pp. 160-61). He inveighs against my "monstrous" centralism and claims that it would lead to the "destruction" of the lower organisations, that it is "permeated through and through with the desire to give the centre unrestricted powers and the unrestricted right to interfere in everything", that it allows the organisations "only one right—to submit without a murmur to orders from above", etc. "The centre proposed by the draft would find itself in a vacuum, it would have no peripheral organisations around it, but only an amorphous mass in which its executive agents would move." Why, this is exactly the kind of *false phrase-mongering* to which the Martovs and Axelrods proceeded to treat us after their defeat at the Congress. The Bund was laughed at when it fought *our* centralism while granting *its own* central body *even more definite* unrestricted rights (e.g., to appoint and expel members, and even to refuse to admit delegates to congresses). And when people sort things out, the howls of the *minority* will also be laughed at, for they cried out against centralism and against the Rules when they were in the minority, but lost no time in taking advantage of the Rules once they had managed to make themselves the majority.

Over the question of two centres, the grouping was also clearly evident: *all* the *Iskra*-ists were opposed by Lieber, by Akimov (the first to strike up the now favourite Axelrod-Martov tune about the Central Organ predominating over the Central Committee on the Council), by Popov, and by Egorov. From the ideas of organisation which the *old Iskra* had always advocated (and which the Popovs and Egorovs had *verbally* approved!), the plan for two centres followed of itself. The policy of the *old Iskra* cut across the plans of *Yuzhny Rabochy*, the plans to create a parallel popular organ and to convert it virtually into the dominant organ. There lies the root of the paradox, so strange at first glance, that all the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the entire Marsh were in favour of one central body, that is, *of seemingly greater centralism*. Of course, there were some delegates (especially among the Marsh) who probably did not have a clear idea where the organisational plans of *Yuzhny Rabochy* would lead, and were bound to lead in the nature of things, but they were impelled to follow the anti-*Iskra*-ists by their very irresoluteness and unsureness of themselves.

Of the speeches by *Iskra*-ists during *this* debate on the Rules (the one preceding the split among the *Iskra*-ists), particularly noteworthy were those of Comrades Martov ("association" with my ideas of organisation) and Trotsky. Every word of the answer the latter gave Comrades Akimov and Lieber exposes the utter falsity of the "minority's" post-Congress conduct and theories. "The Rules, he [Comrade Akimov] said, do not define the jurisdiction of the Central Committee with enough precision. I cannot agree with him. On the contrary, this definition is precise and means that inasmuch as the Party is one whole, it must be ensured control over the local committees. Comrade Lieber said, borrowing my expression, that the Rules were 'organised distrust'. That is true. But I used this expression in reference to the Rules proposed by the Bund spokesmen, which represented organised distrust on the part of a section of the Party towards the whole Party. Our Rules, on the other hand" (at that time, before the defeat over the composition of the central bodies, the Rules were "ours"!), "represent the organised distrust of the Party towards all its sections, that is, control over all local, district, national, and other organi-



Page 71 of the manuscript of *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*. 1904

Reduced

Page 71 of the manuscript of One Step Forward, Two Steps Back. 1904

Reduced

sations" (p. 158). Yes, *our* Rules are *here* correctly described, and we would advise those to bear this more constantly in mind who are now assuring us with an easy conscience that it was the intriguing majority who conceived and introduced the system of "organised distrust" or, which is the same thing, the "state of siege". One has only to compare this speech with the speeches at the Congress of the League Abroad to get a specimen of political spinelessness, a specimen of how the views of Martov and Co. changed depending on whether the matter concerned their own group of a lower order or someone else's.

I. PARAGRAPH ONE OF THE RULES

We have already cited the different formulations around which an interesting debate flared up at the Congress. This debate took up nearly two sittings and ended with *two roll-call* votes (during the entire Congress there were, if I am not mistaken, only eight roll-call votes, which were resorted to only in very important cases because of the great loss of time they involved). The question at issue was undoubtedly one of principle. The interest of the Congress in the debate was tremendous. *All* the delegates voted—a rare occurrence at our Congress (as at any big congress) and one that likewise testifies to the interest displayed by the disputants.

What, then, was the substance of the matter in dispute? I already said at the Congress, and have since repeated it time and again, that "I by no means consider our difference [over Paragraph 1] so vital as to be a matter of life or death to the Party. We shall certainly not perish because of an unfortunate clause in the Rules!" (P. 250.)* Taken by itself, this difference, although it did reveal shades of principle, could never have called forth that divergence (actually, to speak unreservedly, that split) which took place after the Congress. But every *little* difference may become a *big* one if it is insisted on, if it is put into the foreground, if people *set about* searching for all the roots and branches of the difference. Every *little* difference may assume *tremendous* importance if it serves as the starting-point for a *swing* towards definite mistaken views, and if these mistaken

* See present edition, Vol. 6, p. 499.—*Ed.*

views are combined, by virtue of new and additional divergences, with *anarchistic* actions which bring the Party to the point of a split.

And that is just what happened in the present case. The comparatively slight difference over Paragraph 1 has now acquired tremendous importance, because it was this that started the swing towards the opportunist profundities and anarchistic phrase-mongering of the minority (especially at the League Congress, and subsequently in the columns of the new *Iskra* as well). It was this that *marked the beginning* of the coalition of the *Iskra*-ist minority with the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the Marsh, which assumed final and definite shape by the time of the elections, and without understanding which *it is impossible to understand* the major and fundamental divergence over the composition of the central bodies. The slight mistake of Martov and Axelrod over Paragraph 1 was a slight crack in our pot (as I put it at the League Congress). The pot could be bound tight with a *hard* knot (and not a hangman's knot, as it was misunderstood by Martov, who during the League Congress was in a state bordering on hysteria); or *all* efforts could be directed towards widening the crack and breaking the pot in two. And that is what happened, thanks to the boycott and similar anarchistic moves of the zealous Martovites. The difference over Paragraph 1 played no small part in the elections to the central bodies, and Martov's defeat in the elections led him into a "struggle over principles" with the use of grossly mechanical and even brawling methods (such as his speeches at the Congress of the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad).

Now, after all these happenings, the question of Paragraph 1 has thus assumed *tremendous importance*, and we must clearly realise both the character of the Congress groupings in the voting on this paragraph and—far more important still—the real nature of those *shades of opinion* which revealed or began to reveal themselves over Paragraph 1. *Now*, after the events with which the reader is familiar, the question *stands* as follows: Did Martov's formulation, which was supported by Axelrod, reflect his (or their) instability, vacillation, and political vagueness, as I expressed it at the Party Congress (p. 333), his (or their) deviation towards

Jaurèsism and anarchism, as Plekhanov suggested at the League Congress (League Minutes, p. 102 and elsewhere),' Or did my formulation, which was supported by Plekhanov, reflect a wrong, bureaucratic, formalistic, Jack-in-office un-Social-Democratic conception of centralism? *Opportunism and anarchism, or bureaucracy and formalism*?—that is the way the question *stands now*, when the little difference has become a big one. And when discussing the pros and cons of my formulation *on their merits*, we must *bear in mind* just *this* presentation of the question, which has been forced upon us all by the events, or, I would say if it did not sound too pompous, has been evolved by history.

Let us begin the examination of these pros and cons with an analysis of the Congress debate. The first speech, that of Comrade Egorov, is interesting only for the fact that his attitude (*non liquet*, it is not yet clear to me, I do not yet know where the truth lies) was very characteristic of the attitude of many delegates, who found it difficult to grasp the rights and wrongs of this really new and fairly complex and detailed question. The next speech, that of Comrade Axelrod, at once made the issue one of principle. This was the first speech Comrade Axelrod made at the Congress on questions of principle, one might even say the first speech he made at all, and it can scarcely be claimed that his début with the celebrated "professor" was particularly fortunate. "I think," Comrade Axelrod said, "that we must draw a distinction between the concepts party and organisation. These two concepts are being confused here. And the confusion is dangerous." That was the first argument against my formulation. Examine it more closely. When I say that the Party should be the *sum* (and not the mere arithmetical sum, but a complex) of *organisations*,* does that mean that I "confuse"

* The word "organisation" is commonly employed in two senses, a broad and a narrow one. In the narrow sense it signifies an individual nucleus of a collective of people with at least a minimum degree of coherent form. In the broad sense it signifies the sum of such nuclei united into a whole. For example, the navy, the army, or the state is at one and the same time a sum of organisations (in the narrow sense of the word) and a variety of social organisation (in the broad sense of the word). The Department of Education is an organisation (in the broad sense of the word) and consists of a number of organisations (in the narrow sense of the word). Similarly, the Party is an organisa-

the concepts party and organisation? Of course not. I thereby express clearly and precisely my wish, my demand, that the Party, as the vanguard of the class, should be as *organised* as possible, that the Party should admit to its ranks only such elements *as allow of at least a minimum of organisation*. My opponent, on the contrary, *lumps together* in the Party organised and unorganised elements, those who lend themselves to direction and those who do not, the advanced and the incorrigibly backward—for the corrigibly backward can join an organisation. *This confusio*n is indeed *dangerous*. Comrade Axelrod further cited the "strictly secret and centralised organisations of the past" (Zemlya i Volya[96] and Narodnaya Volya[97]): around them, he said, "were grouped a large number of people who did not belong to the organisation but who helped it in one way or another and who were regarded as Party members.... This principle should be even more strictly observed in the Social-Democratic organisation." Here we come to one of the *key* points of the matter: is "this principle" really a Social-Democratic one—this principle which allows people who do not belong to any of the organisations of the Party, but only "help it in one way or another", to call themselves Party members? And Plekhanov gave the only possible reply to this question when he said: "Axelrod was wrong in citing the seventies. At that time there was a well-organised and splendidly disciplined centre; around it there were the organisations of various categories, which it had created; and what remained outside these organisations was chaos, anarchy. The component elements of this chaos called themselves Party members, but this harmed rather than benefited the cause. We should not imitate the anarchy of the seventies, but avoid it." Thus "this principle", which Comrade Axelrod wanted to pass off as a Social-Democratic one, is in reality an *anarchistic principle*. To

tion, *should be* an organisation (in the broad sense of the word); at the same time, the Party should consist of a whole number of diversified organisations (in the narrow sense of the word). Therefore, when he spoke of drawing a distinction between the concepts party and organisation, Comrade Axelrod, firstly, did not take account of the difference between the broad and the narrow sense of the word "organisation", and, secondly, did not observe that he was himself *confusing* organised and unorganised elements.

refute this, one would have to show that control, direction, and discipline *are possible* outside an organisation, and that conferring the title of Party members on "elements of chaos" *is necessary*. The supporters of Comrade Martov's formulation did not show, and could not show, *either* of these things. Comrade Axelrod took as an example "a professor who regards himself as a Social-Democrat and declares himself such". To complete the thought contained in this example, Comrade Axelrod should have gone on to tell us whether the organised Social-Democrats themselves regard this professor as a Social-Democrat. By failing to raise this further question, Comrade Axelrod abandoned his argument half-way. After all, one thing or the other. Either the organised Social-Democrats regard the professor in question as a Social-Democrat, in which case why should they not enrol him in one of the Social-Democratic organisations? For only if the professor is thus enrolled will his "declaration" answer to his actions, and not be empty talk (as professorial declarations all too frequently are). Or the organised Social-Democrats do *not* regard the professor as a Social-Democrat, in which case it would be absurd, senseless and *harmful* to allow him the right to bear the honourable and responsible title of Party member. The matter therefore reduces itself to the alternative: consistent application of the principle of organisation, or the sanctification of disunity and anarchy? Are we to build the Party on the basis of that already formed and welded core of *Social-Democrats* which brought about the Party Congress, for instance, and which should enlarge and multiply Party organisations of all kinds; or are we to content ourselves with the soothing *phrase* that all who help are Party members? "If we adopt Lenin's formula," Comrade Axelrod continued, "we shall be throwing overboard a section of those who, even if they cannot be directly admitted to an organisation, are nevertheless Party members." The confusion of concepts of which Comrade Axelrod wanted to accuse me stands out here quite clearly in his own case: he already takes it for granted that all who help *are* Party members, whereas that is what the whole argument is about and our opponents have still to *prove* the necessity and value of such an interpretation. What is the meaning of the phrase "throwing overboard", which at first glance seems so terri-

ble? Even if only members of organisations recognised as Party organisations are regarded as Party members, people who cannot "directly" join any Party organisation can still work in an organisation which does not belong to the Party but is associated with it. Consequently, there can be no talk of throwing anyone overboard in the sense of preventing them from working, from taking part in the movement. On the contrary, the stronger our Party organisations, consisting of *real* Social-Democrats, the less wavering and instability there is *within* the Party, the broader, more varied, richer, and more fruitful will be the Party's influence on the elements of the working-class *masses* surrounding it and guided by it. The Party, as the vanguard of the working class, must not be confused, after all, with the entire class. And Comrade Axelrod is guilty of just this confusion (which is characteristic of our opportunist Economism in general) when he says: "First and foremost we are, of course, creating an organisation of the most active elements of the Party, an organisation of revolutionaries; but since we are the Party of a class, we must take care not to leave outside the Party ranks people who consciously, though perhaps not very actively, associate themselves with that Party." Firstly, the active elements of the Social-Democratic working-class party will include not only organisations of revolutionaries, but a *whole number* of workers' organisations recognised as Party organisations. Secondly, how, by what logic, does the fact that we are the party of a class warrant the conclusion that it is unnecessary to make a distinction between those who *belong* to the Party and those who *associate* themselves with it? Just the contrary: precisely because there are differences in degree of consciousness and degree of activity, a distinction must be made in degree of proximity to the Party. We are the party of a class, and therefore *almost the entire class* (and in times of war, in a period of civil war, the entire class) should act under the leadership of our Party, should adhere to our Party as closely as possible. But it would be Manilovism[98] and "tail-ism" to think that the entire class, or almost the entire class, can ever rise, under capitalism, to the level of consciousness and activity of its vanguard, of its Social-Democratic Party. No sensible Social-Democrat has ever doubted that under capitalism even the trade union orga-

nisations (which are more primitive and more comprehensible to the undeveloped sections) are incapable of embracing the entire, or almost the entire, working class. To forget the distinction between the vanguard and the whole of the masses gravitating towards it, to forget the vanguard's constant duty of *raising* ever wider sections to its own advanced level, means simply to deceive oneself, to shut one's eyes to the immensity of our tasks, and to narrow down these tasks. And it is just such a shutting of one's eyes, it is just such forgetfulness, to obliterate the difference between those who associate themselves and those who belong, those who are conscious and active and those who only help.

To argue that we are the party of a class *in justification* of organisational looseness, *in justification* of confusing organisation with disorganisation, is to repeat the mistake of Nadezhdin, who confused "the philosophical and social-historical question of the 'depth' of the 'roots' of the movement with the technical and organisational question" (*What Is To Be Done?*, p. 91).* It is this confusion, wrought by the deft hand of Comrade Axelrod, that was then repeated dozens of times by the speakers who defended Comrade Martov's formulation. "The more widespread the title of Party member, the better," said Martov, without, however, explaining the benefit of a widespread *title* which did not correspond to fact. Can it be denied that control over Party members who do not belong to a Party organisation is a mere fiction? A widespread fiction is not beneficial, but harmful. "We could only rejoice if every striker, every demonstrator, answering for his actions, could proclaim himself a Party member" (p. 239). Is that so? *Every striker* should have the right *to proclaim himself a Party member*? In this statement Comrade Martov instantly carries his mistake to the point of absurdity, by *lowering* Social-Democracy to the level of mere strike-making, thereby repeating the misadventures of the Akimovs. We could only rejoice if the Social-Democrats succeeded in directing every strike, for it is their plain and unquestionable duty to direct every manifestation of the class struggle of the proletariat, and strikes are one of the most profound and most powerful manifestations of that

* See present edition, Vol. 5, p. 460.—*Ed.*

struggle. But we should be tail-enders if we were to *identify* this primary form of struggle, which *ipso facto* is no more than a trade unionist form, with the all-round and conscious Social-Democratic struggle. We should be opportunistically *legitimising a patent falsehood* if we were to allow every striker the right to "proclaim himself a Party member", for in *the majority of cases* such a "proclamation" would be *false*. We should be indulging in complacent daydreaming if we tried to assure ourselves and others that *every striker* can *be* a Social-Democrat and a member of the Social-Democratic Party, in face of that infinite disunity, oppression, and stultification which under capitalism is bound to weigh down upon such very wide sections of the "untrained", unskilled workers. This example of the "*striker*" brings out with particular clarity the difference between the *revolutionary striving* to direct every strike in a Social-Democratic way and the *opportunist phrase-mongering* which proclaims *every* striker a Party member. We are the Party of a class inasmuch as we *in fact* direct almost the entire, or even the entire, proletarian class in a Social-Democratic way; but only Akimovs can conclude from this that we must *in word* identify the Party and the class.

"I am not afraid of a conspiratorial organisation," said Comrade Martov in this same speech; but, he added, "for me a conspiratorial organisation has meaning only when it is enveloped by a broad Social-Democratic working-class party" (p. 239). To be exact he should have said: when it is enveloped by a broad Social-Democratic working-class *movement*. And in that form Comrade Martov's proposition would have been not only indisputable, but a plain truism. I dwell on this point only because subsequent speakers turned Comrade Martov's truism into the very *prevalent and very vulgar* argument that Lenin wants "to confine the sum-total of Party members to the sum-total of conspirators". This conclusion, which can only provoke a smile, was drawn both by Comrade Posadovsky and by Comrade Popov; and when it was taken up by Martynov and Akimov, its true character of an opportunist phrase became altogether manifest. Today Comrade Axelrod is developing this same argument in the new *Iskra* by way of acquainting the reading public with the new editorial board's new views on organi-

sation. Already at the Congress, at the very first sitting where Paragraph 1 was discussed, I noticed that our opponents wanted to avail themselves of this cheap weapon, and therefore warned in my speech (p. 240): "It should not be imagined that Party organisations must consist solely of professional revolutionaries. We need the most diverse organisations of all types, ranks, and shades, beginning with extremely limited and secret and ending with very broad, free, *lose Organisationen*." This is such an obvious and self-evident truth that I did not think it necessary to dwell on it. But today, when we have been dragged back in so many respects, one has to "repeat old lessons" on this subject too. In order to do so, I shall quote certain passages from *What Is To Be Done?* and *A Letter to a Comrade*.

"...A circle of leaders of the type of Alexeyev and Myshkin, of Khalturin and Zhelyabov, is capable of coping with political tasks in the genuine and most practical sense of the term, for the reason and to the extent that their impassioned propaganda meets with response among the spontaneously awakening masses, and their sparkling energy is answered and supported by the energy of the revolutionary class."* In order to be a Social-Democratic *party*, we must win the *support* precisely of the *class*. It is not that the Party should envelop the conspiratorial organisation, as Comrade Martov thought, but that the revolutionary class, the proletariat, should envelop the Party, the latter to include both conspiratorial and non-conspiratorial organisations.

"...The workers' organisations for the economic struggle should be trade union organisations. Every Social-Democratic worker should as far as possible assist and actively work in these organisations. But ... it is certainly not in our interest to demand that only Social-Democrats should be eligible for membership in the trade unions since that would only narrow the scope of our influence upon the masses. Let every worker who understands the need to unite for the struggle against the employers and the government join the trade unions. The very aim of the trade unions would be impossible of achievement if they did not unite all who have attained at least this elementary degree of understanding—if they

* See present edition, Vol. 5, p. 447.—*Ed.*

were not very *broad* organisations. The broader these organisations, the broader will be our influence over them—an influence due, not only to the 'spontaneous' development of the economic struggle, but to the direct and conscious effort of the socialist trade union members to influence their comrades" (p. 86).* Incidentally, the example of the trade unions is particularly significant for an assessment of the controversial question of Paragraph 1. That these unions *should* work "under the control and direction" of the Social-Democratic organisations, of that there can be no two opinions among Social-Democrats. But *on those grounds* to confer on all members of trade unions the right to "proclaim themselves" members of the Social-Democratic Party would be an obvious absurdity and would constitute a double danger: on the one hand, of *narrowing* the dimensions of the trade union movement and thus weakening the solidarity of the workers; and, on the other, of opening the door of the Social-Democratic Party to vagueness and vacillation. The German Social-Democrats had occasion to solve a similar problem in a practical instance, in the celebrated case of the Hamburg bricklayers working on piece rates.[99] The Social-Democrats did not hesitate for a moment to proclaim strike-breaking dishonourable in Social-Democratic eyes, that is, to acknowledge that to direct and support strikes was *their own* vital concern; but at the same time they just as resolutely rejected the demand for identifying the interests of the Party with the interests of the trade unions, for *making the Party responsible* for individual acts of individual trade unions. The Party should and will strive to imbue the trade unions with its spirit and bring them under its influence; but precisely in order to do so it must distinguish the fully Social-Democratic elements in these unions (the elements belonging to the Social-Democratic Party) from those which are not fully class-conscious and politically active, and not confuse the two, as Comrade Axelrod would have us do.

"...Centralisation of the most secret functions in an organisation of revolutionaries will not diminish, but rather increase the extent and enhance the quality of the activity

* See present edition, Vol. 5, p. 454.—*Ed.*

of a large number of other organisations that are intended for a broad public and are therefore as loose and as non-secret as possible, such as workers' trade unions; workers' self-education circles and circles for reading illegal literature; and socialist, as well as democratic, circles among *all* other sections of the population; etc., etc. We must have such circles, trade unions, and organisations everywhere in *as large a number as possible* and with the widest variety of functions- but it would be absurd and harmful to *confound* them with the organisation of *revolutionaries*, to efface the border-line between them..." (p. 96).* This quotation shows how out of place it was for Comrade Martov to remind me that the organisation of revolutionaries should be *enveloped* by broad organisations of workers. I had already pointed this out in *What Is To Be Done?*— and in *A Letter to a Comrade* I developed this idea more concretely. Factory circles, I wrote there, "are particularly important to us: the main strength of the movement lies in the organisation of the workers at the *large* factories, for the large factories (and mills) contain not only the predominant part of the working class, as regards numbers, but even more as regards influence, development, and fighting capacity. Every factory must be our fortress.... The factory subcommittee should endeavour to embrace the whole factory, the largest possible number of the workers, with a network of all kinds of circles (or agents).... All groups, circles, subcommittees, etc., should enjoy the status of committee institutions or branches of a committee. Some of them will openly declare their wish to join the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and, *if endorsed* by the committee, will join the Party, and will assume definite functions (on the instructions of, or in agreement with, the committee), will undertake to obey the orders of the Party organs, *receive the same rights as all Party members*, and be regarded as immediate candidates for membership of the committee, etc. Others *will not join* the R.S.D.L.P., and will have the status of circles formed by Party members, or associated with one Party group or another, etc." (pp. 17-18).** The words I have underlined make

---

* See present edition, Vol. 5, p. 466.—*Ed.*

** See present edition, Vol. 6, pp. 241, 243, 244.—*Ed.*

it particularly clear that the *idea* of my formulation of Paragrah 1 was already fully expressed in *A Letter to a Comrade*. The conditions for joining the Party are directly indicated there, namely: 1) a certain degree of organisation, and 2) endorsement by a Party committee. A page later I roughly indicate also what groups and organisations should (or should not) be admitted to the Party, and for what reasons: "The distributing groups should belong to the R.S.D.L.P. and know a certain number of its members and functionaries. The groups for studying labour conditions and drawing up trade union demands need not necessarily belong to the R.S.D.L.P. Groups of students, officers, or office employees engaged in self-education *in conjunction with* one or two Party members should in some cases not even be aware that these belong to the Party, etc." (pp. 18-19).*

There you have additional material on the subject of the "open visor"! Whereas the formula of Comrade Martov's draft does not even touch on relations between the Party and the organisations, I pointed out nearly a year before the Congress that some organisations should belong to the Party, and others not. In *A Letter to a Comrade* the idea I advocated at the Congress was already clearly outlined. The matter might be put graphically in the following way. Depending on degree of organisation in general and of secrecy of organisation in particular, roughly the following categories may be distinguished: 1) organisations of revolutionaries; 2) organisations of workers, as broad and as varied as possible (I confine myself to the working class, taking it as self-evident that, under certain conditions, certain elements of other classes will also be included here). These two categories constitute the Party. Further, 3) workers' organisations associated with the Party; 4) workers' organisations not associated with the Party but actually under its control and direction; 5) unorganised elements of the working class, who in part also come under the direction of the Social-Democratic Party, at any rate during big manifestations of the class struggle. That, approximately, is how the matter presents itself to me. As Comrade Martov sees it, on the

* See present edition, Vol. 6, p. 245.—*Ed.*

contrary, the border-line of the Party remains absolutely vague, for "every striker" can "proclaim himself a Party member". What benefit is there in this looseness? A widespread "title". Its harm is that it introduces a *disorganising* idea, the confusing of class and party.

In illustration of the general propositions we have adduced, let us take a cursory glance at the further discussion of Paragraph 1 at the Congress. Comrade Brouckère (to the great glee of Comrade Martov) pronounced in favour of my formulation, but *his* alliance with me, unlike Comrade Akimov's with Martov, turned out to be based on a misunderstanding. Comrade Brouckère did "not agree with the Rules as a whole, with their entire spirit" (p. 239), and defended my formulation *as the basis of the democracy* which the supporters of *Rabocheye Dyelo* desired. Comrade Brouckère had not yet risen to the view that in a political struggle it is sometimes necessary to choose the *lesser evil*; Comrade Brouckère did not realise that it was useless to advocate democracy at a Congress like ours. Comrade Akimov was more perspicacious. He put the question quite rightly when he stated that "Comrades Martov and Lenin are arguing as to which [formulation] will best achieve their common aim" (p. 252); "Brouckère and I," he continued, "want to choose the one *which will least achieve that aim*. From this angle I choose Martov's formulation." And Comrade Akimov frankly explained that he considered "their very aim" (that is, the aim of Plekhanov, Martov, and myself—the creation of a directing organisation of revolutionaries) to be "impracticable and harmful"; like Comrade Martynov,* he advocated the Economist idea that "an organisation of revolutionaries" was

* Comrade Martynov, it is true, wanted to be different from Comrade Akimov, he wanted to show that conspiratorial did not mean secret, that behind the two different words were two different concepts. What the difference is, neither Comrade Martynov nor Comrade Axelrod, who is now following in his footsteps, ever did explain. Comrade Martynov "acted" as if I had not—for example in *What Is To Be Done?* (as well as in the *Tasks* [see present edition, Vol. 2, pp. 323-51.—*Ed.*])—resolutely opposed "*confining* the political struggle to conspiracy". Comrade Martynov was anxious to have his hearers *forget* that the people I had been fighting *had not seen* any necessity for an *organisation of revolutionaries*, just as Comrade Akimov did not see it now.

unnecessary. He was "confident that in the end the realities of life will force their way into our Party organisation, whether you bar their path with Martov's formulation or with Lenin's". It would not be worth while dwelling on this "tailist" conception of the "realities of life" if we did not encounter it in the case of Comrade Martov too. In general, Comrade Martov's second speech (p. 245) is so interesting that it deserves to be examined in detail.

Comrade Martov's first argument: control by the Party organisations over Party members not belonging to them "is practicable, inasmuch as, having assigned a function to someone, the committee will be able to watch over it" (p. 245). This thesis is remarkably characteristic, for it "betrays", if one may so put it, *who* needs Martov's formulation and whom it will serve *in actual fact*—free-lance intellectuals or workers' groups and the worker masses. The fact is that there are two possible interpretations of Martov's formulation: 1) that anyone who renders the Party regular personal assistance under the direction of one of its organisations is entitled to "*proclaim himself*" (Comrade Martov's own words) a Party member; 2) that a Party organisation is *entitled to regard* as a Party member anyone who renders it regular personal assistance under its direction. It is only the first interpretation that really gives "every striker" the opportunity to call himself a Party member, and accordingly *it alone* immediately won the hearts of the Liebers, Akimovs, and Martynovs. But this interpretation is manifestly no more than a phrase, because it would apply to the entire working class, and the distinction between Party and class would be obliterated; control over and direction of "every striker" can only be spoken of "symbolically". That is why, in his second speech, Comrade Martov at once slipped into the second interpretation (even though, be it said in parenthesis, *it was directly rejected by the Congress* when it turned down Kostich's resolution—p. 255), namely, that a committee would assign functions and watch over their fulfilment. Such special assignments will never, of course, be made to the *mass* of the workers, to the *thousands* of proletarians (of whom Comrade Axelrod and Comrade Martynov spoke)—they will frequently be given precisely to those *professors* whom Comrade Axelrod mentioned, to those *high-school students* for

whom Comrade Lieber and Comrade Popov were so concerned (p. 241), and to the *revolutionary youth* to whom Comrade Axelrod referred in his second speech (p. 242). In a word, Comrade Martov's formula will either remain a dead letter, an empty phrase, or it will be of benefit mainly and almost exclusively to "*intellectuals who are thoroughly imbued with bourgeois individualism*" and do not wish to join an organisation. *In words*, Martov's formulation defends the interests of the broad strata of the proletariat, but *in fact* it serves the interests of the *bourgeois intellectuals*, who fight shy of proletarian discipline and organisation. No one will venture to deny that *the intelligentsia*, *as a special stratum* of modern capitalist society, is characterised, by and large, *precisely by individualism* and incapacity for discipline and organisation (cf., for example, Kautsky's well-known articles on the intelligentsia). This, incidentally is a feature which unfavourably distinguishes this social stratum from the proletariat; it is one of the reasons for the flabbiness and instability of the intellectual, which the proletariat so often feels; and this trait of the intelligentsia is intimately bound up with its customary mode of life, its mode of earning a livelihood, which in a great many respects approximates to the *petty-bourgeois mode of existence* (working in isolation or in very small groups, etc.). Nor is it fortuitous, lastly, that the defenders of Comrade Martov's formulation were the ones who had to cite the example of professors and high-school students! It was not champions of a broad proletarian struggle who, in the controversy over Paragraph 1, took the field against champions of a radically conspiratorial organisation, as Comrades Martynov and Axelrod thought, but the supporters of *bourgeois-intellectual individualism* who clashed with the supporters of *proletarian organisation and discipline*.

Comrade Popov said: "Everywhere, in St. Petersburg as in Nikolayev or Odessa, as the representatives from these towns testify, there are dozens of workers who are distributing literature and carrying on word-of-mouth agitation but who cannot be members of an organisation. They can be attached to an organisation, but not regarded as members" (p. 241). Why they cannot be members of an organisation remained Comrade Popov's secret. I have already quoted the passage from *A Letter to a Comrade* showing that the admis-

sion of all such workers (by the hundred, not the dozen) to an organisation is both possible and necessary, and, moreover, that a great many of these organisations can and should belong to the Party.

Comrade Martov's second argument: "In Lenin's opinion there should be no organisations in the Party other than Party organisations...." Quite true! "In my opinion, on the contrary, such organisations should exist. Life creates and breeds organizations faster than we can include them in the hierarchy of our militant organisation of professional revolutionaries...." That is untrue in two respects: 1) the number of effective organisations of revolutionaries that "life" breeds is far less than we need, than the working-class movement requires; 2) our Party should be a hierarchy not only of organisations of revolutionaries, but of a mass of workers' organisations as well.... "Lenin thinks that the Central Committee will confer the title of Party organisations only on such as are fully reliable in the matter of principles. But Comrade Brouckère understands very well that life [*sic*!] will assert itself and that the Central Committee, in order not to leave a multitude of organisations outside the Party, will have to legitimise them despite their not quite reliable character; that is why Comrade Brouckère associates himself with Lenin...." What a truly tail-ist conception of "life"! Of course, if the Central Committee had *necessarily* to consist of people who were not guided by their own opinions, but by what others might say (*vide* the Organising Committee incident), then "life" would "assert itself" in the sense that the most backward elements in the Party would gain the upper hand (*as has in fact happened now when the backward elements have taken shape as the Party* "*minority*".). But no *intelligent* reason can be given which would induce a *sensible* Central Committee to admit "unreliable" elements to the Party. By this reference to "life", which "breeds" unreliable elements, Comrade Martov patently revealed the opportunist character of his plan of organisation!... "I for my part think," he continued, "that if such an organisation [one that is not quite reliable] is prepared to accept the Party programme and Party control, we may admit it to the Party, without thereby making it a Party organisation. I would consider it a great triumph for our Party if, for example some union of

'independents' were to declare that they accepted the views of Social-Democracy and its programme and were joining the Party; which does not, however, mean that we would include the union in the Party organisation...." Such is the muddle Martov's formulation leads to: non-Party organisations belonging to the Party! Just imagine *his* scheme: the Party= 1) organisations of revolutionaries, +2) workers' organisations recognised as Party organisations, +3) workers' organisations not recognised as Party organisations (consisting principally of "independents"), +4) individuals performing various functions—professors, high-school students, etc., +5) "every striker". Alongside of this remarkable plan one can only put the words of Comrade Lieber: "Our task is not only to organise an organisation [!!]; we can and should organise a party" (p. 241). Yes, of course, we can and should do that, but what it requires is not meaningless words about "organising organisations", but the *unequivocal demand* that Party members should work to create an *organisation* in fact. He who talks about "organising a party" and yet defends using the word party to cover disorganisation and disunity of every kind is just indulging in empty words.

"Our formulation," Comrade Martov said, "expresses the desire to have a series of organisations between the organisation of revolutionaries and the masses." It does not. This truly essential desire is just what Martov's formulation *does not express*, for it *does not offer an incentive to organise*, does not contain a demand for organisation, does not separate organised from unorganised. All it offers is a *title*,* and in this

* At the League Congress, Comrade Martov adduced one more argument in support of his formulation, an argument that deserves to be laughed at. "We might point out," he said, "that, taken literally, Lenin's formulation excludes the *agents of the Central Committee* from the Party, for they do not constitute an organisation" (p. 59). Even at the League Congress this argument was greeted with *laughter*, as the minutes record. Comrade Martov supposes that the "difficulty" he mentions can only be solved by including the Central Committee agents in "the organisation of the Central Committee". But that is not the point. The point is that Comrade Martov's example saliently demonstrates that *he completely fails to understand the idea of Paragraph 1*; it was a sheer specimen of pedantic criticism that did indeed deserve to be laughed at. *Formally speaking*, all that would be required would be to form an "organisation of Central Committee agents", pass a *resolution* to include it in the Party, and the "difficulty" which

connection we cannot but recall Comrade Axelrod's words: "No decree can forbid them [circles of revolutionary youth and the like] or individuals to call themselves Social-Democrats [true enough!] and even to regard themselves as part of the Party"—now that is *not true at all*! It is impossible and *pointless* to forbid anyone to call himself a Social-Democrat, for in its *direct* sense this word only signifies a system of convictions, and not definite organisational relations. But as to forbidding various circles and persons to "regard themselves as part of the Party", that can and should be done if these circles and persons injure the Party, corrupt or disorganise it. It would be absurd to speak of the *Party* as of a whole, as of a political entity, if it could not "by decree forbid" a circle to "regard itself as part" of the whole! What in that case would be the point of defining the procedure and conditions of expulsion from the Party? Comrade Axelrod reduced Comrade Martov's fundamental mistake to an obvious absurdity; he even elevated this mistake to an *opportunist theory* when he added: "As formulated by Lenin, Paragraph 1 directly conflicts in principle with the very nature [!!] and aims of the Social-Democratic Party of the proletariat" (p. 243). This means nothing less than that making higher demands of the Party than of the class conflicts in principle with the very nature of the aims of the proletariat. It is not surprising that Akimov was heart and soul in favour of such a *theory*.

It should be said in fairness that Comrade Axelrod—who now wants to convert this mistaken formulation, one obvious-

---

caused Comrade Martov so much brain-racking would immediately vanish. The *idea* of Paragraph 1 as formulated by me consists in the *incentive* to organise; it consists in *guaranteeing actual* control and direction. *Essentially*, the very question whether the Central Committee agents will belong to the Party is ridiculous, for *actual* control over them is fully and absolutely guaranteed *by the very fact that they have been appointed agents* and that they are kept on as agents. Consequently, here there can be no question of any confusion of organised and unorganised (which is the root mistake in Comrade Martov's formulation). Why Comrade Martov's formulation is no good is that it allows anyone, any opportunist, any windbag, any "professor", and any "high-school student" to *proclaim himself* a Party member. It is in vain for Comrade Martov to try to *talk away this Achilles heel* of his formulation by examples in which there can be no question of people arbitrarily styling or proclaiming themselves members.

ly tending towards opportunism, into the germ of new views —at the Congress, on the contrary, expressed a readiness to "bargain", saying: "But I observe that I am knocking at an open door" (I observe this in the new *Iskra* too), "because Comrade Lenin, with his peripheral circles which are to be regarded as part of the Party organisation, goes out to meet my demand." (And not only with the peripheral circles, but with every kind of workers' union: cf. p. 242 of the Minutes, the speech of Comrade Strakhov, and the passages from *What Is To Be Done?* and *A Letter to a Comrade* quoted above.) "There still remain the individuals, but here, too, we could bargain." I replied to Comrade Axelrod that, generally speaking, I was not averse to bargaining, and I must now explain in what sense this was meant. As regards the individuals— all those professors, high-school students, etc.—I would least of all have agreed to make concessions; but if doubts had been aroused as to the workers' organisations, I would have agreed (despite the utter groundlessness of such doubts, as I have proved above) to add to my Paragraph 1 a note to the following effect: "Workers' organisations which accept the Programme and Rules of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party should be included in the largest possible numbers among the Party organisations." Strictly speaking, of course, the place for such a recommendation is not in the Rules, which should be confined to statutory definitions, but in explanatory commentaries and pamphlets (and I have already pointed out that I gave such explanations in my pamphlets long before the Rules were drawn up); but at least such a note would not contain even a shadow of *wrong* ideas capable of leading to disorganisation, not a shadow of the *opportunist* arguments* and "*anarchistic conceptions*" that are undoubtedly inherent in Comrade Martov's formulation.

* To this category of arguments, which inevitably crop up when attempts are made to justify Martov's formulation, belongs, in particular, Comrade Trotsky's statement (pp. 248 and 346) that "opportunism is produced by more complex [or: is determined by deeper] causes than one or another clause in the Rules; it is brought about by the relative level of development of bourgeois democracy and the proletariat...." The point is not that clauses in the Rules may produce opportunism, but that with their help a more or a less trenchant weapon against opportunism can be forged. The deeper its causes, the more trenchant should this weapon be. Therefore, to *justify* a for-

This last expression, given by me in quotation marks, is that of Comrade Pavlovich, who quite justly characterised as *anarchism* the recognition of "*irresponsible* and *self-enrolled* Party members". "Translated into simple terms," said Comrade Pavlovich, explaining my formulation to Comrade Lieber, "it means: 'if you want to be a Party member, your acceptance of organisational relations too must be not merely platonic'." Simple as this "translation" was, it seems

---

mulation which opens the door to opportunism on the grounds that opportunism has deep causes" is tail-ism of the first water. When Comrade Trotsky was opposed to Comrade Lieber, he understood that the Rules constitute the organised distrust" of the whole towards the part, of the vanguard towards the backward contingent; but when Comrade Trotsky came to be on Comrade Lieber's side, he forgot this and even began to justify the *weakness* and instability of *our* organisation of this distrust (distrust of opportunism) by talking about "complex causes", the "level of development of the proletariat", etc. Here is another of Comrade Trotsky's arguments: "It is much easier for the intellectual youth, organised in one way or another, to *enter themselves* [my italics] on the rolls of the Party." Just so. That is why it is the formulation by which even unorganised elements may *proclaim themselves* Party members that suffers from intellectualist vagueness, and not my formulation, which *obviates* the right to "enter *oneself*" on the rolls. Comrade Trotsky said that if the Central Committee "refused to recognise" an organisation of opportunists, it would only be because of the character of certain individuals, and that since these individuals would be known, as political personalities, they would not be dangerous and could be removed by a general Party boycott. This is only true of cases when people have to be *removed from the Party* (and only half true at that, because an organised party *removes* members by a vote and not by a boycott). It is absolutely untrue of the far more frequent cases when *removal* would be absurd, and when all that is required is *control*. For purposes of control, the Central Committee might, on certain conditions, *deliberately* admit to the Party an organisation which was not quite reliable but which was capable of working; it might do so with the object of testing it, of trying to *direct it on to the right path*, of correcting its partial aberrations by guidance, etc. This would not be dangerous *if* in general "*self-entering*" on the Party rolls were not allowed. It would often be useful for an open and *responsible*, controlled expression (and discussion) of mistaken views and mistaken tactics. "But if statutory definitions are to correspond to actual relations, Comrade Lenin's formulation must be rejected," said Comrade Trotsky, and again he spoke like an opportunist. Actual relations are not a dead thing, they live and develop. Statutory definitions may correspond to the progressive development of those relations, but they may also (if the definitions are bad ones) "correspond" to retrogression or stagnation. The latter case is the "case" of Comrade Martov.

it was not superfluous (as events since the Congress have shown) not only for various dubious professors and high-school students, but for honest-to-goodness Party members, for people at the top.... With no less justice, Comrade Pavlovich pointed to the contradiction between Comrade Martov's formulation and the indisputable precept of scientific socialism which Comrade Martov quoted so unhappily: "Our Party is the conscious spokesman of an unconscious process." Exactly. And for that very reason it is wrong to want "every striker" to have the right to call himself a Party member, for if "every strike" were not only a spontaneous expression of the powerful class instinct and of the class struggle which is leading inevitably to the social revolution, but a *conscious expression* of that process, then ... then the general strike would not be an anarchist phrase, then our Party would forthwith and at once *embrace* the whole working class, and, consequently, would at once put an end to *bourgeois society as a whole*. If it is to be a conscious spokesman *in fact*, the Party must be able to work out organisational relations that will *ensure a definite level* of consciousness and systematically raise this level. "If we are to go the way of Martov," Comrade Pavlovich said, "we should first of all delete the clause on accepting the *programme*, for before a programme can be accepted it must be mastered and understood.... Acceptance of the programme presupposes a fairly high level of political consciousness." We shall never allow *support* of Social-Democracy, *participation* in the struggle it directs, to be artificially *restricted* by any requirements (mastery, understanding, etc.), for this *participation* itself, the very fact of it, *promotes* both consciousness and the instinct for organisation; but since we have *joined together in a party* to carry on systematic work, we must see to it that it is systematic.

That Comrade Pavlovich's warning regarding the programme was not superfluous became apparent *at once*, during *that very same* sitting. Comrades Akimov and Lieber, who secured the adoption of Comrade Martov's formulation,* *at once*

* The vote was twenty-eight for and twenty-two against. Of the eight anti-*Iskra*-ists, seven were for Martov and one for me. Without the aid of the opportunists, Comrade Martov would not have secured

betrayed their true nature by demanding (pp. 254-55) that in the case of the programme too only platonic acceptance, acceptance only of its "basic principles", should be required (for "membership" in the Party). "Comrade Akimov's proposal is quite logical from Comrade Martov's standpoint," Comrade Pavlovich remarked. Unfortunately, we cannot see from the minutes *how many* votes this proposal of Akimov's secured—in all probability, not less than seven (five Bundists, Akimov, and Brouckère). And it was the withdrawal of *seven* delegates from the Congress that converted the "compact majority" (anti-*Iskra*-ists, "Centre", and Martovites) which began to form over Paragraph 1 of the Rules into a compact minority! It was the withdrawal of *seven* delegates that resulted in the defeat of the motion to endorse the old editorial board—that supposed howling violation of "continuity" in the *Iskra* editorship! A curious *seven* it was that constituted the sole salvation and guarantee of *Iskra* "continuity": the Bundists, Akimov and Brouckère, that is, the very delegates who voted against the *motives* for adopting *Iskra* as the Central Organ, the very delegates whose opportunism was acknowledged dozens of times by the Congress, and acknowledged in particular by Martov and Plekhanov in the matter of *toning down* Paragraph 1 in reference to the programme. The "continuity" of *Iskra* guarded by the anti-*Iskra*-ists!—this brings us to the *starting-point* of the post-Congress tragicomedy.

* * *

The grouping of votes over Paragraph 1 of the Rules revealed a phenomenon of exactly the same type as the equality of languages incident: the falling away of one-quarter (approximately) of the *Iskra* majority made possible the victory of the anti-*Iskra*-ists, who were backed by the

---

adoption of his opportunist formulation. (At the League Congress Comrade Martov tried very unsuccessfully to refute this undoubted fact, for some reason mentioning only the votes of the Bundists and forgetting about Comrade Akimov and his friends—or rather remembering them *only* when it could serve against me: Comrade Brouckère's agreement with me.)

"Centre". Of course, here too there were individual votes which disturbed the full symmetry of the picture—in so large an assembly as our Congress there are bound to be some "strays" who shift quite fortuitously from one side to the other, especially on a question like Paragraph 1, where the true character of the divergence was only beginning to emerge and many delegates had simply *not yet found their bearings* (considering that the question had not been discussed beforehand in the press). Five votes fell away from the majority *Iskra*-ists (Rusov and Karsky with two votes each, and Lensky with one); on the other hand, they were joined by one anti-*Iskra*-ist (Brouckère) and by three from the Centre (Medvedev, Egorov and Tsaryov); the result was a total of twenty-three votes (24—5+4), one vote less than in the final grouping in the elections. *It was the anti-"Iskra"-ists who gave Martov his majority*, seven of them voting for him and one for me (of the "Centre" too, seven voted for Martov, and three for me). That coalition of the minority *Iskra*-ists with the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the "Centre" which formed a compact minority at the end of the Congress and after the Congress *was beginning to take shape*. The political error of Martov and Axelrod, who *undoubtedly took a step towards opportunism and anarchistic individualism* in their formulation of Paragraph 1, and especially in their defence of that formulation, was revealed at once and very clearly thanks to the free and open arena offered by the Congress; it was revealed in the fact that the least stable elements, the least steadfast in principle, at once employed all their forces to widen the fissure, the breach, that appeared in the views of the revolutionary Social-Democrats. Working together at the Congress were people who in matters of organisation frankly pursued *different aims* (see Akimov's speech)—a circumstance which at once induced those who were *in principle* opposed to our organisational plan and our Rules to support the error of Comrades Martov and Axelrod. The *Iskra*-ists who on this question too remained faithful to the views of revolutionary Social-Democracy found themselves *in the minority*. This is a point of *the utmost importance*, for unless it is grasped it is absolutely impossible to understand either the struggle over the details of the Rules or the struggle over the personal composition of the Central Organ and the Central Committee.

J. INNOCENT VICTIMS OF A FALSE ACCUSATION OF OPPORTUNISM

Before passing onto the subsequent discussion of the Rules, it is necessary, in order to elucidate our difference over the personal composition of the central institutions, to touch on the *private* meetings of the *Iskra* organisation during the Congress. The last and most important of these four meetings was held *just after* the vote on Paragraph 1 of the Rules—and thus the split in the *Iskra* organisation which took place at this meeting was in point of both time and logic a prelude to the subsequent struggle.

The *Iskra* organisation began to hold private meetings* soon after the Organising Committee incident, which gave rise to a discussion of possible candidates for the Central Committee. It stands to reason that, since binding instructions had been abolished, these meetings were purely in the nature of consultations and their decisions were not binding on anyone; but their importance was nevertheless immense. The selection of candidates for the Central Committee was a matter of considerable difficulty to delegates who were acquainted neither with the secret names nor with the inner work of the *Iskra* organisation, the organisation that had brought about actual Party unity and whose leadership of the practical movement was one of the motives for the official adoption of *Iskra*. We have already seen that, united, the *Iskra*-ists were fully assured a big majority at the Congress, as much as three-fifths, and all the delegates realised this very well. All the *Iskra*-ists, in fact, expected the "*Iskra*" *organisation* to make definite recommendations as to the personal composition of the Central Committee, and not one member of that organisation raised any objection to a preliminary discussion of the Central Committee's composition within it; not one of them so much as hinted at endorsing the entire membership of the Organising Committee, that is, converting that body into the Central

* I have already tried at the League Congress to give an account of what took place at the private meetings, keeping to the barest essentials in order to avoid hopeless arguments. The principal facts are also set out in my *Letter to the Editors of* "*Iskra*" (p. 4). Comrade Martov did not challenge them in his *Reply*.

Committee, or *even at conferring* with the Organising Committee as a whole regarding candidates for the Central Committee. This circumstance is also highly significant, and it is extremely important to bear it in mind, for *now*, *after the event*, the Martovites are zealously defending the Organising Committee, thereby only proving their political spinelessness for the hundredth and thousandth time.* Until the split over the composition of the central bodies led Martov to join forces with the Akimovs, everyone at the Congress clearly realised what any impartial person may easily ascertain from the Congress minutes and from the entire history of *Iskra*, namely, that the Organising Committee was *mainly* a commission set up to convene the Congress, a commission deliberately composed of representatives of different shades, including even the Bundists; while the real work of *creating* the organised unity of the Party was done entirely by the *Iskra* organisation. (It should be remembered also that quite by chance *several Iskra*-ists on the Organising Committee were absent from the Congress, either because they had been arrested or for other reasons "beyond their control".) The members of the *Iskra* organisation present at the Congress have already been enumerated in Comrade Pavlovich's pamphlet (see his *Letter on the Second Congress*, p. 13).[100]

The ultimate result of the heated debates in the *Iskra* organisation was the two votes I have already mentioned in my *Letter to the Editors*. The first vote: "by nine votes to four, with three abstentions, one of the candidates supported by Martov was rejected." What could be simpler and more natural, one would think, than such a fact: by the common consent of all the sixteen *Iskra* organisation members at the Congress, the possible candidates are discussed, and one of Comrade Martov's candidates is rejected by the majority

* Just reflect on this "picture of morals": the *delegate* from the *Iskra* organisation confers *at the Congress* with it *alone* and *does not hint*, even, at conferring with the organising Committee. But after he is defeated both in this organisation and at the Congress, he begins to *regret* that the Organising Committee was not endorsed, to extol it retrospectively, and loftily to ignore the organisation that gave him his mandate! It may safely be vouched that no analogous instance will be found in the history of any really Social-Democratic and really working-class party.

(it was Comrade Stein, as Comrade Martov himself has now blurted out—*State of Siege*, p. 69). After all, one of the reasons why we assembled at the Party Congress was to discuss and decide to whom to entrust the "conductor's baton"—and it was the common duty of us all as Party members to give this item on the agenda the most serious attention, to decide this question from the standpoint of the *interests of the work*, and not of "philistine sentimentality", as Comrade Rusov quite rightly expressed it later. Of course, in discussing candidates *at the Congress*, we were bound to touch upon certain personal qualities, were bound to express our approval or disapproval,* especially at an unofficial and intimate meeting. *And I have already pointed out at the League Congress* that it is absurd to think that a candidate is "disgraced" when he is not approved (League Minutes, p. 49), absurd to make a "scene" and go into hysterics over what forms part of a Party member's direct duty to select officials conscientiously and judiciously. And yet this was what put the fat in the fire as far as our minority are concerned, and they began *after the Congress* to clamour about "destroying reputations" (League Minutes, p. 70) and to assure *the broad public in print* that Comrade Stein had been the "chief figure" on the former Organising Committee and that he had been groundlessly accused of "diabolical schemes" (*State of Siege*, p. 69). Is it not hysterics to shout about "destroying reputations" in connection with the approval or disapproval of candidates? Is it not squabbling when people who have been defeated both at a private meeting of the

* Comrade Martov bitterly complained at the League of the vehemence of my disapproval, failing to see that his complaint turned into an argument against himself. Lenin behaved—to use his own expression—frenziedly (League Minutes, p. 63). That is so. He banged the door. True. His conduct (at the second or third meeting of the *Iskra* organisation) aroused the indignation of the members who remained at the meeting. It did. But what follows? Only that my arguments on the substance of the questions in dispute were convincing and were borne out by the course of the Congress. For if, in fact, nine of the sixteen members of the *Iskra* organisation in the end sided with me, clearly this was so *notwithstanding* and *in spite of* my reprehensible vehemence. Hence, had it not been for this "vehemence", perhaps even more than nine would have sided with me. The more "indignation" my arguments and facts had to overcome, the more convincing they must have been.

Iskra organisation and at the official supreme assembly of the Party, the Congress, begin to complain to all and sundry and recommend rejected candidates to the worthy public as "chief figures", and when they then try to force their candidates upon the Party by causing a split and demanding *co-optation*? In our musty émigré atmosphere political concepts have become so confused that Comrade Martov is no longer able to distinguish Party duty from personal and circle allegiance! It is bureaucracy and formalism, we are to believe, to think it proper to discuss and decide upon candidates *only* at congresses, where delegates assemble primarily for the discussion of important questions of principle, where representatives of the movement assemble who are able to treat the question of personalities impartially, and who are able (and in duty bound) to *demand* and gather all necessary information about the candidates before casting their decisive votes, and where the assignment of a certain place to arguments over the conductor's baton is natural and essential. Instead of this bureaucratic and formal view, new usages and customs have now become the thing: we are, after congresses, to talk right and left about the political burial of Ivan Ivanovich or the destroyed reputation of Ivan Nikiforovich; writers are to recommend candidates in pamphlets, the while beating their breasts and hypocritically asserting: "This is not a circle, it is a party...." Those of the reading public who have a taste for scandal will eagerly savour the sensational news that, on the assurance of Martov himself,* so-and-so was the chief figure on the Organising Committee. This reading public is far more competent to discuss and decide the question than formalistic institutions like congresses, with their grossly mechanical decisions by majority vote.... Yes, there are still veritable Augean stables of émigré squabbling for our real Party workers to clean up!

---

* I, too, like Martov, tried in the *Iskra* organisation to get acertain candidate nominated to the Central Committee and failed, a candidate of whose splendid reputation before and at the beginning of the Congress, as borne out by outstanding facts, I too could speak. But it has never entered my head. This comrade *has sufficient self-respect not to allow* anybody, after the Congress, to nominate him in print or to complain about political burials, destroyed reputations, etc.

Second vote of the *Iskra* organisation: "by ten votes to two, with four abstentions, a list of five [candidates for the Central Committee] was adopted which, on my proposal, included one leader of the non-*Iskra*-ist elements and one leader of the *Iskra*-ist minority."* This vote is of the utmost importance, for it clearly and irrefutably proves the utter falsity of the fables which were built up later, in the atmosphere of squabbling, to the effect that we wanted to eject the non-*Iskra*-ists from the Party or set them aside, that what the majority did was to pick candidates from only one half of the Congress and have them elected by that half, etc. All this is sheer falsehood. The vote I have cited shows that we did not exclude the non-*Iskra*-ists even from the Central Committee, let alone the Party, and that we allowed our opponents a very substantial *minority*. The whole point is that they *wanted to have a majority*, and when this modest wish was not gratified, they started a *row* and refused to be represented on the central bodies at all. That such was the case, Comrade Martov's assertions at the League notwithstanding, is shown by the following *letter* which the minority of the *Iskra* organisation addressed to us, the majority of the *Iskra*-ists (and the majority at the Congress after the withdrawal of the seven), shortly after the Congress adopted Paragraph 1 of the Rules (it should be noted that the *Iskra* organisation meeting I have been speaking of was the *last*: after it, the organisation *actually* broke up and each side tried to convince the other Congress delegates that it was in the right).

Here is the text of the letter:

"Having heard the explanation of delegates Sorokin and Sablina[101] regarding the wish of the majority of the editorial board and the Emancipation of Labour group to attend the meeting [on such and such a date],** and having with the help of these delegates established

* See p. 120 of this volume.—*Ed.*

** According to my reckoning, the date mentioned in the letter was a Tuesday. The meeting took place on Tuesday evening, that is, *after* the 28th sitting of the Congress. This chronological point is very important. It is a *documentary refutation* of Comrade Martov's opinion that we parted company over the organisation of the central bodies, and not over their personal composition. It is *documentary proof* of the correctness of my statement of the case at the League Congress and in the *Letter to the Editors. After the 28th* sitting of the Con-

that at the previous meeting a list of Central Committee candidates was read which was supposed to have come from us, and which was used to misrepresent our whole *political* position; and bearing in mind also that, firstly, this list was attributed to us without any attempt to ascertain its real origin; that, secondly, this circumstance is undoubtedly connected with the accusation of opportunism openly circulated against the majority of the *Iskra* editorial board and of the Emancipation of Labour group; and that thirdly this accusation is, as is perfectly clear to us, connected with a quite definite plan to *change the composition of the* '*Iskra*' *editorial board*—we consider that the explanation given us of the reasons for excluding us from the meeting is unsatisfactory, and that the refusal to admit us to the meeting is proof of not wanting to give us the opportunity to refute the above-mentioned false accusations.

"As to the possibility of our reaching agreement on a joint list of candidates for the Central Committee, we declare that the only list we can accept as the basis for agreement is: Popov, Trotsky, and Glebov. Furthermore, we emphasise that this is a *compromise* list, since the inclusion of Comrade Glebov is to be viewed only as a concession to the wishes of the majority- for now that the role he has played at the Congress is clear to us, *we do not consider Comrade Glebov* a person satisfying the requirements that should be made of a candidate for the Central Committee.

"At the same time, we stress that our entering into negotiations regarding the candidates for the Central Committee has no bearing whatever on the question of the composition of the editorial board of the Central Organ, as on this question (the composition of the editorial board) we are not prepared to enter into any negotiations.

"On behalf of the comrades
"Martov and Starover"

This letter, which accurately reproduces the frame of mind of the disputing sides and the state of the dispute, takes us at once to the "heart" of the incipient split and reveals its real causes. The minority of the *Iskra* organisation, having refused to agree with the majority and preferred freedom of agitation at the Congress (to which they were, of course, fully entitled), nevertheless tried to induce the "delegates" of the majority to admit them to their private meeting! Naturally, this amusing demand only met with a smile and a shrug at our meeting (where the letter was of

---

gress, Comrades Martov and Starover had a great deal to say about a false accusation of opportunism, but *did not say a word* about the differences over the composition of the Council or over co-optation to the central bodies (which we argued about at the 25th, 26th, and 27th sittings).

course read), and the outcry, bordering on hysterics, about "false accusations of opportunism" evoked outright laughter. But let us first examine Martov's and Starover's bitter complaints point by point.

The list had been wrongly attributed to them; their political position was being misrepresented.—But, as Martov himself has admitted (League Minutes, p. 64), it never occurred to me to doubt the truth of his statement that he was not the author of the list. In general, the authorship of the list has nothing to do with the case, and whether the list was drawn up by some *Iskra*-ist or by some representative of the "Centre", etc., is of absolutely no importance. The important thing is that this list, which consisted entirely of members of the present minority, circulated at the Congress, if only as a mere guess or conjecture. Lastly, *the most important thing of all* is that at the Congress Comrade Martov *was obliged* to dissociate himself with the utmost vehemence from *such* a list, a list which he now *would be bound* to greet with delight. Nothing could more saliently exemplify instability in the evaluation of people and shades than this right-about-face in the course of a couple of months from howling about "defamatory rumours" to forcing on the Party central body the very candidates who figure in this supposedly defamatory list!*

This list, Comrade Martov said at the League Congress, "politically implied a coalition between us and *Yuzhny Rabochy*, on the one hand, and the Bund, on the other, a coalition in the sense of a *direct agreement*" (p. 64). That is not true, for, firstly, the Bund would never have entered into an "agreement" about a list which did not include a single Bundist; and, secondly, there was *and could have been no question* of a direct agreement (which was what Martov thought disgraceful) even with the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group, let alone the Bund. It was not an agreement but a coalition that was in question; not that Comrade Martov had made a deal, but that he *was bound to have the support* of those very anti-*Iskra*-ists and unstable elements whom he had fought

* These lines were already set up when we received news of the incident of Comrade Gusev and Comrade Deutsch. We shall examine this incident separately in an *appendix*. (See pp. 416-25 of this volume.—*Ed.*)

during the first half of the Congress and who had seized upon his error over Paragraph 1 of the Rules. The letter I have quoted proves incontrovertibly that the *root* of the "grievance" lay in the *open, and moreover false, accusation of opportunism*. This "accusation" which put the fat in the fire, and which Comrade Martov *now* so carefully steers clear of, in spite of my reminder in the *Letter to the Editors*, was twofold. Firstly, during the discussion of Paragraph 1 of the Rules Plekhanov bluntly declared that Paragraph 1 was a question of "keeping away" from us "every kind of representative of opportunism", and that my draft, as a bulwark against their invading the Party, "should, if only for that reason, receive the votes of all enemies of opportunism" (Congress Minutes, p. 246). These vigorous words, even though I softened them down a little (p. 250),* caused a sensation, which was clearly expressed in the speeches of Comrades Rusov (p. 247), Trotsky (p. 248), and Akimov (p. 253). In the "lobby" of our "parliament", Plekhanov's thesis was keenly commented on and varied in a thousand ways in endless arguments over Paragraph 1. But instead of defending their case on its merits, our dear comrades assumed a ludicrous air of injury and even went to the length of complaining in writing about a "false accusation of opportunism"!

Their narrow circle mentality and astonishing immaturity as Party members, which cannot stand the fresh breeze of open controversy in the presence of all, is here clearly revealed. It is mentality so familiar to the Russian, as expressed in the old saying: either coats off, or let's have your hand! These people are so accustomed to the bell-jar seclusion of an intimate and snug little circle that they almost fainted as soon as a person spoke up in a free and open arena on his own responsibility. Accusations of opportunism!—against whom? Against the Emancipation of Labour group, and its majority at that—can you imagine anything more terrible? Either split the Party on account of this ineffaceable insult, or hush up this "domestic unpleasantness" by restoring the "continuity" of the bell-jar—this alternative is already pretty clearly indicated in the letter we are

* See present edition, Vol. 6, pp. 499-500.—*Ed.*

examining. Intellectualist individualism and the circle mentality had come into conflict with the requirement of open speaking before the Party. Can you imagine such an absurdity, such a squabble, such a complaint about "false accusations of opportunism" in the German party? There, proletarian organisation and discipline weaned them from such intellectualist flabbiness long ago. Nobody has anything but the profoundest respect for Liebknecht, let us say; but how they would have laughed over there at *complaints* that he (together with Bebel) was "openly accused of opportunism" at the 1895 Congress, when, on the agrarian question, he found himself in the bad company of the notorious opportunist Vollmar and his friends. Liebknecht's name is inseparably bound up with the history of the German working-class movement not, of course, because he happened to stray into opportunism on such a comparatively minor and specific question, but in spite of it. And similarly, in spite of all the acrimony of the struggle, the name of Comrade Axelrod, say, inspires respect in every Russian Social-Democrat, and always will; but not because Comrade Axelrod happened to defend an opportunist idea at the Second Congress of our Party, happened to dig out old anarchistic rubbish at the Second Congress of the League, but in spite of it. Only the most hidebound circle mentality, with its logic of "either coats off, or let's have your hand", could give rise to hysterics, squabbles, and a Party split because of a "false accusation of opportunism against the majority of the Emancipation of Labour group".

The other element of this terrible accusation is intimately connected with the preceding (Comrade Martov tried in vain at the League Congress [p. 63] to evade and hush up *one* side of this incident). It relates in fact to that *coalition* of the anti-*Iskra*-ist and wavering elements with Comrade Martov which *began to emerge* in connection with Paragraph 1 of the Rules. Naturally, there was no agreement, direct or indirect, between Comrade Martov and the anti-*Iskra*-ists, nor could there have been, and nobody suspected him of it: it only seemed so to him in his fright. But *politically* his error was revealed in the fact that people who undoubtedly gravitated towards opportunism began to form around him an ever more solid and "compact" majority (which has

now become a minority *only* because of the "accidental" withdrawal of seven delegates). We pointed to this "coalition", also *openly*, of course, immediately after the matter of Paragraph 1—both at the Congress (see Comrade Pavlovich's remark already quoted: Congress Minutes, p. 255) and in the *Iskra* organisation (Plekhanov, as I recall, pointed to it in particular). It is literally the same point and the same jibe as was addressed by Clara Zetkin to Bebel and Liebknecht in 1895, when she said: "*Es tut mir in der Seele weh, dass ich dich in der Gesellschaft seh*'" ("It cuts me to the quick to see you [i.e., Bebel] in such company [i.e., of Vollmar and Co.]"). It is strange, to be sure, that Bebel and Liebknecht did not send a hysterical message to Kautsky and Zetkin complaining of a false accusation of opportunism....

As to the list of candidates for the Central Committee, this letter shows that Comrade Martov was mistaken in declaring at the League that the refusal to come to an agreement with us was not yet final—another example of how unwise it is in a political struggle to attempt to reproduce the *spoken word* from memory, instead of relying on documents. Actually, the "minority" were so modest as to present the "majority" with an ultimatum: take two from the "minority" and one (by way of compromise and *only* as a concession, properly speaking!) from the "majority". This is monstrous, but it is a fact. And this fact clearly shows how absurd are the fables now being spread to the effect that the "majority" picked representatives of only one half of the Congress and got them elected by that one half. *Just the opposite*: the Martovites offered us one out of three only as a concession, consequently, in the event of our not agreeing to this unique "concession", they wanted to get *all* the seats filled by their own candidates! At our private meeting we had a good laugh at the Martovites' modesty and drew up a list of our own: Glebov-Travinsky (subsequently elected to the Central Committee)-*Popov*. For the latter we then substituted (also at a private meeting of the twenty-four) Comrade Vasilyev (subsequently elected to the Central Committee) *only because* Comrade Popov refused, first in private conversation and then openly at the Congress (p. 338), to be included in our list.

That is how matters really stood.

The modest "minority" modestly wished to be in the majority. When this modest wish was not met, the "minority" were pleased to decline altogether and to start a row. Yet there are people who now talk pontifically about the "intransigence" of the "majority"!

Entering the fray in the arena of free agitation at the Congress, the "minority" presented the "majority" with amusing ultimatums. Having suffered defeat, *our heroes burst into tears and began to cry out about a state of siege. Voilà tout.*

The terrible accusation that we intended to change the composition of the editorial board was also greeted with a smile (at our private meeting of the twenty-four): from the very beginning of the Congress, and even before the Congress, everybody had known perfectly well of the plan to *reconstitute* the editorial board by electing an initial trio (I shall speak of this in greater detail when I come to the election of the editorial board at the Congress). That the "minority" took fright at this plan *after* they saw its correctness splendidly confirmed by their coalition with the anti-*Iskra*-ists did not surprise us—it was quite natural. Of course, we could not take seriously the proposal that we should of our own free will, without a fight at the Congress, convert ourselves into a minority; nor could we take seriously this whole letter, the authors of which had reached such an incredible state of exasperation as to speak of "false accusations of opportunism". We confidently hoped that their sense of Party duty would very soon get the better of the natural desire to "vent their spleen".

K. CONTINUATION OF THE DEBATE ON THE RULES COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL

The succeeding clauses of the Rules aroused far more controversy over details than over principles of organisation. The 24th sitting of the Congress was entirely devoted to the question of representation at Party congresses, and again a decided and definite struggle against the common plans of all the *Iskra*-ists was waged only by the Bundists (Goldblatt and Lieber, pp. 258-59) and Comrade Akimov,

who with praiseworthy frankness admitted his role at the Congress: "Every time I speak, I do so fully realising that my arguments will not influence the comrades, but will on the contrary damage the point I am trying to defend" (p. 261). Coming just after Paragraph 1 of the Rules, this apt remark was particularly appropriate; only the words "on the contrary" were not quite in order here, for Comrade Akimov was able not only to damage various points, but at the same time, and by so doing, to "influence the comrades" ... those very inconsistent *Iskra*-ists who inclined towards opportunist phrase-mongering.

Well, in the upshot Paragraph 3 of the Rules, which defines the conditions of representation at congresses, was adopted by a majority with seven abstentions (p. 263)—anti-*Iskra*-ists, evidently.

The arguments over the composition of the Council, which took up the greater part of the 25th Congress sitting, revealed an extraordinary number of groupings around a multitude of proposals. Abramson and Tsaryov rejected the plan for a Council altogether. Panin insisted on making the Council a court of arbitration exclusively, and therefore quite consistently moved to delete the definition that the Council is the supreme institution and that it may be summoned by any two of its members.* Hertz[102] and Rusov advocated differing methods of constituting the Council, in addition to the *three* methods proposed by the *five* members of the Rules Committee.

The questions in dispute reduced themselves primarily to definition of the Council's functions: whether it was to be a court of arbitration or the supreme institution of the Party. Comrade Panin, as I have said, was consistently in favour of the former. But he stood alone. Comrade Martov vigorously opposed this: "I propose that the motion to delete the words, 'the Council is the supreme institution',

* Apparently, Comrade Starover also inclined to the view of Comrade Panin, only with the difference that the latter knew what he wanted and quite consistently moved resolutions aimed at converting the Council into a pure arbitration or conciliation body, whereas Comrade Starover did not know what he wanted when he said that according to the draft the Council could meet "only on the wish of the parties" (p. 266). That was quite incorrect.

be rejected. Our formulation [i.e., the formulation of the Council's functions that we had agreed on in the Rules Committee] deliberately leaves open the possibility of the Council developing into the supreme Party institution. For us, the Council is not merely a conciliation board." Yet the composition of the Council as proposed by Comrade Martov was solely and exclusively that of a "conciliation board" or court of arbitration: two members from each of the cen- . tral bodies and a fifth to be invited by these four. Not only such a composition of the Council, but even that adopted by the Congress on the motion of Comrades Rusov and Hertz (the fifth member to be appointed by the Congress), answers the sole purpose of conciliation or mediation. Between such a composition of the Council and its mission of becoming the supreme Party institution there is an irreconcilable contradiction. The composition of the supreme Party institution should be constant, and not dependent on chance changes (sometimes owing to arrests) in the composition of the central bodies. The supreme institution should stand in direct relation to the Party Congress, receiving its powers from the latter, and not from two other Party institutions subordinate to the Congress The supreme institution should consist of persons known to the Party Congress. Lastly, the *supreme* institution should not be *organised* in a way that makes *its very existence* dependent on chance—the two bodies fail to agree on the selection of the fifth member, and the Party is left without a supreme institution! To this it was objected: 1) that if one of the five were to abstain and the remaining four were to divide equally, the position might also prove a hopeless one (Egorov) . This objection is unfounded, for the impossibility of *adopting a decision* is something that is inevitable at times in the case of *any* body, but that is quite different from the impossibility of *forming* the body. Second objection: "if an institution like the Council proves incapable of selecting the fifth member, it will mean that it is ineffectual in general" (Zasulich). But the point here is not that it will be ineffectual, but that there will be no *supreme* institution at all: without the fifth member, *there will be no* Council, there will be *no* "*institution*", and the question of whether it is effectual or not will not even arise. Lastly, if the trouble were that it might not be possible to

FROM MARX TO MAO NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

form some Party body over which stood another, higher, body, that would be remediable, for in urgent cases the higher body could fill the gap in one way or another. But there is *no* body above the Council except the Congress, and therefore to frame the Rules in such a way that it *might not even be possible to form* the Council would obviously be illogical.

Both my brief speeches at the Congress on this question were devoted to an examination (pp. 267 and 269) *only of these two* wrong objections which Martov and other comrades adduced in defence of his proposal. As to the question of the Central Organ or; the Central Committee predominating on the Council, *I did not even touch on it*. This question was brought up, as early as the 14th sitting of the Congress (p. 157), by *Comrade Akimov*, he being the *first* to talk of the danger of the Central Organ predominating; and Comrades Martov, Axelrod, and others, *after the Congress*, were only following in *Akimov*'s footsteps when they invented the absurd and demagogic story that the "majority" wanted to convert the Central Committee into a tool of the editorial board. When he dealt with this question in his *State of Siege*, Comrade Martov modestly avoided mentioning its real initiator!

Anybody who cares to acquaint himself with the *entire* treatment at the Party Congress of the question of the Central Organ predominating over the Central Committee, and is not content with isolated quotations torn from their context, will easily perceive how Comrade Martov has distorted the matter. *It was none other than Comrade Popov* who, as early as the 14th sitting, started a polemic *against the views of Comrade Akimov*, who wanted "the 'strictest centralisation' at the top of the Party *in order to weaken the influence of the Central Organ*" (p. 154; my italics), which in fact is the whole meaning of this [Akimov's] system". "Far from defending such centralisation", Comrade Popov added, "I am prepared to combat it with every means in my power, because it is *the banner of opportunism*." There you have the *root* of the famous question of the Central Organ predominating over the Central Committee, and it is not surprising that Comrade Martov is now *obliged* to pass over the true origin of the question in silence. *Even* Comrade

Popov could not fail to discern the *opportunist* character of Akimov's talk about the predominance of the Central Organ,* and in order thoroughly to dissociate himself from Comrade Akimov, Comrade Popov *categorically* declared: "Let there be three members from the editorial board on this central body [the Council] and two from the Central Committee. *That is a secondary question*. [My italics.] The important thing is that the leadership, the supreme leadership of the Party, should proceed from one source (p. 155). Comrade Akimov objected: "Under the draft, the Central Organ is ensured predominance on the Council if only because the composition of the editorial board is constant whereas that of the Central Committee is changeable" (p. 157)—an argument which only relates to "constancy" of leadership in matters of *principle* (which is a normal and desirable thing), and certainly not to "predominance" in the sense of interference or encroachment on independence. And Comrade Popov, who at that time did not yet belong to a "minority" which masks its dissatisfaction with the composition of the central bodies by spreading tales of the Central Committee's lack of independence, told Comrade Akimov quite logically: "I propose that it [the Council] be regarded as the directing centre of the Party, in which case *it will be entirely unimportant whether there are more representatives on the Council from the Central Organ or from the Central Committee*" (pp. 157-58; my italics).

When the discussion of the composition of the Council was resumed at the 25th sitting, Comrade Pavlovich, continuing the old debate, pronounced in favour of the predom-

* Neither Comrade Popov nor Comrade Martov hesitated to call Comrade Akimov an opportunist; they only began to take exception and grow indignant when this appellation was applied *to them*, and applied justly, is connection with "equality of languages" or Paragraph 1. Comrade Akimov, in whose footsteps Comrade Martov has followed, was however able to conduct himself with greater dignity and manhood at the Party Congress than Comrade Martov and Co. at the League Congress. "I have been called an opportunist here," said Comrade Akimov at the Party Congress. "I personally consider this an abusive and offensive term and believe that I have done nothing to deserve it. However, I am not protesting" (p. 296). Can it be that Comrades Martov and Starover invited Comrade Akimov to subscribe to their protest against the false accusation of opportunism, but that Comrade Akimov declined?

inance of the Central Organ over the Central Committee "in view of the former's stability" (p. 264). It was stability in matters of *principle* that he had in mind, and that was how he was understood by Comrade Martov, who, speaking immediately after Comrade Pavlovich, considered it unnecessary to "fix the preponderance of one institution over the other" and pointed to the possibility of one of the Central Committee members residing abroad, "whereby the stability of the Central Committee in matters of principle would to some extent be preserved" (p. 264). Here there is not yet even a trace of the demagogic *confusion* of stability in matters of *principle*, and its preservation, with the preservation of the independence and initiative of the Central Committee. *At the Congress* this confusion, which *since the Congress* has practically become Comrade Martov's trump card, was furthered *only by Comrade Akimov*, who *already at that time* spoke of the "Arakcheyev[103] spirit of the Rules" (p. 268), and said that "*if three members of the Party Council were to be from the Central Organ, the Central Committee would be converted into a mere tool of the editorial board*. [My italics.] Three persons residing abroad would obtain the unrestricted [!!] right to order the work of the entire [!!] Party. Their security would be guaranteed, and their power would therefore be lifelong" (p. 268). It was with this absolutely absurd and demagogic talk, in which *ideological leadership is called interference in the work of the entire Party* (and which after the Congress provided a cheap slogan for Comrade Axelrod with his talk about "theocracy")—it was *with this* that Comrade Pavlovich again took issue when he stressed that he stood "for the stability and purity of the principles represented by *Iskra*. By giving preponderance to the editorial board of the Central Organ I want to fortify these principles (p. 268).

That is how the celebrated question of the predominance of the Central Organ over the Central Committee really stands. This famous "difference of principle" on the part of Comrades Axelrod and Martov is nothing but *a repetition of the opportunist and demagogic talk of Comrade Akimov*, the true character of which was clearly detected even by Comrade Popov, in the days when he had not yet suffered defeat over the composition of the central bodies!

* * *

To sum up the question of the composition of the Council: despite Comrade Martov's attempts in his *State of Siege* to prove that my statement of the case in the *Letter to the Editors* is contradictory and incorrect, the minutes of the Congress clearly show that, *in comparison* with Paragraph 1, this question was indeed only a *detail*, and that the assertion in the article "Our Congress" (*Iskra*, No. 53) that we argued "almost exclusively" about the organisation of the Party's central institutions is a *complete distortion*. It is a distortion all the more outrageous since the author of the article *entirely ignores the controversy over Paragraph 1*. Further, that there was no definite grouping of the *Iskra*-ists over the composition of the Council is also borne out by the minutes: there were no roll-call votes; Martov differed with Panin; I found common ground with Popov; Egorov and Gusev took up a separate stand, and so on. Finally, my last statement (at the Congress of the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad), to the effect that the Martovites' coalition with the anti-*Iskra*-ists grew steadily stronger, *is also borne out* by Comrade Martov's and Comrade Axelrod's swing towards Comrade Akimov—now apparent to everyone—on this question as well.

L. CONCLUSION OF THE DEBATE ON THE RULES. CO-OPTATION TO THE CENTRAL BODIES. WITHDRAWAL OF THE *RABOCHEYE DYELO* DELEGATES

Of the subsequent debate on the Rules (26th sitting of the Congress), only the question of restricting the powers of the Central Committee is worth mentioning, for it throws light on the character of the attacks the Martovites are *now* making on hypercentralism. Comrades Egorov and Popov strove for the restriction of centralism with rather more conviction, irrespective of their own candidature or that of those they supported. When the question was still in the Rules Commission, they moved that the right of the Central Committee to dissolve local committees be made contingent on the consent of the Council and, in addition, be limited to cases specially enumerated (p. 272, note 1). This was opposed by three members of the Rules Commis-

sion (Glebov, Martov, and myself), and at the Congress Comrade Martov upheld our view (p. 273) and answered Egorov and Popov by saying that "the Central Committee would in any case deliberate before deciding on so serious a step as the dissolution of an organisation". As you see, *at that time* Comrade Martov still turned a deaf ear to *every* anti-centralist scheme, and the Congress rejected the proposal of Egorov and Popov—only unfortunately the minutes do not tell us by how many votes.

At the Party Congress, Comrade Martov was also "against substituting the word 'endorses' for the word 'organises' [the Central Committee organises committees, etc.—Paragraph 6 of the Party Rules]. It must be given the right to organise as well." That is what Comrade Martov said *then* not having yet hit on the wonderful idea that the concept "organise" does not include endorsement, which he discovered only at the League Congress.

Apart from these two points, the debate over Paragraphs 5-11 of the Rules (Minutes, pp. 273-76) is hardly of any interest, being confined to quite minor arguments over details. Then came Paragraph 12—the question of co-optation to all Party bodies in general and to the central bodies in particular. The commission proposed raising the majority required for co-optation from two-thirds to four-fifths. Glebov, who presented its report, moved that decisions to co-opt to the Central Committee must be *unanimous*. Comrade Egorov, while acknowledging *dissonances* undesirable, stood for a simple majority in the absence of a reasoned veto. Comrade Popov agreed neither with the commission nor with Comrade Egorov and demanded either a simple majority (without the right of veto) or unanimity. Comrade Martov agreed neither with the commission, nor with Glebov, nor with Egorov, nor with Popov, declaring against unanimity, against four-fifths (in favour of two-thirds), and *against* "*mutual co-optation*", *that is*, *the right of the editorial board of the Central Organ to protest a co-optation to the Central Committee and vice versa* ("the right of mutual control over co-optation").

As the reader sees, the groupings were highly variegated and the differences so numerous as almost to lend "uniqueness" to the views of each delegate!

Comrade Martov said: "I admit the psychological impossibility of working with unpleasant persons. But it is also important for our organisation to be virile and effectual.... The right of the Central Committee and the editorial board of the Central Organ to mutual control in cases of co-optation is unnecessary. It is not because I think that one is not competent in the sphere of the other that I am against it. No! The editorial board of the Central Organ, for instance, might give the Central Committee sound advice as to whether Mr. Nadezhdin, say, should be admitted to the Central Committee. I object because I do not want to create mutually exasperating red tape."

I objected: "There are two questions here. The first is that of the required majority, and I am against lowering it from four-fifths to two-thirds. The stipulation for a reasoned protest is not expedient, and I am against it. Incomparably more important is the second question, the right of the Central Committee and the Central Organ to mutual control over co-optation. The mutual consent of the two central bodies is an essential condition for harmony. What is involved here is a possible rupture between the two central bodies. Whoever does not want a split should be concerned to safeguard harmony. We know from the history of the Party that there have been people who caused splits. It is a question of principle, a very important question, one on which the whole future of the Party may depend" (pp. 276-77). That is the full text of the summary of my speech as recorded at the Congress, a speech to which Comrade Martov attaches particularly serious importance. Unfortunately, although attaching serious importance to it, he did not take the trouble to consider it in connection with the whole debate and the whole political situation at the Congress at the moment it was made.

The first question that arises is why, in my original draft (see p. 394, Paragraph 11),* I stipulated a majority of only two-thirds and did not demand mutual control over co-optation to the central bodies. Comrade Trotsky, who spoke after me (p. 277), did in fact at once raise this question.

The answer to it is given in my speech at the League

* See present edition, Vol. 6, p. 475.—*Ed.*

Congress and in Comrade Pavlovich's letter on the Second Congress. Paragraph 1 of the Rules "broke the pot" and it had to be bound tight with a "double knot"—I said at the League Congress. That meant, firstly, that on a purely theoretical question Martov had proved to be an opportunist, and his mistake had been *upheld* by Lieber and Akimov. It meant, secondly, that the coalition of the Martovites (that is, an insignificant minority of the *Iskra*-ists) with the anti-*Iskra*-ists ensured them *a majority at the Congress* in the voting on the personal composition of the central bodies. And it was about the *personal composition* of the central bodies that I was speaking here, emphasising the need for harmony and *warning against* "*people who cause splits*". This warning was indeed of important significance in principle, for the *Iskra* organisation (which was undoubtedly best qualified to judge about the personal composition of the central bodies, having as it did the closest practical acquaintance with all affairs and with all the candidates) had already made its recommendations on this subject and had taken the decision we know regarding the candidates who aroused its misgivings. Both morally and on its merits (that is, its competence to judge), the *Iskra* organisation should have had the decisive say in this delicate matter. But *formally speaking*, of course, Comrade Martov had every right to appeal to the Liebers and Akimovs *against* the majority of the *Iskra* organisation. And in his brilliant speech on Paragraph 1, Comrade Akimov had said with remarkable explicitness and sagacity that whenever he perceived a difference among the *Iskra*-ists over the methods of achieving their common *Iskra* aim, he consciously and deliberately *voted for the worse method*, because his, Akimov's, aims were diametrically opposed to those of the *Iskra*-ists. There could not be the *slightest doubt* therefore that, quite irrespective of the wishes and intentions of Comrade Martov, *it was the worse composition of the central bodies* that would obtain the support of the Liebers and Akimovs. They *could vote*, they were bound to vote (judging by their *deeds*, by their vote on Paragraph 1, and not by their words) precisely for that list which would promise the presence of "people who cause splits", and would do so *in order to* "cause splits". Is it surprising, in view of this situation, that I

said that it was an important question of principle (harmony between the two central bodies), one on which the whole future of the Party might depend?

No Social-Democrat at all acquainted with the *Iskra* ideas and plans and with the history of the movement, and at all earnest in sharing those ideas, could doubt for a moment that while formally it was quite right and proper for the dispute within the *Iskra* organisation over the composition of the central bodies to be decided by the Liebers and Akimovs, this would ensure the *worst* possible results. It was imperative to *fight to avert* these worst possible results.

How were we to fight them? We did not fight by hysterics and rows, of course, but by methods which were *quite loyal and quite legitimate*: perceiving that we were in the minority (as on the question of Paragraph 1), *we appealed to the Congress to protect the rights of the minority*. Greater strictness as regards the majority required for adoption of members (four-fifths instead of two-thirds), the requirement of unanimity for co-optation, mutual control over co-optation to the central bodies—all this we began to advocate *when we found ourselves in the minority on the question of the personal composition of the central bodies*. This fact is constantly ignored by the Ivans and Peters who are so ready to give opinions on the Congress lightly, after a couple of chats with friends, without seriously studying *all* the minutes and all the "testimony" of the persons concerned. Yet anybody who cares to make a conscientious study of these minutes and this testimony will inevitably encounter the fact I have mentioned, namely, that the *root* of the dispute *at that moment of the Congress* was the *personal composition of the central bodies*, and that we strove for stricter conditions of control just because we were in the minority and wanted "a double knot to bind tight the pot" broken by Martov amid the jubilation and with the jubilant assistance of the Liebers and the Akimovs.

"If it were not so," Comrade Pavlovich says, speaking of this moment of the Congress, "one would have to assume that in moving the point about unanimity in cases of co-optation, we were concerned for the interests of our adversaries; for to the side which predominates in any insti-

tution unanimity is unnecessary and even disadvantageous." (*Letter on the Second Congress*, p. 14). But today the chronological aspect of the events is all too often forgotten; it is forgotten that there was *a whole period at the Congress* when the present minority was the majority (thanks to the participation of the Liebers and Akimovs), and that it was precisely at this period that the controversy over co-optation to the central bodies took place, the underlying reason for which was the difference within the *Iskra* organisation over the personal composition of the central bodies. Whoever grasps this fact will understand the passion that marked our debates and will not be surprised by the *seeming* paradox that petty differences over details gave rise to really important issues of principle.

Comrade Deutsch, speaking at this same sitting (p. 277), was in many respects right when he said: "This motion is undoubtedly designed for the *given moment*." Yes, indeed, it is only when we have understood the given moment, in all its complexity, that we can understand the true meaning of the controversy. And it is highly important to bear in mind that when *we* were in the minority, we defended the rights of the minority by *such methods* as will be acknowledged legitimate and permissible by any European Social-Democrat, namely, by appealing to the Congress for stricter control over the personal composition of the central bodies. Similarly, Comrade Egorov was in many respects right when he said at the Congress, but at a different sitting: "I am exceedingly surprised to hear reference to principles again being made in the debate. [This was said in reference to the elections to the Central Committee, at the 31st sitting of the Congress, that is, if I am not mistaken, on Thursday morning, whereas the 26th sitting, of which we are now speaking, was held on Monday evening.] I think it is clear to everyone that during the last few days the debate has not revolved around any question of principle, but exclusively around securing or preventing the inclusion of one or another person in the central institutions. Let us acknowledge that principles have been lost at this Congress long since, and call a spade a spade. (*General laughter. Muravyov*: 'I request to have it recorded in the minutes that Comrade Martov smiled')" (p. 337). It is not surprising that Comrade

Martov, like the rest of us, laughed at Comrade Egorov's complaints, which were indeed ludicrous. Yes, "*during the last few days*" a very great deal did *revolve* around the personal composition of the central bodies. That is true. That was indeed *clear to everyone* at the Congress (and it is only *now* that the minority is trying to *obscure* this clear fact). And it is true, lastly, that a spade should be called a spade. But, for God's sake, where is the "loss of principles" *here*? After all, we assembled at the Congress *in order*, *in the first days* (see p. 10, the Congress agenda), to discuss the programme, tactics, and Rules and to decide the questions relating to them, and *in the last days* (Items 18 and 19 of the agenda) to discuss the personal composition of the central bodies and to decide *those* questions. When the *last days* of congresses are devoted to a struggle over the conductor's baton, that is natural and absolutely legitimate. (But when a fight over the conductor's baton is waged *after congresses*, that is squabbling.) If someone suffers defeat *at the congress* over the personal composition of the central bodies (as Comrade Egorov did), it is *simply ludicrous* of him, *after that*, to speak of "loss of principles". It is therefore understandable why everybody laughed at Comrade Egorov. And it is also understandable why Comrade Muravyov requested to have it recorded in the minutes that Comrade Martov shared in the laughter: *in laughing at Comrade Egorov*, *Comrade Martov was laughing at himself....*

In addition to Comrade Muravyov's irony, it will not be superfluous, perhaps, to mention the following fact. As we know, *after the Congress* Comrade Martov asserted right and left that it was the question of co-optation to the central bodies that played the cardinal role in our divergence, and that "the majority of the old editorial board" was emphatically opposed to mutual control over co-optation to the central bodies. *Before the Congress*, when accepting my plan to elect two trios, with mutual co-optation by a two-thirds majority, Comrade Martov *wrote to me on the subject*: "*In adopting this form of mutual co-optation*, it should be stressed that after the Congress additions to each body will be effected on somewhat different lines. (I *would advise the following*: each body co-opts new members, informing the other body of its intention; *the latter may enter a pro-*

test, in which case the dispute shall be settled by the Council. To avoid delays, this procedure should be followed in relation *to candidates nominated in advance—at least in the case of the Central Committee*—from whose number the additions may then be made more expeditiously.) In order to stress that subsequent co-optation will be effected in the manner provided by the Party Rules, the following words should be added to Item 22*: '...by which the decisions taken must be endorsed'." (My italics.)

Comment is superfluous.

Having explained the significance of the moment when the controversy over co-optation to the central bodies took place, we must dwell a little on the *votings* on the subject—it is unnecessary to dwell on the *discussion*, as the speeches of Comrade Martov and myself, already quoted, were followed only by brief interchanges in which very few of the delegates took part (see Minutes, pp. 277-80). In relation to the voting, Comrade Martov asserted at the League Congress that in my account of the matter I was guilty of "the greatest distortion" (League Minutes, p. 60) "in representing the struggle around the Rules [Comrade Martov unwittingly uttered a profound truth: after Paragraph 1, the heated disputes were indeed *around* the Rules] as a struggle of *Iskra* against the Martovites joined in coalition with the Bund."

Let us examine this interesting "greatest distortion". Comrade Martov added together the votings on the composition of the Council and the votings on co-optation and listed *eight* in all: 1) election to the Council of two members each from the Central Organ and the Central Committee—27 for

---

* The reference is to my original draft of the *Tagesordnung* (agenda—*Ed.*) of the Congress and my commentary to it, with which all the delegates were familiar. Item 22 of this draft provided for the election of two trios—to the Central Organ and to the Central Committee—"mutual co-optation" by these six by a two-thirds majority, the endorsement of this mutual co-optation by the Congress, and subsequent co-optation by the Central Organ and the Central Committee separately.

(M), 16 against (L), 7 abstentions.* (Let me say parenthetically that the number of abstentions is shown in the Minutes—p. 270—as 8, but that is a detail.) 2) election of the fifth Council member by the Congress—23 for (L), 18 against (M), 7 abstentions. 3) replacement of lapsed Council members by the Council itself—23 against (M), 16 for (L), 12 abstentions. 4) unanimity for co-optation to the Central Committee—25 for (L), 19 against (M), 7 abstentions. 5) the stipulation for *one* reasoned protest for non-co-optation—21 for (L), 19 against (M), 11 abstentions. 6) unanimity for co-optation to the Central Organ—23 for (L), 21 against (M), 7 abstentions. 7) votability of a motion giving the Council the right to annul a Central Organ or Central Committee decision not to co-opt a new member—25 for (M), 19 against (L), 7 abstentions. 8) this motion itself—24 for (M), 23 against (L), 4 abstentions. "*Here*, *evidently*," Comrade Martov concluded (League Minutes, p. 61), "*one Bund delegate voted for the motion while the rest abstained*." (My italics.)

Why, may one ask, did Comrade Martov consider it *evident* that the Bundist had voted *for him*, *Martov*, when there were no roll-call votes?

Because he counted the *number of votes cast*, and when it indicated that the Bund *had taken part* in the voting, he, Comrade Martov, did not doubt that it had been on *his*, Martov's, side.

Where, then, is the "greatest distortion" on my part?

The total votes were 51, without the Bundists 46, without the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists 43. In *seven* of the eight votings mentioned by Comrade Martov, 43, 41, 39, 44, 40, 44, and 44 delegates took part; in *one*, 47 delegates (or rather votes), and here Comrade Martov himself admitted that he was supported by a Bundist. We thus find that the picture sketched by Martov (and sketched incompletely, as we shall soon see) *only confirms and strengthens my account of the struggle*! We find that in a great many cases the number of abstentions was *very high*: this points to the slight—*relatively* slight interest shown by the Congress as a whole in certain *minor points*, and to the absence of any definite grouping of the

* The letters M and L in parentheses indicate which side I (L) and which side Martov (M) was on.

Iskra-ists on these questions. Martov's statement that the Bundists "manifestly helped Lenin by abstaining" (League Minutes, p. 62) *in fact speaks against Martov*: it means that it was *only* when the Bundists were absent or abstained that I could sometimes count upon victory. But whenever the Bundists *thought it worth while* to intervene in the struggle, they supported Comrade Martov; and the above-mentioned case when 37 delegates voted was *not the only time* they intervened. Whoever cares to refer to the Congress Minutes will notice *a very strange incompleteness* in Comrade Martov's picture. Comrade Martov *simply omitted three cases* when the Bund *did take part* in the voting, and *it goes without saying* that *in all these cases* Comrade Martov was the victor. Here are the three cases: 1) adoption of Comrade Fomin's amendment to lower the required majority from four-fifths to two-thirds—27 for, 21 against (p. 278), that is, 48 votes. 2) adoption of Comrade Martov's motion to delete mutual co-optation—26 for, 24 against (p. 279), that is, 50 votes. Lastly, 3) rejection of my motion to permit co-optation to the Central Organ or the Central Committee only with the consent of all members of the Council (p. 280)—27 against, 22 for (there was even a roll-call vote, of which, unfortunately, there is no record in the minutes), that is, 49 votes.

To sum up: on the question of co-optation to the central bodies the Bundists took part *in only four votings* (the *three* I have just mentioned, with 48, 50, and 49 votes, and the *one* mentioned by Comrade Martov, with 47 votes). *In all these votings* Comrade Martov was the victor. *My statement of the case proves to be right in every particular*: in declaring that there was a coalition with the Bund, in noting the relatively minor character of the questions (a large number of abstentions in very many cases), and in pointing to the absence of any definite grouping of the *Iskra*-ists (no roll-call votes; very few speakers in the debates).

Comrade Martov's attempt to detect a contradiction in my statement of the case turns out to have been made with unsound means, for he tore isolated words from their context and did not trouble to reconstruct the complete picture.

The last paragraph of the Rules, dealing with the organisation abroad, again gave rise to debates and votings which were highly significant from the point of view of the groupings at the Congress. The question at issue was recognition of the League as the Party organisation abroad. Comrade Akimov, of course, at once rose up in arms, reminding the Congress of the Union Abroad, which had been endorsed by the First Congress, and pointing out that the question was one of principle. "Let me first make the reservation," he said, "that I do not attach any particular practical significance to which way the question is decided. The ideological struggle which has been going on in our Party is undoubtedly not over yet; but it will be continued on a different plane and with a different alignment of forces.... Paragraph 13 of the Rules once more reflects, and in a very marked way, the tendency to convert our Congress from a Party congress into a factional congress. Instead of causing all Social-Democrats in Russia to defer to the decisions of the Party Congress in the name of Party unity, by uniting all Party organisations, it is proposed that the Congress should destroy the organisation of the minority and make the minority disappear from the scene" (p. 281). As the reader sees, the "continuity" which became so dear to Comrade Martov after his defeat over the composition of the central bodies was no less dear to Comrade Akimov. But at the Congress these people who apply different standards to themselves and to others rose up in heated protest against Comrade Akimov. Although the programme had been adopted, *Iskra* endorsed, and nearly the entire Rules passed, that "principle" which "in principle" distinguished the League from the Union was brought to the fore. "If Comrade Akimov is anxious to make the issue one of principle," exclaimed Comrade Martov, "we have nothing against it; especially since Comrade Akimov has spoken of possible combinations in a struggle with two trends. *The victory of one trend must be sanctioned* [this, mark, was said at the *27th* sitting of the Congress!] not in the sense that we make another bow to *Iskra*, but in the sense that we *bow a last farewell to all the possible combinations Comrade Akimov spoke of*" (p. 282; my italics).

What a picture! When all the Congress arguments regarding the programme *were already over*, Comrade Martov con-

tinued to *bow a last farewell* to all possible combinations... until he suffered defeat over the composition of the central bodies! Comrade Martov "bowed a last farewell" at the Congress to that *possible* "combination" which he cheerfully brought to fruition *on the very morrow of the Congress*. But Comrade Akimov proved *even then* to be much more farsighted than Comrade Martov; Comrade Akimov referred to the five years' work of "an old Party organisation which, by the will of the First Congress, bears the name of a committee", and concluded with a most venomous and *prescient* stab: "As to Comrade Martov's opinion that my hopes of a new trend appearing in our Party are in vain, let me say that *even he himself inspires me with such hopes*" (p. 283; my italics).

Yes, it must be confessed, Comrade Martov has fully justified Comrade Akimov's hopes!

Comrade Martov became convinced that Comrade Akimov was right, and joined him, after the "continuity" had been broken of an old Party body deemed to have been working for three years. Comrade Akimov's victory did not cost him much effort.

But at the Congress Comrade Akimov was backed—and backed consistently—only by Comrades Martynov and Brouckère and the Bundists (eight votes). Comrade Egorov, like the real leader of the "Centre" that he is, adhered to the golden mean: he agreed with the *Iskra*-ists, you see, he "sympathised" with them (p. 282), and *proved* his sympathy by the proposal (p. 283) to avoid the question of principle altogether and *say nothing* about either the League or the Union. The proposal was rejected by twenty-seven votes to fifteen. Apparently, in addition to the anti-*Iskra*-ists (eight), nearly the entire "Centre" (ten) voted with Comrade Egorov (the total vote was forty-two, so that a large number abstained or *were absent*, as often happened during votes which were uninteresting or whose result was a *foregone conclusion*). *Whenever the question arose* of carrying out the "*Iskra*" *principles in practice*, it turned out that the "sympathy" of the "Centre" was purely *verbal*, and we secured only thirty votes or a little over. This was to be seen even more graphically in the debate and votes on Rusov's motion (to recognise the League as the *sole* organisation abroad). Here

the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the "Marsh" took up an outright position of *principle*, and its champions, Comrades Lieber and Egorov, declared Comrade Rusov's motion unvotable, impermissible: "It slaughters all the other organisations abroad" (Egorov). And, not desiring to have any part in "slaughtering organisations", the speaker not only refused to vote, but even left the hall. But the leader of the "Centre" must be given his due: he displayed ten times more political manhood and strength of conviction (in his mistaken principles) than did Comrade Martov and Co., for he stood up for an organisation being "slaughtered" *not only when that organisation was his own circle*, defeated in open combat.

Comrade Rusov's motion was deemed votable by twenty-seven votes to fifteen, and was then adopted by twenty-five votes to seventeen. If we add to these seventeen the absent Comrade Egorov, we get *the full complement* (*eighteen*) *of the anti-*"*Iskra*"*-ists and the* "*Centre*".

As a whole Paragraph 13 of the Rules, dealing with the organisation abroad, was adopted by only *thirty-one votes* to twelve, with six abstentions. This figure, thirty-one—showing the approximate number of *Iskra*-ists at the Congress, that is, of people who consistently advocated *Iskra*'s views and applied them *in practice*—we are now encountering for no less than the *sixth time* in our analysis of the voting at the Congress (place of the Bund question on the agenda, the Organising Committee incident, the dissolution of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group, and two votes on the agrarian programme). Yet Comrade Martov seriously wants to assure us that there are no grounds for picking out such a "narrow" group of *Iskra*-ists!

Nor can we omit to mention that the adoption of Paragraph 13 of the Rules evoked an extremely characteristic discussion in connection with a statement by Comrades Akimov and Martynov that they "refused to take part in the voting" (p. 288). The Bureau of the Congress discussed this statement and found—with every reason—that not even the direct closing down of the Union would entitle its delegates to refuse to take part in the Congress proceedings. Refusal to vote is absolutely abnormal and impermissible—such was the view of the Bureau, which was shared by the whole Congress, including the *Iskra*-ists of the minority, who

at the 28th sitting *hotly condemned what they themselves were guilty of at the 31st*! When Comrade Martynov proceeded to defend his statement (p. 291), he was opposed alike by Pavlovich, by Trotsky, by Karsky, and by Martov. Comrade Martov was particularly clear on the duties of a dissatisfied minority (until he found himself in the minority!) and held forth on the subject in a very didactic manner. "Either you are delegates to the Congress," he told Comrades Akimov and Martynov, "in which case you *must* take part in *all* its proceedings [my italics; Comrade Martov did not yet perceive any formalism and bureaucracy in subordination of the minority to the majority!]; or you are not delegates, in which case you cannot remain at the sitting.... The statement of the Union delegates compels me to ask two questions: are they members of the Party, and are they delegates to the Congress?" (P. 292).

Comrade Martov instructing Comrade Akimov in the duties of a Party member! But it was not without reason that Comrade Akimov had said that he had some hopes in Comrade Martov.... These hopes were to come true, however, only *after* Martov was defeated in the elections. When the matter did not concern himself, but others, Comrade Martov was deaf even to the terrible catchword "emergency law", *first launched* (if I am not mistaken) by *Comrade Martynov*. "The explanation given us," Comrade Martynov replied to those who urged him to withdraw his statement, "has not made it clear whether the decision was one of principle or an *emergency measure* against the Union. If the latter, we consider that the Union has been insulted. Comrade Egorov got the same impression as we did, namely, that it was an *emergency law* [my italics] against the Union, and therefore even left the hall" (p. 295). Both Comrade Martov and Comrade Trotsky protested vigorously, along with Plekhanov, against the absurd, *truly absurd*, idea of regarding a vote of the Congress as an *insult*; and Comrade Trotsky, defending a resolution adopted by the Congress on his motion (that Comrades Akimov and Martynov could consider that full satisfaction had been given them), declared that "the resolution is one of principle, not a philistine one, and *it is no business of ours if anybody takes offence at it*" (p. 296). But it very soon became apparent that the circle mentality

and the philistine outlook are still all too strong in our Party, and the proud words I have italicised proved to be merely a high-sounding phrase.

Comrades Akimov and Martynov refused to withdraw their statement, and walked out of the Congress, amidst the delegates' general cry: "Absolutely unwarranted!"

M. THE ELECTIONS. END OF THE CONGRESS

After adopting the Rules, the Congress passed a resolution on district organisations and a number of resolutions on particular Party organisations, and, following the extremely instructive debate on the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group which I have analysed above, proceeded to discuss the election of the Party's central institutions.

We already know that the *Iskra* organisation, from which the entire Congress had expected an authoritative recommendation, had split over this question, for the *minority* of the organisation wanted to test in free and open combat whether it could not win a *majority* at the Congress. We also know that a plan was known long before the Congress—and to all the delegates at the Congress itself—for *reconstituting* the editorial board by the election of two trios, one to the Central Organ and one to the Central Committee. Let us dwell on this plan in greater detail in order to throw light on the Congress debate.

Here is the exact text of my commentary to the draft *Tagesordnung* of the Congress where this plan was set forth:* "The Congress shall elect three persons to the editorial board of the Central Organ and three to the Central Committee. These six persons *in conjunction* shall, if necessary, co-opt by a two-thirds majority vote additional members to the editorial board of the Central Organ and to the Central Committee and report to this effect to the Congress. After the report has been endorsed by the Congress, subsequent co-optation shall be effected by the editorial board of the Central Organ and by the Central Committee separately."

The plan stands out in this text quite definitely and

---

* See my *Letter to the Editors of "Iskra"*, p. 5, and the League Minutes, p. 53.

unambiguously: it implies a *reconstitution* of the editorial board, effected *with the participation* of the most influential leaders of the practical work. Both the features of this plan which I have emphasised are apparent at once to anyone who takes the trouble to read the text at all attentively. But nowadays one has to stop and explain the most elementary things. It was precisely a *reconstitution* of the editorial board that the plan implied—not necessarily an enlargement and not necessarily a reduction of its membership, but its reconstitution; for the question of a possible enlargement or reduction was left *open*: co-optation was provided for only *if necessary*. Among the suggestions for such reconstitution made by various people, some provided for a possible reduction of the number of editors, and some for increasing it to seven (I personally had always regarded seven as far preferable to six), and even to eleven (I considered this possible in the event of peaceful union with all Social-Democratic organisations in general and with the Bund and the Polish Social-Democrats in particular). But what is most important, and this is usually overlooked by people talking about the "trio", is that *the matter of further co-optation to the Central Organ was to be decided with the participation of the members of the Central Committee*. Not one comrade of all the "minority" members of the organisation or Congress delegates, who knew of this plan and approved it (either explicitly or tacitly), has taken the trouble to explain the meaning of this point. Firstly, why was a trio, and only a trio, taken as the starting-point for reconstituting the editorial board? Obviously, this would have been *absolutely senseless* if the *sole*, or at least the main, purpose had been to *enlarge* the board, and if that board had really been considered a "harmonious" one. If the purpose is to enlarge a "harmonious" body, it would be strange to *start*, not with the whole body, but with only *a part*. Obviously, *not all* members of the board were considered quite suitable for discussing and *deciding* the matter of reconstituting it, of converting the old editorial circle into a *Party institution*. Obviously, even those who personally desired the reconstitution to be an enlargement recognised that the old composition of the hoard was not harmonious and did not answer to the ideal of a Party institution, for otherwise there would

be no reason *first* to reduce the six to *three* in order to enlarge it. I repeat, this is self-evident, and only the temporary confusion of the issue by "personalities" could have caused it to be forgotten.

Secondly, it will be seen from the above-quoted text that even *the agreement of all three members of the Central Organ* would not by itself be enough for the enlargement of the trio. This, too, is always lost sight of. Two-thirds of *six*, that is, *four* votes, were to be required for co-optation; hence it would only be necessary for the three members elected to the Central Committee to exercise their veto, and *no enlargement of the trio would be possible*. Conversely, even if two of the three members of the editorial board of the Central Organ were opposed to further co-optation, it would nevertheless be possible if all three members of the Central Committee were in favour of it. It is thus obvious that the intention was, in converting the old circle into a Party institution, to grant the *deciding* voice to the Congress-elected leaders of the practical work. Which comrades we roughly had in mind may be seen from the fact that prior to the Congress the editorial board unanimously elected Comrade Pavlovich a seventh member of their body, in case it should be necessary to make a statement at the Congress on behalf of the board; in addition to Comrade Pavlovich, a certain old member of the *Iskra* organisation and member of the Organising Committee, *who was subsequently elected to the Central Committee*, was proposed for the seventh place.

Thus the plan for the election of two trios was obviously designed: 1) to reconstitute the editorial board; 2) to rid it of certain elements of the old circle spirit, which is out of place in a Party institution (if there had been nothing to get rid of there would have been no point in the idea of an initial trio!); and, lastly, 3) to get rid of the "theocratic" features of a body of writers (getting rid of them by enlisting the services of prominent practical workers *in deciding* the question of enlarging the trio). This plan, with which all the editors were acquainted, was, clearly, based on *three years' experience* of work and *fully* accorded with the principles of revolutionary organisation that we were consistently introducing. In the period of *disunity* in which *Iskra* entered the arena, groups were often formed haphazardly and

spontaneously, and inevitably suffered from certain pernicious manifestations of the circle spirit. The creation of a Party presupposed and demanded the elimination of these features; the participation of prominent practical workers in this elimination was *essential*, for certain members of the editorial board had *always* dealt with organisational affairs, and the body to enter the system of Party institutions was to be a body not merely of writers, but of political leaders. It was likewise natural, from the standpoint of the policy *Iskra* had always pursued, to leave the selection of the initial trio to the Congress we had observed the greatest *caution* in preparing for the Congress, waiting until all controversial questions of principle relating to programme, tactics, and organisation had been *fully* clarified; we had *no doubt* that the Congress would be an "*Iskra*"*-ist one* in the sense that its overwhelming majority would be solid on these fundamental questions (this was also indicated in part by the resolutions recognising *Iskra* as the leading organ), we *were bound* therefore to leave it to the comrades who had borne the whole brunt of the work of disseminating *Iskra*'s ideas and preparing for its conversion into a party to decide *for themselves* who were the most suitable candidates for the new Party institution. It is *only* by the fact that this plan for "two trios" was a natural one, *only* by the fact that it *fully accorded* with *Iskra*'s whole policy and with everything known about *Iskra* to people at all closely acquainted with the work, that the general approval of this plan and the absence of any rival plan *is to be explained*.

And so, at the Congress, Comrade Rusov first of all moved the election of *two trios. It never even occurred* to the followers of Martov, who *had informed us in writing that this plan was connected with the false accusation of opportunism*, to reduce the dispute over a board of six or three to the question whether this accusation was right or wrong. *Not one of them even hinted at it! None of them ventured to say a single word* about the differing shades of principle involved in the dispute over six or three. They preferred a commoner and cheaper method, namely, to evoke *pity*, to speak of *possible injured feelings*, to pretend that *the question of the editorial board had already been settled* by appointing *Iskra* the Central Organ. This last argument, adduced by Comrade

Koltsov against Comrade Rusov, was a piece of *downright falsity*. Two separate items were included—not fortuitously, of course—in the Congress agenda (see Minutes, p. 10): Item 4—"Central Organ of the Party", and Item 18—"Election of the Central Committee and the editorial board of the Central Organ". That in the first place. In the second place, when the Central Organ was being appointed, *all* the delegates categorically declared that this did *not* mean the endorsement of the editorial board, but only of the trend,* and *not a single protest* was raised against these declarations.

Thus the statement that by endorsing a definite organ the Congress had in effect endorsed the editorial board—a statement many times reiterated by the adherents of the minority (by Koltsov, p. 321, by Posadovsky, p. 321, by Popov, p. 322, and by many others)—was *simply untrue in fact*. It was a perfectly obvious *manoeuvre* to cover a *retreat* from the position held at the time when the question of the composition of the central bodies could still be regarded *in a really dispassionate light by all*. The retreat could not be justified either by motives of principle (for to raise the question of the "false accusation of opportunism" *at the Congress* was too much to the *disadvantage* of the minority, and they *did not even hint* at it), or by a reference to the *factual* data showing which was actually more effectual—six or three (for the mere mention of these facts would have produced a heap of arguments against the minority). They had to try to burke the issue by *talk* about a "symmetrical

* See Minutes, p. 140, *Akimov*'s speech: "...I am told that we shall discuss the election of the Central Organ at the end"; *Muravyov*'s speech against Akimov, "who takes the question of the future editorial board of the Central Organ very much to heart" (p. 141), *Pavlovich*'s speech to the effect that, having appointed the organ, we had obtained "the concrete material on which to perform the operations Comrade Akimov is 90 much concerned about", and that there could not be a shadow of doubt about *Iskra*'s "submitting" to "the decisions, of the Party" (p. 142); *Trotsky*'s speech: "Since we are not endorsing the editorial board, what is it that we are endorsing in *Iskra*?... Not the name, but the trend... not the name, but the banner" (p. 142); *Martynov*'s speech: "...Like many other comrades, I consider that while discussing the adoption of *Iskra*, as a newspaper of a definite trend, as our Central Organ, we should not at this juncture discuss the method of electing or endorsing its editorial board, we shall discuss that later in its proper order on the agenda..." (p. 143).

whole", about a "harmonious team", about a "symmetrical and crystal-integral entity", and so on. It is not surprising that these arguments were immediately called by their true name: "*wretched words*" (p. 328). The very plan for a trio clearly testified to a lack of "harmony", and the impressions obtained by the delegates during a month and more of working together obviously afforded a mass of material to enable them to judge *for themselves*. When Comrade Posadovsky hinted at this material incautiously and injudiciously from his own standpoint: see pp. 321 and 325 regarding the "qualified sense" in which he had used the word "dissonances"), Comrade Muravyov bluntly declared: "In my opinion it is now quite clear to the majority of the Congress that such* dissonances undoubtedly do exist" (p. 321). The minority chose to construe the word "dissonances" (which was given currency by Posadovsky, not Muravyov) in a purely personal sense, not daring to take up the gauntlet flung down by Comrade Muravyov, not daring to bring forward in defence of the board of six a *single* argument *on the actual merits of the case*. The result was a dispute which for its sterility was more than comic: the majority (through the mouth of Comrade Muravyov) declared that the true significance of the six-or-three issue was quite clear to them, but the minority persistently refused to listen and affirmed that "we are *not in a position* to examine it". The majority not only considered themselves in a position to examine it, but had "examined it" already and announced that the results of the examination were *quite clear* to them, but the minority apparently *feared an examination* and took cover behind mere "wretched words". The majority urged us to "bear in mind that our Central Organ is something more than a literary group"; the majority "wanted the Central Organ to be headed by *quite definite persons, persons known to the Congress, persons meeting the requirements* I have mentioned" (that is, not only literary

* What "dissonances" exactly Comrade Posadovsky had in mind the Congress never did learn. Comrade Muravyov, for his part, stated at this same sitting (p. 322) that his meaning had been misrepresented, and when the minutes were being endorsed he plainly declared that he "was referring to the dissonances which had been revealed in the Congress debates on various points, dissonances over principle, whose existence is now unfortunately a fact that nobody will deny" (p. 353).

requirements; Comrade Lange's speech, p. 327). Again the minority did not dare to take up the gauntlet and did not say a word as to who, in their opinion, was suitable for what was more than a literary body, as to who was a figure of a "quite definite" magnitude "known to the Congress". The minority continued to take shelter behind their celebrated "harmony". Nor was this all. The minority even introduced into the debate arguments which were absolutely false in principle and which therefore quite rightly evoked a sharp rebuff. "The Congress," don't you see, "has neither the moral nor the political right to refashion the editorial board" (Trotsky, p. 326); "it is too delicate [*sic*!] a question" (Trotsky again); "*how will the editors who are not reelected feel about the fact that the Congress does not want to see them on the board any more*?" (Tsaryov, p. 324.)*

Such arguments simply put the whole question on the plane of *pity and injured feelings*, and were a direct admission of bankruptcy as regards real arguments of principle, real political arguments. And the majority immediately gave this attitude its *true* name: *philistinism* (Comrade Rusov). "We are hearing strange speeches from the lips of revolutionaries," Comrade Rusov justly remarked, "speeches that are in marked disharmony with the concepts Party work, Party ethics. The principal argument on which the opponents of electing trios take their stand amounts to a *purely philistine view of Party affairs* [my italics throughout].... If we adopt this standpoint, which is a *philistine* and not a Party standpoint, we shall at every election have to consider: will not Petrov be offended if Ivanov is elected and not he, will not some member of the Organising Committee be offended if another member, and not he, is elected to the Central Committee? Where is this going to land us, comrades? If we have gathered here for the purpose of creating a Party, and *not of indulging in mutual compliments and philistine sentimentality*, then we can never agree to such a view. We are about to *elect officials*, and there can be no talk of lack of confidence in any person not elected; *our*

* Cf. Comrade Posadovsky's speech: "...By electing three of the six members of the old editorial board, you pronounce the other three to be unnecessary and superfluous. And you have neither any right nor any grounds to do that."

only consideration should be the interests of the work and a person's suitability for the post to which he is being elected" (p. 325).

We would advise all who want to make an independent examination of the reasons for the Party split and to dig down to the *roots* of it at the Congress to read this speech of Comrade Rusov's *over and over again*; his arguments were not even contested by the minority, let alone refuted. And indeed there is no contesting such elementary, rudimentary truths, which were forgotten only because of "*nervous excitement*", as Comrade Rusov himself rightly explained. And this is really the explanation least discreditable to the minority of how they could desert the Party standpoint for a philistine and circle standpoint.*

* In his *State of Siege*, Comrade Martov treats this question just as he does all the others he touches upon. He does not trouble to give a complete picture of the controversy. He very modestly evades the only real issue of *principle* that arose in this controversy: philistine sentimentality, or the election of officials; the Party standpoint, or the injured feelings of the Ivan Ivanoviches? Here, too, Comrade Martov confines himself to plucking out isolated bits and pieces of what happened and adding all sorts of abusive remarks at my expense. That's not quite enough. Comrade Martov!

Comrade Martov particularly pesters *me* with the question *why* Comrades Axelrod, Zasulich, and Starover were not elected at the Congress. The philistine attitude he has adopted prevents him from seeing how *unseemly* these questions are (why doesn't he ask his colleague on the editorial board, Comrade Plekhanov?). He detects a contradiction in the fact that I regard the behaviour of the minority at the Congress on the question of the six as "tactless", yet at the same time demand Party publicity. There is no contradiction here, as Martov himself could easily have seen if he had taken the trouble to give a connected account of the *whole* matter, and not merely fragments of it. It was tactless to treat the question from a philistine standpoint and appeal to pity and consideration for injured feelings; the interests of Party publicity demanded that an estimation be given *in point of fact* of the advantages of six as compared with three, an estimation of the candidates for the posts, an estimation of the different shades—*the minority gave not a hint of any of this at the Congress.*

By carefully studying the minutes, Comrade Martov would have found in the delegates' speeches a *whole series* of arguments against the board of six. Here is a selection from these speeches: firstly, that dissonances, in the sense of different shades of principle, were clearly apparent in the old six; secondly, that a technical simplification of the editorial work was desirable; thirdly, that the interests of the work came before philistine sentimentality, and only election could ensure that the persons chosen were suited for their posts; fourthly,

But the minority were so totally unable to find sensible and business-like arguments against election that, in addition to introducing philistinism into Party affairs, they resorted to downright *scandalous practices*. Indeed, what other name can we give to the action of Comrade Popov when he advised Comrade Muravyov "not to undertake delicate *commissions*" (p. 322)? What is this but "getting personal", as Comrade Sorokin rightly put it (p. 328)? What is it but speculating on "*personalities*", in the absence of *political* arguments? Was Comrade Sorokin right or wrong when he said that "we have always protested against such practices"? "*Was it permissible for Comrade Deutsch* to try demonstratively to pillory comrades who did not agree with him?"* (P. 328.)

Let us sum up the debate on the editorial board. The minority did not refute (nor even try to refute) the majority's numerous statements that the plan for a trio was known to the *delegates* at the very beginning of the Congress *and*

that the right of the Congress to choose must not be restricted; fifthly, that the Party now needed something more than a literary group on the Central Organ, that the Central Organ needed not only writers, but administrators as well; sixthly, that the Central Organ must consist of quite definite persons, persons known to the *Congress*; seventhly, that a board of six was often ineffectual and the board's work had been accomplished *not thanks to* its abnormal constitution, *but in spite of it*; eighthly, that the conduct of a newspaper was a party (not a circle) affair, etc. Let Comrade Martov, if he is so interested in the reasons for the non-election of these persons, *penetrate* into the meaning of each of these considerations and refute *a single one* of them.

* That is the way Comrade Sorokin, *at this same sitting* understood Comrade Deutsch's words (cf. p. 324—"sharp interchange with Orlov"). Comrade Deutsch explained (p. 351) that he had "said nothing like it", but *in the same breath* admitted that he had said something *very*, *very much* "like it". "I did not say 'who dares'," Comrade Deutsch explained; "what I said was: 'I would be interested to see the people who would dare [*sic*!—Comrade Deutsch fell out of the frying pan into the fire!] to support such a criminal [sic!] proposal as the election of a board of three'" (p. 351). Comrade Deutsch did not refute *but confirmed* Comrade Sorokin's words. Comrade Deutsch only confirmed the truth of Comrade Sorokin's reproach that "all concepts are here muddled" (in the minority's arguments in favour of six). Comrade Deutsch only confirmed the pertinence of Comrade Sorokin's reminder of the *elementary* truth that "we are Party members and should be guided exclusively by political considerations". To cry that election was *criminal* was to sink not only to philistinism, but to practices that were downright *scandalous*!

prior to the Congress, and that, consequently, this plan was based on *considerations and facts which had no relation to the events and disputes at the Congress*. In defending the board of six, the minority took up a position which was *wrong and impermissible in principle*, one based on *philistine* considerations. The minority displayed an utter forgetfulness of the *Party* attitude towards the election of *officials*, not even attempting to give an *estimation* of each candidate for a post and of his suitability or unsuitability for the functions it involved. The minority *evaded* a discussion of the question on its merits and talked instead of their celebrated harmony, "shedding tears" and "indulging in pathos" (Lange's speech, p. 327), as though "somebody was being murdered". In their state of "*nervous excitement*" (p. 325) the minority even went to the length of "*getting personal*", of howling that election was "criminal", and similar *impermissible* practices.

The battle over six or three at the 30th sitting of our Congress was a battle between *philistinism* and the *party spirit*, between "*personalities*" of the worst kind and *political considerations*, between *wretched words* and the most elementary conception of *revolutionary duty*.

And at the 31st sitting, when the Congress, by a majority of nineteen to seventeen with three abstentions, had *rejected* the motion to endorse the old editorial board as a whole (see p. 330 and the *errata*), and when the *former editors* had returned to the hall, Comrade Martov in his "statement on behalf of the majority of the former editorial board" (pp. 330-31) displayed this same shakiness and instability of political position and *political concepts* to an even greater degree. Let us examine in detail each point of this collective *statement* and my reply (pp. 332-33).

"From now on," Comrade Martov said when the old editorial board was not endorsed, "the old *Iskra* does not exist, and it would be more consistent to change its name. At any rate, we see in the new resolution of the Congress a substantial limitation of the vote of confidence in *Iskra* which was passed at one of the first Congress sittings."

Comrade Martov and his colleagues raised a truly interesting and in many respects instructive question of *political consistency*. I have already replied to this by referring

to what *everyone* said when *Iskra* was being endorsed (Minutes, p. 349, cf. above, p. 82).* What we have here is unquestionably a crying instance of political inconsistency, but whether on the part of the majority of the Congress or of the majority of the old editorial board we shall leave the reader to judge. And there are two other questions very pertinently raised by Comrade Martov and his colleagues which we shall likewise leave the reader to decide: 1) Did the desire to detect a "limitation of the vote of confidence in *Iskra*" in the *Congress* decision to *elect officials to the editorial board of the Central Organ* betray a *philistine* or a *Party* attitude? 2) *When did the old "Iskra" really cease to exist*—starting from No. 46, when the two of us, Plekhanov and I, began to conduct it, or from No. 53, when the majority of the old editorial board took it over? If the first question is a most interesting *question of principle*, the second is a most interesting *question of fact*.

"Since it has now been decided," Comrade Martov continued, "to elect an editorial board of three, I must declare on my own behalf and that of the three other comrades that none of us will sit on this new editorial board. For myself, I must add that if it be true that certain comrades wanted to include my name in the list of candidates for this 'trio', I must regard it as an insult which I have done nothing to deserve [*sic*!]. I say this in view of the circumstances under which it has been decided to change the editorial board. This decision was taken on the grounds of some kind of 'friction',** of the former editorial board having been in-

* See pp. 308-10 of this volume.—*Ed*.

** Comrade Martov was probably referring to Comrade Posadovsky's expression "dissonances". I repeat that Comrade Posadovsky never did explain to the Congress what *he* meant, while Comrade Muravyov, who had likewise used the expression, explained that he meant dissonances over *principle*, as *revealed in the Congress debates*. The reader will recall that the *sole* real debate over *principles* in which four of the editors (Plekhanov, Martov, Axelrod, and I) took part was in connection with Paragraph 1 of the Rules, and that Comrades Martov and Starover complained *in writing* of a "false accusation of opportunism" as being one of the arguments for "changing" the editorial board. *In this letter*, Comrade Martov had detected a *clear* connection between "opportunism" and the plan to change the editorial board, but *at the Congress* he confined himself to hinting hazily at "*some kind of friction*". The "false accusation of opportunism" had already been forgotten!

effectual; moreover, the Congress decided the matter along definite lines without questioning the editorial board about this friction or even appointing a commission to report whether it had been ineffectual. [Strange that it never occurred to any member of the minority to propose to the Congress to "question the editorial board" or appoint a commission! Was it not because it would have been useless after the split in the *Iskra* organisation and the failure of the negotiations Comrades Martov and Starover wrote about?] Under the circumstances, I must regard the assumption of certain comrades that I would agree to sit on an editorial board reformed in this manner as a slur on my political reputation...."*

I have purposely quoted this argument in full to acquaint the reader with a specimen and with the beginning of what has blossomed out so profusely *since the Congress* and which cannot be called by any other name than *squabbling*. I have already employed this expression in my *Letter to the Editors of* "*Iskra*", and in spite of the editors' annoyance I am obliged to repeat it, for its correctness is beyond dispute. It is a mistake to think that squabbling presupposes "sordid motives" (as the editors of the new *Iskra* conclude): any revolutionary at all acquainted with our colonies of exiles and political émigrés will have witnessed dozens of cases of squabbling in which the most absurd accusations, suspi-

* Comrade Martov further added: "Ryazanov might agree to such a role, but not the Martov whom, I think, you know by his work." Inasmuch as this was a *personal* attack on Ryazanov, Comrade Martov withdrew the remark. But it was not because of Ryazanov's personal qualities (to refer to them would have been out of place) that his name figured at the Congress as a byword; it was because of the *political complexion* of the Borba group—its *political mistakes*. Comrade Martov does well to withdraw real or assumed personal insults, but this should not lead us to forget *political mistakes*, which should serve as a *lesson to the Party*. The Borba group was accused at our Congress of causing "organisational chaos" and "disunity not justified by any considerations of principle" (Comrade Martov's speech, p. 38). *Such* political conduct does indeed deserve censure, and not only when seen in a small group prior to the Party Congress, during the period of *general* chaos, but also when we see it *after* the Party Congress, in the period when the chaos has been abolished, even if indulged in by "the majority of the *Iskra* editorial board and the majority of the Emancipation of Labour group".

cions, self-accusations, "personalities", etc., were levelled and harped upon owing to "nervous excitement" and abnormal, stagnant conditions of life. No sensible person will necessarily seek for sordid *motives* in these squabbles, *however sordid their manifestations may be*. And it is only to "nervous excitement" that we can attribute that tangled skein of absurdities, personalities, fantastic horrors, and imaginary insults and slurs which is contained in the above-quoted passage from Comrade Martov's speech. Stagnant conditions of life breed such squabbles among us by the hundred, and a political party would be unworthy of respect if it did not have the courage to designate its malady by its true name, to make a ruthless diagnosis and search for a cure.

Insofar as anything relating to principles can be extracted at all from this tangled skein, one is led *inevitably* to the conclusion that "elections have nothing to do with any slurs on political reputations", that "to deny the right of the Congress to hold new elections, make new appointments of any kind, and change the composition of its authorised boards" is to *confuse* the issue, and that "Comrade Martov's views on the permissibility of electing part of the old board reflect an *extreme confusion of political ideas*" (as I expressed it at the Congress, p. 332).*

I shall omit Comrade Martov's "personal" remark as to who initiated the plan for the trio, and shall pass to his "political" characterisation of the significance attaching to the non-endorsement of the old editorial board: "...What has now taken place is the last act of the struggle which has raged during the second half of the Congress. [Quite right! And this second half of the Congress began when Martov fell into the tight clutches of Comrade Akimov over Paragraph 1 of the Rules.] It is an open secret that in this reform it is not a question of being 'effectual', but of a struggle for influence on the Central Committee. [Firstly, it is an open secret that it *was* a question of being effectual, *as well as* of a divergence over the *composition* of the Central Committee, for the plan of the "reform" was proposed at a time when that divergence *was nowhere in sight* and when Comrade Martov

* See present edition, Vol. 6, pp. 503-04.—*Ed.*

joined us in electing Comrade Pavlovich a seventh member of the editorial board! Secondly, we have already shown by *documentary* proofs that it was a question of the *personal composition* of the Central Committee, that *à la fin des fins* the matter came down to a difference of lists: Glebov-Travinsky-Popov or Glebov-Trotsky-Popov.] The majority of the editorial board showed that they did not want the Central Committee to be converted into a tool of the editorial board. [That is Akimov's refrain: the question of the influence for which every majority fights at any and every party congress so as then to *consolidate* it with the help of a *majority* on the central institutions is transferred to the plane of *opportunist slanders* about a "tool" of the *editorial board*, about a "mere *appendage*" of the editorial board, as Comrade Martov himself put it somewhat later, p. 334.] That is why it was found necessary to reduce the number of members of the editorial board [!!]. And that is why I cannot join such an editorial board. [Just examine this "that is why" a little more carefully. How *might* the editorial board have converted the Central Committee into an appendage or tool? *Only* if it had had three votes on the Council and had *abused* its superiority. Is that not clear? And is it not likewise clear that, having been elected the third member, Comrade Martov could always have prevented such an abuse and *by his vote alone* have destroyed all superiority of the editorial board on the Council? Consequently, the whole matter boils down to the personal composition of the Central Committee, and it is at once clear that the talk about a tool and an appendage is *slander*.] Together with the majority of the old editorial board, I thought that the Congress would put an end to the 'state of siege' in the Party and would establish a normal state of affairs. But as a matter of fact the state of siege, with its emergency laws against particular groups, still continues, and has even become more acute. Only if the old editorial board remains in its entirety can we guarantee that the rights conferred on the editorial board by the Rules will not be used to the detriment of the Party...."

There you have the whole passage from Comrade Martov's speech in which *he first advanced the notorious war-cry of a* "*state of siege*". And now look at my reply to him:

"...However, in correcting Martov's statement about the private character of the plan for two trios, I have no intention of denying Martov's assertion of the 'political significance' of the step we took in not endorsing the old editorial board. On the contrary, I fully and unreservedly agree with Comrade Martov that this step is of great political significance—only not the significance which Martov ascribes to it. He said that it was an act in a struggle for influence on the Central Committee in Russia. I go farther than Martov. The whole activity of *Iskra* as a separate group has hitherto been a struggle for influence; but now it is a matter of something more, namely, the organisational consolidation of this influence, and not only a struggle for it. How profoundly Comrade Martov and I differ politically on this point is shown by the fact that he blames me for this wish to influence the Central Committee, whereas I count it to my credit that I strove and still strive to consolidate this influence by organisational means. It appears that we are even talking in different languages! What would be the point of all our work, of all our efforts, if they ended in the same old struggle for influence, and not in its complete acquisition and consolidation? Yes, Comrade Martov is absolutely right: the step we have taken is undoubtedly a major political step showing that one of the trends now to be observed has been chosen for the future work of our Party. *And I am not at all frightened by the dreadful words* '*a state of siege in the Party*', '*emergency laws against particular individuals and groups*', *etc.* We not only can but we must create a 'state of siege' in relation to unstable and vacillating elements, and all our Party Rules, the whole system of centralism now endorsed by the Congress are nothing but a 'state of siege' in respect to the numerous sources of political vagueness. It is special laws, even if they are emergency laws, that are needed as measures against vagueness, and the step taken by the Congress has correctly indicated the political direction to be followed, by having created a firm basis for such laws and such measures."*

I have italicised in this summary of my speech at the Congress *the sentence which Comrade Martov preferred to*

* See present edition, Vol. 6, pp. 507-08.—*Ed.*

omit in his "*State of Siege*" (p. 16). It is not surprising that he did not like this sentence and did not choose to understand its obvious meaning.

What does the expression "dreadful words" imply, Comrade Martov?

It implies *mockery*, mockery of those who give big names to little things, who confuse a simple question by pretentious phrase-mongering.

The little and simple fact which *alone* could have given, and actually did give, Comrade Martov cause for "nervous excitement" was *nothing but* his *defeat at the Congress* over the *personal composition of the central bodies*. The political significance of this simple fact was that, having won, the majority of the Party Congress consolidated their influence by establishing their majority in the Party leadership as well, by creating an organisational basis for a struggle, with the help of the Rules, against what this majority considered to be vacillation, instability, and vagueness.* To make this an occasion for talking of a "struggle for influence" with horror in one's eyes and complaining of a "state of siege" was nothing but *pretentious phrase-mongering*, dreadful words.

Comrade Martov does not agree with this? Then perhaps he will try to prove to us that a party congress has ever existed, or is in general conceivable, where the majority would not proceed to consolidate the influence they had gained: 1) by securing a majority on the central bodies, and 2) by endowing it with powers to counteract vacillation, instability, and vagueness.

Before the elections, our Congress had to decide whether to give *one-third* of the votes on the Central Organ and on the Central Committee to the Party majority or the Party minority. The board of six and Comrade Martov's list meant giving one-third to us and two-thirds to his followers.

---

* How was the instability, vacillation, and vagueness of the *Iskra*-ist minority manifested at the Congress? Firstly, by their opportunist phrase-mongering over Paragraph 1 of the Rules, secondly, by their coalition with Comrades Akimov and Lieber, which during the second half of the Congress rapidly grew more pronounced; thirdly, by their readiness to degrade the question of electing officials to the Central Organ to the level of philistinism, of wretched words, and even of getting personal. After the Congress all these lovely attributes developed from mere buds into blossoms and fruit.

A trio on the Central Organ and our list meant two-thirds for us and one-third for Comrade Martov's followers. Comrade Martov refused to make terms with us or yield, and challenged us *in writing* to a battle at the Congress. Having suffered defeat at the Congress, he began to weep and to complain of a "state of siege"! Well, isn't that squabbling? Isn't it a new manifestation of the wishy-washiness of the intellectual?

One cannot help recalling in this connection the brilliant social and psychological characterisation of this latter quality recently given by Karl Kautsky. The Social-Democratic parties of different countries suffer not infrequently nowadays from similar maladies, and it would be very, very useful for us to learn from more experienced comrades the correct diagnosis and the correct cure. Karl Kautsky's characterisation of certain intellectuals will therefore be only a seeming digression from our theme.

"The problem ... that again interests us so keenly today is the *antagonism between the intelligentsia* and the proletariat*. My colleagues [Kautsky is himself an intellectual, a writer and editor] will mostly be indignant that I admit this antagonism. But it actually exists, and, as in other cases, it would be the most inexpedient tactics to try to overcome the fact by denying it. This antagonism is a social one, it relates to classes, not to individuals. The individual intellectual, like the individual capitalist, may identify himself with the proletariat in its class struggle. When he does, he changes his character too. It is not *this type* of intellectual, who is still an exception among his class, that we shall mainly speak of in what follows. Unless otherwise stated, *I shall use the word intellectual to mean only the common run of intellectual who takes the stand of bourgeois society*, and who is characteristic of the intelligentsia as a *class*. This *class* stands in a certain *antagonism* to the proletariat.

"This antagonism differs, however, from the antagonism between labour and capital. The intellectual is not a capitalist. True, his standard of life is bourgeois, and he must maintain it if he is not to become a pauper; but at the same time he is compelled to sell the product of his labour, and often his labour-power, and is himself often enough exploited and humiliated by the capitalist. Hence the intellectual does not stand in any economic antagonism to the proletariat. But his status of life and his conditions of labour are not proletarian, and this gives rise to a certain antagonism in sentiments and ideas.

* I use the words intellectual and intelligentsia to translate the German *Literat* and *Literatentum*, which include not only writers but in general all educated people, the members of the liberal professions, the brain workers, as the English call them, as distinct from manual workers.

"As an isolated individual, the proletarian is nothing. His whole strength, his whole progress, all his hopes and expectations are derived from *organisation*, from systematic action in conjunction with his fellows. He feels big and strong when he forms part of a big and strong organism. This organism is the main thing for him; the individual in comparison means very little. The proletarian fights with the utmost devotion as part of the anonymous mass, without prospect of personal advantage or personal glory, doing his duty in any post he is assigned to with a voluntary discipline which pervades all his feelings and thoughts.

"Quite different is the case of the intellectual. He does not fight by means of power, but by argument. His weapons are his personal knowledge, his personal ability, his personal convictions. He can attain to any position at all only through his personal qualities. Hence the freest play for his individuality seems to him the prime condition for successful activity. It is only with difficulty that he submits to being a part subordinate to a whole, and then only from necessity, not from inclination. He recognises the need of discipline only for the mass, not for the elect minds. And of course he counts himself among the latter....

"Nietzsche's philosophy, with its cult of the superman, for whom the fulfilment of his own individuality is everything and any subordination of that individuality to a great social aim is vulgar and despicable, is the real philosophy of the intellectual; and it renders him totally unfit to take part in the class struggle of the proletariat.

"Next to Nietzsche, the most outstanding exponent of a philosophy answering to the sentiments of the intelligentsia is probably Ibsen. His Doctor Stockmann (in *An Enemy of the People*) is not a socialist, as many have thought, but the type of the intellectual, who is bound to come into conflict with the proletarian movement, and with any movement of the people generally, as soon as he attempts to work within it. For the basis of the proletarian movement, as of every democratic* movement, is respect for the majority of one's fellows. The typical intellectual *à la* Stockmann regards a 'compact majority' as a monster that must be overthrown....

"An ideal example of an intellectual who had become thoroughly imbued with the sentiments of the proletariat, and who, although he was a brilliant writer, had quite lost the specific mentality of the intellectual, marched cheerfully with the rank and file, worked in any post he was assigned to, subordinated himself whole-heartedly to our great cause, and despised the feeble whining [*weichliches Gewinsel*] about the suppression of his individuality which the intellectual trained on Ibsen and Nietzsche is prone to indulge in when he happens to be in the minority—an ideal example of the kind of intellectual

* It is extremely characteristic of the confusion brought by our Martovites into all questions of organisation that, though they have swung towards Akimov and a *misplaced* democracy, they are at the same time *incensed at the democratic election of the editorial board*, its election at *the Congress*, as planned in advance by everybody! Perhaps that is your *principle*, gentlemen?

the socialist movement needs was Liebknecht. We may also mention Marx, who never forced himself to the forefront and whose party discipline in the International, where he often found himself in the minority, was exemplary."*

Just such feeble whining of intellectuals who happened to find themselves in the minority, and nothing more, was the refusal of Martov and his friends to be named for office merely because the old circle had not been endorsed, as were their complaints of a state of siege and emergency laws "against particular groups", which Martov cared nothing about when *Yuzhny Rabochy* and *Rabocheye Dyelo* were dissolved, but only came to care about when *his* group was dissolved.

Just such feeble whining of intellectuals who happened to find themselves in the minority was that endless torrent of complaints, reproaches, hints, accusations, slanders, and insinuations regarding the "compact majority" which was started by Martov and which poured out in such a flood at our Party Congress** (and even more so after).

The minority bitterly complained that the compact majority held private meetings. Well, the minority had to do something to conceal the unpleasant fact that the delegates it invited to its own private meetings refused to attend, while those who would willingly have attended (the Egorovs, Makhovs, and Brouckères) the minority could not invite after all the fighting it had done with them at the Congress.

The minority bitterly complained of the "false accusation of opportunism". Well, it had to do something to conceal the unpleasant fact that it was *opportunists*, who in most cases had followed the anti-*Iskra*-ists—and partly these anti-*Iskra*-ists themselves—that made up the compact minority, seizing with both hands on the championship of the circle spirit in Party institutions, opportunism in arguments, philistinism in Party affairs, and the instability and wishy-washiness of the intellectual.

We shall show in the next section what is the explanation of the highly interesting *political fact* that a "compact

---

* Karl Kautsky, "Franz Mehring", *Neue Zeit*, XXII, I, S. 101-03, 1903, No. 4.

** See pp. 337, 338, 340, 352, etc., of the Congress Minutes.

majority" was formed towards the end of the Congress, and why, in spite of every challenge, the minority so very, very warily *evades* the *reasons* for its formation and its *history*. But let us first finish our analysis of the Congress debates.

During the elections to the Central Committee, Comrade Martov moved a highly characteristic resolution (p. 336), the three main features of which I have on occasion referred to as "mate in three moves". Here they are: 1) to ballot *lists* of candidates for the Central Committee, and not the candidates individually; 2) after the lists had been announced, to allow two sittings to elapse (for discussion, evidently); 3) in the absence of an absolute majority, a second ballot to be regarded as final. This resolution was a most carefully conceived stratagem (we must give the adversary his due!), with which Comrade Egorov did not agree (p. 337), but which would *most certainly* have assured a complete victory for Martov *if the seven Bundists and "Rabocheye Dyelo"-ists had not quit the Congress*. The reason for this stratagem was that the *Iskra*-ist minority *did not have, and could not have had*, a "direct agreement" (such as there was among the *Iskra*-ist majority) *even with the Egorovs and Makhovs*, let alone the Bund and Brouckère.

Remember that at the League Congress Comrade Martov complained that the "false accusation of opportunism" presumed a direct agreement between him and the Bund. I repeat, this only seemed so to Comrade Martov in his fright, and *this very refusal of Comrade Egorov to agree to the balloting of lists* (Comrade Egorov "had not yet lost his principles"—presumably the principles that made him join forces with Goldblatt in appraising the absolute importance of democratic guarantees) *graphically* demonstrates the highly important fact that *there could be no question of a "direct agreement" even with Egorov*. But a *coalition* there could be, and was, both with Egorov and with Brouckère, a coalition in the sense that the Martovites *were sure* of their support every time they, the Martovites, came into serious conflict with us and Akimov and his friends had to choose the *lesser evil*. There was not and is not the slightest doubt that *Comrades Akimov and Lieber would certainly have voted both for the board of six on the Central Organ and for Martov's list for the Central Committee*, as being *the lesser evil*, as being *what*

would least achieve the "*Iskra*" *aims* (see Akimov's speech on Paragraph 1 and the "hopes" he placed in Martov). Balloting of lists, allowing two sittings to elapse, and a re-ballot were designed to achieve this very result with almost mechanical certainty without a direct agreement.

But since our compact majority remained a compact majority, Comrade Martov's flank movement would only have meant delay, and we were bound to reject it. The minority poured forth their complaints on this score in a written statement (p. 341) and, *following the example of Martynov and Akimov*, *refused to vote* in the elections to the Central Committee, "in view of the conditions in which they were held". Since the Congress, such complaints of abnormal conditions at the elections (see *State of Siege*, p. 31) have been poured right and left into the ears of hundreds of Party gossips. But in what did this *abnormality* consist? In the secret ballot—which had been stipulated beforehand in the Standing Orders of the Congress (Point 6, Minutes, p. 11), and in which it was absurd to detect any "hypocrisy" or "injustice"? In the formation of a compact majority—that "monster" in the eyes of wishy-washy intellectuals? Or in the *abnormal* desire of these worthy intellectuals to *violate the pledge* they had given before the Congress that they would recognise all its elections (p. 380, Point 18 of the Congress Regulations)?

Comrade Popov *subtly* hinted at this desire when he asked outright at the Congress on the day of the elections: "Is the Bureau certain that the decision of the Congress is valid and in order when half the delegates refused to vote?"* The Bureau of course replied that it was certain, and recalled the incident of Comrades Akimov and Martynov. Comrade Martov agreed with the Bureau and explicitly declared that Comrade Popov was mistaken and that "*the decisions of the Congress are valid*" (p. 343). Now let the reader form his own opinion of the political consistency—highly normal, we must suppose—revealed by a comparison of *this declaration made by him in the hearing of the Party* with his

* P. 342. This refers to the election of the fifth member of the Council. Twenty-four ballots (out of a total of forty-four votes) were cast, two of which were blank.

behaviour after the Congress and with the phrase in his *State of Siege* about "*the revolt of half the Party which already began at the Congress*" (p. 20). The hopes which Comrade Akimov had placed in Comrade Martov outweighed the ephemeral good intentions of Martov himself.

"*You have conquered*", Comrade Akimov!

* * *

Certain features, seemingly petty but actually very important, of the *end* of the Congress, the part of it *after* the elections, may serve to show how pure and simple a "dreadful word" was the famous phrase about a "state of siege", which has now for ever acquired a tragicomical meaning. Comrade Martov is now making great play with this tragicomical "state of siege", seriously assuring both himself and his readers that this bogey of his own invention implied some sort of abnormal persecution, hounding, bullying of the "minority" by the "majority". We shall presently show how matters stood *after* the Congress. But take even the end of the Congress, and you will find that *after the elections*, far from persecuting the unhappy Martovites, who are supposed to have been bullied, ill-treated, and led to the slaughter, the "compact majority" *itself offered* them (through Lyadov) *two seats out of three* on the Minutes Committee (p. 354). Take the resolutions on tactical and other questions (p. 355 et seq.), and you will find that they were discussed on their merits in a purely business-like way, and that the signatories to many of the resolutions included both representatives of the monstrous compact "majority" and followers of the "humiliated and insulted" "minority" (Minutes, pp. 355, 357, 363, 365 and 367). This looks like "shutting out from work" and "bullying" in general, does it not?

The only interesting—but, unfortunately, all too brief—controversy on the substance of a question arose in connection with Starover's resolution on the liberals. As one can see from the signatures to it (pp. 357 and 358), it was adopted by the Congress because three of the supporters of the "majority" (Braun, Orlov, and Osipov[104]) voted both *for it* and for Plekhanov's resolution, not perceiving the irreconcilable contradiction between the two. No irreconcilable contra-

diction is apparent at first glance, because Plekhanov's resolution lays down a general principle, outlines a definite attitude, as regards principles and tactics, towards *bourgeois liberalism in Russia*, whereas Starover's attempts to define the *concrete conditions in which "temporary agreements" would be permissible* with "liberal or liberal-democratic trends". The subjects of the two resolutions are different. But Starover's suffers from *political vagueness*, and is consequently petty and shallow. It *does not define the class content of Russian liberalism*, does not indicate the *definite* political trends in which this is expressed, does not explain to the proletariat the *principal* tasks of propaganda and agitation in relation to these definite trends; it confuses (owing to its vagueness) such different things as the student movement and *Osvobozhdeniye*, it too pettily and casuistically prescribes *three* concrete conditions under which "temporary agreements" would be permissible. Here too, as in many other cases, political vagueness leads to casuistry. The absence of any general principle and the attempt to enumerate "conditions" result in a petty and, strictly speaking, *incorrect* specification of these conditions. Just examine Starover's three conditions: 1) the "liberal or liberal-democratic trends" shall "clearly and unambiguously declare that in their struggle against the autocratic government they will resolutely side with the Russian Social-Democrats". What is the difference between the liberal and liberal-democratic trends? The resolution furnishes no material for a reply to this question. Is it not that the liberal trends speak for the politically least progressive sections of the bourgeoisie, and the liberal-democratic—for the more progressive sections of the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie? If that is so, can Comrade Starover possibly think that the sections of the bourgeoisie which are least progressive (but progressive nevertheless, for otherwise there could be no talk of liberalism) can "resolutely side with the Social-Democrats"?? That is absurd, and even if the spokesmen of such a trend were to "*declare it clearly and unambiguously*" (an absolutely impossible assumption), we, the party of the proletariat, *would be obliged not to believe* their declarations. To be a liberal and resolutely side with the Social-Democrats—the one excludes the other.

Further, let us assume a case where "liberal or liberal-democratic trends" clearly and unambiguously declare that in their struggle against the autocracy they will resolutely side with the *Socialist-Revolutionaries*. Such an assumption is far less unlikely than Comrade Starover's (owing to the bourgeois-democratic nature of the Socialist-Revolutionary trend). From his resolution, because of its vagueness and casuistry, it would appear that *in a case like this temporary agreements* with such liberals would be *impermissible*. But this conclusion, which follows inevitably from Comrade Starover's resolution, is an *absolutely false* one. Temporary agreements are permissible with the Socialist-Revolutionaries (see the Congress resolution on the latter), and, *consequently*, with liberals who side with the Socialist-Revolutionaries.

Second condition: these trends "shall not include in their programmes any demands running counter to the interests of the working class or the democracy generally, or obscuring their political consciousness". Here we have the same mistake again: there never have been, nor can there be, liberal-democratic trends which did not include in their programmes demands running counter to the interests of the working class and obscuring its (the proletariat's) political consciousness. Even one of the most democratic sections of our liberal-democratic trend, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, put forward in their programme—a muddled one, like all liberal programmes—demands that run counter to the interests of the working class and obscure its political consciousness. The conclusion to be drawn from this fact is that it is *essential* to "expose the limitations and inadequacy of the bourgeois emancipation movement", but not that temporary agreements are impermissible.

Lastly, in the general form in which it is presented, Comrade Starover's third "condition" (that the liberal-democrats should make universal, equal, secret, and direct suffrage the slogan of their struggle) is likewise *incorrect*: it *would be unwise* to declare impermissible in all cases temporary and partial agreements with liberal-democratic trends whose slogan was a constitution with a qualified suffrage, or a "curtailed" constitution generally. As a matter of fact, the *Osvobozhdeniye* "trend" would fit into just this category,

but it would be political short-sightedness incompatible with the principles of Marxism to tie one's hands by forbidding in advance "temporary agreements" with even the most timorous liberals.

To sum up: Comrade Starover's resolution, which was signed also by Comrades Martov and Axelrod, is a *mistake*, and the Third Congress would be wise to rescind it. It suffers from *political vagueness* in its theoretical and tactical position, from casuistry in the practical "conditions" it stipulates. It *confuses two questions*: 1) the exposure of the "anti-revolutionary and anti-proletarian" features of *all* liberal-democratic trends, and the need to *combat* these features, and 2) the *conditions* for temporary and partial *agreements* with any of these trends. It does not give what it should (an analysis of the class content of liberalism), and gives what it should not (prescription of "conditions"). It is absurd in general to draw up detailed "conditions" for temporary agreements at a party congress, when there is not even a definite partner to such possible agreements in view; and even if there were such a definite partner in view, it would be a hundred times more rational to leave the definition of the "conditions" for a temporary agreement to the Party's central institutions, as the Congress did in relation to the Socialist-Revolutionary "trend" (see Plekhanov's modification of the end of Comrade Axelrod's resolution—Minutes, pp. 362 and 15).

As to the objections of the "minority" to Plekhanov's resolution, Comrade Martov's only argument was: Plekhanov's resolution "ends with the paltry conclusion that a particular writer should be exposed. Would this not be 'using a sledge-hammer to kill a fly'?" (P. 358). This argument, whose emptiness is concealed by a smart phrase—"paltry conclusion"—provides a new specimen of pompous phrase-mongering. Firstly, Plekhanov's resolution speaks of "exposing in the eyes of the proletariat the limitations and inadequacy of the bourgeois emancipation movement wherever these limitations and inadequacy manifest themselves". Hence Comrade Martov's assertion (at the League Congress: Minutes, p. 88) that "all attention is to be directed only to Struve, only to one liberal" is the sheerest nonsense. Secondly, to compare Mr. Struve to a "fly" when the possibility of tem-

porary agreements with the Russian liberals is in question, is to sacrifice an elementary and manifest political fact for a smart phrase. No, Mr. Struve is not a fly, but a political magnitude, and not because he personally is such a big figure, but because of his position as the sole representative of Russian liberalism—of at all effectual and organised liberalism—in the illegal world. Therefore, to talk of the Russian liberals, and of what our Party's attitude towards them should be, without having precisely Mr. Struve and *Osvobozhdeniye* in mind is to talk without saying anything. Or perhaps Comrade Martov will show us *even one single* "liberal or liberal-democratic trend" in Russia which could compare even remotely today with the *Osvobozhdeniye* trend? It would be interesting to see him try!*

"Struve's name means nothing to the workers," said Comrade Kostrov, supporting Comrade Martov. I hope Comrade Kostrov and Comrade Martov will not be offended—but that argument is fully in the Akimov style. It is like the argument about the proletariat in the genitive case.[105]

Who are the workers to whom Struve's name (and the name of *Osvobozhdeniye*, mentioned in Comrade Plekhanov's resolution alongside of Mr. Struve) "means nothing"? Those who know very little, or nothing at all, of the "liberal and liberal-democratic trends" in Russia. One asks, what should

* At the League Congress Comrade Martov also adduced the following argument against Comrade Plekhanov's resolution: "The chief objection to it, the chief defect of this resolution, is that it totally ignores the fact that it is our duty, in the struggle against the autocracy, not to shun alliance with liberal-democratic elements. Comrade Lenin would call this a Martynov tendency. This tendency is already being manifested in the new *Iskra*" (p. 88).

For the wealth of "gems" it contains this passage is indeed rare. 1) The phrase about *alliance* with the liberals is a sheer muddle. Nobody mentioned alliance, Comrade Martov, but only temporary or partial agreements. That is an entirely different thing. 2) If Plekhanov's resolution ignores an incredible "alliance" and speaks only of "support" in general, that is one of its merits, not a defect. 3) Perhaps Comrade Martov will take the trouble to explain what in general characterises "Martynov tendencies"? Perhaps he will tell us what is the relation between these tendencies and opportunism? Perhaps he will trace the relation of these tendencies to Paragraph 1 of the Rules? 4) I am just burning with impatience to hear from Comrade Martov how "Martynov tendencies" were manifested in the "new" *Iskra*. Please, Comrade Martov, relieve me of the torments of suspense!

be the attitude of our Party Congress to such workers: should it instruct Party members to acquaint these workers with the only definite liberal trend in Russia; or should it *refrain from mentioning* a name with which the workers are little acquainted because of their little acquaintance with politics? If Comrade Kostrov, having taken one step in the wake of Comrade Akimov, does not want to take another, he will answer this question in the former sense. And having answered it in the former sense, he will see how groundless his argument was. *At any rate*, the words "Struve" and "*Osvobozhdeniye*" in Plekhanov's resolution *are likely to be of much more value* to the workers than the words "liberal and liberal-democratic trend" in Starover's resolution.

Except through *Osvobozhdeniye*, the Russian worker cannot at the present time acquaint himself in practice with anything like a frank expression of the political tendencies of our liberalism. The legal liberal literature is unsuitable for this purpose because it is so nebulous. And we must as assiduously as possible (and among the broadest possible masses of workers) direct the weapon of our criticism against the *Osvobozhdeniye* gentry, so that when the future revolution breaks out, the Russian proletariat may, with the real criticism of weapons,[106] paralyse the inevitable attempts of the *Osvobozhdeniye* gentry to curtail the democratic character of the revolution.

Apart from Comrade Egorov's "perplexity", mentioned above, over the question of our "supporting" the oppositional and revolutionary movement, the debate on the resolutions offered little of interest; in fact, there was hardly any debate at all.

The Congress ended with a brief reminder from the chairman that its decisions were binding on all Party members.

N. GENERAL PICTURE OF THE STRUGGLE AT THE CONGRESS. THE REVOLUTIONARY AND OPPORTUNIST WINGS OF THE PARTY

Having finished our analysis of the Congress debates and voting, we must now sum up, so that we may, on the basis of the *entire* Congress material, answer the question: what

elements, groups, and shades went to make up the final majority and minority which we saw in the elections and which were destined for a time to become the main division in our Party? A summary must be made of all the material relating to shades of principle, theoretical and tactical, which the minutes of the Congress provide in such abundance. Without a general "resumé", without a general picture of the Congress as a whole, and of all the principal groupings during the voting, this material is too disjointed, too disconnected, so that at first sight the individual groupings seem accidental, especially to one who does not take the trouble to make an independent and comprehensive *study* of the Congress Minutes (and how many readers have taken that trouble?).

In English parliamentary reports we often meet the characteristic word "division". The House "divided" into such and such a majority and minority, it is said when an issue is voted. The "division" of our Social-Democratic House on the various issues discussed at the Congress presents a picture of the struggle within the Party, of its shades of opinion and groups, that is *unique of its kind and unparalleled for its completeness and accuracy*. To make the picture a graphic one, to obtain a real *picture* instead of a heap of disconnected, disjointed, and isolated facts and incidents, to put a stop to the endless and senseless arguments over particular votings (who voted for whom and who supported whom?), I have decided to try to depict *all the basic* types of "divisions" at our Congress in the form of a *diagram*. This will probably seem strange to a great many people, but I doubt whether any other method can be found that would really generalise and summarise the results in the most complete and accurate manner possible. Which way a particular delegate voted can be ascertained with absolute accuracy in cases when a roll-call vote was taken; and in certain important cases when no roll-call vote was taken it can be determined from the minutes with a very high degree of probability, with a sufficient degree of approximation to the truth. And if we take into account *all* the roll-call votes and all the other votes on issues of any importance (as judged, for example, by the thoroughness and warmth of the debates), we shall obtain the most objective picture

of our inner Party struggle that the material at our disposal permits. In doing so, instead of giving a photograph, i.e., an image of each voting separately, we shall try to give a picture, i.e., to present all the main *types* of voting, ignoring relatively unimportant exceptions and variations which would only confuse matters. In any case, anybody will be able with the aid of the minutes to check every detail of our picture, to amplify it with any particular voting he likes, in short, to criticise it not only by arguing, expressing doubts, and making references to isolated incidents, but by drawing a *different picture* on the basis of the same material.

In marking on the diagram each delegate who took part in the voting, we shall indicate by special shading the four main groups which we have traced in detail through the whole of the Congress debates, viz., 1) the *Iskra*-ists of the majority; 2) the *Iskra*-ists of the minority; 3) the "Centre", and 4) the anti-*Iskra*-ists. We have seen the difference in shades of principle between these groups in a *host of instances*, and if anyone does not like the *names* of the groups, which remind lovers of zigzags too much of the *Iskra* organisation and the *Iskra* trend, we can tell them that it is not the name that matters. Now that we have traced the shades through *all* the debates at the Congress, it is easy to substitute for the already established and familiar Party appellations (which jar on the ears of some) a characterisation of the *essence of the shades between the groups*. Were this substitution made, we would obtain the following names for these same four groups: 1) consistent revolutionary Social-Democrats; 2) minor opportunists; 3) middling opportunists; and 4) major opportunists (major by our Russian standards). Let us hope that these names will be less shocking to those who have latterly taken to assuring themselves and others that *Iskra*-ist is a name which only denotes a "circle", and not a *trend*.

Let us now explain in detail the types of voting "snapped" on this diagram (see diagram: General Picture of the Struggle at the Congress—p. 339).

The first type of voting (A) covers the cases when the "Centre" joined with the *Iskra*-ists against the anti-*Iskra*-ists or a part of them. It includes the vote on the programme as a whole (Comrade Akimov alone abstained, all the others

voted for); the vote on the resolution condemning federation in principle (all voted for except the five Bundists); the vote on Paragraph 2 of the Bund Rules (the five Bundists voted against us; five abstained, viz.: Martynov, Akimov, Brouckère, and Makhov with his two votes; the rest were with us); *it is this vote that is represented in diagram A*. Further, the *three* votes on the question of endorsing *Iskra* as the Party's Central Organ were also of this type: the editors (five votes) abstained; in all three cases there were two votes against (Akimov and Brouckère), and, in addition, when the vote on the *motives* for endorsing *Iskra* was taken, the five Bundists and Comrade Martynov abstained.*

This type of voting provides the answer to a very interesting and important question, namely, when did the Congress "Centre" vote with the *Iskra*-ists? It was either when *the anti-*"Iskra"*-ists*, *too*, *were with us*, with a few exceptions (adoption of the programme, or endorsement of *Iskra* without motives stated), or else when it was a question of the sort of *statement* which was not in itself a direct committal to a definite political position (recognition of *Iskra*'s organising work was not in itself a committal to carry out its organisational policy in relation to particular groups; rejection of the principle of federation did not preclude abstention from voting on a specific scheme of federation, as we have seen in the case of Comrade Makhov). We have already seen, when speaking of the significance of the groupings at the Congress in general, how falsely this matter is put in the official account of the official *Iskra*, which (through the mouth of Comrade Martov) *slurs and glosses over* the difference between the *Iskra*-ists and the "Centre", between consistent revolutionary Social-Democrats and opportunists, by citing *cases when the anti-*"*Iskra*"*-ists*, *too*, *voted with us*! Even the most "Right-wing" of the opportunists in the German

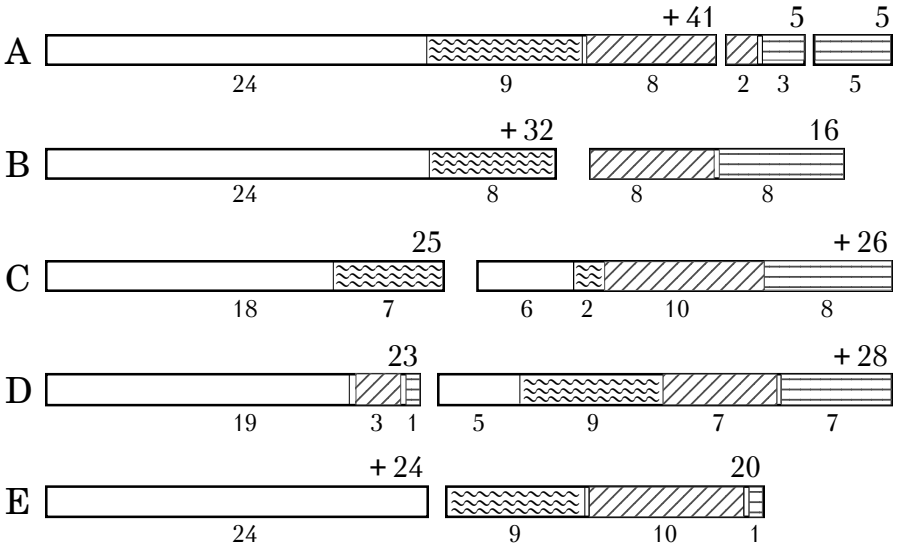
* Why was the vote on Paragraph 2 of the Bund Rules taken for depiction in the diagram? Because the votes on endorsing *Iskra* were not as full, while the votes on the programme and on the question of federation referred to political decisions of a less definite and specific character. Speaking generally, the choice of one or another of a number of votes *of the same type* will not in the least affect the main features of the picture, as anyone may easily see by making the corresponding changes.

and French Social-Democratic parties never vote against such points as *the adoption of the programme as a whole.*

The second type of voting (B) covers the cases when the *Iskra*-ists, consistent and inconsistent, voted together against all the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the entire "Centre". These were mostly cases that involved giving effect to definite and specific plans of the *Iskra* policy, that is, endorsing *Iskra in fact and not only in word.* They include the *Organising Committee incident**; the question of making the position of the Bund in the Party the first item on the agenda; the dissolution of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group; two votes on the agrarian programme, and, sixthly and lastly, the vote *against* the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad (*Rabocheye Dyelo*), that is, the recognition of the League as the only Party organisation abroad. The old, pre-Party, circle spirit, the interests of opportunist organisations or groups, the narrow conception of Marxism were fighting here against the strictly consistent and principled policy of revolutionary Social-Democracy; the *Iskra*-ists of the minority still sided with us in quite a number of cases, in a number of exceedingly important votes (important from the standpoint of the Organising Committee, *Yuzhny Rabochy*, and *Rabocheye Dyelo*) ... until *their own* circle spirit and their own inconsistency came into question. The "divisions" of this type bring out with graphic clarity that on a number of issues involving the practical application of our principles, *the Centre joined forces with the anti-"Iskra"-ists*, displaying a much greater kinship with them than with us, a much greater leaning *in practice*

* It is this vote that is depicted in Diagram B, the *Iskra*-ists secured thirty-two votes, the Bundist resolution sixteen. It should be pointed out that of the votes of this type *not one was by roll-call.* The way the individual delegates voted can only be established—but with a very high degree of probability—by two sets of evidence: 1) in the debate the speakers of both groups of *Iskra*-ists spoke in favour, those of the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the "Centre" against; 2) the number of votes cast *in favour* was always very close to thirty-three. Nor should it be forgotten that when analysing the Congress debates we pointed out, quite apart from the voting, *a number* of cases when the "Centre" sided with the anti-*Iskra*-ists (the opportunists) against us. Some of these issues were: the absolute value of democratic demands, whether we should support the oppositional elements, restriction of centralism, etc.

GENERAL PICTURE OF THE STRUGGLE AT THE CONGRESS



The plus and minus signs indicate the total number of votes cast *for* and *against* on a particular issue. The figures below the stripes indicate the number of votes cast by each of the four groups. The character of the votings covered by each of the types A to E is explained in the text.

Name of group

- ISKRA-ISTS OF THE MAJORITY
- ISKRA-ISTS OF THE MINORITY
- CENTER
- ANTI-ISKRA-ISTS

A
B
C
D
E

towards the *opportunist* than towards the *revolutionary* wing of Social-Democracy. Those who were *Iskra*-ists *in name* but were ashamed *to be Iskra*-ists revealed their true nature, and the struggle that inevitably ensued caused no little acrimony, which obscured from the less thoughtful and more impressionable the significance of the shades of principle disclosed in that struggle. But now that the ardour of battle has somewhat abated and the minutes remain as a dispassionate extract of a series of heated encounters, only those who wilfully close their eyes can fail to perceive that the alliance of the Makhovs and Egorovs with the Akimovs and Liebers was not, and could not be, fortuitous. The only thing Martov and Axelrod can do is keep well away from a comprehensive and accurate analysis of the minutes, or try at this late date to *undo* their behaviour at the Congress by all sorts of expressions of *regret*. As if regrets can remove differences of views and differences of policy! As if the present alliance of Martov and Axelrod with Akimov, Brouckère, and Martynov can cause our Party, restored at the Second Congress, to forget the struggle which the *Iskra*-ists waged with the anti-*Iskra*-ists almost throughout the Congress!

The distinguishing feature of the third type of voting at the Congress, represented by the three remaining parts of the diagram (C, D, and E), is that a *small section of the "Iskra"-ists broke away and went over to the anti-"Iskra"-ists*, who accordingly gained the victory (as long as they remained at the Congress). In order to trace with complete accuracy the development of this celebrated *coalition* of the *Iskra*-ist minority with the anti-*Iskra*-ists, the mere mention of which drove Martov to write hysterical epistles at the Congress, we have reproduced all the three main kinds of *roll-call* votes of this type. C is the vote on equality of languages (the last of the three roll-call votes on this question is given, it being the fullest). All the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the whole Centre stand solid against us; from the *Iskra*-ists a part of the majority and a part of the minority break away. *It is not yet clear which of the "Iskra"-ists are capable of forming a definite and lasting coalition with the opportunist "Right wing" of the Congress*. Next comes type D—the vote on Paragraph 1 of the Rules (of the two votes, we have

taken the one which was more clear-cut, that is, in which there were no abstentions). *The coalition stands out more saliently and assumes firmer shape**: *all* the *Iskra*-ists of the minority are now on the side of Akimov and Lieber, but only a very small number of *Iskra*-ists of the majority, these counterbalancing three of the "Centre" and one anti-*Iskra*-ist who have come over to our side. A mere glance at the diagram suffices to show which elements shifted from side to side casually and temporarily and which *were drawn with irresistible force* towards *a lasting coalition with the Akimovs*. The last vote (E—elections to the Central Organ, the Central Committee, and the Party Council), *which in fact represents the final division into majority and minority*, clearly reveals the complete fusion of the *Iskra*-ist minority with the *entire* "Centre" and the *remnants* of the anti-*Iskra*-ists. By this time, of the eight anti-*Iskra*-ists, *only* Comrade Brouckère remained at the Congress (Comrade Akimov had already explained his mistake to him and he had taken his proper place in the ranks of the *Martovites*). The withdrawal of the seven *most* "*Right-wing*" *of the opportunists* decided the issue of the elections against Martov.**

And now, with the aid of the objective evidence of votes of *every type*, let us sum up the results of the Congress.

There has been much talk to the effect that the majority at our Congress was "*accidental*". This, in fact, was Comrade Martov's sole consolation in his *Once More in the Minority*.

---

* *Judging by all indications*, *four other votes on the Rules* were of the same type: p. 278—27 for Fomin, as against 21 for us; p. 279—26 for Martov, as against 24 for us; p. 280—27 against me, 22 for; and, on the same page, 24 for Martov, as against 23 for us. These are the votes on the question of co-optation to the central bodies, which I have already dealt with. No roll-call votes are available (there was one, but the record of it has been lost). The Bundists (all or part) evidently *saved* Martov. Martov's erroneous statements (at the League) concerning these votes have been corrected above.

** The seven opportunists who withdrew from the Second Congress were the five Bundists (the Bund withdrew from the Party after the Second Congress rejected the principle of federation) and two *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists, Comrade Martynov and Comrade Akimov. These latter left the Congress after the *Iskra*-ist League was recognised as the *only* Party organisation abroad, i.e., after the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ist Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad was dissolved. (Author's footnote to the 1907 edition.—*Ed*.)

The diagram clearly shows that in *one sense*, but in only one, the majority could be called accidental, viz., in the sense that the withdrawal of the seven most opportunist delegates of the "*Right*" was—supposedly—a matter of *accident*. *To the extent* that this withdrawal was an accident (and no more), our majority was accidental. A mere glance at the diagram will show better than any long arguments on whose side these seven would have been, *were bound to have been*.* But the question is: how far was the withdrawal of the seven really an accident? That is a question which those who talk so freely about the "accidental" character of the majority do not like to ask themselves. It is an unpleasant question for them. Was it an accident that the most extreme representatives of the *Right* and not of the *Left* wing of our Party were the ones to withdraw? Was it an accident that it was *opportunist*s who withdrew, and not consistent *revolutionary Social-Democrats*? Is there no connection between this "accidental" withdrawal and the struggle against the opportunist wing which was waged throughout the Congress and which stands out so graphically in our diagram?

One has only to ask these questions, which are so unpleasant to the minority, to realise what fact all this talk about the accidental character of the majority is intended to *conceal*. It is the unquestionable and incontrovertible fact that *the minority was formed of those in our Party who gravitate most towards opportunism*. The minority was formed of those elements in the Party *who are least stable* in theory, *least steadfast in matters of principle*. It was from the *Right* wing of the Party that the minority was formed. The division into majority and minority is a direct and inevitable continuation of that division of the Social-Democrats into a revolutionary and an opportunist wing, into a Mountain and a Gironde,[107] which did not appear only yesterday, nor in the Russian workers' party alone, and which no doubt will not disappear tomorrow.

This fact is of cardinal importance for elucidating the causes and the various stages of our disagreements. Who-

* We shall see later that *after* the Congress both Comrade Akimov and the Voronezh Committee, which has the closest *kinship* with Comrade Akimov, explicitly expressed their sympathy with the "*minority*".

ever tries to *evade* the fact by denying or glossing over the struggle at the Congress and the shades of principle that it revealed, simply testifies to his own intellectual and political poverty. And in order to *disprove* the fact, it would have to be shown, *in the first place*, that the general picture of the voting and "divisions" at our Party Congress was different from the one I have drawn; and, *in the second place*, that it was the most consistent revolutionary Social-Democrats, those who in Russia have adopted the name of *Iskra*-ists,* who *were in the wrong on the substance* of all those issues over which the Congress "divided". Well, just try to show that, gentlemen!

Incidentally, the fact that the minority was formed of the most opportunist, the least stable and consistent elements of the Party provides an answer to those numerous objections and expressions of doubt which are addressed to the majority by people who are imperfectly acquainted with the matter, or have not given it sufficient thought. Is it not petty, we are told, to account for the *divergence* by a minor mistake of Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod? Yes, gentlemen, Comrade Martov's mistake was a minor one (and I said so even at the Congress, in the heat of the struggle); but this minor mistake *could* (*and did*) cause a lot of harm because Comrade Martov was pulled over to the side of delegates who had made a *whole series of mistakes*, had manifested an inclination towards opportunism and inconsistency of principle on a whole series of

* Note for Comrade Martov's benefit. If Comrade Martov has now forgotten that the term "*Iskra*"-ist implies *the follower of a trend* and not *a member of a circle*, we would advise him to read in the Congress Minutes the explanation Comrade Trotsky gave Comrade Akimov on this point. There were three *Iskra*-ist *circles* (in relation to the Party) at the Congress: the Emancipation of Labour group, the *Iskra* editorial board, and the *Iskra* organisation. Two of these three circles had the good sense to dissolve themselves; the third did not display enough Party spirit to do so, and was dissolved by the Congress. The broadest of the *Iskra*-ist circles, the *Iskra* organisation (which included the editorial board and the Emancipation of Labour group), had sixteen members present at the Congress in all, of whom *only eleven* were entitled to vote. *Iskra*-ists *by trend*, on the other hand, not by membership in any *Iskra*-ist "circle", numbered, by my calculation, *twenty-seven*, *with thirty-three votes*. Hence, *less than half* of the *Iskra*-ists at the Congress belonged to *Iskra*-ist *circles*.

questions. That Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod should have displayed instability was an unimportant fact concerning individuals; it was not an individual fact, however, but a *Party* fact, and a *not altogether unimportant one*, that a very considerable minority should have been formed of *all* the least stable elements, of *all* who either rejected *Iskra*'s trend altogether and openly opposed it, or paid lip service to it but actually sided time and again with the anti-*Iskra*-ists.

Is it not absurd to *account for* the divergence by the prevalence of an inveterate circle spirit and revolutionary philistinism in the small circle comprised by the old *Iskra* editorial board? No, it is not absurd, because *all those in our Party* who all through the Congress had fought *for every kind of circle*, all those *who were generally incapable of rising* above revolutionary philistinism, all those who talked about the "historical" character of the philistine and circle spirit in order to justify and preserve that evil, *rose up* in support of *this particular* circle. The fact that narrow circle interests prevailed over the Party interest in the one little circle of the *Iskra* editorial board might, perhaps, be regarded as an accident; but it was no accident that in staunch support of this circle rose up the Akimovs and Brouckères, who attached no less (if not more) value to the "historical continuity" of the celebrated Voronezh Committee and the notorious St. Petersburg "Workers' Organisation"[108]; the Egorovs, who lamented the "murder" of *Rabocheye Dyelo* as bitterly as the "murder" of the old editorial board (if not more so); the Makhovs, etc., etc. You can tell a man by his friends—the proverb says. And you can tell a man's *political complexion* by his political allies, by the people who vote for him.

The minor mistake committed by Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod was, and might have remained, a *minor* one until it became the starting-point for a *durable alliance* between them and the whole opportunist wing of our Party, until it led, as a result of that alliance, to a *recrudescence* of opportunism, to the exaction of *revenge* by all whom *Iskra* had fought and who were now overjoyed at a chance of *venting their spleen* on the consistent adherents of revolutionary Social-Democracy. And as a result of the post-Congress

events, what we are witnessing in the new *Iskra* is precisely a recrudescence of opportunism, the revenge of the Akimovs and Brouckères (see the leaflet issued by the Voronezh Committee*), and the glee of the Martynovs, who have at last (at last!) been allowed, in the detested *Iskra*, to have a kick at the detested "enemy" for each and every former grievance. This makes it particularly clear how essential it was to "restore *Iskra*'s old editorial board" (we are quoting from Comrade Starover's ultimatum of November 3, 1903) in order to preserve *Iskra* "continuity"....

Taken by itself, there was nothing dreadful, nor critical, nor even anything abnormal in the fact that the Congress (and the Party) divided into a Left and a Right, a revolutionary and an opportunist wing. On the contrary, the whole past decade in the history of the Russian (and not only the Russian) Social-Democratic movement had been leading inevitably and inexorably to such a division. The fact that the division took place over a number of very *minor* mistakes of the Right wing, of (relatively) very unimportant differences (a fact which seems shocking to the superficial observer and to the philistine mind), marked *a big step forward for our Party as a whole*. Formerly we used to differ over major issues, such as might in some cases even justify a split; now we have reached agreement on all major and important points, and are only divided by *shades*, about which we may *and should* argue, but over which it would be absurd and childish to part company (as Comrade Plekhanov has quite rightly said in his interesting article "What Should Not Be Done", to which we shall revert). *Now*, when the *anarchistic behaviour* of the minority *since the Congress* has almost brought the Party to a split, one may often hear wiseacres saying: Was it worth while fighting at the Congress over such trifles as the Organising Committee incident, the dissolution of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group or *Rabocheye Dyelo*, or Paragraph 1, or the dissolution of the old editorial board, etc.? Those who argue in this way**

* See pp. 406-07 of this volume.—*Ed.*

** I cannot help recalling in this connection a conversation I happened to have at the Congress with one of the "Centre" delegates. "How oppressive the atmosphere is at our Congress!" he complained. "This bitter fighting, this agitation of one against the other, this biting

are in fact introducing the circle standpoint into Party affairs: a struggle of *shades* in the Party is *inevitable and essential*, as long as it does not lead to anarchy and splits, as long as it is confined *within bounds* approved by the common consent of all comrades and Party members. And *our struggle* against the Right wing of the Party *at the Congress*, against Akimov and Axelrod, Martynov and Martov, *in no way exceeded those bounds*. One need only recall two facts which incontrovertibly prove this: 1) when Comrades Martynov and Akimov were about to quit the Congress, *we were all prepared* to do everything to obliterate the idea of an "insult"; *we all adopted* (by thirty-two votes) Comrade Trotsky's motion inviting these comrades to regard the explanations as satisfactory and withdraw their statement; 2) when it came to the election of the central bodies, we were prepared to allow the minority (or the opportunist wing) of the Congress *a minority on both central bodies*: Martov on the Central Organ and Popov on the Central Committee. We *could not* act otherwise from the Party standpoint, since even before the Congress we had decided to elect two trios. *If the difference of shades revealed at the Congress was not great*, neither was the *practical* conclusion we drew from the struggle between these shades: the conclusion amounted *solely* to this, that *two-thirds* of the seats on both bodies of three ought to be given to the *majority* at the Party Congress.

It was only the *refusa*l of the minority at the Party Congress to be a *minority on the central bodies* that led first to the "feeble whining" of defeated intellectuals, and then to *anarchistic talk* and anarchistic actions.

In conclusion, let us take one more glance at the diagram from the standpoint of the composition of the central bodies. Quite naturally, *in addition* to the question of shades,

---

controversy, this uncomradely attitude!..." "What a splendid thing our Congress is!" I replied. "A free and open struggle. Opinions have been stated. The shades have been revealed. The groups have taken shape. Hands have been raised. A decision has been taken. A stage has been passed. Forward! That's the stuff for me! That's life! That's not like the endless, tedious word-chopping of your intellectuals, which stops not because the question has been settled, but because they are too tired to talk any more...."

The comrade of the "Centre" stared at me in perplexity and shrugged his shoulders. We were talking different languages.

the delegates were faced during the elections with the question of the *suitability*, efficiency, etc., of one or another *person*. The minority are now very prone to confuse these two questions. Yet that they are different questions is self-evident, and this can be seen from the simple fact, for instance, that the election of an *initial* trio for the Central Organ had been planned even *before the Congress*, at a time when no one could have foreseen the alliance of Martov and Axelrod with Martynov and Akimov. Different questions have to be answered in different ways: the answer to the question of shades must be sought for in the *minutes of the Congress*, in the *open* discussions and voting on each and every issue. As to the question of the suitability of *persons*, everybody at the Congress had decided that it should be settled by *secret ballot*. Why did *the whole Congress unanimously* take that decision? The question is so elementary that it would be odd to dwell on it. But (since their defeat at the ballot-box) the minority have begun to forget even elementary things. We have heard torrents of ardent, passionate speeches, heated almost to the point of irresponsibility, in defence of the old editorial board, but we have heard *absolutely nothing* about the shades *at the Congress* that were involved in the struggle over a board of six or three. We hear talk and gossip on all sides about the ineffectualness, the unsuitability, the evil designs, etc., of the persons elected to the Central Committee, but we hear *absolutely nothing* about the shades *at the Congress* that fought for predominance on the Central Committee. To me it seems indecent and discreditable to go about talking and gossiping *outside the Congress* about the qualities and actions of individuals (for in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred these actions are an organisational secret, which can only be divulged to the supreme authority of the Party). To fight *outside the Congress* by means of *such gossip* would, in my opinion, be *scandal-mongering*. And the only public reply I could make to all this talk would be to point to the struggle at the Congress: You say that the Central Committee was elected by a narrow majority. That is true. But this narrow majority consisted of all who had most consistently fought, not in words but in actual fact, for the realisation of the *Iskra* plans. Consequently, the *moral* prestige of this majority

should be even higher—incomparably so—than its *formal* prestige—higher in the eyes of all who value the continuity of the *Iskra trend* above the continuity of a particular *Iskra circle*. Who was *more competent to judge* the suitability of particular persons to carry out the *Iskra* policy—those who fought for that policy at the Congress, or those who in no few cases fought against that policy and defended everything retrograde, every kind of old rubbish, every kind of circle mentality?

O. AFTER THE CONGRESS. TWO METHODS OF STRUGGLE

The analysis of the debates and voting at the Congress, which we have now concluded, actually explains *in nuce* (in embryo) *everything that has happened since the Congress*, and we can be brief in outlining the subsequent stages of our Party crisis.

The refusal of Martov and Popov to stand for election immediately introduced an atmosphere of *squabbling* into a Party struggle between Party shades. On the very next day after the Congress, Comrade Glebov, thinking it incredible that the unelected editors could seriously have decided to *swing towards* Akimov and Martynov, and attributing the whole thing primarily to irritation, suggested to Plekhanov and me that the matter should be ended peaceably and that all four should be "co-opted" on condition that proper representation of the editorial board on the Council was guaranteed (i.e., that of the two representatives, one was definitely drawn from the *Party* majority). This condition seemed sound to Plekhanov and me, for its acceptance would imply *a tacit admission of the mistake at the Congress*, a desire for peace instead of war, a desire to be closer to Plekhanov and me than to Akimov and Martynov, Egorov and Makhov. The concession as regards "co-optation" thus became a *personal* one, and it was not worth while refusing to make a personal concession which should clear away the irritation and restore peace. Plekhanov and I therefore consented. But the editorial majority rejected the condition. *Glebov left*. We began to wait and see what would happen next: whether Martov would adhere to the

loyal stand he had taken up at the Congress (*against* Comrade Popov, the representative of the Centre), or whether the unstable elements who inclined towards a split, and in whose wake he had followed, would gain the upper hand.

We were faced with the question: would Comrade Martov choose to regard his Congress "coalition" as an isolated political fact (just as, *si licet parva componere magnis*,* Bebel's coalition with Vollmar in 1895 was an isolated case), or would he want to *consolidate* this coalition, exert himself to prove that it was *Plekhanov and I* who were mistaken at the Congress, and become the actual leader of the opportunist wing of our Party? This question might be formulated otherwise as follows: a squabble or a political Party struggle? Of the three of us who on the day after the Congress were the sole available members of the central institutions, Glebov inclined most to the former answer and made the most efforts to reconcile the children who had fallen out. Comrade Plekhanov inclined most to the latter answer and was, as the saying goes, neither to hold nor to bind. I on this occasion acted the part of "Centre", or "Marsh", and endeavoured to employ persuasion. To try at this date to recall the spoken attempts at persuasion would be a hopelessly muddled business, and I shall not follow the bad example of Comrade Martov and Comrade Plekhanov. But I do consider it necessary to reproduce certain passages from one written attempt at persuasion which I addressed to one of the "minority" *Iskra*-ists:

"...The refusal of Martov to serve on the editorial board, his refusal and that of other Party writers to collaborate, the refusal of a number of persons to work on the Central Committee, and the propaganda of a boycott or passive resistance are bound to lead, even if against the wishes of Martov and his friends, to a split in the Party. Even if Martov adheres to a loyal stand (which he took up so resolutely at the Congress), others will not, and the outcome I have mentioned will be inevitable....

"And so I ask myself: over what, in point of fact, would we be parting company?... I go over all the events and impressions of the Congress; I realise that I often behaved

* If little things may be compared to big.—*Ed.*

and acted in a state of frightful irritation, 'frenziedly'; I am quite willing to admit this fault of mine to anyone, if that can be called a fault which was a natural product of the atmosphere, the reactions, the interjections, the struggle, etc. But examining now, quite unfrenziedly, the results attained, the outcome achieved by frenzied struggle, I can detect nothing, absolutely nothing in these results that is injurious to the Party, and absolutely nothing that is an affront or insult to the minority.

"Of course, the very fact of finding oneself in the minority could not but be vexatious, but I categorically protest against the idea that we 'cast slurs' on anybody, that we *wanted* to insult or humiliate anybody. Nothing of the kind. And one should not allow political differences to lead to an interpretation of events based on accusing the other side of unscrupulousness, chicanery, intrigue, and the other nice things we are hearing mentioned more and more often in this atmosphere of an impending split. This should not be allowed, for it is, to say the least, the *nec plus ultra* of irrationality.

"Martov and I have had a political (and organisational) difference, as we had dozens of times before. Defeated over Paragraph 1 of the Rules, I could not but strive with all my might for *revanche* in what remained to me (and to the Congress). I could not but strive, on the one hand, for a strictly *Iskra*-ist Central Committee, and, on the other, for a trio on the editorial board.... I consider this trio the *only* one capable of being an official institution, instead of a body based on indulgence and slackness, the only one to be a real centre, each member of which would always state and defend his Party viewpoint, not one grain more, and irrespective of all personal considerations and all fear of giving offence, of resignations, and so on.

"This trio, after what had occurred at the Congress, undoubtedly meant legitimising a political and organisational line in one respect directed against Martov. Undoubtedly. Cause a rupture on that account? Break up the Party because of it?? Did not Martov and Plekhanov oppose me over the question of demonstrations? And did not Martov and I oppose Plekhanov over the question of the programme? Is not one side of every trio always up against the other

two? If the majority of the *Iskra*-ists, both in the *Iskra* organisation and at the Congress, found this particular shade of Martov's line organisationally and politically mistaken, is it not really senseless to attempt to attribute this to 'intrigue', 'incitement', and so forth? Would it not be senseless to try to talk away this fact by *abusing* the majority and calling them 'riffraff'?

"I repeat that, like the majority of the *Iskra*-ists at the Congress, I am profoundly convinced that the line Martov adopted was wrong, and that he had to be corrected. To take offence at this correction, to regard it as an insult, etc., is unreasonable. We have not cast, and are not casting, any 'slurs' on anyone, nor are we excluding anyone *from work*. And to cause a split because someone has been excluded *from a central body* seems to me a piece of inconceivable folly."*

I have thought it necessary to recall these written statements of mine now, because they *conclusively* prove that the majority wanted to draw a definite line *at once* between possible (and in a heated struggle inevitable) personal grievances and personal irritations caused by biting and "frenzied" attacks, etc., on the one hand, and a definite political mistake, a definite political line (coalition with the Right wing), on the other.

These statements prove that the *passive resistance* of the minority *began immediately after the Congress* and-at once evoked from us the warning that it was a *step towards splitting the Party*; the warning that it ran directly counter to their *declarations of loyalty at the Congress*; that the split would be solely over the *fact of exclusion from the central institutions* (that is, non-election to them), for nobody ever thought of excluding any Party member *from work*; and that our political difference (an inevitable difference, inasmuch as it had not yet been elucidated and settled which line at

* This letter (to A. N. Potresov, of August 31 [September 13], 1903—*Ed.*) was written in *September* (New Style). I have only omitted what seemed to me irrelevant to the matter in hand. If the addressee considers what I have omitted important, he can easily repair the omission. Incidentally, let me take this opportunity to say that any of my opponents may publish any of my private letters should they think a useful purpose will be served by it.

the Congress was mistaken, Martov's or ours) was being *perverted more and more into a squabble*, accompanied by abuse, suspicions, and so on and so forth.

But the warnings were in vain. The behaviour of the minority showed that the least stable elements among them, those who *least valued the Party*, were gaining the upper hand. This compelled Plekhanov and me to withdraw the consent we had given to Glebov's proposal. For if the minority were demonstrating by their *deeds* their political instability not only as regards principles, but even as regards *elementary Party loyalty*, what value could be attached to their *talk* about this celebrated "continuity"? Nobody scoffed more wittily than Plekhanov at the utter absurdity of demanding the "co-optation" to the Party editorial board of a majority consisting of people who frankly proclaimed their new and growing differences of opinion! Has there ever been a case in the world of a party majority on the central institutions converting itself into a minority of its own accord, *prior to the airing* of *new* differences in the press, in full view of the Party? Let the differences first be stated, let the Party judge how profound and important they were, let the Party itself correct the mistake it had made at the Second Congress, should it be shown that it had made a mistake! The very fact that such a demand was made *on the plea* of differences still unknown demonstrated the utter instability of those who made it, the complete submersion of political differences by squabbling, and their entire disrespect both for the Party as a whole and for their own convictions. Never have there been, nor will there be, persons of *convinced principle* who refuse to try to *convince* before they secure (*privately*) a majority in the institution they want to bring round to their standpoint.

Finally, on October 4, Comrade Plekhanov announced that he would make a *last* attempt to put an end to this absurd state of affairs A meeting was called of all the six members of the old editorial board, attended by a new member of the Central Committee.* Comrade Plekhanov

* This Central Committee member[109] arranged, in addition, a number of private and collective talks with the minority, in which he refuted the preposterous tales that were being spread and appealed to their sense of Party duty.

spent three whole hours proving how unreasonable it was to demand "co-optation" of four of the "minority" to two of the "majority". He proposed *co-opting two of them*, so as, on the one hand, to remove all fears that we wanted to "bully", suppress, besiege, behead or bury anyone, and, on the other, to safeguard the rights and position of the Party "majority". *The co-optation of two was likewise rejected.*

On October 6, Plekhanov and I wrote the following official letter to all the old editors of *Iskra* and to Comrade Trotsky, one of its contributors:

"Dear Comrades,

"The editorial board of the Central Organ considers it its duty officially to express its regret at your withdrawal from participation in *Iskra* and *Zarya*. In spite of the repeated invitations to collaborate which we made to you immediately following the Second Party Congress and several times after, we have not received a single contribution from you. The editors of the Central Organ declare that your withdrawal from participation is not justified by anything they have done. No personal irritation should serve, of course, as an obstacle to your working on the Central Organ of the Party. If, on the other hand, your withdrawal is due to any differences of opinion with us, we would consider it of the greatest benefit to the Party if you were to set forth these differences at length. More, we would consider it highly desirable for the nature and depth of these differences to be explained to the whole Party as early as possible in the columns of the publications of which we are the editors."*

As the reader sees, it was still quite unclear to us whether the actions of the "minority" were principally governed by personal irritation or by a desire to steer the organ (and the Party) along a *new course*, and if so, what course exactly. I think that if we were even now to set seventy wise men

* The letter to Comrade Martov contained in addition a reference to a certain pamphlet and the following sentence: "Lastly, we once more inform you, in the interests of the work, that we are still prepared to co-opt you to the editorial board of the Central Organ, in order to give you every opportunity officially to state and defend your views in the supreme institution of the Party."

to elucidate this question with the help of any literature or any testimony you like, they too could make nothing of this tangle. I doubt whether a squabble can ever be disentangled: you have either to cut it, or set it aside.*

Axelrod, Zasulich, Starover, Trotsky, and Koltsov sent a couple of lines in reply to this letter of October 6, to the effect that the undersigned were taking no part in *Iskra* since its passage into the hands of the new editorial board. Comrade Martov was more communicative and honoured us with the following reply:

"To the Editorial Board of the, Central Organ of the R.S.D.L.P.

"Dear Comrades,

"In reply to your letter of October 6 I wish to state the following: I consider all our discussions on the subject of working together on one organ at an end after the conference which took place in the presence of a Central Committee member on October 4, and at which you refused to state the reasons that induced you to withdraw your proposal to us that Axelrod, Zasulich, Starover, and I should join the editorial board on condition that we undertook to elect Comrade Lenin our 'representative' on the Council. After you repeatedly evaded at this conference formulating the statements you had yourselves made in the presence of witnesses, I do not think it necessary to explain in a letter to you my motives for refusing to work on *Iskra* under present conditions. Should the need arise, I shall explain them in detail to the whole Party, which will already be able to learn from the minutes of the Second Congress why I rejected the proposal, which you now repeat, that I accept a seat on the editorial board and on the Council....**

"*L. Martov*"

This letter, in conjunction with the previous documents, clarifies beyond any possible dispute that question of boycott, disorganisation, anarchy, and preparations for a split which Comrade Martov (with the help of exclamation marks and rows of dots) so assiduously evades in his *State of Siege*—the question of loyal and disloyal methods of struggle.

Comrade Martov and the others are *invited* to set forth their differences, they are *asked* to tell us plainly what the trouble is all about and what their intentions are, they are *exhorted* to stop sulking and to analyse calmly the mis-

---

* Comrade Plekhanov would probably add: "or satisfy *each and every claim* of the initiators of the squabble". We shall see why this was impossible.

** I omit what Martov replied in reference to his pamphlet, then being republished.

take made over Paragraph 1 (which is intimately connected with their mistake in swinging to the Right)—but Comrade Martov and Co. *refuse to talk*, and cry: "We are being besieged! We are being bullied!" The jibe about "dreadful words" has not cooled the ardour of these comical outcries.

How is it possible to *besiege* someone who r*efuses to work together with you*?—we asked Comrade Martov. How is it possible to ill-treat, "bully", and oppress a minority which *refuses to be a minority*? Being in the minority necessarily and inevitably involves certain disadvantages. These disadvantages are that you either have to join a body which will outvote you on certain questions, or you stay outside that body and attack it, and consequently come under the fire of well-mounted batteries.

Did Comrade Martov's cries about a "state of siege" mean that those in the minority were being fought or governed unfairly and unloyally? *Only* such an assertion could have contained even a grain of sense (in Martov's eyes), for, I repeat, being in the minority necessarily and inevitably involves certain disadvantages. But the whole comedy of the matter is that Comrade Martov *could not be fought at all* as long as he refused to talk! The minority *could not be governed at all* as long as they refused to be a minority!

Comrade Martov could not cite *a single fact* to show that the editorial board of the Central Organ had exceeded or abused its powers while Plekhanov and I were on it. Nor could the practical workers of the minority cite *a single fact* of a like kind with regard to the Central Committee. However Comrade Martov may now twist and turn in his *State of Siege*, it remains absolutely incontrovertible that *the outcries about a state of siege were nothing but* "*feeble whining*".

How utterly Comrade Martov and Co. lacked *sensible* arguments against the editorial board appointed by the Congress is best of all shown by their own catchword: "We are not serfs!" (*State of Siege*, p. 34.) The mentality of the bourgeois intellectual, who counts himself among the "elect minds" standing above mass organisation and mass discipline, is expressed here with remarkable clarity. To *explain* their refusal to work in the Party by saying that they "are not serfs" is *to give themselves away completely*,

to confess to a total lack of arguments, an utter inability to furnish any motives, any sensible reasons for dissatisfaction. Plekhanov and I declare that their refusal is not justified by anything we have done; we request them to set forth their differences; and all they reply is: "We are not serfs" (adding that no bargain has yet been reached on the subject of co-optation).

To the individualism of the intellectual, which already manifested itself in the controversy over Paragraph 1, revealing its tendency to opportunist argument and anarchistic phrase-mongering; *all* proletarian organisation and discipline seems to be *serfdom*. The reading public will soon learn that in the eyes of these "Party members" and Party "officials" even a new *Party Congress* is a serf institution that is terrible and abhorrent to the "elect minds".... This "institution" is indeed terrible to people who are not averse to making use of the Party title but are conscious that this title of theirs *does not accord* with the interests and will of the Party.

The committee resolutions enumerated in my letter to the editors of the new *Iskra*, and published by Comrade Martov in his *State of Siege*, show with facts that the behaviour of the minority amounted all along to sheer *disobedience* of the decisions of the Congress and *disorganisation* of positive practical work. Consisting of opportunists and people who detested *Iskra*, the minority strove to *rend the Party* and damaged and disorganised its work, thirsting to avenge their defeat at the Congress and sensing that by *honest and loyal* means (by explaining their case in the press or at a congress) they would *never* succeed in refuting the accusation of opportunism and intellectualist instability which at the Second Congress had been levelled against them. Realising that they could not *convince* the Party, they tried to gain their ends by *disorganising* the Party and *hampering all its work*. They were reproached with having (by their mistakes at the Congress) caused a crack in our pot; they replied to the reproach by trying *with all their might* to *smash* the pot *altogether*.

So distorted had their ideas become that boycott and refusal to work were proclaimed to be "*honest** methods"

* Mining Area resolution (*State of Siege*, p. 38).

of struggle. Comrade Martov is now wriggling all around this delicate point. Comrade Martov is such a "man of principle" that he defends boycott ... when practised by the minority, but condemns boycott when, his side happening to have become the majority, it threatens Martov himself!

We need not, I think, go into the question whether this is a squabble or a "difference of principle" as to what are honest methods of struggle in a Social-Democratic workers' party.

After the unsuccessful attempts (of October 4 and 6) to obtain an explanation from the comrades who had started the "co-optation" row, nothing remained for the central institutions but to wait and see what would come of their verbal assurances that they would adhere to loyal methods of struggle. On October 10, the Central Committee addressed a circular letter to the League (see League Minutes, pp. 3-5), announcing that it was engaged in drafting Rules for the League and inviting the League members to assist. The Administration of the League had at that time decided against a congress of that body (by two votes to one; *ibid.*, p. 20). The replies received from minority supporters to this circular showed at once that the celebrated promise to be loyal and abide by the decisions of the Congress was just talk, and that, as a matter of fact, the minority had positively decided *not to obey* the central institutions of the Party, replying to their appeals to collaborate with *evasive excuses* full of sophistry and *anarchistic* phrasemongering. In reply to the famous open letter of Deutsch, a member of the Administration (p. 10), Plekhanov, myself, and other supporters of the majority expressed our vigorous "protest against the gross violations of Party discipline by which an official of the League permits himself to hamper the organisational activities of a Party institution and calls upon other comrades likewise to violate discipline and the Rules. Remarks such as, 'I do not consider myself at liberty to take part in such work on the invitation of the Central Committee', or, 'Comrades, we must on no account allow it [The Central Committee] to draw up new Rules for the League', etc., are agitational methods of a kind that can

only arouse disgust in anyone who has the slightest conception of the meaning of the words party, organisation, and party discipline. Such methods are all the more disgraceful for the fact that they are being used against a newly created Party institution and are therefore an undoubted attempt to undermine confidence in it among Party comrades, and that, moreover, they are being employed under the cachet of a member of the League Administration and behind the back of the Central Committee." (P. 17.)

Under such conditions, the League Congress promised to be nothing but a brawl.

From the outset, Comrade Martov continued his Congress tactics of "getting personal", this time with Comrade Plekhanov, by distorting private conversations. Comrade Plekhanov protested, and Comrade Martov was obliged to withdraw his accusations (League Minutes, pp. 39 and 134), which were a product of either irresponsibility or resentment.

The time for the report arrived. I had been the League's delegate at the Party Congress. A mere reference to the summary of my report (p. 43 et seq.)* will show the reader that I gave a rough outline of that analysis of the voting at the Congress which, in greater detail, forms the contents of the present pamphlet. The central feature of the report was precisely the proof that, owing to their mistakes, Martov and Co. had landed in the opportunist wing of our Party. Although this report was made to an audience whose majority consisted of violent opponents, they could discover absolutely nothing in it which departed from loyal methods of Party struggle and controversy.

Martov's report, on the contrary, apart from minor 'corrections' to particular points of my account (the incorrectness of these corrections we have shown above), was nothing but—a product of disordered nerves.

No wonder that the majority refused to carry on the fight in this atmosphere. Comrade Plekhanov entered a protest against the "*scene*" (p. 68)—it was indeed a regular "scene"!—and withdrew from the Congress without stating the objections he had already prepared on the substance of the report. Nearly all the other supporters of the majority

* See pp. 73-83 of this volume.—*Ed.*

also withdrew from the Congress, after filing a written protest against the "unworthy behaviour" of Comrade Martov (League Minutes, p. 75).

The methods of struggle employed by the minority became perfectly clear to all. We had accused the minority of committing a political mistake at the Congress, of having swung towards opportunism, of having formed a coalition with the Bundists, the Akimovs, the Brouckères, the Egorovs, and the Makhovs. The minority had been defeated at the Congress and they had now "worked out" *two* methods of struggle, embracing all their endless variety of sorties, assaults, attacks, etc.

First method—disorganising all the activity of the Party, damaging the work, hampering all and everything "without statement of reasons".

Second method—making "scenes", and so on and so forth.*

This "second method of struggle" is also apparent in the League's famous resolutions of "principle", in the discussion of which the "majority", of course, took no part. Let us examine these resolutions, which Comrade Martov has reproduced in his *State of Siege*.

The first resolution, signed by Comrades Trotsky, Fomin, Deutsch, and others, contains two theses directed against the "majority" of the Party Congress: 1) "The League expresses its profound regret that, owing to the manifestation at the Congress of tendencies which essentially run counter to the earlier policy of *Iskra*, due care was not given in drafting the Party Rules to providing sufficient safeguards of the independence and authority of the Central Committee." (League Minutes, p. 83.)

As we have already seen, this thesis of "principle" amounts to nothing but *Akimov* phrase-mongering, the *opportunist* character of which was exposed at the Party Congress *even* by Comrade Popov! In point of fact, the claim that the

* I have already pointed out that it would be unwise to attribute to sordid motives even the most sordid manifestations of the squabbling that is so habitual in the atmosphere of émigré and exile colonies. It is a sort of epidemic disease engendered by abnormal conditions of life, disordered nerves, and so on. I *had* to give a true picture of this system of struggle here, because Comrade Martov has *again resorted to it in its full scope in his "State of Siege"*.

"majority" did not mean to safeguard the independence and authority of the Central Committee was never anything but gossip. It need only be mentioned that when Plekhanov and I were on the editorial board, *there was on the Council no predominance* of the Central Organ over the Central Committee, but when the Martovites joined the editorial board, the Central Organ *secured* predominance over the Central Committee on the Council! When we were on the editorial board, *practical workers in Russia predominated* on the Council over writers residing abroad; since the Martovites took over, the contrary has been the case. When we were on the editorial board, the Council *never once* attempted to interfere in any *practical* matter; since the unanimous co-optation *such interference has begun*, as the reading public will learn in detail in the near future.

Next thesis of the resolution we are examining: "...when constituting the official central bodies of the Party, the Congress ignored the need for maintaining continuity with the actually existing central bodies...."

This thesis boils down to nothing but the question of the *personal* composition of the central bodies. The "minority" preferred to evade the fact that at the Congress the old central bodies had proved their unfitness and committed a number of mistakes. But most comical of all is the reference to "continuity" with respect to the Organising Committee. At the Congress, as we have seen, nobody even hinted that the entire membership of the Organising Committee should be endorsed. At the Congress, Martov actually cried in a frenzy that a list containing three members of the Organising Committee was defamatory to him. At the Congress, the *final* list proposed by the "minority" contained *one* member of the Organising Committee (*Popov*, Glebov or Fomin, and Trotsky), whereas the list the "majority" put through contained *two* members of the Organising Committee out of three (*Travinsky*, *Vasilyev*, and Glebov). We ask, can this reference to "continuity" really be considered a "difference of principle"?

Let us pass to the other resolution, which was signed by four members of the old editorial board, headed by Comrade Axelrod. Here we find all those major accusations against the "majority" which have subsequently been re-

peated many times in the press. They can most conveniently be examined as formulated by the members of the editorial circle. The accusations are levelled against "the system of autocratic and bureaucratic government of the Party", against "bureaucratic centralism", which, as distinct from "genuinely Social-Democratic centralism", is defined as follows: it "places in the forefront, not internal union, but external, formal unity, achieved and maintained by purely mechanical means, by the systematic suppression of individual initiative an independent social activity"; it is therefore "by its very nature incapable of organically uniting the component elements of society".

What "society" Comrade Axelrod and Co. are here referring to, heaven alone knows. Apparently, Comrade Axelrod was not quite clear himself whether he was penning a Zemstvo address on the subject of desirable government reforms, or pouring forth the complaints of the "minority". What *is the implication* of "autocracy" in the Party, about which the dissatisfied "editors" clamour? Autocracy means the supreme, uncontrolled, non-accountable, non-elective rule of one individual. We know very well from the literature of the "minority" that by autocrat they mean *me*, and no one else. When the resolution in question was being drafted and adopted, I was on the Central Organ together with Plekhanov. Consequently, Comrade Axelrod and Co. were expressing the conviction that Plekhanov and all the members of the Central Committee "governed the Party", not in accordance with their own views of what the interests of the work required, but in accordance with the *will* of the autocrat Lenin. This accusation of autocratic government necessarily and inevitably implies pronouncing all members of the governing body except the autocrat to be mere tools in the hands of another, mere pawns and agents of another's will. And once again we ask, is this really a "difference of principle" on the part of the highly respected Comrade Axelrod?

Further, what external, formal unity are they here talking about, our "Party members" just returned from a Party Congress whose decisions they have solemnly acknowledged valid? Do they know of any other method of achieving unity in a party organised on any at all durable basis, except

a party Congress? If they do, why have they not the courage to declare frankly that they no longer regard the Second Congress as valid? Why do they not try to tell us their new ideas and new methods of achieving unity in a supposedly organised party?

Further, what "suppression of individual initiative" are they talking about, our individualist intellectuals whom the Central Organ of the Party has just been *exhorting* to set forth their differences, but who *instead* have engaged in bargaining about "co-optation"? And, in general, how could Plekhanov and I, or the Central Committee, have suppressed the initiative and independent activity of people who refused to engage in *any* "activity" in conjunction with us? How can anyone be "suppressed" in an institution or body in which he *refuses to have any part*? How could the unelected editors complain of a "system of government" when they refused to "*be governed*"? We *could not* have committed *any* errors in directing our comrades for the simple reason that they never worked under our direction at all.

It is clear, I think, that the cries about this celebrated bureaucracy are just a screen for dissatisfaction with the personal composition of the central bodies, a fig-leaf to cover up the violation of a pledge solemnly given at the Congress. You are a bureaucrat because you were appointed by the Congress not in accordance with my wishes, but against them; you are a formalist because you take your stand on the formal decisions of the Congress, and not on my consent; you are acting in a grossly mechanical way because you cite the "mechanical" majority at the Party Congress and pay no heed to my wish to be co-opted; you are an autocrat because you refuse to hand over the power to the old snug little band who insist on their circle "continuity" all the more because they do not like the explicit disapproval of this circle spirit by the Congress.

These cries about bureaucracy have never had any *real* meaning except the one I have indicated.* And this method of struggle only proves once again the intellectualist instability of the minority. They wanted to convince the Party that

* It is enough to point out that Comrade Plekhanov ceased to be a supporter of "bureaucratic centralism" in the eyes of the minority once he put through the beneficent co-optation.

the selection of the central bodies was unfortunate. And how did they go about it? By criticism of *Iskra* as conducted by Plekhanov and me? No, that they were unable to offer. The method they used consisted in the refusal of a section of the Party to work under the direction of the hated central bodies. But no central institution of any party in the world can ever prove its ability to direct people who refuse to accept its direction. Refusal to accept the direction of the central bodies is tantamount to refusing to remain in the Party, it is tantamount to disrupting the Party; it is a method of *destroying*, not of convincing. And these efforts to destroy instead of convince show their lack of consistent principles, lack of faith in their own ideas.

They talk of bureaucracy. The word bureaucracy might be translated into Russian as concentration on place and position. Bureaucracy means subordinating the interests of the *work* to the interests of one's own *career*; it means focusing attention on *places* and ignoring the work itself; it means wrangling over *co-optation* instead of fighting for *ideas*. That bureaucracy of this kind is undesirable and detrimental to the Party is unquestionably true, and I can safely leave it to the reader to judge which of the two sides now contending in our Party is guilty of such bureaucracy.... They talk about grossly mechanical methods of achieving unity. Unquestionably, grossly mechanical methods are detrimental; but I again leave it to the reader to judge whether a grosser and more mechanical method of struggle of a new trend against an old one can be imagined than installing people in Party institutions before the Party has been convinced of the correctness of their new views, and before these views have even been set forth to the Party.

But perhaps the catchwords of the minority do mean something in principle, perhaps they do express some special group of ideas, irrespective of the petty and particular cause which undoubtedly started the "swing" in the present case? Perhaps if we were to set aside the wrangling over "co-optation", these catchwords might turn out to be an expression of a different system of views?

Let us examine the matter from this angle. Before doing so, we must place on record that the first to attempt such an examination was Comrade Plekhanov at the League,

who pointed out the minority's swing towards *anarchism* and *opportunism*, and that Comrade Martov (who is now highly offended because not everyone is ready to admit that his position is one of principle*) preferred *completely to ignore* this incident in his *State of Siege*.

At the League Congress the general question was raised as to whether Rules that the League or a committee may draw up for itself are valid without the Central Committee's endorsement, and even if the Central Committee refuses to endorse them. Nothing could be clearer, one would think: Rules are a formal expression of organisation, and, according to Paragraph 6 of our Party Rules, the right to organise committees is explicitly vested in the Central Committee; Rules define the limits of a committee's autonomy, and the decisive voice in defining those limits belongs to the central and not to a local institution of the Party. *That is elementary*, and it was sheer childishness to argue with such an air of profundity that "organising" does not always imply "endorsing Rules" (as if the League itself had not of its own accord expressed the wish to be organised on the basis of formal Rules). But Comrade Martov has forgotten (temporarily, let us hope) even the ABC of Social-Democracy. In his opinion, the demand that Rules should be endorsed only indicated that "the earlier, revolutionary *Iskra* centralism is being replaced by bureaucratic centralism" (League Minutes, p. 95), and there, in fact—Comrade Martov declared in the same speech—lay the "principle" at issue

* Nothing could be more comical than the new *Iskra*'s *grievance* that Lenin refuses to see any differences of principle, or denies them. If your attitude had been based more on principle, you would the sooner have examined my repeated statements that you have swung towards opportunism. If your position had been based more on principle, you could not well have degraded an ideological struggle to a squabble over places. You have only yourselves to blame, for you have yourselves done everything to make it impossible to regard you as men of principle. Take Comrade Martov, for example: when speaking, in his *State of Siege*, of the League Congress, he says nothing about the dispute with Plekhanov over anarchism, but instead informs us that Lenin is a super-centre, that Lenin has only to wink his eye to have the centre issue orders, that the Central Committee rode roughshod over the League, etc. I have no doubt that by picking his topic in this way, Comrade Martov displayed the profundity of his ideals and principles.

(p. 96)—a principle which he preferred to ignore in his *State of Siege*!

Comrade Plekhanov answered Martov at once, requesting that expressions like bureaucracy, Jack-in-office, etc., be refrained from as "detracting from the dignity of the Congress" (p. 96). There followed an interchange with Comrade Martov, who regarded these expressions as "a characterisation of a certain trend from the standpoint of principle". *At that time*, Comrade Plekhanov, like all the other supporters of the majority, took these expressions at their real value, clearly realising that they related exclusively to the realm, if we may so put it, of "co-optation", and not of principle. However, he deferred to the insistence of the Martovs and Deutsches (pp. 96-97) and proceeded to examine their supposed principles *from the standpoint of principle*. "If that were so," said he (that is, if the committees were autonomous in shaping their organisation, in drawing up their Rules), "they would be autonomous in relation to the whole, to the Party. That is not even a Bundist view, it is a downright anarchistic view. That is just how the anarchists argue: the rights of individuals are unlimited; they may conflict; every individual determines the limits of his rights for himself. The limits of autonomy should be determined not by the group itself, but by the whole of which it forms a part. The Bund was a striking instance of the violation of this principle. Hence, the limits of autonomy are determined by the Congress, or by the highest body set up by the Congress. The authority of the central institution should rest on moral and intellectual prestige. There I, of course, agree. Every representative of the organisation must be concerned for the moral prestige of its institution. But it does not follow that, while prestige is necessary, authority is not.... To counter-oppose the power of authority to the power of ideas is anarchistic talk, which should have no place here" (p. 98). These propositions are as elementary as can be, they are in fact axioms, which it was strange even to put to the vote (p. 102) and which were called in question only because "concepts have now been confused" (loc. cit). But the minority's intellectualist individualism had, inevitably, driven them to the point of wanting to sabotage the Congress, to refuse to submit to the majority; and that wish could not be justi-

fied except by *anarchistic talk*. It is very amusing to note that the minority had nothing to offer in reply to Plekhanov but *complaints* of his use of excessively strong words, like opportunism, anarchism, and so forth. Plekhanov quite rightly poked fun at these complaints by asking why "the words Jaurèsism and anarchism are not permissible, and the words *lèse-majesté* and Jack-in-office are". No answer was given. This quaint sort of *quid pro quo* is always happening to Comrades Martov, Axelrod, and Co.: their new catchwords clearly bear the stamp of vexation; any reference to the fact offends them—they are, you see, men of principle; but, they are told, if you deny *on principle* that the part should submit to the whole, you are anarchists, and again they are offended!—the expression is too strong! In other words, they want to give battle to Plekhanov, but only on condition that he does not hit back in earnest!

How many times Comrade Martov and various other "Mensheviks"* have convicted me, no less childishly, of the following "contradiction". They quote a passage from *What Is To Be Done?* or *A Letter to a Comrade* which speaks of ideological influence, a struggle for influence, etc., and contrast it to the "bureaucratic" method of influencing by means of the Rules, to the "autocratic" tendency to rely on authority, and the like. How naïve they are! They have already forgotten that *previously* our Party was not a formally organised whole, but merely a sum of separate groups, and therefore no other relations except those of ideological influence were possible between these groups. *Now* we have become an organised Party, and this implies the establishment of authority, the transformation of the power of ideas into the power of authority, the subordination of lower Party bodies to higher ones. Why, it positively makes one uncomfortable to have to chew over such elementary things for the benefit of old associates, especially when one feels that at the bottom of it all is simply the minority's refusal to submit to the majority in the matter of the elections! But *from the standpoint of principle* these endless exposures of my contradictions boil down to *nothing but* anarchistic phrase-mongering. The

* From the Russian *menshinstvo*—"minority", as "Bolshevik" comes from *bolshinstvo*—"majority".—*Trans.*

new *Iskra* is not averse to enjoying the title and rights of a Party institution, but it does not want to submit to the majority of the Party.

If the talk about bureaucracy contains any principle at all, if it is not just an anarchistic denial of the duty of the part to submit to the whole, then what we have here is the *principle of opportunism*, which seeks to lessen the responsibility of individual intellectuals to the party of the proletariat, to lessen the influence of the central institutions, to enlarge the autonomy of the least steadfast elements in the Party, to reduce organisational relations to a purely platonic and verbal acceptance of them. We saw this at the Party Congress, where the Akimovs and Liebers made exactly the same sort of speeches about "monstrous" centralism as poured from the lips of Martov and Co. at the League Congress. That opportunism leads to the Martov and Axelrod "views" on organisation by its very nature, and not by chance, and not in Russia alone but the world over, we shall see later, when examining Comrade Axelrod's article in the new *Iskra*.

P. LITTLE ANNOYANCES SHOULD NOT STAND IN THE WAY OF A BIG PLEASURE

The League's rejection of the resolution declaring that its Rules must be endorsed by the Central Committee (League Minutes, p. 105) was, as the Party Congress majority at once unanimously noted, a "*crying violation of the Party Rules*". Regarded as the act of men of principle, this violation was sheer anarchism; while in the atmosphere of the post-Congress struggle, it inevitably created the impression that the Party minority were trying to "settle scores" with the Party majority (League Minutes, p. 112); it meant that they did not wish to obey the Party or to remain within the Party. And when the League refused to adopt a resolution on the Central Committee statement calling for changes in its Rules (pp. 124-25), it inevitably followed that this assembly, which wanted to *be counted* an assembly of a Party organisation but at the same time not to obey the Party's central institution, had to be pronounced *unlawful*. Accordingly, the followers of the Party majority at once

withdrew from this quasi-Party assembly, so as not to have any share in an indecent farce.

The individualism of the intellectual, with its platonic acceptance of organisational relations, which was revealed in the lack of steadfastness over Paragraph 1 of the Rules, thus in practice reached the logical end I had predicted even in September, that is, a month and a half before, namely, the point of *disrupting* the Party organisation. And at that moment, on the evening of the day the League Congress ended, Comrade Plekhanov announced to his colleagues on both the Party's central institutions that he could not bear to "fire on his comrades", that "rather than have a split, it is better to put a bullet in one's brain", and that, to avert a greater evil, it was necessary to make the maximum personal concessions, over which, in point of fact (much more than over the principles to be discerned-in the incorrect position on Paragraph 1), this destructive struggle was being waged. In order to give a more accurate characterisation of Comrade Plekhanov's right-about-face, which has acquired a certain general Party significance, I consider it advisable to rely not on private conversations, nor on private letters (that last resort in extremity), but on Plekhanov's own statement of the case to the whole Party, namely, his article "What Should Not Be Done" in No. 52 of *Iskra*, which was written just after the League Congress, after I had resigned from the editorial board of the Central Organ (November 1, 1903), and before the co-optation of the Martovites (November 26, 1903).

The fundamental idea of "What Should Not Be Done" is that in politics one must not be too stiff-necked, too harsh and unyielding; that it is sometimes necessary, to avoid a split, to yield even to revisionists (among those moving towards us or among the inconsistents) and to anarchistic individualists. It was only natural that these abstract generalities should arouse universal perplexity among *Iskra* readers. One cannot help laughing when reading the proud and majestic statements of Comrade Plekhanov (in subsequent articles) that he had not been understood because of the novelty of his ideas and because people lacked a knowledge of dialectics. In reality, "What Should Not Be Done" could only be understood, at the time it was written, by some

dozen people living in two Geneva suburbs whose names both begin with the same letter.[110] Comrade Plekhanov's misfortune was that he put into circulation among some ten thousand readers an agglomeration of hints, reproaches, algebraical symbols, and riddles which were intended only for these dozen or so people who had taken part in all the developments of the post-Congress struggle with the minority. This misfortune befell Comrade Plekhanov because he violated a basic principle of that dialectics to which he so unluckily referred, namely, that there is no abstract truth, that truth is always concrete. That is why it was out of place to lend an abstract form to the perfectly concrete idea of yielding to the Martovites after the League Congress.

Yielding—which Comrade Plekhanov advocated as a new war-cry—is legitimate and essential in two cases: when the yielder is convinced that those who are striving to make him yield are in the right (in which case honest political leaders frankly and openly admit their mistake), or when an irrational and harmful demand is yielded to in order to avert a greater evil. It is perfectly clear from the article in question that it is the latter case the author has in mind: he speaks plainly of yielding to revisionists and anarchistic individualists (that is, to the Martovites, as every Party member now knows from the League Minutes), and says that it is essential in order to avert a split. As we see, Comrade Plekhanov's supposedly novel idea amounts to no more than the not very novel piece of commonplace wisdom that little annoyances should not be allowed to stand in the way of a big pleasure, that a little opportunist folly and a little anarchistic talk is better than a big Party split. When Comrade Plekhanov wrote this article he clearly realised that the minority represented the opportunist wing of our Party and that they were fighting with anarchistic weapons. Comrade Plekhanov came forward with the plan to combat this minority by means of personal concessions, just as (again *si licet parva componere magnis*) the German Social-Democrats combated Bernstein. Bebel publicly declared at congresses of his Party that he did not know anyone who was so susceptible to the influence of environment as Comrade Bernstein (not Mr. Bernstein, as Comrade Plekhanov was once so fond of calling him, but Comrade Bernstein): let us

take him into our environment, let us make him a member of the Reichstag, let us combat revisionism, not by inappropriate harshness (*à la* Sobakevich-Parvus) towards the revisionist, but by "killing him with kindness"—as Comrade M. Beer, I recall, put it at a meeting of English Social-Democrats when defending German conciliatoriness, peaceableness, mildness, flexibility, and caution against the attack of the English Sobakevich—Hyndman. And in just the same way, Comrade Plekhanov wanted to "kill with kindness" the little anarchism and the little opportunism of Comrades Axelrod and Martov. True, while hinting quite plainly at the "anarchistic individualists", Comrade Plekhanov expressed himself in a deliberately vague way about the revisionists; he did so in a manner to create the impression that he was referring to the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists, who were swinging from opportunism towards orthodoxy, and not to Axelrod and Martov, who had begun to swing *from orthodoxy towards revisionism*. But this was only an innocent military ruse,* a feeble bulwark that was incapable of withstanding the artillery fire of Party publicity.

And anyone who acquaints himself with the actual state of affairs at the political juncture we are describing, anyone who gains an insight into Comrade Plekhanov's mentality, will realise that I could not have acted in this instance otherwise than I did. I say this for the benefit of those supporters of the majority who have reproached me for surrendering

* There was never any question after the Party Congress of making concessions to Comrades Martynov, Akimov, and Brouckère. I am not aware that they too demanded "co-optation". I even doubt whether Comrade Starover or Comrade Martov consulted Comrade Brouckère when they sent us their epistles and "notes" in the name of "half the Party".... At the League Congress Comrade Martov rejected, with the profound indignation of an unbending political stalwart, the very idea of a "union with Ryazanov or Martynov", of the possibility of a "deal" with them, or even of joint "service to the Party" (as an editor; League Minutes, D. 53). At the League Congress Comrade Martov sternly condemned "Martynov tendencies" (p. 88), and when Comrade Orthodox[111] subtly hinted that Axelrod and Martov no doubt "consider that Comrades Akimov, Martynov, and others also have the right to get together, draw up Rules for themselves, and act in accordance with them as they see fit" (p. 99), the Martovites denied it, as Peter denied Christ (p. 100: "Comrade Orthodox's fears" "regarding the Akimovs, Martynovs, etc.", "have no foundation").

the editorial board. When Comrade Plekhanov swung round after the League Congress and from being a supporter of the majority became a supporter of reconciliation at all costs, I was obliged to put the very best interpretation on it. Perhaps Comrade Plekhanov wanted in his article to put forward a programme for an amicable and honest peace? Any such programme boils down to a sincere admission of mistakes by both sides. What was the mistake Comrade Plekhanov laid at the door of the majority? An inappropriate, Sobakevich-like, harshness towards the revisionists. We do not know what Comrade Plekhanov had in mind by that: his witticism about the asses, or his extremely incautious—in Axelrod's presence—reference to anarchism and opportunism. Comrade Plekhanov preferred to express himself "abstractly", and, moreover, with a hint at the other fellow. That is a matter of taste, of course. But, after all, I had admitted my personal harshness openly both in the letter to the *Iskra*-ist and at the League Congress. How then could I refuse to admit that the majority were guilty of such a "mistake"? As to the minority, Comrade Plekhanov pointed to their mistake quite clearly, namely, revisionism (cf. his remarks about opportunism at the Party Congress and about Jaurèsism at the League Congress) and anarchism which had led to the verge of a split. Could I obstruct an attempt to secure an acknowledgement of these mistakes and undo their harm by means of personal concessions and "kindness" in general? Could I obstruct such an attempt when Comrade Plekhanov in "What Should Not Be Done" directly appealed to us to "*spare the adversaries*" among the revisionists who were revisionists "only because of a certain inconsistency"? And if I did not believe in this attempt, could I do otherwise than make a personal concession regarding the Central Organ and move over to the Central Committee in order to defend the position of the majority?* I could not absolutely deny

* Comrade Martov put it very aptly when he said that I had moved over *avec armes et bagages*. Comrade Martov is very fond of military metaphors: campaign against the League, engagement, incurable wounds, etc., etc. To tell the truth, I too have a great weakness for military metaphors, especially just now, when one follows the news from the Pacific with such eager interest. But, Comrade Martov, if we are to use military language, the story goes like this. We capture two forts at the Party Congress. You attack them at the League Congress.

the feasibility of such attempts and take upon myself the full onus for the threatening split, if only because I had myself been inclined, in the letter of October 6, to attribute the wrangle to "personal irritation". But I did consider, and still consider, it my political duty to defend the position of the majority. To rely in this on Comrade Plekhanov would have been difficult and risky, for everything went to show that he was prepared to interpret his dictum that "a leader of the proletariat has no right to give rein to his warlike inclinations when they run counter to political good sense" —to interpret it in a dialectical way to mean that if you had to fire, then it was better sense (considering the state of the weather in Geneva in November) to fire at the majority.... To defend the majority's position was essential, because, when dealing with the question of the free (?) will of a revolutionary, Comrade Plekhanov—in defiance of dialectics, which demands a concrete and comprehensive examination—modestly evaded the question of *confidence in a revolutionary*, of confidence in a "leader of the proletariat" who was leading a definite wing of the Party. When speaking of anarchistic individualism and advising us to close our eyes "at times" to violations of discipline and to yield "sometimes" to intellectualist license, which "is rooted in a sentiment that has nothing to do with devotion to the revolutionary idea", Comrade Plekhanov apparently forgot that we must also reckon with the free will of the majority of the Party, and that it must be left *to the practical workers* to determine the *extent* of the concessions to be made to the anarchistic individualists. Easy as it is to fight childish anarchistic nonsense on the literary plane, it is very difficult to carry on practical work in the same organisation with an anarchistic individualist. A writer who took it upon himself to determine the extent of the concessions that might be made to anarchism

---

After the first brief interchange of shots, my colleague, the commandant of one of the forts, opens the gates to the enemy. Naturally, I gather together the little artillery I have and move into the other fort, which is practically unfortified, in order to "stand siege" against the enemy's overwhelming numbers. I even make an offer of peace, for what chance do I stand against two powers? But in reply to my offer, the new allies bombard my last fort. I return the fire. Whereupon my former colleague—the commandant—exclaims in magnificent indignation: "Just look, good people, how bellicose this Chamberlain is!"

in practice would only be betraying his inordinate and truly doctrinaire literary conceit. Comrade Plekhanov majestically remarked (for the sake of importance, as Bazarov[112] used to say) that if a new split were to occur the workers would cease to understand us; yet at the same time he initiated an endless stream of articles in the new *Iskra* whose real and concrete meaning was bound to be incomprehensible not only to the workers, but to the world at large. It is not surprising that when a member of the Central Committee read the proofs of "What Should Not Be Done" he warned Comrade Plekhanov that his plan to somewhat curtail the size of a certain publication (the minutes of the Party Congress and the League Congress) would be defeated by this very article, which would excite curiosity, offer for the judgement of the man in the street something that was piquant and at the same time quite incomprehensible to him,* and inevitably cause people to ask in perplexity: "What has happened?" It is not surprising that owing to the abstractness of its arguments and the vagueness of its hints, this article of Comrade Plekhanov's caused jubilation in the ranks of the enemies of Social-Democracy—the dancing of the *cancan* in the columns of *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* and ecstatic praises from the consistent revisionists in *Osvobozhdeniye*. The source of all these comical and sad misunderstandings, from which Comrade Plekhanov later tried so comically and so sadly to extricate himself, lay precisely in the violation of that basic principle of dialectics: concrete questions should be examined in all their concreteness. The delight of Mr. Struve, in particular, was quite natural: he was not in the least interested in the "good" aims (killing with kindness)

---

* We are having a heated and passionate argument in private. Suddenly one of us jumps up, flings open the window, and begins to clamour against Sobakeviches, anarchistic individualists, revisionists, etc. Naturally, a crowd of curious idlers gathers in the street and our enemies rub their hands in glee. Other of the disputants go to the window too and want to give a coherent account of the whole matter, without hinting at things nobody knows anything about. Thereupon the window is banged to on the plea that it is not worth while discussing *squabbles* (*Iskra*, No. 53, p. 8, col. 2, line 24 up). It was not worth while *beginning in* "*Iskra*" on a discussion of "squabbles", Comrade Plekhanov[113]—that would be nearer the truth!

which Comrade Plekhanov pursued (but might not achieve); Mr. Struve welcomed, and could not but welcome, that *swing towards the opportunist wing of our Party* which had begun in the new *Iskra*, as everybody can now plainly see. The Russian bourgeois democrats are not the only ones to welcome every swing-towards opportunism, even the slightest and most temporary, in any Social-Democratic party. The estimate of a shrewd enemy is very rarely based on sheer misunderstanding: you can tell a man's mistakes by the people who praise him. And it is in vain that Comrade Plekhanov hopes the reader will be inattentive and tries to make out that the majority unconditionally objected to a personal concession in the matter of co-optation, and not to a desertion from the Left wing of the Party to the Right. The point is not that Comrade Plekhanov made a personal concession in order to avert a split (that was very praiseworthy), but that, though fully realising the need to *join issue* with the inconsistent revisionists and anarchistic individualists, he chose instead to join issue with the majority, with whom he parted company *over the extent* of the possible practical concessions to anarchism. The point is not that Comrade Plekhanov changed the personal composition of the editorial board, but that he betrayed his position of opposing revisionism and anarchism and ceased to defend that position in the Central Organ of the Party.

As to the Central Committee, which *at this time* was the sole organised representative of the majority, Comrade Plekhanov parted company with it then *exclusively over the possible extent of practical concessions to anarchism*. Nearly a month had elapsed since November 1, when my resignation had given a free hand to the policy of killing with kindness. Comrade Plekhanov had had every opportunity, through all sorts of contacts, to test the expedience of this policy. Comrade Plekhanov had in this period published his article "What Should Not Be Done", which was—*and remains*—the Martovites' sole ticket of admittance, so to speak, to the editorial board. The watchwords—revisionism (which we should contend with, but sparing the adversary) and anarchistic individualism (which should be courted and killed with kindness)—were printed on this ticket in imposing italics. Do come in, gentlemen, please, I will kill you

with kindness—is what Comrade Plekhanov said by this invitation card to his new colleagues on the editorial board. Naturally, all that remained to the Central Committee was to say its last word (that is what ultimatum means—a last word as to a possible peace) about what, in its opinion, was the permissible extent of practical concessions to anarchistic individualism. Either you want peace—in which case here are a certain number of seats to prove our kindness, peaceableness, readiness to make concessions, etc. (we cannot allow you any more if peace is to be guaranteed in the Party, peace not in the sense of an absence of controversy, but in the sense that the Party will not be destroyed by anarchistic individualism); take these seats and swing back again little by little from Akimov to Plekhanov. Or else you want to maintain and develop your point of view, to swing over altogether to Akimov (if only in the realm of organisational questions), and to convince the Party that you, not Plekhanov, are right—in which case form a writers' group of your own, secure representation at the next Congress, and set about winning a majority by an honest struggle, by open controversy. This alternative, which was quite explicitly submitted to the Martovites in the Central Committee ultimatum of November 25, 1903 (see *State of Siege* and *Commentary on the League Minutes**), was in full harmony with

---

* I shall not, of course, go into the tangle Martov created over this Central Committee ultimatum in his State of Siege by quoting private conversations and so on. This is the "second method of struggle" I described in the previous section, which only a specialist in nervous disorders could hope to disentangle. It is enough to say that Comrade Martov insists that there was an agreement with the Central Committee not to publish the negotiations, which agreement has not been discovered to this day in spite of a most assiduous search. Comrade Travinsky who conducted the negotiations on behalf of the Central Committee, informed me in writing that he considered me entitled to publish my letter to the editors outside of *Iskra*.

But there was one phrase of Comrade Martov's that I particularly liked. That was the phrase "Bonapartism of the worst type." I find that Comrade Martov has brought in this category very appropriately. Let us examine dispassionately what the concept implies., In 'my opinion, it implies acquiring power by *formally* legal means, but *actually* in defiance of the will of the people (or of a party).' Is that not so, Comrade Martov? And if it is then I may safely leave it to the public to judge who has been guilty of this "Bonapartism of the

the letter Plekhanov and I had sent to the former editors on October 6, 1903: either it is a matter of personal irritation (in which case, *if the worst comes to the worst*, we might even "co-opt"), or it is a matter of a difference of principle (in which case you must *first* convince the Party, and only then talk about changing the personal composition of the central bodies). The Central Committee could the more readily leave it to the Martovites to make this delicate choice for themselves since *at this very time* Comrade Martov in his *profession de foi* (*Once More in the Minority*) wrote the following:

"*The minority lay claim to only one honour*, namely, to be the first in the history of our Party to show that one can be 'defeated' *and yet not form a new party*. This position of the minority follows from all their views on the organisational development of the Party; it follows from the consciousness of their strong ties with the Party's earlier work. The minority do not believe in the mystic power of 'paper revolutions', and see in the *deep roots* which their endeavours have *in life* a guarantee that *by purely ideological propaganda within the Party they will secure the triumph of their principles of organisation.*" (My italics.)

What proud and magnificent words! And how bitter it was to be taught by events that' they were—*merely words*.... I hope you will forgive me, Comrade Martov, but now *I claim on behalf of the majority* this "honour" which *you have not deserved*. The honour will indeed be a great one, one worth fighting for, for the circles have left us the tradition of an extraordinarily light-hearted attitude towards splits and an extraordinarily zealous application of the maxim: "either coats off, or let's have your hand!"

The big pleasure (of having a united Party) was bound to outweigh, and did outweigh, the little annoyances (in

worst type" Lenin and Comrade Y,[114] who might have availed themselves of their *formal* right not to admit the Martovites, but *did not avail themselves* of it, though in doing so they would have been backed by the will of the Second Congress—or those who occupied the editorial board by *formally legitimate means* ("unanimous co-optation"), but who knew that *actually this was not in accordance with the will of the Second Congress* and who are afraid to have this will tested at the Third Congress.

the shape of the squabbling over co-optation). I resigned from the Central Organ, and Comrade Y (who had been delegated by Plekhanov and myself to the Party Council on behalf of the editorial board of the Central Organ) resigned from the Council. The Martovites replied to the Central Committee's last word as to peace with a letter (see publications mentioned) which was tantamount to a declaration of war. Then, and only then, did I write my letter to the editorial board (*Iskra*, No. 53) on the subject of publicity.* If it comes to talking about revisionism and discussing inconsistency, anarchistic individualism, and the defeat of various leaders, then, gentlemen, let us tell all that occurred, without reservation—that was the gist of this letter about publicity. The editorial board replied with angry abuse and the lordly admonition: do not dare to stir up "*the pettiness and squabbling of circle life*" (*Iskra*, No. 53). Is that so, I thought to myself: "the pettiness and squabbling of circle life"?... Well, *es ist mir recht*, gentlemen, there I agree with you. Why, that means that you directly class all this fuss over "co-optation" as *circle squabbling*. That is true. But what discord is this?—in the editorial of this same issue, No. 53, this same editorial board (we must suppose) talks about bureaucracy, formalism, and the rest.** Do not dare to raise the question of the fight for co-optation to the Central Organ, for that would be squabbling. But we will raise the question of co-optation to the Central Committee, and will not call it squabbling, but a difference of principle on the subject of "formalism". No, dear comrades, I said to myself, permit me not to permit you that. You want to fire at my fort, and yet demand that I surrender my artillery. What jokers you are! And so I wrote and published outside of *Iskra* my *Letter to the Editors* (*Why I Resigned from the "Iskra" Editorial Board*),*** briefly relating what had really occurred, and asking yet again whether

* See pp. 114-17 of this volume.—*Ed.*

** As it subsequently turned out, the "discord" was explained very simply—it was a discord among the editors of the Central Organ. It was Plekhanov who wrote about "squabbling" (see his admission in "A Sad Misunderstanding", No. 57), while the editorial, "Our Congress", was written by Martov (*State of Siege*, p. 84). They were tugging in different directions.

*** See pp. 118-24 of this volume.—*Ed.*

peace was not possible on the basis of the following division: you take the Central Organ, we take the Central Committee. Neither side will then feel "alien" in the Party, and we will argue about the swing towards opportunism, first in the press, and then, perhaps, at the Third Party Congress.

In reply to this mention of peace the enemy opened fire with all his-batteries, including even the Council. ShelIs rained on my head. Autocrat, Schweitzer,[115] bureaucrat, formalist, supercentre, one-sided, stiff-necked, obstinate, narrow-minded, suspicious, quarrelsome.... Very well, my friends! Have you finished? You have nothing more in reserve? Poor ammunition, I must say....

Now comes my turn. Let us examine the *content* of the new *Iskra*'s new views on organisation and the relation of these views to that division of our Party into "majority" and "minority" the true character of which we have shown by our analysis of the debates and voting at the Second Congress.

Q. THE NEW *ISKRA*. OPPORTUNISM IN QUESTIONS OF ORGANISATION

As the basis for an analysis of the principles of the new *Iskra* we should unquestionably take the two articles of Comrade Axelrod.* The concrete meaning of some of his favourite catchwords has already been shown at length. Now we must try to leave their concrete meaning on one side and delve down to the line of thought that caused the "minority" to arrive (in connection with this or that minor and petty matter) at these particular slogans rather than any others, must examine the principles behind these slogans, irrespective of their origin, irrespective of the question of "co-optation". Concessions are all the fashion nowadays, so let us make a concession to Comrade Axelrod and take his "theory" "seriously".

Comrade Axelrod's basic thesis (*Iskra*, No. 57) is that "from the very outset our movement harboured two opposite trends, whose mutual antagonism could not fail to develop

* These articles were included in the collection "*Iskra*" *over Two Years*, Part II, p. 122 et seq. (St. Petersburg, 1906). (Author's note to 1907 edition.—*Ed.*)

and to affect the movement parallel with its own development". To be specific: "In principle, the proletarian aim of the movement [in Russia] is the same as that of western Social-Democracy." But in our country the masses of the workers are influenced "by a social element alien to them", namely, the radical intelligentsia. And so, Comrade Axelrod establishes the existence of an antagonism between the proletarian and the radical-intellectual trend in our Party.

In this Comrade Axelrod is undoubtedly right. The existence of such an antagonism (and not in the Russian Social-Democratic Party alone) is beyond question. What is more, everyone knows that it is this antagonism that largely accounts for the division of present-day Social-Democracy into revolutionary (also known as orthodox) and opportunist (revisionist, ministerialist, reformist) Social-Democracy, which during the past ten years of our movement has become fully apparent in Russia too. Everyone also knows that the proletarian trend of the movement is expressed by orthodox Social-Democracy, while the trend of the democratic intelligentsia is expressed by opportunist Social-Democracy.

But, after so closely approaching this piece of common knowledge, Comrade Axelrod begins timidly to back away from it. He does not make *the slightest attempt* to analyse how this division manifested itself in the history of Russian Social-Democracy in general, and at our Party Congress in particular, although it is about the Congress that he is writing! Like all the other editors of the new *Iskra*, Comrade Axelrod displays a *mortal fear* of the minutes of this Congress. This should not surprise us after all that has been said above, but in a "theoretician" who claims to be investigating the different trends in our movement it is certainly a queer case of *truth-phobia*. Backing away, because of this malady, from the latest and most accurate material on the trends in our movement, Comrade Axelrod seeks salvation in the sphere of pleasant daydreaming. He writes: "Has not legal Marxism, or semi-Marxism, provided our liberals with a literary leader? Why should not prankish history provide revolutionary bourgeois democracy with a leader from the school of orthodox, revolutionary Marxism?" All we can say about this daydream which Comrade Axelrod

finds so pleasant is that if history does sometimes play pranks, that is no excuse for *pranks of thought* on the part of people who undertake to analyse history. When the liberal peeped out from under the cloak of the leader of semi-Marxism, those who wished (*and were able*) to trace his "trend" did not allude to possible pranks of history, but pointed to tens and hundreds of instances of that leader's mentality and logic, to alI those characteristics of his literary make-up which betrayed the reflection of Marxism in bourgeois literature.[116] And if Comrade Axelrod, setting out to analyse "the general-revolutionary and the proletarian trend in our movement", could produce *nothing*, *absolutely nothing*, in proof or evidence that certain representatives of that orthodox wing of the Party which he so detests showed such and such a trend, he thereby issued *a formal certificate of his own poverty*. Comrade Axelrod's case must be weak indeed if all he can do is allude to possible pranks of history!

Comrade Axelrod's other allusion—to the "Jacobins"—is still more revealing. Comrade Axelrod is probably aware that the division of present-day Social-Democracy into revolutionary and opportunist has long since given rise—and not only in Russia—to "historical parallels with the era of the great French Revolution". Comrade Axelrod is probably aware that the *Girondists of present-day Social-Democracy* everywhere and always resort to the terms "Jacobinism", "Blanquism", and so on to describe their opponents. Let us then not imitate Comrade Axelrod's truth-phobia, let us consult the minutes of our Congress and see whether they offer any material for an analysis and examination of the trends we are considering and the parallels we are discussing.

First example: the Party Congress debate on the programme. Comrade Akimov ("fully agreeing" with Comrade Martynov) says: "The clause on the capture of political power [the dictatorship of the proletariat] has been formulated in such a way—as compared with the programmes of all other Social-Democratic parties—that it may be interpreted, and actually has been interpreted by Plekhanov, to mean that the role of the leading organisation will relegate to-the background the class it is leading and separate the former from the latter. Consequently, the formulation of our polit-

ical tasks is exactly the same as in the case of Narodnaya Volya." (Minutes, p. 124.) Comrade Plekhanov and other *Iskra*-ists take issue with Comrade Akimov and accuse him of opportunism. Does not Comrade Axelrod find that this dispute shows us (in actual fact, and not-in the imaginary pranks of history) the antagonism between the *present-day Jacobins* and the present-day *Girondists* of Social-Democracy? And was it not because he found himself in the company of the *Girondists* of Social-Democracy (owing to the mistakes he committed) that Comrade Axelrod began talking about Jacobins?

Second example: Comrade Posadovsky declares that there is a "serious difference of opinion" over the "fundamental question" of "the absolute value of democratic principles" (p. 169). Together with Plekhanov, he denies their absolute value. The leaders of the "Centre" or Marsh (Egorov) and of the anti-*Iskra*-ists (Goldblatt) vehemently oppose this view and accuse Plekhanov of "imitating bourgeois tactics" (p. 170). *This is exactly Comrade Axelrod's idea of a connection between orthodoxy and the bourgeois trend*, the only difference being that in Axelrod's case it is vague and general, whereas Goldblatt linked it up with specific issues. Again we ask: does not Comrade Axelrod find that this dispute, too, shows us *palpably*, at our Party Congress, the antagonism between the Jacobins and the Girondists of present-day Social-Democracy? Is it not because he finds himself in the company of the Girondists that Comrade Axelrod raises this outcry against the Jacobins?

Third example: the debate on Paragraph 1 of the Rules. Who is it that defends "*the proletarian trend in our movement*"? Who is it that insists that the worker is not afraid of organisation, that the proletarian has no sympathy for anarchy, that he values the incentive to organise? Who is it that warns us against the bourgeois intelligentsia, permeated through and through with opportunism? *The Jacobins of Social-Democracy*. And who is it that tries to smuggle radical intellectuals in the Party? Who is it that is concerned about professors, high-school students, free lances, the radical youth? *The Girondist Axelrod together with the Girondist Lieber*.

How clumsily Comrade Axelrod defends himself against the "false accusation of opportunism" that at our Party Congress was openly levelled at the majority of the Emancipation of Labour group! By taking up the hackneyed Bernsteinian refrain about Jacobinism, Blanquism, and so on, he defends himself in a manner that only bears out the accusation! He shouts about the menace of the radical intellectuals in order to drown out his own speeches at the Party Congress, which were full of concern for these intellectuals.

These "dreadful words"—Jacobinism and the rest—are expressive of *opportunism* and nothing else. A Jacobin who wholly identities himself with the *organisation* of the proletariat—a proletariat *conscious* of its class interests—is a *revolutionary Social-Democrat*. A Girondist who sighs after professors and high-school students, who is afraid of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and who yearns for the absolute value of democratic demands is an *opportunist*. It is only opportunists who can still detect a danger in conspiratorial organisations today, when the idea of confining the political struggle to conspiracy has been refuted thousands of times in the press and has long been refuted and swept aside by the realities of life, and when the cardinal importance of mass political agitation has been elucidated and reiterated to the point of nausea. The real basis of this fear of conspiracy, of Blanquism, is not any feature to be found in the practical movement (as Bernstein and Co. have long, and vainly, been trying to make out), but the Girondist timidity of the bourgeois intellectual, whose mentality so often shows itself among the Social-Democrats of today. Nothing could be more comical than these laborious efforts of the new *Iskra* to utter a *new word* of warning (uttered hundreds of times before) against the tactics of the French conspirator revolutionaries of the forties and sixties (No. 62, editorial).[117] In the next issue of *Iskra*, the Girondists of present-day Social-Democracy will no doubt show us a group of French conspirators of the forties for whom the importance of political agitation among the working masses, the importance of the labour press as the principal means by which the party influences the class, was an elementary truth they had learned and assimilated long ago.

However, the tendency of the new *Iskra* to repeat the elements and go back to the ABC while pretending to be uttering something new is not fortuitous; it is an inevitable consequence of the situation Axelrod and Martov find themselves in, now that they have landed in the opportunist wing of our Party. There is nothing for it. They have to repeat the opportunist phrases, they have to *go back*, in order to try to find in the *remote past* some sort of justification for their position, which is indefensible from the point of view of the struggle at the Congress and of the shades and divisions in the Party that took shape there. To the Akimovite profundities about Jacobinism and Blanquism, Comrade Axelrod adds Akimovite lamentations to the effect that not only the "Economists", but the "politicians" as well, were "one-sided", excessively "infatuated", and so on and so forth. Reading the high-flown disquisitions on this subject in the new *Iskra*, which conceitedly claims to be above all this one-sidedness and infatuation, one asks in perplexity: whose portrait is it they are painting? where is it that they hear such talk?[118] Who does not know that the division of the Russian Social-Democrats into Economists and politicians has long been obsolete? Go through the files of *Iskra* for the last year or two before the Party Congress, and you will find that the fight against "Economism" subsided and came to an end altogether as far back as 1902; you will find, for example, that in July 1903 (No. 43), "the times of Economism" are spoken of as being "definitely over", Economism is considered "dead and buried", and any infatuations of the politicians are regarded as obvious atavism. Why, then, do the new editors, of *Iskra* revert to this dead and buried division? Did we fight the Akimovs at the Congress on account of the mistakes they made in *Rabocheye Dyelo* two years ago? If we had, we should have been sheer idiots. But everyone knows that we did not, that it was not for their old, dead and buried mistakes in *Rabocheye Dyelo* that we fought the Akimovs at the Congress, but for the *new mistakes* they committed in their arguments and their voting at the Congress. It was not by their stand in *Rabocheye Dyelo*, but by their stand at the Congress, that we judged which mistakes were really a thing of the past and which still lived and called for controversy. By the time of the Congress the

old division into Economists and politicians no longer existed; but various opportunist trends continued to exist. They found expression in the debates and voting on a number of issues, and finally led to a new division of the Party into "majority?" and "minority". The whole point is that the new editors of *Iskra* are, for obvious reasons, trying to gloss over the connection between this new division and *contemporary* opportunism in our Party, and are, in consequence, compelled to go back from the new division to the old one. Their inability to explain the political origin of the new division (or their desire, in order to prove how accommodating they are, to cast a veil* over its origin) compels them to keep harping on a division that has long been obsolete. Everyone knows that the new division is based on a difference over questions of *organisation*, which began with the controversy over principles of organisation (Paragraph 1 of the Rules) and ended up with a "practice" worthy of anarchists. The old division into Economists and politicians was based mainly on a difference over questions of *tactics*.

In its efforts to justify this retreat from the more complex, truly topical and burning issues of Party life to issues that have long been settled and have now been dug up artificially, the new *Iskra* resorts to an amusing display of profundity for which there can be no other name than tail-ism. Started by Comrade Axelrod, there runs like a a crimson thread through all the writing of the new *Iskra* the profound "idea" that content is more important than

---

* See Plekhanov's article on "Economism" in No. 53 of *Iskra*. The subtitle of the article appears to contain a slight misprint. Instead of "Reflections on the Second Party Congress", it should apparently read, "on the *League* Congress", or even "on *Co-optation*". However appropriate concessions to personal claims may be under certain circumstances, it is quite inadmissible (from the Party, not the philistine standpoint) to confuse the issues that are agitating the Party and to substitute for the new mistake of Martov and Axelrod, who have begun to swing from orthodoxy towards opportunism, the old mistake (never recalled today by anyone except the new *Iskra*) of the Martynovs and Akimovs, who perhaps may now be prepared to swing from opportunism towards orthodoxy on many questions of programme and tactics.

form, that programme and tactics are more important than organisation, that "the vitality of an organisation is in direct proportion to the volume and value of the content it puts into the movement", that centralism is not an "end in itself", not an "all-saving talisman", etc., etc. Great and profound truths! The programme is indeed more important than tactics, and tactics more important than organisation. The alphabet is more important than etymology, and etymology more important than syntax—but what would we say of people who, after failing in an examination in syntax, went about pluming and priding themselves on being left in a lower class for another year? Comrade Axelrod argued about principles of organisation like an opportunist (Paragraph 1), and behaved inside the organisation like an anarchist (League Congress)—and now he is trying to render Social-Democracy more profound. Sour grapes! What is organisation, properly speaking? Why, it is only a form. What is centralism? After all, it is not a talisman. What is syntax? Why, it is less important than etymology; it is only the form of combining the elements of etymology.... "Will not Comrade Alexandrov agree with us," the new editors of *Iskra* triumphantly ask, "when we say that the Congress did much more for the centralisation of Party work by drawing up a Party programme than by adopting Rules, however perfect the latter may seem?" (No. 56, Supplement.) It is to be hoped that this classical utterance will acquire a historic fame no less wide and no less lasting than Comrade Krichevsky's celebrated remark that Social-Democracy, like mankind, always sets itself only such tasks as it can perform. For the new *Iskra*'s piece of profundity is of exactly the same stamp. Why was Comrade Krichevsky's phrase held up to derision? Because he tried to justify the mistake of a section of the Social-Democrats in matters of tactics—their inability to set correct political tasks—by a commonplace which he wanted to palm off as philosophy. In exactly the same way the new *Iskra* tries to justify the mistake of a section of the Social-Democrats in matters of organisation—the intellectualist instability of certain comrades, which has led them to the point of anarchistic phrasemongering—by the commonplace that the programme is more important than the Rules, that questions of programme

are more important than questions of organisation! What is this but tail-ism? What is it but pluming oneself on having been left in a lower class for another year?

The adoption of a programme contributes more to the centralisation of the work than the adoption of Rules. How this commonplace, palmed off as philosophy, reeks of the mentality of the radical intellectual, who has much more in common with bourgeois decadence than with Social-Democracy! Why, the word centralisation is used in this famous phrase in a sense that is nothing but *symbolical*. If the authors of the phrase are unable or disinclined to think, they might at least have recalled the simple fact that the adoption of a programme together with the Bundists, far from leading to the centralisation of our common work, did not even save us from a split. Unity on questions of programme and tactics is an essential but by no means a sufficient condition for Party unity, for the centralisation of Party work (good God, what elementary things one has to spell out nowadays, when all concepts have been confused!). The latter requires, in addition, unity of organisation, which, in a party that has grown to be anything more than a mere family circle, is inconceivable without formal Rules, without the subordination of the minority to the majority and of the part to the whole. As long as we had no unity on the fundamental questions of programme and tactics, we bluntly admitted that we were living in a period of disunity and separate circles, we bluntly declared that before we could unite, lines of demarcation must be drawn; we did not even talk of the forms of a joint organisation, but exclusively discussed the new (at that time they really were new) problems of fighting opportunism on programme and tactics. At present, as we all agree, this fight has already produced a sufficient degree of unity, as formulated in the Party programme and the Party resolutions on tactics; we had to take the next step, and, by common consent, we did take it, working out the *forms* of a united organisation that would merge all the circles together. But now these forms have been half destroyed and we have been dragged back, dragged back to anarchistic conduct, to anarchistic phrases, to the revival of a circle in place of a Party editorial board. And this step back is being justified on the plea that the

alphabet is more helpful to literate speech than a knowledge of syntax!

The philosophy of tail-ism, which flourished three years ago in questions of tactics, is being resurrected today in relation to questions of organisation. Take the following argument of the new editors. "The militant Social-Democratic trend in the Party," says Comrade Alexandrov, "should be maintained not only by an ideological struggle, but by definite forms of organisation." Whereupon the editors edifyingly remark: "Not bad, this juxtaposition of ideological struggle and forms of organisation. The ideological struggle is a process, whereas the forms of organisation are only ... forms [believe it or not, that is what they say—No. 56, Supplement, p. 4, bottom of col. 1!] designed to clothe a fluid and developing content—the developing practical work of the Party." That is positively in the style of the joke about a cannon-ball being a cannon-ball and a bomb a bomb! The ideological struggle is a process, whereas the forms of organisation are only forms clothing the content! The point at issue is whether our ideological struggle is to have forms *of a higher type* to clothe it, the forms of a party organisation, binding on all, or the forms of the old disunity and the old circles. We have been dragged back from higher to more primitive forms, and this is being justified on the plea that the ideological struggle is a process, whereas forms—are only forms. That is just how Comrade Krichevsky in bygone days tried to drag us back from tactics-as-a-plan to tactics-as-a-process.

Take the new *Iskra*'s pompous talk about the "self-training of the proletariat", directed against those who are supposed to be in danger of missing the content because of the form (No. 58, editorial). Is this not Akimovism No. 2? Akimovism No. 1 justified the backwardness of a section of the Social-Democratic intelligentsia in formulating tactical tasks by talking about the more "profound" content of "the proletarian struggle" and the self-training of the proletariat. Akimovism No. 2 justifies the backwardness of a section of the Social-Democratic intelligentsia in the theory and practice of organisation by equally profound talk about organisation being merely a form and the self-training of the proletariat the important thing. Let me tell you gentlemen who are

so solicitous about the younger brother that the proletariat is not afraid of organisation and discipline! The proletariat will do nothing to have the worthy professors and high-school students who do not want to join an organisation recognised as Party members merely because they work under the control of an organisation. The proletariat is trained for organisation by its whole life, far more radically than many an intellectual prig. Having gained some understanding of our programme and our tactics, the proletariat will not start justifying backwardness in organisation by arguing that the form is less important than the content. It is not the proletariat, but *certain intellectuals* in our Party who lack *self-training* in the spirit of organisation and discipline, in the spirit of hostility and contempt for anarchistic talk. When they say that it is not ripe for organisation, the Akimovs No. 2 libel the proletariat just as the Akimovs No. 1 libelled it when they said that it was not ripe for the political struggle. The proletarian who has become a conscious Social-Democrat and feels himself a member of the Party will reject tail-ism in matters of organisation with the same contempt as he rejected tail-ism in matters of tactics.

Finally, consider the profound wisdom of the new *Iskra*'s "Practical Worker". "Properly understood," he says, "the idea of a 'militant' centralist organisation uniting and centralising the revolutionaries' *activities* [the italics are to make it look more profound] can only materialise naturally if such activities *exist* [both new and clever!]; organisation itself, being a form [mark that!], can only grow *simultaneously* [the italics are the author's, as throughout this quotation] with the growth of the revolutionary work which is its content." (No. 57.) Does not this remind you very much of the character in the folk tale who, on seeing a funeral, cried: "Many happy returns of the day"? I am sure there is not a practical worker (in the genuine sense of the term) in our Party who does not understand that it is precisely the form of our activities (i.e., our organisation) that has long been lagging, and lagging desperately, behind their content, and that only the Simple Simons in the Party could shout to people who are lagging: "Keep in line; don't run ahead!" Compare our Party, let us say, with the Bund. There

can be no question but that the *content** of the work of our Party is immeasurably richer, more varied, broader, and deeper than is the case with the Bund. The scope of our theoretical views is wider, our programme more developed, our influence among the mass of the workers (and not merely among the organised artisans) broader and deeper, our propaganda and agitation more varied; the pulse of the political work of both leaders and rank and file is more lively, the *popular* movements during demonstrations and general strikes more impressive, and our work among the non-proletarian strata more energetic. But the "form"? Compared with the Bund's, the "form" of our work is lagging unpardonably, lagging so that it is an eyesore and brings a blush of shame to the cheeks of anyone who does not merely "pick his teeth" when contemplating the affairs of his Party. The fact that the organisation of our work lags behind its content is our weak point, and it was our weak point long before the Congress, long before the Organising Committee was formed. The lame and undeveloped character of the form makes any serious step in the further development of the content impossible; it causes a shameful stagnation, leads to a waste of energy, to a discrepancy between word and deed. We have all been suffering wretchedly from this discrepancy, yet along come the Axelrods and "Practical Workers" of the new *Iskra* with their profound precept: the form must grow naturally, only simultaneously with the content!

That is where a small mistake on the question of organisation (Paragraph 1) will lead you if you try to *lend profundity* to nonsense and to find philosophical justification for opportunist talk. Marching slowly, in timid zigzags![119] we have heard this refrain in relation to questions of tactics; we are hearing it again in relation to questions of organisation. *Tail-ism in questions of organisation* is a natural and

* I leave quite aside the fact that the *content* of our Party work was mapped out at the Congress (in the programme, etc.) in the spirit of revolutionary Social-Democracy only *at the cost of a struggle*, a struggle against those very anti-*Iskra*-ists and that very Marsh whose representatives numerically predominate in our "minority". On this question of "content" it would he interesting also to compare, let us say, six issues of the old *Iskra* (Nos. 46-51) with twelve issues of the new *Iskra* (Nos. 52-63). But that will have to wait for some other time.

inevitable product of the mentality of the *anarchistic individualist* when he starts to elevate his anarchistic deviations (which at the outset may have been accidental) to a *system of views*, to special *differences of principle*. At the League Congress we witnessed the beginnings of this anarchism; in the new *Iskra* we are witnessing attempts to elevate it to a system of views. These attempts strikingly confirm what was already said at the Party Congress about the difference between the points of view of the bourgeois intellectual who attaches himself to the Social-Democratic movement and the proletarian who has become conscious of his class interests. For instance, this same "Practical Worker" of the new *Iskra* with whose profundity we are already familiar denounces me for visualising the Party "as an immense factory" headed by a director in the shape of the Central Committee (No. 57, Supplement). "Practical Worker" never guesses that this dreadful word of his immediately betrays the mentality of the bourgeois intellectual unfamiliar with either the practice or the theory of proletarian organisation. For the factory, which seems only a bogey to some, represents that highest form of capitalist co-operation which has united and disciplined the proletariat, taught it to organise, and placed it at the head of all the other sections of the toiling and exploited population. And Marxism, the ideology of the proletariat trained by capitalism, has been and is teaching unstable intellectuals to distinguish between the factory as a means of exploitation (discipline based on fear of starvation) and the factory as a means of organisation (discipline based on collective work united by the conditions of a technically highly developed form of production). The discipline and organisation which come so hard to the bourgeois intellectual are very easily acquired by the proletariat just because of this factory "schooling". Mortal fear of this school and utter failure to understand its importance as an organising factor are characteristic of the ways of thinking which reflect the petty-bourgeois mode of life and which give rise to the species of anarchism that the German Social-Democrats call *Edelanarchismus*, that is, the anarchism of the "noble" gentleman, or aristocratic anarchism, as I would call it. This aristocratic anarchism is particularly characteristic of the Russian nihilist. He thinks of the Party

organisation as a monstrous "factory"; he regards the subordination of the part to the whole and of the minority to the majority as "serfdom" (see Axelrod's articles); division of labour under the direction of a centre evokes from him a tragicomical outcry against transforming people into "cogs and wheels" (to turn editors into contributors being considered a particularly atrocious species of such transformation); mention of the organisational Rules of the Party calls forth a contemptuous grimace and the disdainful remark (intended for the "formalists") that one could very well dispense with Rules altogether.

Incredible as it may seem, it was a didactic remark of just this sort that Comrade Martov addressed to me in *Iskra*, No. 58, quoting, for greater weight, my own words in *A Letter to a Comrade*. Well, what is it if not "aristocratic anarchism" and tail-ism to cite examples from the era of disunity, the era of the circles, to *justify* the preservation and glorification of the circle spirit and anarchy in the era of the Party?

Why did we not need Rules before? Because the Party consisted of separate circles without any organisational tie between them. Any individual could pass from one circle to another at his own "sweet will", for he was not faced with any formulated expression of the will of the whole. Disputes within the circles were not settled according to Rules, "*but by struggle and threats to resign*", as I put it in *A Letter to a Comrade*,* summarising the experience of a number of circles in general and of our own editorial circle of six in particular. In the era of the circles, this was natural and inevitable, but it never occurred to anybody to extol it, to regard it as ideal; everyone complained of the disunity, everyone was distressed by it and eager to see the isolated circles fused into a formally constituted party organisation. And now that this fusion has taken place, we are being dragged back and, under the guise of higher organisational views, treated to anarchistic phrase-mongering! To people accustomed to the loose dressing-gown and slippers of the Oblomov[120] circle domesticity, formal Rules seem narrow, restrictive, irksome, mean, and bureaucratic, a bond of

* See present edition, Vol. 6, pp. 229-50.—*Ed.*

serfdom and a fetter on the free "process" of the ideological struggle. Aristocratic anarchism cannot understand that formal Rules are needed precisely in order to replace the narrow circle ties by the broad Party tie. It was unnecessary and impossible to give formal shape to the internal ties of a circle or the ties between circles, for these ties rested on personal friendship or on an instinctive "confidence" for which no reason was given. The Party tie cannot and must not rest on either of these; it must be founded on *formal*, "bureaucratically" worded Rules (bureaucratic from the standpoint of the undisciplined intellectual), strict adherence to which can alone safeguard us from the wilfulness and caprices characteristic of the circles, from the circle wrangling that goes by the name of the free "process" of the ideological struggle.

The editors of the new *Iskra* try to trump Alexandrov with the didactic remark that "confidence is a delicate thing and cannot be hammered into people's hearts and minds" (No. 56, Supplement). The editors do not realise that by this talk about confidence, *naked* confidence, they are once more betraying their aristocratic anarchism and organisational tail-ism. When I was a member of a circle only—whether it was the circle of the six editors or the *Iskra* organisation—I was entitled to justify my refusal, say, to work with X merely on the grounds of lack of confidence, without stating reason or motive. But now that I have become a member of a party, *I have no right* to plead lack of confidence in general, for that would throw open the doors to all the freaks and whims of the old circles; I am *obliged* to give formal reasons for my "confidence" or "lack of confidence", that is, to cite a formally established principle of our programme, tactics or Rules; I must not just declare my "confidence" or "lack of confidence" without giving reasons, but must acknowledge that my decisions—and generally all decisions of any section of the Party—*have to be accounted for* to the whole Party; I am obliged to adhere to a *formally prescribed* procedure when giving expression to my "lack of confidence" or trying to secure the acceptance of the views and wishes that follow from this lack of confidence. From the *circle* view that "confidence" does not have to be accounted for, we have already risen to the *Party* view which demands

adherence to a formally prescribed procedure of expressing, accounting for, and *testing* our confidence; but the editors try to drag us back, and call their tail-ism new views on organisation!

Listen to the way our so-called Party editors talk about writers' groups that might demand representation on the editorial board. "We shall not get indignant and begin to shout about discipline", we are admonished by these aristocratic anarchists who have always and everywhere looked down on such a thing as discipline. We shall either "arrange the matter" (*sic*!) with the group, if it is sensible, or just laugh at its demands.

Dear me, what a lofty and noble rebuff to vulgar "factory" formalism! But in reality it is the old circle phraseology furbished up a little and served up to the Party by an editorial board which feels that it is not a Party institution, but the survival of an old circle. The intrinsic falsity of this position inevitably leads to the *anarchistic* profundity of elevating the disunity they hypocritically proclaim to be past and gone to a *principle* of Social-Democratic organisation. There is no need for any hierarchy of higher and lower Party bodies and authorities—aristocratic anarchism regards such a hierarchy as the bureaucratic invention of ministries, departments, etc. (see Axelrod's article); there is no need for the part to submit to the whole; there is no need for any "formal bureaucratic" definition of *Party* methods of "arranging matters" or of delimiting differences. Let the old circle wrangling be sanctified by pompous talk about "genuinely Social-Democratic" methods of organisation.

This is, where the proletarian who has been through the school of the "factory" can and should teach a lesson to anarchistic individualism. The class-conscious worker has long since emerged from the state of infancy when he used to fight shy of the intellectual as such. The class-conscious worker appreciates the richer store of knowledge and the wider political outlook which he finds among Social-Democratic intellectuals. But as we proceed with the building of a *real* party, the class-conscious worker must learn to distinguish the mentality of the soldier of the proletarian army from the mentality of the bourgeois intellectual who parades anarchistic phrases; he must learn to *insist* that the duties

of a Party member be fulfilled not only by the rank and file, but by the "people at the top" as well; he must learn to treat tail-ism in matters of organisation with the same contempt as he used, in days gone by, to treat tail-ism in matters of tactics!

Inseparably connected with Girondism and aristocratic anarchism is the last characteristic feature of the new *Iskra*'s attitude towards matters of organisation, namely, its defence of *autonomism* as against centralism. This is the meaning in principle (if it has any such meaning*) of its outcry against bureaucracy and autocracy, of its regrets about "an undeserved disregard for the non-*Iskra*-ists" (who defended autonomism at the Congress), of its comical howls about a demand for "unquestioning obedience", of its bitter complaints of "Jack-in-office rule", etc., etc. The opportunist wing of any party always defends and justifies all backwardness, whether in programme, tactics, or organisation. The new *Iskra*'s defence of backwardness in organisation (its tail-ism) is closely connected with the defence of *autonomism*. True, autonomism has, generally speaking, been so discredited already by the three years' propaganda work of the old *Iskra* that the new *Iskra* is ashamed, *as yet*, to advocate it openly; it still assures us of its sympathy for centralism, but shows it only by printing the word centralism in italics. Actually, it is enough to apply the slightest touch of criticism to the "principles" of the "genuinely Social-Democratic" (not anarchistic?) quasi-centralism of the new *Iskra* for the autonomist standpoint to be detected at every step. Is it not now clear to all and sundry that on the subject of organisation Axelrod and Martov have swung over to Akimov? Have they not solemnly admitted it themselves in the significant words, "undeserved disregard for the non-*Iskra*-ists"? And what was it but autonomism that Akimov and his friends defended at our Party Congress?

It was autonomism (if not anarchism) that Martov and Axelrod defended at the League Congress when, with amusing zeal, they tried to prove that the part need not submit to the whole, that the part is autonomous in defining its

---

* I leave aside here, as in this section generally, the "co-optational" meaning of this outcry.

relation to the whole, that the Rules of the League, in which that relation is formulated, are valid in defiance of the will of the Party majority, in defiance of the will of the Party centre. And it is autonomism that Comrade Martov is now openly defending in the columns of the new *Iskra* (No. 60) in the matter of the right of the Central Committee to appoint members to the local committees. I shall not speak of the puerile sophistries which Comrade Martov used to defend autonomism at the League Congress, and is still using in the new *Iskra**—the important thing here is to note the undoubted tendency to *defend autonomism against centralism*, which is a fundamental characteristic of opportunism in matters of organisation.

Perhaps the only attempt to *analyse* the concept bureaucracy is the distinction drawn in the new *Iskra* (No. 53) between the "formal *democratic* principle" (author's italics) and the "formal *bureaucratic* principle". This distinction (which, unfortunately, was no more developed or explained than the reference to the non-*Iskra*-ists) contains a grain of truth. Bureaucracy *versus* democracy is in fact centralism *versus* autonomism; it is the organisational principle of revolutionary Social-Democracy as opposed to the organisational principle of opportunist Social-Democracy. The latter strives to proceed from the bottom upward, and, therefore, wherever possible and as far as possible, upholds autonomism and "democracy", carried (by the overzealous) to the point of anarchism. The former strives to proceed from the top downward, and upholds an extension of the rights and powers of the centre in relation to the parts. In the period of disunity and separate circles, this top from which revolutionary Social-Democracy strove to proceed organisationally was inevitably one of the circles, the one enjoying most influence by virtue of its activity and its revolutionary consistency (in our case, the *Iskra* organisation). In the period of the restoration of actual Party unity and dis-

* In enumerating various paragraphs of the Rules, Comrade Martov *omitted* the one which deals with the relation of the whole to the part: the Central Committee "allocates the Party forces" (Paragraph 6). Can one allocate forces without transferring people from one committee to another? It is positively awkward to have to dwell on such elementary things.

solution of the obsolete circles in this unity, this top is inevitably the *Party Congress*, as the supreme organ of the Party; the Congress as far as possible includes representatives of all the active organisations, and, by appointing the central institutions (often with a membership which satisfies the advanced elements of the Party more than the backward and is more to the taste of its revolutionary than its opportunist wing), makes them the top until the next Congress. Such, at any rate, is the case among the Social-Democratic Europeans, although little by little this custom, so abhorrent in principle to anarchists, is beginning to spread—not without difficulty and not without conflicts and squabbles—to the Social-Democratic Asiatics.

It is highly interesting to note that these fundamental characteristics of opportunism in matters of organisation (autonomism, aristocratic or intellectualist anarchism, tailism, and Girondism) are, *mutatis mutandis* with appropriate modifications), to be observed in all the Social-Democratic parties in the world, wherever there is a division into a a revolutionary and an opportunist wing (and where is there not?). Only quite recently this was very strikingly revealed in the German Social-Democratic Party, when its defeat at the elections in the 20th electoral division of Saxony (known as the Göhre incident*) brought the question of the *principles* of party organisation to the fore. That this incident should have become an issue of principle was largely due to the zeal of the German opportunists. Göhre (an ex-parson, author of the fairly well-known book *Drei Monate Fabrikarbeiter*,** and one of the "heroes" of the Dresden Congress) is himself an extreme opportunist and the *Sozialistische Monatshefte* (*Socialist Monthly*),[122] the organ of the consistent German opportunists, at once "took up the cudgels" on his behalf.

* Göhre was returned to the Reichstag on June 16, 1903, from the 15th division of Saxony, but after the Dresden Congress[121] he resigned his seat. The electorate of the 20th division, which had fallen vacant on the death of Rosenow, wanted to put forward Göhre as candidate. The Central Party Executive and the Regional Party Executive for Saxony opposed this, and while they had no formal right to forbid Göhre's nomination, they succeeded in getting him to decline. The Social-Democrats were defeated at the polls.

** *Three Months as a Factory Worker.—Ed.*

Opportunism in programme is naturally connected with opportunism in tactics and opportunism in organisation. The exposition of the "new" point of view was undertaken by Comrade Wolfgang Heine. To give the reader some idea of the political complexion of this typical intellectual, who on joining the Social-Democratic movement brought with him opportunist habits of thought, it is enough to say that Comrade Wolfgang Heine is something less than a German Comrade Akimov and something more than a German Comrade Egorov.

Comrade Wolfgang Heine took the field in the *Sozialistische Monatshefte* with no less pomp than Comrade Axelrod in the new *Iskra*. The very title of his article is priceless: "Democratic Observations on the Göhre Incident" (*Sozialistische Monatshefte*, No. 4, April). The contents are no less thunderous. Comrade W. Heine rises up in arms against "encroachments on the autonomy of the constituency", champions "the democratic principle", and protests against the interference of an "appointed authority" (i.e., the Central Party Executive) in the free election of deputies by the people. The point at issue, Comrade W. Heine admonishes us, is not a random incident, but a general "*tendency towards bureaucracy and centralism in the Party*", a tendency, he says, which was to be observed before, but which is now becoming particularly dangerous. It must be "recognised as a principle that the local institutions of the Party are the vehicles of Party life" (a plagiarism on Comrade Martov's pamphlet *Once More in the Minority*). We must not "accustom ourselves to having all important political decisions come from one centre", and must warn the Party against "a doctrinaire policy which loses contact with life" (borrowed from Comrade Martov's speech at the Party Congress to the effect that "life will assert itself"). Rendering his argument more profound, Comrade W. Heine says: "...If we go down to the roots of the matter and leave aside personal conflicts, which here, as everywhere, have played no small part, this bitterness against the *revisionists* [the italics are the author's and evidently hint at a distinction between fighting revisionism and fighting revisionists] will be found to be mainly expressive of the distrust of the Party officialdom for '*outsiders*' [W. Heine had apparently not yet read the pamphlet

about combating the state of siege, and therefore resorted to an Anglicism—*Outsidertum*], the distrust of tradition for the unusual, of the impersonal institution for everything individual [see Axelrod's resolution at the League Congress on the suppression of individual initiative]—in short, of that tendency which we have defined above as a tendency towards bureaucracy and centralism in the Party."

The idea of "discipline" inspires Comrade W. Heine with a no less noble disgust than Comrade Axelrod.... "The revisionists," he writes, "have been accused of lack of discipline for having written for the *Sozialistische Monatshefte*, an organ whose Social-Democratic character has even been denied because it is not *controlled by the Party*. This very attempt to narrow down the concept 'Social-Democratic', this insistence on *discipline* in the sphere of ideological production, where absolute freedom should prevail [remember: the ideological struggle is a process whereas the forms of organisation are only forms], demonstrates the tendency towards bureaucracy and the suppression of individuality". And W. Heine goes on and on, fulminating against this detestable tendency to create "*one* big all-embracing organisation, as centralised as possible, *one* set of tactics, and *one* theory", against the demand for "implicit obedience", "blind submission", against "oversimplified centralism", etc., etc., literally "*à la* Axelrod".

The controversy started by W. Heine spread, and as there were no squabbles about co-optation in the German Party to obscure the issue, and as the German Akimovs display their complexion not only at congresses, but all the time, in a periodical of their own, the argument soon boiled down to an analysis of the principles of the orthodox and revisionist trends on the question of organisation. Karl Kautsky came forward (in the *Neue Zeit*, 1904, No. 28, in the article "*Wahlkreis und Partei*"—"Constituency and Party") as one of the spokesmen of the revolutionary trend (which, exactly as in our Party, was of course accused of "dictatorship", "inquisitorial" tendencies, and other dreadful things). W. Heine's article, he says, "expresses the line of thought of the whole revisionist trend". Not only in Germany, but in France and Italy as well, the opportunists are all staunch supporters of autonomism, of a slackening of Party disci-

pline, of reducing it to naught; everywhere their tendencies lead to *disorganisation* and to perverting "the democratic principle" into *anarchism*. "Democracy does not mean absence of authority," Karl Kautsky informs the opportunists on the subject of organisation, "democracy does not mean anarchy; it means the rule of the masses over their representatives, in distinction to other forms of rule, where the supposed servants of the people are in reality their masters." Kautsky traces at length the disruptive role played by opportunist autonomism in various countries; he shows that it is precisely the influx of "*a great number of bourgeois elements*"* into the Social-Democratic movement that is strengthening opportunism, autonomism, and the tendency to violate discipline; and once more he reminds us that "organisation is the weapon that will emancipate the proletariat", that "organisation is the characteristic weapon of the proletariat in the class struggle".

In Germany, where opportunism is weaker than in France or Italy, "autonomist tendencies have so far led only to more or less passionate declamations against dictators and grand inquisitors, against excommunication** and heresy-hunting, and to endless cavilling and squabbling, which would only result in endless strife if replied to by the other side".

It is not surprising that in Russia, where opportunism in the Party is even weaker than in Germany, autonomist tendencies should have produced fewer ideas and more "passionate declamations" and squabbling.

It is not surprising that Kautsky arrives at the following conclusion: "There is perhaps no other question on which revisionism in all countries, despite its multiplicity of form and hue, is so alike as on the question of organisation." Kautsky, too, defines the basic tendencies of orthodoxy and revisionism in this sphere with the help of the "dreadful word": bureaucracy *versus* democracy. We are told, he says, that to give the Party leadership the right to influence the

* Kautsky mentions *Jaurès* as an example. The more these people deviated towards opportunism, the more "they were bound to consider Party discipline an impermissible constraint on their free personality".

** *Bannstrahl*: excommunication. This is the German equivalent of the Russian "state of siege" and "emergency laws". It is the "dreadful word" of the German opportunists.

selection of candidates (for parliament) by the constituencies is "a shameful encroachment on the democratic principle, which demands that all political activity proceed from the bottom upward, by the independent activity of the masses, and not from the top downward, in a bureaucratic way.... But if there is any democratic principle, it is that the majority must have predominance over the minority, and not the other way round...." The election of a member of parliament by any constituency is an important matter for the Party as a whole, which should influence the nomination of candidates, if only through its representatives (*Vertrauensmänner*). "Whoever considers this too bureaucratic or centralistic let him suggest that candidates be nominated by the direct vote of the Party membership at large [*sämtliche Parteigenossen*]. If he thinks this is not practicable, he must not complain of a lack of democracy when this function, like many others that concern the Party as a whole, is exercised by one or several Party bodies." It has long been "common law" in the German Party for constituencies to "come to a friendly understanding" with the Party leadership about the choice of candidates. "But the Party has grown too big for this tacit common law to suffice any longer. Common law ceases to be law when it ceases to be accepted as a matter of course, when its stipulations, and even its very existence, are called in question. Then it becomes necessary to formulate the law specifically, to codify it" ... to go over to more "precise statutory definition* [*statutarische Festlegung*] and, accordingly, greater strictness [*grössere Straffheit*] of organisation".

Thus you have, in a different environment, the same struggle between the opportunist and the revolutionary wing of the Party on the question of organisation, the same conflict between autonomism and centralism, between democracy and "bureaucracy", between the tendency to relax

* It is highly instructive to compare these remarks of Kautsky's about the replacement of a tacitly recognised common law by a formally defined statutory law with that whole "change-over" which our Party in general, and the editorial board in particular, have been undergoing since the Party Congress. Cf. the speech of V. I. Zasulich (at the League Congress, p. 66 et seq.), who does not seem to realise the full significance of this change-over.

and the tendency to tighten organisation and discipline, between the mentality of the unstable intellectual and that of the staunch proletarian, between intellectualist individualism and proletarian solidarity. What, one asks, was the attitude to this conflict of *bourgeois democracy*—not the bourgeois democracy which prankish history has only promised in private to show to Comrade Axelrod some day, but the real and actual bourgeois democracy which in Germany has spokesmen no less shrewd and observant than our own gentlemen of *Osvobozhdeniye*? German bourgeois democracy at once reacted to the new controversy, and—like Russian bourgeois democracy, like bourgeois democracy everywhere and always—sided solidly with the opportunist wing of the Social-Democratic Party. The *Frankfurter Zeitung*, leading organ of the German stock exchange, published a thunderous editorial (*Frankfurter Zeitung*, April 7, 1904, No. 97, evening edition) which shows that shameless plagiarising of Axelrod is becoming a veritable disease with the German press. The stern democrats of the Frankfort stock exchange lash out furiously at the "absolutism" in the Social-Democratic Party, at the "party dictatorship", at the "autocratic rule of the Party authorities", at the "interdicts" which are intended "concurrently to chastise revisionism as a whole" (recall the "false accusation of opportunism"), at the insistence on "blind obedience", "deadening discipline", "servile subordination", and the transforming of Party members into "political corpses" (that is a good bit stronger than cogs and wheels!). "All distinctiveness of personality", the knights of the stock exchange indignantly exclaim at the sight of the undemocratic regime among the Social-Democrats, "all individuality is to be held in opprobrium, because it is feared that they might lead to the French order of things, to Jaurèsism and Millerandism, as was stated in so many words by Sindermann, who made the report on the subject" at the Party Congress of the Saxon Social-Democrats .

And so, insofar as the new catchwords of the new *Iskra* on organisation contain any principles at all, there can be no doubt that they are opportunist principles. This conclu-

sion is confirmed both by the whole analysis of our Party Congress, which divided into a revolutionary and an opportunist wing, and by the example of *all* European Social-Democratic parties, where opportunism in organisation finds expression in the same tendencies, in the same accusations, and very often in the same catchwords. Of course, the national peculiarities of the various parties and the different political conditions in different countries leave their impress and make German opportunism quite dissimilar from French, French opportunism from Italian, and Italian opportunism from Russian. But the similarity of the fundamental division of all these parties into a revolutionary and an opportunist wing, the similarity of the line of thought and the tendencies of opportunism in organisation stand out clearly in spite of all this difference of conditions.* With large numbers of radical intellectuals in the ranks of our Marxists and our Social-Democrats, the opportunism which their mentality produces has been, and is, bound to exist, in the most varied spheres and in the most varied forms. We fought opportunism on the fundamental problems of our world conception, on the questions of our programme, and the complete divergence of aims inevitably led to an irrevocable break between the Social-Democrats and the liberals who had corrupted our legal Marxism. We fought opportunism on tactical issues, and our divergence with Comrades Krichevsky and Akimov on these less important issues was naturally only temporary, and was not accompanied by the formation of different parties. We must now vanquish the opportunism of Martov and Axelrod on

* No one will doubt today that the old division of the Russian Social-Democrats into Economists and politicians on questions of tactics was similar to the division of the whole international Social-Democratic movement into opportunists and revolutionaries, although the difference between Comrades Martynov and Akimov, on the one hand, and Comrades von Vollmar and von Elm or Jaurès and Millerand, on the other, is very great. Nor can there be any doubt about the similarity of the main divisions on questions of organisation, in spite of the enormous difference between the conditions of politically unenfranchised and politically free countries. It is extremely characteristic that the highly principled editors of the new *Iskra*, while briefly touching on the controversy between Kautsky and Heine (No. 64), timidly *evaded* discussing the trends of *principle* manifested on questions of organisation by opportunism and orthodoxy *generally*.

questions of organisation, which are, of course, less fundamental than questions of tactics, let alone of programme, but which have now come to the forefront in our Party life.

When we speak of fighting opportunism, we must never forget a characteristic feature of present-day opportunism in every sphere, namely, its vagueness, amorphousness, elusiveness. An opportunist, by his very nature, will always evade taking a clear and decisive stand, he will always seek a middle course, he will always wriggle like a snake between two mutually exclusive points of view and try to "agree" with both and reduce his differences of opinion to petty amendments, doubts, innocent and pious suggestions, and so on and so forth. Comrade Eduard Bernstein, an opportunist in questions of programme, "agrees" with the revolutionary programme of his party, and although he would no doubt like to have it "radically revised", he considers this untimely, inexpedient, not so important as the elucidation of "general principles" of "criticism" (which mainly consist in uncritically borrowing principles and catchwords from bourgeois democracy). Comrade von Vollmar, an opportunist in questions of tactics, also agrees with the old tactics of revolutionary Social-Democracy and also coniines himself mostly to declamations, petty amendments, and sneers rather than openly advocates any definite "ministerial" tactics.[123] Comrades Martov and Axelrod, opportunists in questions of organisation, have also failed so far to produce, though directly challenged to do so, any definite statement of principles that could be "fixed by statute"; they too would like, they most certainly would like, a "radical revision" of our Rules of Organisation (*Iskra* No. 58, p. 2, col. 3), but they would prefer to devote themselves first to "general problems of organisation" (for a really radical revision of our Rules, which, in spite of Paragraph 1, are centralist Rules, would inevitably lead, if carried out in the spirit of the new *Iskra*, to autonomism; and Comrade Martov, of course, does not like to admit even to himself that he tends *in principle* towards autonomism). Their "principles" of organisation therefore display all the colours of the rainbow. The predominant item consists of innocent passionate declamations against autocracy and bureaucracy,

against blind obedience and cogs and wheels—declamations so innocent that it is still very difficult to discern in them what is really concerned with principle and what is really concerned with co-optation. But as it goes on, the thing gets worse: attempts to analyse and precisely define this detestable "bureaucracy" inevitably lead to autonomism; attempts to "lend profundity" to their stand and vindicate it inevitably lead to justifying backwardness, to tail-ism, to Girondist phrase-mongering. At last there emerges the principle of *anarchism*, as the sole really definite principle, which for that reason stands out in practice in particular relief (practice is always in advance of theory). Sneering at discipline—autonomism—anarchism—there you have the ladder which our opportunism in matters of organisation now climbs and now descends, skipping from rung to rung and skilfully dodging any definite statement of its principles.* Exactly the same stages are displayed by oppor-

* Those who recall the debate on Paragraph 1 will now clearly see that the mistake committed by Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod over Paragraph 1 had *inevitably* to lead, when developed and deepened, to opportunism in matters of organisation. Comrade Martov's fundamental idea—self-enrolment in the Party—was this same false "democracy", the idea of building the Party from the bottom upward. My idea, on the other hand, was "bureaucratic" in the sense that the Party was to be built from the top downward, from the Party Congress to the individual Party organisations. The mentality of the bourgeois intellectual, anarchistic phrase-mongering, and opportunist, tail-ist profundity were all already displayed in the debate on Paragraph 1. Comrade Martov says in his *State of Siege* (p. 20) that "new ideas are beginning to be worked out" by the new *Iskra*. That is true in the sense that he and Axelrod are really pushing ideas in a new direction, beginning with Paragraph 1. The only trouble is that this direction is an opportunist one. The more they "work" in *this* direction, and the more this work is cleared of squabbling over co-optation, the deeper will they sink in the mire. Comrade Plekhanov already perceived this clearly at the Party Congress, and in his article "What Should Not Be Done" warned them once again: I am prepared, he as much as said, even to co-opt you, only don't continue along this road which can only lead to opportunism and anarchism. Martov and Axelrod would not follow this good advice: What? Not continue along this road? Agree with Lenin that the co-optation clamour is nothing but squabbling? Never! We'll show him that we are men of principle!—And they have. They have clearly shown everyone that if they have any new principles at all, they are opportunist principles.

tunism in matters of programme and tactics: sneering at "orthodoxy", narrowness, and immobility—revisionist "criticism" and ministerialism—bourgeois democracy.

There is a close psychological connection between this hatred of discipline and that incessant nagging note of *injury* which is to be detected in all the writings of all opportunists today in general, and of our minority in particular. They are being persecuted, hounded, ejected, besieged, and bullied. There is far more psychological and political truth in these catchwords than was probably suspected even by the author of the pleasant and witty joke about bullies and bullied. For you have only to take the minutes of our Party Congress to see that the minority are all those who suffer from a sense of injury, all those who at one time or another and for one reason or another were offended by the revolutionary Social-Democrats. There are the Bundists and the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists, whom we "offended" so badly that they withdrew from the Congress: there are the *Yuzhny Rabochy*-ists, who were mortally offended by the slaughter of organisations in general and of their own in particular; there is Comrade Makhov, who had to put up with offence every time he took the floor (for every time he did, he invariably made a fool of himself); and lastly, there are Comrade Martov and Comrade Axelrod, who were offended by the "false accusation of opportunism" in connection with Paragraph 1 of the Rules and by their defeat in the elections. All these mortal offences were not the accidental outcome of impermissible witticisms, rude behaviour, frenzied controversy, slamming of doors, and shaking of fists, as so many philistines imagine to this day, but the inevitable political outcome of the whole three years' ideological work of *Iskra*. If in the course of these three years we were not just wagging our tongues, but giving expression to convictions which were to be translated into deeds, we could not but fight the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the "Marsh" at the Congress. And when, together with Comrade Martov, who had fought in the front line with visor up, we had offended such heaps of people, we had only to offend Comrade Axelrod and Comrade Martov ever such a little bit for the cup to overflow. Quantity was transformed into quality. The negation was negated. All the offended forgot their mutual scores, fell

weeping into each other's arms, and raised the banner of "revolt against Leninism".*

A revolt is a splendid thing when it is the advanced elements who revolt against the reactionary elements. When the revolutionary wing revolts against the opportunist wing, it is a good thing. When the opportunist wing revolts against the revolutionary wing, it is a bad business.

Comrade Plekhanov is compelled to take part in this bad business in the capacity of a prisoner of war, so to speak. He tries to "vent his spleen" by fishing out isolated awkward phrases by the author of some resolution in favour of the "majority", and exclaiming: "Poor Comrade Lenin! A fine lot his orthodox supporters are!" (*Iskra*, No. 63, Supplements.)

Well, Comrade Plekhanov, all I can say is that if I am poor, the editors of the new *Iskra* are downright paupers. However poor I may be, I have not yet reached such utter destitution as to have to shut my eyes to the Party Congress and hunt for material for the exercise of my wit in the resolutions of committeemen. However poor I may be, I am a thousand times better off than those whose supporters do not utter an awkward phrase inadvertently, but on every issue—whether of organisation, tactics, or programme—adhere stubbornly and persistently to principles which are the very opposite of the principles of revolutionary Social-Democracy. However poor I may be, I have not yet reached the stage of having to *conceal from the public* the praises lavished on me by such supporters. And that is what the editors of the new *Iskra* have to do.

Reader, do you know what the Voronezh Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party stands for? If not, read the minutes of the Party Congress. You will learn from them that the line of that committee is wholly expressed by Comrade Akimov and Comrade Brouckère, who at the Congress fought the revolutionary wing of the Party all along the line, and who scores of times were ranked as oppor-

* This amazing expression is Comrade Martov's (*State of Siege*, p. 68). Comrade Martov waited until he was five to one before raising the "revolt" against me alone. Comrade Martov argues very unskilfully: he wants to destroy his opponent by paying him the highest compliments.

tunists by everybody, from Comrade Plekhanov to Comrade Popov. Well, this Voronezh Committee, in its January leaflet (No. 12, January 1904), makes the following statement:

"A great and important event in the life of our steadily growing Party took place last year: the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., a congress of the representatives of its organisations. Convening a Party congress is a very complicated matter, and, under the prevailing monarchical regime, a very dangerous and difficult one. It is therefore not surprising that it was carried out *in a far from perfect way*, and that the Congress itself, although it passed off without mishap, did not live up to all the Party's expectations. The comrades whom the Conference of 1902 commissioned to convene the Congress were arrested, and *the Congress was arranged by persons who represented only one of the trends in Russian Social-Democracy*, *viz.*, *the* '*Iskra*'*-ists. Many* organisations of Social-Democrats who did not happen to be *Iskra*-ists were not invited to take part in the work of the Congress, *partly for this reason* the task of drawing up *a programme and Rules* for the Party was carried out by the Congress in an *extremely imperfect manner*; the delegates themselves admit that there are important flaws in the Rules 'which may lead to dangerous misunderstandings'. The *Iskra*-ists themselves split at the Congress, and many prominent members of our R.S.D.L.P. who formerly appeared to be in full agreement with the *Iskra* programme of action have come to see that many of its views, advocated *mainly by Lenin and Plekhanov*, are impracticable. Although these last gained the upper hand at the Congress, the pulse of real life and the requirements of the practical work, in which all the non-*Iskra*-ists are taking part, are quickly correcting the mistakes of the theoreticians and have, since the Congress, already introduced important modifications. '*Iskra*' *has changed greatly and promises* to pay careful heed to the demands of all workers in the Social-Democratic movement generally. Thus, although *the results of the Congress will have to be revised* at the next Congress, and, as is obvious to the delegates themselves, are unsatisfactory *and therefore cannot be accepted by the Party as unimpeachable decisions*, the Congress clarified the situation in the Party, provided much material for the further theoretical and organising activity of the Party, and was an experience of immense instructive value for the work of the Party as a whole. The decisions of the Congress and the Rules it drew up will be *taken into account* by all the organisations, but many will *refrain from being guided by them exclusively*, *in view of* their manifest imperfections.

"Fully realising the importance of the work of the Party as a whole, the Voronezh Committee actively *responded* in all matters concerning the organisation of the Congress. It fully appreciates the importance of what took place at the Congress and *welcomes the change undergone by* '*Iskra*', which has become the Central Organ (chief organ).

Although the state of affairs in the Party and the Central Committee does not satisfy us *as yet*, we are confident that

by joint efforts the difficult work of organising the Party will be perfected. In view of false rumours, the Voronezh Committee informs the comrades that there is no question of the Voronezh Committee leaving the Party. The Voronezh Committee perfectly realises what a dangerous precedent would be created by the withdrawal of a workers' organisation like the Voronezh Committee from the R.S.D.L.P., *what a reproach this would be to the Party*, and how disadvantageous it would be to workers' organisations which might follow this example. We must not cause new splits, but persistently strive to unite all class-conscious workers and socialists in one party. Besides, the Second Congress was not a constituent congress, but only a regular one. Expulsion from the Party can only be by decision of a Party court, and no organisation, not even the Central Committee, has the right to expel any Social-Democratic organisation from the Party. Furthermore, under Paragraph 8 of the Rules adopted by the Second Congress every organisation is autonomous in its local affairs, and *the Voronezh Committee is accordingly fully entitled to put its views on organisation into practice and to advocate them in the Party*."

The editors of the new *Iskra*, in quoting this leaflet in No. 61, reprinted the second half of this tirade, which we give here in large type; as for the first half, here printed in small type, the editors *preferred to omit it*.

They were ashamed.

FROM MARX TO MAO
NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

R. A FEW WORDS ON DIALECTICS. TWO REVOLUTIONS

A general glance at the development of our Party crisis will readily show that in the main, with minor exceptions, the composition of the two contending sides remained unchanged throughout. It was a struggle between the revolutionary wing and the opportunist wing in our Party. But this struggle passed through the most varied stages, and anyone who wants to find his bearings in the vast amount of literature already accumulated, the mass of fragmentary evidence, passages torn from their context, isolated accusations, and so

on and so forth, must thoroughly familiarise himself with the peculiarities of each of these stages.

Let us enumerate the principal and clearly distinct stages: 1) The controversy over Paragraph 1 of the Rules. A purely ideological struggle over the basic principles of organisation. Plekhanov and I are in the minority. Martov and Axelrod propose an opportunist formulation and find themselves in the arms of the opportunists. 2) The split in the *Iskra* organisation over the lists of candidates for the Central Committee: Fomin or Vasilyev in a committee of five, Trotsky or Travinsky in a committee of three. Plekhanov and I gain the majority (nine to seven), partly because of the very fact that we were in the minority on Paragraph 1. Martov's coalition with the opportunists confirmed my worst fears over the Organising Committee incident. 3) Continuation of the controversy over details of the Rules. Martov is again saved by the opportunists. We are again in the minority and fight for the rights of the minority on the central bodies. 4) The seven extreme opportunists withdraw from the Congress. We become the majority and defeat the coalition (the *Iskra*-ist minority, the "Marsh", and the anti-*Iskra*-ists) in the elections. Martov and Popov decline to accept seats in our trios. 5) The post-Congress squabble over co-optation. An orgy of anarchistic behaviour and anarchistic phrase-mongering. The least stable and steadfast elements among the "minority" gain the upper hand. 6) To avert a split, Plekhanov adopts the policy of "killing with kindness". The "minority" occupy the editorial board of the Central Organ and the Council and attack the Central Committee with all their might. The squabble continues to pervade everything. 7) First attack on the Central Committee repulsed. The squabble seems to be subsiding somewhat. It becomes possible to discuss in comparative calm two purely ideological questions which profoundly agitate the Party: a) what is the political significance and explanation of the division of our Party into "majority" and "minority" which took shape at the Second Congress and superseded all earlier divisions? b) what is the significance in principle of the new *Iskra*'s new position on the question of organisation?

In each of these stages the circumstances of the struggle and the immediate object of the attack are materially differ-

ent; each stage is, as it were, a separate battle in one general military campaign. Our struggle cannot be understood at all unless the concrete circumstances of each battle are studied. But once that is done, we see clearly that development does indeed proceed dialectically, by way of contradictions: the minority becomes the majority, and the majority becomes the minority; each side passes from the defensive to the offensive, and from the offensive to the defensive; the starting-point of ideological struggle (Paragraph 1) is "negated" and gives place to an all-pervading squabble*; but then begins "the negation of the negation", and, having just about managed to "rub along" with our god-given wife on different central bodies, we return to the starting-point, the purely ideological struggle; but by now this "thesis" has been enriched by all the results of the "antithesis" and has become a higher synthesis, in which the isolated, random error over Paragraph 1 has grown into a quasi-system of opportunist views on matters of organisation, and in which the connection between this fact and the basic division of our Party into a revolutionary and an opportunist wing becomes increasingly apparent to all. In a word, not only do oats grow according to Hegel, but the Russian Social-Democrats war among themselves according to Hegel.

But the great Hegelian dialectics which Marxism made its own, having first turned it right side up, must never be confused with the vulgar trick of justifying the zigzags of politicians who swing over from the revolutionary to the opportunist wing of the Party, with the vulgar habit of lumping together particular statements, and particular developmental factors, belonging to different stages of a single process. Genuine dialectics does not justify the errors of individuals, but studies the inevitable turns, proving that they were inevitable by a detailed study of the process of development in all its concreteness. One of the basic principles of dialectics is that there is no such thing as abstract truth, truth is always concrete.... And, one thing

* The difficult problem of drawing a line between squabbling and differences of principle now solves itself: all that relates to co-optation is squabbling; all that relates to analysis of the struggle at the Congress, to the controversy over Paragraph I and the swing towards. Opportunism and anarchism is a difference of principle.

more, the great Hegelian dialectics should never be confused with that vulgar worldly wisdom so well expressed by the Italian saying: *mettere la coda dove non va il capo* (sticking in the tail where the head will not go through).

The outcome of the dialectical development of our Party struggle has been two revolutions. The Party Congress was a real revolution, as Comrade Martov justly remarked in his *Once More in the Minority*. The wits of the minority are also right when they say: "The world moves through revolutions; well, we have made a revolution!" They did indeed make a revolution after the Congress; and it is true, too, that generally speaking the world does move through revolutions. But the concrete significance of each concrete revolution is not defined by this general aphorism; there are revolutions which are more like reaction, to paraphrase the unforgettable expression of the unforgettable Comrade Makhov. We must know whether it was the revolutionary or the opportunist wing of the Party that was the actual force that made the revolution, must know whether it was revolutionary or opportunist principles that inspired the fighters, before we can determine whether a particular concrete revolution moved the "world" (our Party) forward or backward.

Our Party Congress was unique and unprecedented in the entire history of the Russian revolutionary movement. For the first time a secret revolutionary party succeeded in emerging from the darkness of underground life into broad daylight, showing everyone the whole course and outcome of our internal Party struggle, the whole character of our Party and of each of its more or less noticeable components in matters of programme, tactics, and organisation. For the first time we succeeded in throwing off the traditions of circle looseness and revolutionary philistinism, in bringing together dozens of very different groups, many of which had been fiercely warring among themselves and had been linked solely by the force of an idea, and which were now prepared (in principle, that is) to sacrifice all their group aloofness and group independence for the sake of the great whole which we were for the first time actually creating—the *Party*. But in politics sacrifices are not obtained gratis, they have to be won in battle. The battle over the slaughter of organisations necessarily proved terribly fierce. The

fresh breeze of free and open struggle blew into a gale. The gale swept away—and a very good thing that it did!—each and every remnant of all circle interests, sentiments, and traditions without exception, and for the first time created genuinely Party institutions.

But it is one thing to call oneself something, and another to be it. It is one thing to sacrifice the circle system in principle for the sake of the Party, and another to renounce one's own circle. The fresh breeze proved too fresh as yet for people used to musty philistinism. "The Party was unable to stand the strain of its first congress," as Comrade Martov rightly put it (inadvertently) in his *Once More in the Minority*. The sense of injury over the slaughter of organisations was too strong. The furious gale raised all the mud from the bottom of our Party stream; and the mud took its revenge. The old hidebound circle spirit overpowered the still young party spirit. The opportunist wing of the Party, routed though it had been, got the better—temporarily, of course—of the revolutionary wing, having been reinforced by Akimov's accidental gain.

The result is the new *Iskra*, which is compelled to develop and deepen the error its editors committed at the Party Congress. The old *Iskra* taught the truths of revolutionary struggle. The new *Iskra* teaches the worldly wisdom of yielding and getting on with everyone. The old *Iskra* was the organ of militant orthodoxy. The new *Iskra* treats us to a recrudescence of opportunism—chiefly on questions of organisation. The old *Iskra* earned the honour of being detested by the opportunists, both Russian and West-European. The new *Iskra* has "grown wise" and will soon cease to be ashamed of the praises lavished on it by the extreme opportunists. The old *Iskra* marched unswervingly towards its goal, and there was no discrepancy between its word and its deed. The inherent falsity of the new *Iskra*'s position inevitably leads—independently even of anyone's will or intention—to political hypocrisy. It inveighs against the circle spirit in order to conceal the victory of the circle spirit over the party spirit. It hypocritically condemns splits, as if one can imagine any way of avoiding splits in any at all organised party except by the subordination of the minority to the majority. It says that heed must be paid to revolution-

ary public opinion, yet, while concealing the praises of the Akimovs, indulges in petty scandal-mongering about the committees of the revolutionary wing of the Party.* How shameful! How they have disgraced our old *Iskra*!

One step forward, two steps back.... It happens in the lives of individuals, and it happens in the history of nations and in the development of parties. It would be the most criminal cowardice to doubt even for a moment the inevitable and complete triumph of the principles of revolutionary Social-Democracy, of proletarian organisation and Party discipline. We have already won a great deal, and we must go on fighting, undismayed by reverses, fighting steadfastly, scorning the philistine methods of circle wrangling, doing our very utmost to preserve the hard-won single Party tie linking all Russian Social-Democrats, and striving by dint of persistent and systematic work to give all Party members, and the workers in particular, a full and conscious understanding of the duties of Party members, of the struggle at the Second Party Congress, of all the causes and all the stages of our divergence, and of the utter disastrousness of opportunism, which, in the sphere of organisation as in the sphere of our programme and our tactics, helplessly surrenders to the bourgeois psychology, uncritically adopts the point of view of bourgeois democracy, and blunts the weapon of the class struggle of the proletariat.

In its struggle for power the proletariat has no other weapon but organisation. Disunited by the rule of anarchic competition in the bourgeois world, ground down by forced labour for capital, constantly thrust back to the "lower depths" of utter destitution, savagery, and degeneration, the proletariat can, and inevitably will, become an invincible force only through its ideological unification on the principles of Marxism being reinforced by the material unity of organisation, which welds millions of toilers into an army of the working class. Neither the senile rule of the Russian autocracy nor the senescent rule of international capital will be able to withstand this army. It will

* A stereotyped form has even been worked out for this charming pastime: our special correspondent X informs us that Committee Y of the majority has behaved badly to Comrade Z of the minority.

more and more firmly close its ranks, in spite of all zigzags and backward steps, in spite of the opportunist phrase-mongering of the Girondists of present-day Social-Democracy, in spite of the self-satisfied exaltation of the retrograde circle spirit, and in spite of the tinsel and fuss of *intellectualist* anarchism.

Appendix

THE INCIDENT OF COMRADE GUSEV AND COMRADE DEUTSCH

This incident is closely bound up with the so-called "false" (Comrade Martov's expression) list mentioned in the letter of Comrades Martov and Starover, which has been quoted in Section J. The substance of it is as follows. Comrade Gusev informed Comrade Pavlovich that this list, consisting of Comrades Stein, Egorov, Popov, Trotsky, and Fomin, had been communicated to him, Gusev, by Comrade Deutsch (Comrade Pavlovich's *Letter*, p. 12). Comrade Deutsch accused Comrade Gusev of "deliberate calumny" on account of this statement, and a comrades' arbitration court declared Comrade Gusev's "statement" "*incorrect*" (see the court's decision in *Iskra*, No. 62). After the *editorial board* of *Iskra* had published the court decision, *Comrade Martov* (not the editorial board this time) issued a special leaflet entitled *The Decision of the Comrades' Arbitration Court*, in which he reprinted in full, not only the decision of the court, but the whole report of the proceedings, together with *a postscript of his own*. In this postscript, Comrade Martov among other things spoke of "the disgraceful fact of the forgery of a list in the interests of a factional struggle". Comrades Lyadov and Gorin, who had been delegates to the Second Congress, replied to this leaflet with one of their own entitled *An Onlooker at the Arbitration Court*, in which they "vigorously protest against Comrade Martov permitting himself to go further than the court decision and to ascribe evil motives to Comrade Gusev", whereas the court did not find that there had been a deliberate calumny, but only that Comrade Gusev's statement was incorrect. Comrades Gorin and

Lyadov explained at length that Comrade Gusev's statement might have been due to a quite natural mistake, and described as "*unworthy*" the conduct of Comrade Martov, who had himself made (and again made in his leaflet) a number of erroneous statements, arbitrarily attributing evil intent to Comrade Gusev. There could be no evil intent there at all, they said. That, if I am not mistaken, is all the "literature" on this question, which I consider it my duty to help clear up.

First of all, it is essential that the reader have a clear idea of the time and conditions in which this list (of candidates for the Central Committee) appeared. As I have already stated in this pamphlet, the *Iskra* organisation conferred during the Congress about a list of candidates for the Central Committee which it could jointly submit to the Congress. The conference ended in disagreement: the majority of the *Iskra* organisation adopted a list consisting of Travinsky, Glebov, Vasilyev, Popov, and Trotsky, but the minority refused to yield and insisted on a list consisting of Travinsky, Glebov, Fomin, Popov, and Trotsky. The two sections of the *Iskra* organisation did not meet together again after the meeting at which these lists were put forward and voted on. Both sections entered the arena of free agitation at the Congress, wishing to have the issue between them settled by a vote of the Party Congress as a whole and each trying to win as many delegates as it could to its side. This free agitation at the Congress at once revealed the political fact I have analysed in such detail in this pamphlet, namely, that in order to gain the victory over us, it was essential for the *Iskra*-ist minority (headed by Martov) to have the support of the "Centre" (the Marsh) and of the anti-*Iskra*-ists. This was essential because the vast majority of the delegates who consistently upheld the programme, tactics, and organisational plans of *Iskra* against the onslaught of the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the "Centre" very quickly and very staunchly took their stand on our side. Of the thirty-three delegates (or rather votes) not belonging to the anti-*Iskra*-ists or the "Centre", we very quickly won twenty-four and concluded a "direct agreement" with them, forming a "compact majority". Comrade Martov, on the other hand, was left with only nine votes; to gain the victory, he needed all the votes of the

anti-*Iskra*-ists and the "Centre"—with which groups he might join forces (as over Paragraph 1 of the Rules), might form a "coalition", that is, might have their support, but with which he *could not* conclude a direct agreement—could not do so because throughout the Congress he had fought these groups no less sharply than we had. Therein lay the tragicomedy of Comrade Martov's position! In his *State of Siege* Comrade Martov tries to annihilate me with the deadly venomous question: "We would respectfully request Comrade Lenin to answer explicitly—*to whom* at the Congress were the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group an outside element?" (P. 23, footnote.) I answer respectfully and explicitly: they were an outside element to Comrade Martov. And the proof is that whereas I very quickly concluded a direct agreement with the *Iskra*-ists, Comrade Martov did not conclude, and could not have concluded, a direct agreement with *Yuzhny Rabochy*, nor with Comrade Makhov, nor with Comrade Brouckère.

Only when we have got a clear idea of this political situation can we understand the "crux" of this vexed question of the celebrated "false" list. Picture to yourself the actual state of affairs: the *Iskra* organisation has split, and we are freely campaigning at the Congress, defending our respective lists. During this defence, in the host of private conversations, the lists are varied in a hundred different combinations: a committee of three is proposed instead of five; all sorts of substitutions of one candidate for another are suggested. I very well recall, for instance, that the candidatures of Comrades Rusov, Osipov, Pavlovich, and Dyedov[124] were suggested in private conversations among the majority, and then, after discussions and arguments, were withdrawn. It may very well be that other candidatures too were proposed of which I have no knowledge. In the course of these conversations each Congress delegate expressed his opinion, suggested changes, argued, and so on. It is highly unlikely that this was the case only among the majority. There is no doubt, in fact, that the same sort of thing went on among the minority, for their original five (Popov, Trotsky, Fomin, Glebov, and Travinsky) were later replaced, as we have seen from the letter of Comrades Martov and Starover, by a trio—Glebov, Trotsky, and Popov—Glebov, moreover, not being

to their taste, so that they were very ready to substitute Fomin (see the leaflet of Comrades Lyadov and Gorin). It should not be forgotten that my demarcation of the Congress delegates into the groups defined in this pamphlet was made on the basis of an analysis undertaken post-factum; actually, during the election agitation these groups were only just beginning to emerge and the exchange of opinions among the delegates proceeded quite freely; no "wall" divided us, and each would speak to any delegate he wanted to discuss matters with in private. It is not at all surprising in these circumstances that among all the various combinations and lists there should appear, alongside the list of the minority of the *Iskra* organisation (Popov, Trotsky, Fomin, Glebov, and Travinsky), the not very different list: Popov, Trotsky, Fomin, Stein, and Egorov. The appearance of such a combination of candidates was very natural, because our candidates, Glebov and Travinsky, were patently not to the liking of the minority of the *Iskra* organisation (see their letter in Section J, where they remove Travinsky from the trio and expressly state that Glebov is a compromise). To replace Glebov and Travinsky by the Organising Committee members Stein and Egorov was perfectly natural, and it would have been strange if no one of the delegates belonging to the Party minority had thought of it.

Let us now examine the following two questions: 1) Who was the author of the list: Egorov, Stein, Popov, Trotsky, and Fomin? and 2) Why was Comrade Martov so profoundly incensed that such a list should be attributed to him? To give an *exact* answer to the first question, it would be necessary to question all the Congress delegates. That is now impossible. It would be necessary, in particular, to ascertain who of the delegates belonging to the Party minority (not to be confused with the *Iskra* organisation minority) had heard at the Congress of the lists that caused the split in the *Iskra* organisation; what they had thought of the respective lists of the majority and minority of the *Iskra* organisation; and whether they had not suggested or heard others suggest or express opinions about desirable changes in the list of the minority of the *Iskra* organisation. Unfortunately, these questions do not seem to have been raised in the arbitration court either, which (to judge by the text of its decision) did

not even learn over just what lists of five the *Iskra* organisation split. Comrade Byelov, for example (whom I class among the "Centre"), "testified that he had been on good comradely terms with Deutsch, who used to give him his impressions of the work of the Congress, and that if Deutsch had been campaigning on behalf of any list he would have informed Byelov of the fact." It is to be regretted that it was not brought out whether Comrade Deutsch gave Comrade Byelov at the Congress his impressions as to the lists of the *Iskra* organisation, and if he did, what was Comrade Byelov's reaction to the list of five proposed by the *Iskra* organisation minority, and whether he did not suggest or hear others suggest any desirable changes in it. Because this was not made clear, we get that contradiction in the evidence of Comrade Byelov and Comrade Deutsch which has already been noted by Comrades Gorin and Lyadov, namely, that Comrade Deutsch, notwithstanding his own assertions to the contrary, did "campaign in behalf of certain Central Committee candidates" suggested by the *Iskra* organisation. Comrade Byelov further testified that "he had heard about the list circulating at the Congress a couple of days before the Congress closed, in private conversation, when he met Comrades Egorov and Popov and the delegates from the Kharkov Committee. Egorov had expressed surprise that his name had been included in a list of Central Committee candidates, as in his, Egorov's, opinion his candidature could not inspire sympathy among the Congress delegates, whether of the majority or of the minority". It is extremely significant that the reference here is apparently to the minority *of the* "*Iskra*" *organisation*, for among the rest of the Party Congress minority the candidature of Comrade Egorov, a member of the Organising Committee and a prominent speaker of the "Centre", not only could, but in all likelihood would have been greeted sympathetically. Unfortunately, we learn nothing from Comrade Byelov as to the sympathy or antipathy of those among the Party minority who did not belong to the *Iskra* organisation. And yet that is just what is important, for Comrade Deutsch waxed indignant about this list having been attributed to the minority of the *Iskra* organisation, whereas it may have originated with the minority which did not belong to that organisation!

Of course, it is very difficult at this date to recall who first suggested this combination of candidates, and from whom each of us heard about it. I, for example, do not undertake to recall even just who among the majority first proposed the candidatures of Rusov, Dyedov, and the others I have mentioned. The only thing that sticks in my memory, out of the host of conversations, suggestions, and rumours of all sorts of combinations of candidates, is those "lists" which were directly put to the vote in the *Iskra* organisation or at the private meetings of the majority. These "lists" were mostly circulated orally (in my *Letter to the Editors of* "*Iskra*", p. 4, line 5 from below, it is the combination of five candidates which I orally proposed at the meeting that I call a "list"); but it also happened very often that they were jotted down in notes, such as in general passed between delegates during the sittings of the Congress and were usually destroyed after the sittings.

Since we have no exact information as to the origin of this celebrated list, it can only be assumed that the combination of candidates which we have in it was either suggested by some delegate belonging to the Party minority, without the knowledge of the *Iskra* organisation minority, and thereafter began to circulate at the Congress in spoken and written form; or else that this combination was suggested at the Congress by some member of the *Iskra* organisation minority who subsequently forgot about it. The latter assumption seems to me the more likely one, for the following reasons: already at the Congress the *Iskra* organisation minority were *undoubtedly* sympathetic towards the candidature of Comrade Stein (see present pamphlet); and as to the candidature of Comrade Egorov, *this* minority did undoubtedly arrive at the idea after the Congress (for both at the League Congress and in *State of Siege* regret was expressed that the Organising Committee had not been endorsed as the Central Committee—and Comrade Egorov was a member of the Organising Committee). Is it then not natural to assume that this idea, which was evidently in the air, of converting the members of the Organising Committee into members of the Central Committee was voiced by some member of the minority in private conversation at the Party Congress too?

But instead of a natural explanation, Comrade Martov and Comrade Deutsch are determined to see here something *sordid*—a plot, a piece of dishonesty, the dissemination of "*deliberately* false rumours *with the object* of defaming", a "*forgery in the interests of a factional struggle*", and so forth. This morbid urge can only be explained by the unwholesome conditions of émigré life, or by an abnormal nervous condition, and I would not even have taken the question up if matters had not gone to the length of an unworthy attack upon a comrade's honour. Just think: what grounds could Comrades Deutsch and Martov have had for detecting a sordid, evil intent in an incorrect statement, in an incorrect rumour? The picture which their morbid imaginations conjured up was apparently that the majority "defamed" them, not by pointing to the minority's political mistake (Paragraph 1 and the coalition with the opportunists), but by ascribing to the minority "deliberately false" and "forged" lists. The minority preferred to attribute the matter not to their own mistake, but to sordid, dishonest, and disgraceful practices on the part of the majority! How irrational it was to seek for evil intent in the "incorrect statement", we have already shown above, by describing the circumstances. It was clearly realised by the comrades' arbitration court too, which did not find any calumny, or any evil intent, or anything disgraceful. Lastly, it is most clearly proved by the fact that at the Party Congress itself, prior to the elections, the minority of the *Iskra* organisation entered into discussions with the majority regarding this false rumour, and Comrade Martov even stated his views in a letter which was read at a meeting of all the twenty-four delegates of the majority! It never even occurred to the majority to conceal from the minority of the *Iskra* organisation that such a list was circulating at the Congress: Comrade Lensky told Comrade Deutsch about it (see the court decision); Comrade Plekhanov spoke of it to Comrade Zasulich ("You can't talk to her, she seems to take me for Trepov,"[125] Comrade Plekhanov said to me, and this joke, repeated many times after, is one more indication of the abnormal state of excitement the minority were in); and I informed Comrade Martov that his assurance (that the list was not his, Martov's) was quite enough for me (League

Minutes, p. 64). Comrade Martov (together with Comrade Starover, if I remember rightly) thereupon sent a note to us on the Bureau which ran roughly as follows: "The majority of the *Iskra* editorial board request to be allowed to attend the private meeting of the majority in order to refute the defamatory rumours which are being circulated about them." Plekhanov and I replied on the same slip of paper, saying: "We have not heard any defamatory rumours. If a meeting of the editorial board is required, that should be arranged separately. Lenin, Plekhanov." At the meeting of the majority held that evening, we related this to all the twenty-four delegates. To preclude all possible misunderstanding, it was decided to elect delegates from all the twenty-four of us jointly and send them to talk it over with Comrades Martov and Starover. The delegates elected, Comrades Sorokin and Sablina, went and explained that nobody was specifically attributing the list to Martov or Starover, particularly after their statement, and that it was of absolutely no importance whether this list originated with the minority of the *Iskra* organisation or with the Congress minority not belonging to that organisation. After all, we could not start an investigation at the Congress and question all the delegates about this list! But Comrades Martov and Starover, not content with this, sent us a letter containing a formal denial (see Section J). This letter was read out by our representatives, Comrades Sorokin and Sablina, at a meeting of the twenty-four. It might have seemed that the incident could be considered closed—not in the sense that the origin of the list had been ascertained (if anybody cared about that), but in the sense that the idea had been completely dispelled that there was any intention of "injuring the minority", or of "defaming" anybody, or of resorting to a "forgery in the interests of a factional struggle". Yet at the League Congress (pp. 63-64) Comrade Martov again brought forth this sordid story conjured up by a morbid imagination, and, what is more, made a number of *incorrect statements* (evidently due to his wrought-up condition). He said that the list included a Bundist. That was untrue. All the witnesses in the arbitration court, including Comrades Stein and Byelov, declared that the list had Comrade Egorov in it, Comrade Martov said that the list implied a coalition

in the sense of a direct agreement. That was untrue, as I have already explained. Comrade Martov said that there were no other lists originating with the minority of the *Iskra* organisation (and likely to repel the majority of the Congress from this minority), "not even forged ones". That was untrue, for the entire majority at the Party Congress knew of no less than three lists which originated with Comrade Martov and Co., and which did not meet with the approval of the majority (see the leaflet by Lyadov and Gorin).

Why, in general, was Comrade Martov so incensed by this list? Because it signified a swing towards the Right wing of the Party. At that time Comrade Martov cried out against a "false accusation of opportunism" and expressed indignation at the "misrepresentation of his political position"; but now everybody can see that the question whether this list belonged to Comrade Martov and Comrade Deutsch could have had no political significance whatever, and that *essentially*, *apart from this or any other list*, the accusation was not false, but true, and the characterisation of his political position absolutely correct.

The upshot of this painful and artificial affair of the celebrated false list is as follows:

1) One cannot but join Comrades Gorin and Lyadov in describing as unworthy Comrade Martov's attempt to asperse Comrade Gusev's honour by crying about a "disgraceful fact of the forgery of a list in the interests of a factional struggle".

2) With the object of creating a healthier atmosphere and of sparing Party members the necessity of taking every morbid extravagance seriously, it would perhaps be advisable at the Third Congress to adopt a rule such as is contained in the Rules of Organisation of the German Social-Democratic Labour Party. Paragraph 2 of these Rules runs: "No person can belong to the Party who is guilty of a gross violation of the principles of the Party programme or of dishonourable conduct. The question of continued membership in the Party shall be decided by a court of arbitration convened by the Party Executive. One half of the judges shall be nominated by the person demanding the expulsion, the other half by the person whose expulsion is demanded; the chairman shall be appointed by the Party Executive. An appeal against a

decision of the court of arbitration may be made to the Control Commission or to the Party Congress." Such a rule might serve as a good weapon against all who frivolously level accusations (or spread rumours) of dishonourable conduct. If there were such a rule, all such accusations would once and for all be classed as indecent slanders unless their author had the moral courage to come forward *before the Party* in the role of accuser and seek for a verdict from the competent Party institution.

LETTER TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Dear Friends,

Boris has informed me that five Central Committee members (he, Loshad, Valentin, Mitrofan,[126] and Travinsky) have passed a vote of censure on me for having voted in the Council in favour of a congress and for agitating on behalf of a congress. I request each of the five to confirm this fact or to explain it to me, for I cannot conceive *how* a member of a body can be censured for doing what it is his right and duty to do. You may not agree with him, you may recall I him from the Council, but to "censure" him is strange indeed; for as long as I sat on the Council *I could not do otherwise* than vote in accordance with my convictions. And to agitate for a congress is likewise the right of every Party member and every member of the Central Committee, so that the powers of a Party body in relation to its members do not entitle it (either formally *or morally*) to restrict any of us in the exercise of that right. All I am obliged to do is to announce that half or more of the Central Committee are opposed to a congress.

As regards the Council, the matter has now been arranged as follows: Boris has been appointed (by five votes, he says) in place of Kol. My resignation (he says) has not been accepted. I withdraw my resignation and remain on the Council. As far as that is concerned, the conflict has been settled, and I only ask for an explanation of the "censure".

But far more important is the following conflict: Boris has informed me that he finds it impossible to remain a member of the Central Committee unless I (1) stop agitating for a congress, and (2) work against a congress. Naturally, I can do neither of these things, and I have accordingly told Boris that I shall discuss the matter with *all* my colleagues on the Central Committee and shall then *let him have my reply*, which will say whether *I am* resigning from

the Central Committee or not. As regards this conflict, which threatens to lead to the resignation of one of us (or even of one of the two sections of the Central Committee), I consider it of the utmost importance to discuss it thoroughly, without heat, and with a proper knowledge of the facts. I think Boris is much to blame for having presented his "ultimatum" without reading either the *Council minutes* (highly important!) or my pamphlet,* in which I set forth the *principles* on which I take my stand. Is it wise to aggravate the conflict without going to the bottom of the matter, which is a highly complicated one?? Is it wise to aggravate it when *basically* we agree (at any rate, the declaration written in the name of the Central Committee by Valentin, which was sent to us but *did not reach us* and which Boris told me about, stresses our common stand on principles of organisation, as against the opportunist stand of the minority)? Even as regards the congress, we differ only as to the date, for Boris has no objection to a congress being convened six months or a year later. See what emerges. According to the Rules, there should be a congress next summer; I consider that *at best*, assuming that our agitation is an unqualified success, it will be *impossible* to convene one in under six months, and most likely it will take even longer. It turns out that our "difference" boils down to a matter of the date! Does it make sense to part company over that? Look at the matter from the purely political angle: Boris declares that agitation for a congress is incompatible with building up positive work, that the former is injurious to the latter. I do not agree that they are incompatible; but even assuming that Boris is right, what would be the result if he succeeded in getting those who disagree with him about this to resign from the Central Committee? The result would *unquestionably* be to intensify the agitation enormously, to exacerbate relations between the majority and the Central Committee, and to aggravate for Boris himself the business—which he finds so unpleasant—of working against a congress. Is there any sense in aggravating matters in this way? Boris says that he is against a congress because it would mean a split. I think he misjudges the position as it is today

* See pp. 201-423 of this volume.—*Ed.*

and as it is likely to be tomorrow; but even if he is right, by securing our resignation from the Central Committee he would enormously *increase* the likelihood of a split, because he would undoubtedly be aggravating the situation. To aggravate the conflict within the Central Committee would be unwise from any angle.

Essentially, the *only* difference of opinion between Boris and me is that he considers a split at the Third Congress inevitable, while I consider it unlikely. We both believe that the majority at the Third Congress will be on our side. Boris thinks that the minority will leave the Party: neither we nor Martov, he feels, will be able to restrain the extremists. I think that he fails to take account of the swiftly moving situation, which today is not what it was yesterday, and tomorrow will not be what it is today. Boris sees the situation as it existed yesterday (when the squabbling pushed principles into the background, when there *could be* hopes of smoothing things over, of toning them down, of personal concessions being successful). That situation exists no longer, as I show at length in my pamphlet, and as is shown by the general dissatisfaction with the new *Iskra* (even on the part of such mild people as the writers' group of the Central Committee in Russia). The situation today is different: principles are pushing the squabbling into the background. Today it is no longer co-optation that is the issue not by any means. The issue is *whether the new "Iskra" is right in principle*. And it is the dissatisfaction with the new *Iskra*'s principles, which is bound to keep growing, that is producing an ever stronger agitation for a congress. That is what Boris does not appreciate. Tomorrow the squabbling will recede even further into the background. On the one hand, the minority will not be in a position, morally and politically, to quit (the moment for that which existed after the League Congress is *gone*). On the other hand, as I *already declared at the Council* (I once more beg you all to be sure to read the Council minutes before rushing at this difficult problem), we by no means refuse to make terms. I say to all and sundry that I for one am *absolutely* prepared (1) to give all the old editors a guarantee that everything they write will be published at the Party's expense, without alteration or comment; (2) to suspend until the Fourth

Congress the Central Committee's right to appoint and dismiss members of the local committees; (3) to guarantee, in a special resolution, the more sensitively-felt rights of the *minority*, and even (4) *conditionally*, *as a last resort*, to make *Iskra* neutral, keeping its columns free of mutual controversy (with the help of a commission of practical workers from both sides, etc.). I think that under such circumstances the minority at the Third Congress, being only a small minority, will not venture to withdraw from the Congress. I think that at the Third Congress we shall, by formally adopted decisions, finally dispel the fantasy of a "state of siege" and bring about a position where controversies will take their course *without interfering with positive work*. And that, after all, is the crux of the whole crisis, that is what I tried to secure at the Council, and four-fifths of the congress are bound to support it! I know very well that this is what Boris wants too, but there is no achieving it without a congress. Boris is mistaken in thinking that we started the onslaught (by agitating for a congress) and that put the minority's back up. Quite the contrary: it was only after a number of letters and appeals, prior to the Council and at the Council itself, that we pronounced for a congress, and by the agitation we have only shown our strength a little. Whoever does not want to land in the ridiculous (if not worse) position of Plekhanov (read his article in No. 65) must frankly and openly take up a stand in the struggle. Nothing can now stop the agitation for a congress. One must be tolerant—neutral, if you will—towards it, and then it will not interfere with positive work. To rage against this agitation is useless.

I earnestly request a reply from *each* of the Central Committee members. It is essential to come to an understanding and clear up the matter, so that we may work together, not without some differences, perhaps, but without conflicts and without attempts to oust one another.

Written on May 13 (26), 1904

Published, with some changes, in the pamphlet *The Fight for a Congress*, by N. Shakhov, Geneva, 1904

Published according to the manuscript

STATEMENT BY THREE MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

The three Central Committee members Glebov, Zverev,[127] *and Lenin*, having discussed the differences within the Central Committee, have arrived at the following conclusions, which shall be communicated to all members of the Central Committee:

1) The differences arose over the question of summoning a congress. After Lenin and Vasilyev had declared in the Party Council in favour of a congress, the majority of the Central Committee (by five votes to four, *Travinsky*'s vote having been transferred to Comrade *Glebov*) declared against a congress. *Lenin* and *Vasilyev* thereupon announced their provisional resignation from the Council. This conflict has now been adjusted* by having *Glebov* and *Lenin* serve as the Central Committee's representatives on the Council.

2) Comrade Glebov has informed Comrade Lenin that he, Glebov, will resign from the Central Committee unless Lenin gives up agitating (outside the Central Committee) for a congress and works against a congress. Lenin, considering such an attitude to the question wrong and impermissible in principle, states that he will canvass the opinion of each of the Central Committee members and will then give his reply, which can only be whether he, Lenin, is resigning from the Central Committee or not. (What applies to Lenin likewise applies, from Comrade *Glebov*'s standpoint, to all Central Committee members sharing Lenin's view.)

3) To give an accurate picture of the differences within the Central Committee at the present time, it should be

---

* Concerning this see the letter by Lenin appended hereto, which has been approved by Comrade *Glebov*. (Pp. 424-27 of this volume.—*Ed.*)

stated that Comrade *Valentin* and Comrade *Nikitich*,[128] in the declaration written by them in March and approved by Comrade *Glebov*, stated (1) that they were emphatically opposed to co-optation at the demand of the minority; (2) that they shared the views on organisation set out in the pamphlet *What Is To Be Done?* and (3) that they, or at least two of them, did not approve of the opportunist position of certain Party writers. As regards a congress, Comrade Glebov is convinced (1) that the difference on this question is causing a duality of policy in the Central Committee, and (2) that a congress may lead to a split. It is because he does not wish to assume responsibility for this that he declares himself bound to resign from the Central Committee. Lenin, on the other hand, considers that the Central Committee, being a body accountable to the congress, must be neutral in the matter of the congress and allow all its members freedom of agitation. As to a split, it is unlikely, for the majority are prepared in principle to make terms at the congress, even to the point of neutralising *Iskra*.

4) Pending settlement of this conflict all official steps and statements by Comrade *Glebov* and Comrade Lenin on behalf of the Central Committee shall only be undertaken by their common consent and over their joint signatures.

Central Committee members
Glebov
Zverev
Lenin

Geneva, May 26, 1904

Published, with some changes, in the pamphlet *The Fight for a Congress*, by N. Shakhov, Geneva, 1904

Published according to the manuscript

TO THE PARTY

I. Answer the tittle-tattle about Bonapartism. Nonsense. Beneath dignity to reply. Freedom of agitation for congress. No stand by Central Committee *qua talis*,* unlike Central Organ.

It's the committees that must decide, and the Central Committee invites them to weigh the pros and cons calmly and carefully, hear both sides, study the documents without undue haste, with an awareness of Party duty.

II. Call for positive work. Importance of present juncture: the war. Appeal of Central Committee delegates in the Council.** Repeat. Ideological struggle must not interfere with positive work. Impermissible forms of struggle. Differences and divergencies should not be exaggerated.

III. Attempt gradually to establish passable relations. (Karl Kautsky's appeal.[129])

Central Committee proposes terms for a *modus vivendi*:

1) The right for all *six* to publish everything at the Party's expense.

2) *Idem* for writers' group with representation at congress.

3) Suspension for a prolonged period of the appointment and dismissal of members.

4) Guarantee for a prolonged period of certain rights of the minority.

---

* As such.—*Ed.*

** See pp. 145-47 of this volume.—*Ed.*

5) Guarantee that *all* Party publications will be distributed and delivered at a committee's wish.

6) Truce for at least six months; the finale—a 16-page pamphlet shared half-and-half. The minority to have the last word.

Written after May 15 (28), 1904

First published in 1930
in *Lenin Miscellany XV*

Published according
to the manuscript

SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE R.S.D.L.P.

MAY 31 (JUNE 13) AND JUNE 5 (18), 1904[130]

First published in 1930
in *Lenin Miscellany XV*

Published according to the text
of the Council Minutes

1

SPEECHES CONCERNING AN INTER-PARTY CONFERENCE MAY 31 (JUNE 13)

I

Does the Council wish to have the Polish Socialist Party proposal read out? (*Plekhanov*: "Yes, it would be desirable.") "The Polish Socialist Party has always believed in the need for close association between the Polish and Russian socialist camps with a view to making the struggle against the common enemy—tsarism—more effective. Up to the present this was unfortunately not possible, with resultant inconveniences for both sides in their practical work. We therefore warmly welcome the re-establishment of the R.S.D.L.P. as a united whole, with central institutions responsible for all its activities, since this allows the first step to be taken towards what has long been our purpose. We realise that the prolonged absence of regular contacts between you and ourselves has given rise to a number of mutual misunderstandings and dissonances, which must be settled and smoothed out before the final framing of the desired agreement can be undertaken. Accordingly, our Central Working Committee has decided to propose to you that a conference should be held abroad at an early date at which delegates from your Party could discuss with three delegates of ours the possibilities and conditions for joint struggle by our two parties. The results of this conference could serve as the basis for an agreement to be concluded between the appropriate bodies of the R.S.D.L.P. and the P.S.P. Hoping for an early reply, etc."

In reply to this letter the Central Committee asked the P.S.P. for fuller particulars as to the nature of the conference, the exact bodies to be represented, and the proposed time and place. It also inquired how the P.S.P. would feel about having the Polish Social-Democrats take part.

The P.S.P. replied with the following letter:

"Dear Comrades,

"We were somewhat surprised by your letter, for it seems to us that the answers to the questions it asks are already contained in our original letter. The conference we propose would be of a preliminary nature, to explore the possibilities of closer association between our parties; it could, for example, work out the draft of a permanent agreement.

"Our three delegates to negotiate with you have been appointed by the Central Committee, which is between congresses the highest authority in our Party. Presumably the delegates you appoint to negotiate with us will represent the corresponding authority in your Party, or whatever body the powers to conduct such negotiations are vested in.

"We would propose meeting at some place abroad. The actual spot is a secondary matter, though Vienna would suit us best. The delegates have been appointed by our Central Committee to negotiate with your Party, and not the Social-Democratic Party of Poland and Lithuania, and there can therefore be no question of delegates from the latter participating."

Those are all the documents relating to the P.S.P. overtures to our Party. I for my part would say that, with the P.S.P. refusing to invite delegates from the Polish Social-Democrats to the projected conference, we cannot accept its proposal. As to the proposal of the Finns, we could consent in principle to a preliminary conference. Accordingly I think our resolution could be formulated as follows:

"The R.S.D.L.P. consents in principle to a preliminary conference with representatives of various revolutionary and opposition parties, with a view to reaching agreement on certain specific issues."

As regards Comrade Martov's proposal for a prior conference of Social-Democratic groups only, I doubt whether this is advisable, because besides the Bund, the Polish Social-Democrats, and the Proletariat Party,[131] there are

other Social-Democratic organisations in the border regions, which it would hardly be convenient to invite to the conference, while if not invited they might be offended.

II

Comrades Axelrod and Martov say the Letts have two groups. (*Martov*: "Two trends.") The way it comes out now is that we are to hold a conference with the one that gravitates towards the Socialist-Revolutionaries and *Osvobozhdeniye* and inclines towards terrorism (according to Comrade Axelrod), while the other group is very weak. We must find out more exactly how matters stand. If they are merely two trends, that is no concern of ours and we are joining forces with what is the Lettish Party. But if they are distinct groups, we may land in a very awkward position by choosing the wrong one. We must first find out both their strength and their complexion. As for the Caucasus, it should, I think, be brought into the conference. For that we must find out if there are Social-Democratic organisations there which could make common cause with us.

2

SPEECHES ON CO-OPTATION TO THE COMMITTEES AND THE RIGHT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE TO APPOINT NEW MEMBERS TO THEM
JUNE 5 (18)

I

In this resolution, irrespective of its practical conclusion, I would suggest altering the beginning. Since we cannot pass any decisions on the rights and wrongs of the Moscow dispute for lack of sufficient information, the resolution ought not to be linked up either with any disputes there have been. I would in general propose that where one part of an organisation lodges a complaint against the other, the other part should be notified, so as to have a chance to put its case too. For example, as regards the Moscow dispute things were not as Comrade Martov says they were. According to my information, three out of the five members wanted to co-opt two new members to the committee, and the rest were willing, only provided another member from their side was co-opted too, which would still have maintained—and even strengthened—the predominant trend. It was only the majority's categorical refusal to agree to this combination that made the Moscow comrades want to invoke the Rules. And while one Central Committee member was in favour of the committee majority's interpretation of the Rules, another Central Committee representative opposed it.

I say this only by way of a statement of fact and to have it recorded in the minutes. And so, I move that the beginning of Comrade Martov's resolution be altered so that it will lay down a definite ruling to operate henceforth, in

the future. As for the ruling itself, I would suggest that all fractions be treated as a full unit.

II

This incident goes to show anew that in cases where one side lodges a complaint, the other side should at once be notified, so that it may offer its explanations. Only in that case shall we be in a position to adopt appropriate decisions on the disputes. According to our information, what happened was this. The Nikolayev Committee consisted of people belonging to the majority. Then all of them were arrested. Thereupon the Central Committee, or possibly a representative of it, appointed three members to the Nikolayev Committee, among them two who had not previously been in Nikolayev and one who had already worked there before and possessed numerous contacts. It may be that at the moment of the arrests this third one was not in Nikolayev either. When the Central Committee's candidates arrived in Nikolayev, they already found there two minority members who wanted to work, and agreed to admit them. So the fact is that the three co-opted the two. That is how it was. To verify it, inquiries can be made of the committee members, if they have not been arrested yet.... (*Martov*: "They already have....")

According to our information, the facts are quite different from what has been represented, and to my way of thinking the two majority members were right in acting as they did. The place where the candidates named by the Central Committee happen to be cannot serve as a reason for not admitting them. I again suggest passing a resolution to the effect that in cases of complaints both sides shall be given a hearing. As to the actual point at issue, I disagree with Comrade Martov's resolution in principle. The Central Committee cannot be deprived of the right to appoint its own candidates to the committees. Of course, all authority is open to abuse, but to combat that evil there is control—in the form of the press, for example, or action by the Council, etc. I join in the view that in the co-optation of new members the question of group distinctions should not be allowed to have any place. I do not know so far of a single case of the

Central Committee forcing anyone upon a committee. All this talk of forcible appointment causes it to be very careful, and sheer tact restrains it from exercising its right.

III

There are a few comments I want to make. First of all I should like to point out that the claim that two of the candidates were sent to the Nikolayev Committee from Odessa or even by the Odessa Committee is based on some sort of misunderstanding. Most likely there was a Central Committee agent in Odessa, who duly took steps to re-establish the Nikolayev Committee after the arrests. At any rate we know quite definitely that these three people were appointed to it by the Central Committee, not anybody else. I say this in passing, so as to remove any possible misunderstandings on this score. Secondly, Comrade Martov's statement that he too does not know of a single case of the Central Committee forcing its candidates on local committees is very important, particularly as the editorial board, through its agents, has full information about what goes on in the Party. As to the young woman who Comrade Martov says demanded to be co-opted to the Moscow Committee without a ballot, that example can hardly carry any weight, for we do not know either the circumstances of the case or the extent of her authorisation; and anyway, she was in fact admitted to the committee only after a ballot. Thirdly, I also think it very important to note Comrade Martov's remark that in normal conditions the Central Committee's power of influencing the composition of the local committees cannot be restricted. It has been said here that people accuse the Central Committee of artificially "manufacturing" the committees; but then, accusations of a similar nature are not infrequently to be heard against the Central Organ. And since, as acknowledged by Comrade Martov himself, there are in reality no such cases, and the whole thing comes down to no more than the *possibility* of them, I don't think that is a sufficient reason for restricting the Central Committee's powers, particularly as in practice the mere fact of such an approach will arouse a certain resentment. I am quite ready to concur in Comrade Martov's opinion that the two members of the

Nikolayev Committee whom he speaks of are very valuable revolutionary workers—but then, they *were*, in point of fact, admitted to the committee.

In general, one may say that, precisely because of the various imputations that have been current recently, the Central Committee has acted with the greatest circumspection and has been in no haste to avail itself of its right to appoint new members to the local organisations. And I have nothing against these cautious tactics being formally laid down for a time, by way of precluding and putting an end to false rumours about the Central Committee.

As regards our point about notifying the other side in cases of a complaint being lodged, I move the following resolution: "The Party Council requests Party organisations, in all cases of a complaint or inquiry being addressed to it by any part of an organisation, immediately and fully to notify the other part of the organisation of the contents of that complaint or inquiry, for in order to settle disputes the Party Council must have a statement of both sides of the case. The same applies to complaints by one organisation against another."[132]

3

SPEECH ON THE NEWSPAPER *RASSVET*[133] JUNE 5 (18)

Unfortunately, there is not very much I can say in defence of *Rassvet*. So far this experiment does have to be acknowledged not altogether successful. Bonch-Bruyevich is not an experienced journalist and was entitled to expect help from other Party writers. This help was not forthcoming, and under the circumstances it is not fair to put all the blame for the failure on him alone. It is only five months so far since the beginning of publication. The paper may still get on its feet, particularly if other writers come to its aid. Something has, after all, been accomplished: contacts among the sects are broadening, both in America and in Russia. It should also be mentioned that financially this publication does not tax the Party's resources, since it is financed out of other funds. I think closing it down would be premature and move that the experiment be continued.

WHAT WE ARE WORKING FOR

(TO THE PARTY)[134]

A private meeting was recently held of nineteen members of the R.S.D.L.P. (among them Second Congress delegates, members of committees and other Party organisations, and revolutionaries not belonging to any Party organisation). This conference of persons who are at one in sharing the views of the Second Party Congress majority discussed our Party crisis and ways and means of overcoming it, and decided to address the following appeal to all Russian Social-Democrats.

Comrades, the grave crisis in our Party is dragging on interminably. The strife keeps growing, breeding dispute after dispute, disastrously hampering positive work all along the line, and increasingly destroying the bond between the Party and its Central Organ, which has definitely become the organ of a circle and mainly an émigré circle at that. That organ is manufacturing differences, ferreting out old questions that have long been settled and are a thing of the past; it coquettes with the consistent opportunists and betrays incredible confusion in its thinking; it shamelessly ignores the Party Congress, its debates and decisions, and mocks at Party organisation and discipline and at the majority of the revolutionaries who created the Party and are doing the work on the spot; basing itself on unprovable allegations and unauthenticated anonymous reports, it carpingly and maliciously crows over shortcomings in the work of the committees of the Party's revolutionary wing. That is what we are getting from the new *Iskra*, which has become a fountainhead of strife; that is what we are getting from the editorial board which the Congress rejected, and which has taken

advantage of personal concessions to start new squabbles over co-optation and disrupt the Party.

Yet the historical juncture Russia is now passing through calls for the exertion of all our Party's energies. The revolutionary unrest among the working class and the ferment among other sections of the population is growing apace; the war and crisis, starvation and unemployment are undermining the foundations of the autocracy ever more deeply; a shameful end to the shameful war is not far off, and it is bound to heighten the revolutionary unrest still more, it will bring the working class face to face with its enemies, and will require the most vigorous offensive action on the part of the Social-Democrats. A united Party organisation, a consistent revolutionary Marxist line, decent and dignified bounds to the internal struggle in the Party so as to prevent its becoming disruptive and hampering positive work—these are urgent demands of the entire working-class movement of Russia, and they must be satisfied immediately and at all costs, or the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party will risk completely forfeiting its good name and all the influence it has won.

The first step towards this end, in our opinion, is to establish the fullest clarity, frankness, and outspokenness in the relations between the various groups, trends, and shades in our Party. There are times, to be sure, when in the interests of the work minor differences should be passed over in silence; but to think that the present is such a moment in our Party's life would be a most deplorable and unpardonable mistake. Personal concessions to the minority did not check the strife, the disputed issues have now been put point-blank, a direct challenge has been hurled at the entire Party, and only flabby and ignorant individuals can dream of bringing back the irrevocable past, of concealing, withholding, glossing over or shutting their eyes to anything. No, the policy of washing one's hands, the policy of passive abstention, the policy of *laisser faire, laisser passer* has already proved its utter futility in our Party struggle. Any further evasion, equivocation or concealment would be not only fruitless and contemptible, but downright criminal. We are taking the initiative of making a frank and full statement of our programme of struggle within the Party;

and we call on the representatives of each and every shade in the Russian Social-Democratic movement, whether already belonging to the Party or intending to join it under certain conditions, to do likewise. Only complete clarity and frankness can furnish all class-conscious workers and all members of the Party with the material for a rational and firm decision of the disputed Party issues.

We uphold the standpoint of the Second Party Congress majority. We consider that the erroneous position of the Congress minority, and their determination to persist in this position regardless of the will of the Party, was the prime cause of all subsequent mistakes and of all the strife. The error in that position was twofold: firstly, the old editorial circle of *Iskra* could look for support to no one but the opportunist wing of our Congress and our Party; secondly, this alliance with acknowledged opportunists (who were, and are, headed by Comrade Akimov) took final shape and became a Party division only over such an issue as the elections to the central bodies. From the first error there logically and inevitably followed all that confusion as to principle and all that opportunist wobbling which we find in the thinking of the new *Iskra*, insofar as that thinking can be considered to be based on principle at all. From the second error followed their insistence on the old editorial circle against the will of the Party, their defence and justification of the circle spirit as against the party spirit, their employment in our controversies of methods only associated with philistine squabbling and circle wrangling, but certainly not with a struggle among Party members who respect their Party and themselves. From the first error it followed as a logical and inevitable consequence that those who rallied around the minority included all who tend towards opportunism, all who want to drag the Party back and be revenged for injuries done by the revolutionary Social-Democrats to their opponents, all who express the intellectualist trend in our movement, all who incline towards the intellectual's anarchistic rejection of organisation and discipline. From the second error followed the supremacy of an émigré circle over the majority of the Party workers in Russia and the orgy of specifically émigré brawling which among the minority takes the place of methods of persuasion.

There is no longer any room for doubt. No one who is a Party member not only in name, no one who really wants to uphold the vital interests of our working-class movement, can hesitate now. The minority have declared war and are fighting all along the line; and we accept the challenge and declare that the war will be relentless, a war to a finish. We are fighting against the circle spirit in general, and the old editorial circle in particular, on behalf of the party spirit. We are fighting in the interests of the working-class movement in Russia against émigré squabbling. We are fighting on behalf of the revolutionary proletarian trend in our movement against the opportunist intellectualist trend. We are fighting for the consistent revolutionary Social-Democratic line against vacillation, zigzags, and reversions to the long-obsolete past. We are fighting for a close-knit Party organisation of our working-class vanguard and against intellectualist license, disorganisation, and anarchy. We are fighting for respect for Party congresses and against spineless veering about, against divergence of word and deed, against contempt for agreements and decisions adopted by common consent. We are fighting for publicity in the Party as against the new *Iskra*'s and the new Party Council's tactics of keeping their minutes a secret and gagging the majority.

From our programme of struggle the methods and immediate aims of that struggle follow of themselves. The first method is all-embracing agitation, spoken and written, on the widest possible scale. This point would not be worth dwelling on were it not that the minority's squabbling has given rise in our Party to the notorious "conciliatory trend" (so justly ridiculed by the Ekaterinoslav Committee and many other organisations), which hides its head under its wing and preaches that the majority should cease its struggle against the minority. The existence of such childish views, unworthy of any adult Party member, can only be attributed to faint-heartedness, weariness, or remoteness from reality. One may and should demand that the party struggle be confined within party bounds, one may and should use other means besides exhortation to secure it; but the proposal to cease upholding what was upheld before the entire Party at the Congress and what is deemed essential in the Party's

vital interests—such a proposal, if anyone dared to make it publicly, would only earn universal contempt.

The second, and decisive, means of struggle, in our opinion, is a Party congress. We unreservedly support those committees which demand that the Third Party Congress be summoned immediately. We consider it our duty, in particular, to deal with the hypocritical arguments which the editors of the new *Iskra* and their overt and covert abettors bring against a congress, while assiduously concealing these arguments (which are scarcely consistent with Party duty) from the eyes of the world (as is being done by the League Abroad and the *Iskra* editors, whose agitation has only partly been brought into the open and exposed by the committees). First argument: a congress would lead to a split. The very fact that the minority employ such an argument demonstrates the entire falsity of their position. For in saying that, the minority admit that the Party is against them, that their émigré circle has forced itself upon the Party and manages to maintain itself only because of the remoteness of Russia and the external difficulties under which the real revolutionaries have to work. Those who are honest towards the Party and sincerely anxious to work together will not fear a congress, but desire it, in order to put an end to the strife, bring the Party and its official bodies into conformity, and remove unseemly ambiguity. Those who hold up the bogey of a split only make it obvious that their consciences are not clear. Without the subordination of minority to majority there can be no working-class party at all worthy of the name; and if mutual (not one-sided) concessions are necessary, if arrangements and agreements between different parts of the Party have sometimes to be made, they are only possible and permissible at a congress. No self-respecting revolutionary will want to remain in a party that manages to hold together only because a party congress is artificially put off.

Second argument: a reconciliation is still possible without a congress. What this opinion is based on is unknown. Its proponents talk and act only behind the scenes. Is it not time to abandon these back-stage intrigues, which only increase mutual distrust, intensify animosity, and obscure the situation? Why is it that no one ventures to come forward publicly with a plan of reconciliation?—is it not because, the posi-

tion being what it is, no such plan is conceivable which would not at best provoke laughter? Those who understand peace to mean the co-optation of minority favourites to the Central Committee do not want peace, but intensification of the majority's struggle; they fail to understand that the struggle in the Party has once and for all outgrown the limits of a mere squabble over co-optation. Those who understand it to mean the cessation of controversy and struggle are reverting to the old circle mentality: there will always be controversy and struggle in a party, all that is necessary is to confine them within Party bounds—and that only a congress can do. In short, whichever way you turn this slogan of peace without a congress, however you revolve this idea of reconciling the contending sides without satisfying either, you will find that this brilliant idea only reflects confusion and emptiness of mind, it is the idea of people who do not know what they want and what they ought to strive for. If even the plan of so influential (formerly influential) a man as Plekhanov—to quench the fire at the very start by making the maximum personal concessions—suffered a complete fiasco, can one seriously speak of such plans now?

Third argument: the congress may be manipulated. The St. Petersburg Committee has already replied to this argument by calling it an insinuation.[135] And this statement by a local committee was a well-deserved slap in the face for those who make sneaking charges without a shadow of fact to support them, although the minority control both the supreme Council and the press organ of the Party, so that they have not only the means of publicly exposing any suspected abuses, but also the means of administrative correction and pressure. Everyone knows that if there were any such facts the minority would have trumpeted them forth long ago, and that the recent Council resolution, which shows that there have been no such facts in the past, rules out their possibility in the future.[136] By resorting to this argument *Iskra* only shows yet again that instead of controversy it now engages in fishwives' abuse, and compels us to turn to all Party members and ask: Have we in fact a party? Do we want to follow the Socialist-Revolutionaries' example and rest content with a facade and signboard, or is it not rather our duty to tear down all shams?

FROM MARX TO MAO NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

Fourth argument: the differences have not yet been clarified. The best answer to that argument is supplied by the new *Iskra* itself, a study of which will show the Party that differences are being manufactured, not clarified, and that the confusion is growing endlessly. Only a congress, at which all comrades can openly and fully state their wishes, can bring clarity into these incredibly confused issues and this confused situation.

Fifth argument: a congress would divert forces and funds from positive work. This argument, too, sounds like a dismal mockery, for no greater diversion of forces and funds can be imagined than that which the strife is producing.

No, all the arguments against a congress testify either to hypocrisy or to ignorance of the position and pusillanimous doubts of the Party's strength. Our Party is again very sick, but it has strength enough to recover and become worthy of the Russian proletariat. As the methods of cure we would recommend the three following reforms, which we shall work for by every available loyal means.

Firstly, the editorship of the Central Organ to be handed over to the adherents of the Second Party Congress majority.

Secondly, the local organisation abroad (the League) to be subordinated in fact to the all-Russia central organisation (the Central Committee).

Thirdly, the Rules to provide guarantees that Party struggles are conducted by Party methods.

Regarding these three fundamental points of our programme little remains to be added after what has already been said. That the old editorial board of *Iskra* has now palpably demonstrated its unfitness, we consider incontrovertible. It is not *Iskra*-ism that has outlived its day, as Comrade Martov professed to discover after his defeat in the elections, but the old *Iskra* editorial board. It would be sheer hypocrisy not to say that bluntly now, after the challenges this circle has flung down to the entire Party. On the abnormal position of the organisation abroad, which has converted itself into a second (if not a third) leadership and completely ignores the Party's Central Committee, there is no need to expatiate at length. Lastly, the entire experience of the post-Congress struggle compels us to give thought to the juridical position of the minority (any minority) in our Party. That

experience shows, we are convinced, that it is necessary to include in the Party Rules guarantees of minority rights, so that the dissatisfactions, irritations and conflicts that will constantly and unavoidably arise may be diverted from the accustomed philistine channels of rows and squabbling into the still unaccustomed channels of a constitutional and dignified struggle for one's convictions. As one of these essential guarantees, we propose that the minority be allowed one or more writers' groups, with the right to be represented at congresses and with complete "freedom of speech". In general, the widest guarantees should be given as regards publication of Party literature criticising the activities of the central Party institutions. The committees should be given the right to receive (through the general Party transport system) the particular Party publications they desire. The Central Committee's right to influence the personal composition of the committees otherwise than by advice should, until the Fourth Congress, be suspended. We do not here elaborate our proposals in detail, for we are not compiling draft Rules, but only a general programme of struggle. We consider it highly important that the arrangements for publication of minority literature which the Central Committee proposed to the minority of the Second Congress should be incorporated in the Rules, in order that dissatisfaction may find seemly forms of expression, that the foolish fantasy of a state of siege (invented by the heroes of co-optation) may be finally and completely dispelled, and that the inevitable internal struggles in the Party may not interfere with positive work.

We must teach our minority to fight about the personal composition of the central bodies only at congresses, and not hamper our work after congresses by squabbling; we must achieve this if our Party is not to perish. Lastly, in this general programme we shall only briefly mention certain specific amendments we would wish to see made in the Rules, 9, to wit: the conversion of the Council from a tripartite arbitration body into a body elected by the Congress amendment of Paragraph 1 of the Rules along the lines advocated by the Second Congress majority, with the inclusion among Party organisations of all workers' organisations and all groups of Russian Social-Democrats which had an indepen-

dent existence during the circle period and which desire to join the Party, etc., etc.

In putting forward this programme of our struggle within the Party, we invite all Party organisations and the representatives of all shades in the Party to make a statement of their own programmes, so as to permit of gradual, serious, circumspect, and judicious preparation for a congress.

We have no Party—the conspirators in our editorial palace coup said to themselves, banking on the remoteness of Russia, the frequent changes of workers there, and on their own indispensability. Our Party is coming into being!—say we, seeing the committees awakening to active intervention, seeing the growing political understanding of the advanced workers. Our Party is coming into being; we have ever more numerous young forces capable both of reinvigorating and of replacing decrepit literary bodies; we have revolutionaries, and their number is steadily growing, who prize the trend of the old *Iskra* that schooled them above any editorial circle. Our Party is coming into being, and no subterfuges or delays, no senile malicious vituperation of the new *Iskra* can hold back the decided and final verdict of this Party.

From these new forces in our Party we derive our certainty of victory.

Written in July 1904

First published in 1923 in the first edition of the *Collected Works*, Vol. V

Published according to the manuscript

TO THE PARTY

A private meeting was recently held of twenty-two members of the R.S.D.L.P.,[137] persons who are at one in sharing the views of the Second Party Congress majority. This conference discussed our Party crisis and ways and means of overcoming it, and decided to address the following appeal to all Social-Democrats of Russia:

Comrades, the grave crisis in our Party life is dragging on and on, and no end is in sight. The strife keeps growing, breeding dispute after dispute, and the Party's positive work all along the line is hampered by it to the utmost. The energies of the Party, still young and not yet consolidated, are being grievously dissipated.

Yet the present historical juncture makes vast demands on the Party, vaster than ever before. The revolutionary unrest among the working class is growing, and so is the ferment among other sections of society; the war and crisis, starvation and unemployment are with elemental and inevitable force undermining the foundations of the autocracy. A shameful end to the shameful war is not far off; and it is bound to heighten the revolutionary unrest still more, it is bound to bring the working class face to face with its enemies, and it will require of the Social-Democrats tremendous effort, a colossal exertion of energy to organise the last decisive fight against the autocracy.

Is our Party equal to these demands in its present condition? Every honest man will unhesitatingly answer: No!

The unity of the Party has been deeply undermined, its internal struggle has gone beyond all party bounds. Organised discipline has been shaken to its very foundations, and

the Party's capacity for harmonious and united action is fading into a mere dream.

Nonetheless, we regard the Party's sickness as a matter of growing pains. We consider that the underlying cause of the crisis is the transition from the circle form to party forms of the life of Social-Democracy; the essence of its internal struggle is a conflict between the circle spirit and the party spirit. And, consequently, only by shaking off this sickness can our Party become a *real* party.

Under the name of the Party "minority" there have united a variety of elements who are linked by a conscious or unconscious desire to preserve circle relationships, pre-party forms of organisation.

Certain prominent figures in the more influential of the former circles, unaccustomed to the organisational self-limitations which Party discipline demands, are inclined from force of habit to confuse their own circle interests with the general Party interests, with which in the period of the circles they may in many cases indeed have coincided. A number of these people (part of the former *Iskra* editorial board, part of the former Organising Committee, the members of the former *Yuzhny Rabochy* group, and others) have been the leaders in a struggle on behalf of the circle spirit as against the party spirit.

Their allies proved to be all those elements who in theory or practice had deviated from the principles of strict Social-Democracy (the Economists, *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists, etc.), for only the circle atmosphere could preserve the ideological individuality and the influence of these elements, whereas the Party atmosphere threatened to absorb them or deprive them of all influence. Lastly, the opposition cadres have in general been drawn chiefly from those elements in our Party which consist primarily of intellectuals. The intelligentsia is always more individualistic than the proletariat, owing to its very conditions of life and work, which do not directly involve a large-scale combination of efforts, do not directly educate it through organised collective labour. The intellectual elements therefore find it harder to adapt themselves to the discipline of Party life, and those of them who are not equal to it naturally raise the standard of revolt against the necessary organisational limitations, and elevate

their instinctive anarchism to a principle of struggle, misnaming it a desire for "autonomy", a demand for "tolerance", etc.

The section of the Party abroad, where the circles are comparatively long-lived, where theoreticians of various shades are gathered, and where the intelligentsia decidedly predominates, was bound to be most inclined to the views of the "minority", which there as a result soon proved to be the actual majority. Russia, on the other hand, where the voice of the organised proletarians is louder, where the Party intelligentsia too, being in closer and more direct contact with them, is trained in a more proletarian spirit, and where the exigencies of the immediate struggle make the need for organised unity more strongly felt, came out in vigorous opposition to the circle spirit and the disruptive anarchistic tendencies. It gave quite clear expression to this attitude in numerous statements by committees and other Party organisations.

The struggle developed and grew increasingly acute. And to what lengths has it not gone!

The Party organ, of which the "minority" managed to seize control against the will of the Congress and thanks to personal concessions by the editors elected at the Congress, has become an organ of struggle against the Party!

It is now least of all the ideological leader of the Party in its struggle against the autocracy and the bourgeoisie, and most of all the leader of circle opposition to the party spirit. On the one hand, conscious that its fundamental position is indefensible from the standpoint of the Party's interests, it is busy searching out real and imaginary differences to provide an ideological screen for that position; and in this search, seizing on one slogan one day and on another the next, it is turning more and more for its material to the Right wing of the Party—the former opponents of *Iskra*—and drawing ever closer to them ideologically, trying to rehabilitate their theories, which the Party has rejected, and to turn the Party's ideological life back to what had already seemed the bygone period of vagueness of principle-and ideological wavering and vacillation. On the other hand, in an endeavour to undermine the moral influence of the Party majority, the new *Iskra* is even busier searching out

and denouncing mistakes on the part of their adherents, magnifying every real slip to monstrous proportions and trying to lay the blame for it on the Party majority as a whole, and seizing on every insinuation and piece of circle gossip that could prove damaging to its opponents, often enough not even troubling about their verisimilitude, let alone verifying their truth. In this course the men of the new *Iskra* have gone so far as to impute to members of the majority absolutely non-existent and in fact impossible crimes—and not only of a political nature (as when they accuse the Central Committee of forcibly ejecting individuals and breaking up organisations), but even crimes against common ethics (as when prominent figures in the Party are accused of forgery or moral complicity in forgery). Never before has the Party been immersed in such a sea of mud as the émigré minority have stirred up in the present controversy.

How could all this have happened?

The mode of action of each of the sides corresponded to its fundamental trend. The Party majority, anxious at all costs to preserve the Party's unity and organisational cohesion, fought only by loyal Party means, and more than once made concessions for the sake of reaching a reconciliation. The minority, following an anarchistic trend, showed no concern for peace and unity in the Party. They turned every concession into a weapon with which to continue the fight. Of all the minority's demands, only one has not now been met—that discord should be brought into the Party's Central Committee by the co-optation of minority men forcibly foisted upon it; yet the attacks of the minority are more vicious than ever. Having gained control of the Central Organ and the Party Council, the minority do not scruple to exploit in their circle interests the very discipline that they are in fact fighting.

The position has become intolerable, impossible; to allow it to drag on any longer would be a positive crime.

The first means of ending it, in our opinion, is complete clarity and frankness in Party relations. Amidst all this mud and fog there is no finding the true path. Every Party trend, every group must openly and definitely state what it thinks of the present position in the Party and what solution it desires. And that is what we are proposing to all

comrades, to the representatives of all shades in the Party. The practical way out of the crisis, we consider, is the immediate summoning of the Third Party Congress. It alone can clarify the situation, settle the disputes, and confine the struggle within proper bounds. Without a congress all we can expect is the progressive disintegration of the Party.

All the arguments brought against a congress are, we maintain, totally invalid.

We are told that a congress would lead to a split. But why? If the minority are irreconcilable in their anarchistic leanings, if they are prepared to have a split rather than submit to the Party, then they have already virtually seceded from it, and to defer the inevitable formal split would be more than irrational: chained together, both sides would more and more senselessly dissipate their strength in wrangling and squabbling, exhausting themselves morally and growing ever pettier and shallower. But we do not grant the possibility of a split. In face of the real strength of the organised Party, the anarchistically minded elements are bound to, and we think will, bow in submission, for by their very nature they are incapable of constituting an independent force. It is argued that a reconciliation is possible without a congress. But what sort of reconciliation? Total surrender to the circle spirit, co-optation of the minority to the Central Committee, which would complete the disorganisation of the central institutions. That would make the Party nothing but a name, and the Party majority would be compelled to start the struggle anew. And the minority? They have used every concession hitherto won only as a buttress for their disruptive activities; even from their point of view, the struggle has far outgrown the bounds of a squabble over co-optation; how then can they discontinue it? And still less will they do so if they have not gained all their demands. We are told that a congress will not achieve its purpose because the differences have not yet been clarified. But are they being clarified now, is not the confusion growing worse confounded? Differences are not being clarified, but deliberately searched out and manufactured, and only a congress can put an end to this. It alone, by bringing the contending parties face to face and making them frankly and definitely state their objects, can thoroughly clarify

the mutual relations between the different trends and forces in the Party. But, the minority declare, the congress may be manipulated by the breaking up of organisations. That is a lying insinuation, we reply, an insinuation unsupported by a single fact. If there were any such facts, we may be sure that the minority, being in possession of the Party organ, would have given them wide publicity, and, controlling the Party Council as they do, would have had ample opportunity to correct them. Lastly, the recent Council resolution, which points to no such facts in the past, completely rules out their possibility in the future. Who is now going to believe this far-fetched insinuation? Fears are expressed that a congress would divert too much of our forces and funds from positive work. What a bitter mockery! Can any greater diversion of forces and funds, be imagined than that which the strife is producing? A congress is imperative! It would be imperative even if Party life had proceeded normally, in view of the exceptional historical juncture and the new tasks with which the world events may confront the Party. It is doubly imperative in the present Party crisis, in order to find an honest and reasonable way out of it, to preserve the forces of the Party and uphold its honour and dignity.

What must the Third Congress do to put an end to the strife and restore Party life to normal? Most essential for this, in our view, are the following reforms, which we shall advocate and work for by every available loyal means:

I. The editorship of the Central Organ to be handed over to the adherents of the Party majority. The need for this, in view of the manifest inability of the present editorial board to conduct the Central Organ as required by the general Party interests, has been sufficiently demonstrated. The organ of a circle cannot and must not be the organ of the Party.

II. The relationship of the local organisation abroad (the League) to the all-Russia central body, the Central Committee, to be clearly defined. The present position of the League, which has converted itself into a second Party leadership and manages its associated groups without any control, completely ignoring the Central Committee, is obviously abnormal and must be ended.

III. The Rules to provide guarantees that Party struggles are conducted by Party methods. That this reform is essential is shown by the entire experience of the post-Congress struggle. It is necessary to include in the Party Rules guarantees of the rights of any minority, so that the disagreements, dissatisfactions, and irritations that will constantly and unavoidably arise may be diverted from the old, philistine, circle channels of rows and squabbling into the still unaccustomed channels of a constitutional and dignified struggle for one's convictions. Among the conditions needed for such a change we class the following. The minority should be allowed one or more writers' groups, with the right to be represented at congresses; the widest formal guarantees should be given as regards publication of Party literature criticising the activities of the central Party institutions. The right of the committees to receive (through the general Party transport system) the particular Party publications they desire should be formally recognised. The limits of the Central Committee's right to influence the personal composition of the committees should be precisely defined. We consider it highly important that the arrangements for publication of minority literature which the Central Committee proposed to the minority of the Second Congress should be incorporated in the Rules, in order that the fantasy of a "state of siege" invented by the minority themselves may be dispelled, and that the inevitable internal struggles in the Party may be conducted in seemly forms and not allowed to interfere with positive work.

We do not here elaborate our proposals in detail, for we are not putting forward draft Rules, but only a general programme of struggle for Party unity. We shall therefore only briefly indicate certain specific amendments to the Rules which are in our opinion desirable, without in any way binding ourselves as regards subsequent elaboration of the Rules, in the light of further experience. For example, it is necessary to reform the Party Council, as an institution which, in its present form, has proved in practice to be unfit for its function of co-ordinating and exercising supreme supervision over the activities of the central bodies. It should be made a body entirely elected by the Congress, instead of being a court where the Congress-elected fifth member sits as

arbiter over the central bodies, which defend themselves through their delegates. Further, Paragraph 1 of the Rules should be revised, in line with the criticisms voiced in the Party, to define the Party's boundaries more precisely, etc.

In putting forward this programme of struggle for Party unity, we invite the representatives of all other shades and all Party organisations to make a clear statement of their own programmes, so as to permit of serious and systematic, conscious and methodical preparation for a congress. An issue involving the very life, the honour and dignity of the Party is at stake: is it an ideological and material force capable of sufficient rational self-organisation to act as the real leader of our country's revolutionary working-class movement? By all their actions, the émigré minority answer: No! And they continue to act in this way with confident assurance, banking on the remoteness of Russia, the frequent changes of workers there, and the indispensability of their own leaders and literary forces. Our Party is coming into being!—we answer, seeing the growing political understanding of the advanced workers, the vigorous activity of the committees in general Party life. Our Party is coming into being, we have ever more numerous young forces capable of replacing or reinvigorating old literary bodies which forfeit the Party's confidence; we have ever more revolutionaries who prize the consistent Party trend above any circle of former leaders. Our Party is coming into being, and no subterfuges or delays can hold back its decided and final verdict.

From these forces in our Party we derive our certainty of victory.

Comrades, reprint and distribute this appeal!

Written in the early part of August 1904

First published in leaflet form in August 1904

Published according to the text in the pamphlet *To the Party*, Geneva, 1904

TO FIVE MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

FOR RUSSIA

August 18, 1904

To Members of the C.C., R.S.D.L.P., Glebov, Konyagin,[138] Travinsky, Loshad, and Osipov.

I was informed today, through the Central Committee's Berlin agent, of the decisions taken by four (?) members of the Central Committee at their meeting in Russia.[139] I cannot acknowledge these decisions lawfully adopted, for the following reasons:

1) The statement at the beginning of the resolution that the meeting was attended by all Central Committee members but one (that is, myself) is *not true*. After the arrest of Vasilyev and Zverev and the resignation of Mitrofanov,[140] the Central Committee still has another member—Comrade Osipov. The rumours of his resignation have proved false: Comrade Osipov himself considers that he is a member of the Central Committee. That was also the view of Vasilyev (who wrote to me about it), Zverev, and myself. In any case, the four Central Committee members had no right to declare Osipov no longer a member without first clarifying the matter of his alleged resignation. It has to be added that neither I nor the Central Organ nor any of the Central Committee's foreign agents was ever formally notified of Osipov's resignation. Yet Osipov was not invited to the meeting.

2) I too, so far from being invited to the meeting, was not even informed of it or notified of the matters to be discussed. The Central Committee has of course the right to decide matters by a majority vote, but its decisions cannot be lawful

unless all members have been given the opportunity to share in the proceedings and, if necessary, enter a dissenting opinion. I was denied that opportunity *altogether unlawfully*.

3) The four Central Committee members have not stated their attitude to the agreement of May 26, 1904, between Glebov and myself, although that agreement and my accompanying letter were, with Glebov and Zverev's consent, sent to all members of the Central Committee with the request to give me a direct answer. The majority on the Central Committee are fully entitled to overrule the minority, but certainly not to evade official inquiries by the minority and issues expressly raised by the minority for discussion.

4) In view of the above I demand an immediate answer from the four Central Committee members to the following: a) on what grounds was Comrade Osipov, a member of the Central Committee, not invited to the meeting? b) ditto as regards myself; c) do they recognise that the majority of a body has the right to adopt decisions in the name of the body as a whole only if the minority has been invited to the proceedings and given the opportunity to state its views and enter a dissenting opinion? d) do they recognise their obligation to give an answer on the substance of all the issues raised in the agreement of May 26, 1904?

5) Since the four Central Committee members have communicated their unlawfully adopted decisions (as supposed decisions of the whole Central Committee) to the Central Organ, I am obliged to address a letter regarding their mode of procedure to Party workers whom this matter rather closely concerns.

Central Committee member *N. Lenin*

First published in 1930
in *Lenin Miscellany XV*

Published according
to the manuscript

LETTER TO CENTRAL COMMITTEE AGENTS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS OF THE R.S.D.L.P. SIDING WITH THE SECOND PARTY CONGRESS MAJORITY

Comrades,

The conflict within the Central Committee has reached such a pitch that I consider myself morally obliged to bring it to the knowledge of all who support the Second Party Congress majority. I am compelled to do so both by the unlawful proceedings of four members of the Central Committee and by the fear of again taking some incautious step harmful to the Party (such as my resignation from the editorial board) unless I consult like-minded comrades who are working on the spot, who have a better knowledge of the real sentiment in the Party, and who have in fact, and not merely in word, declared war on the old émigré circle spirit in the name of the young party spirit.

What the conflict within the Central Committee consists in will be seen from the four appended documents: 1) the agreement of May 26, 1904, between three Central Committee members—Glebov, Zverev, and Lenin; 2) my letter of the same date to the members of the Central Committee; 3) a resolution allegedly adopted by all members of the Central Committee but one; 4) my protest impeaching the lawfulness of this alleged resolution.[141]

I would earnestly request all like-minded comrades in the present struggle in the Party to read these instructive documents carefully, and frankly and unreservedly state their opinion concerning them. I for my part shall refrain from any public statement in the press on these issues, at least for a time, until I know the views of some of those working

in Russia, or until compelled to such a statement by events.

I shall confine myself here to a few questions to the Party, if the members of our organisations find that we do in fact have a party: 1) can a working-class party worthy of the name tolerate a Central Committee, elected by the majority, that proclaims the policy of the majority to be a "group" policy? 2) are people morally entitled to our confidence who in a declaration written in March say one thing and in July quite another?—3) people who take advantage of the arrest of two majority members of the Central Committee to trample on the interests of the majority?—4) people who in the name of combating group policies talk of a conference with the minority group, ignoring the majority?—5) people who are afraid of having their actions judged by a congress, and for that reason dare to intimidate the Party with the prospect of a split and to "forbid" Party members their elementary right of agitating for a congress?—6) people so childishly incapable of understanding our Party crisis that they insist in all seriousness on the "legitimacy" of the Central Organ and decree the "*high standard*" of that Central Organ?—7) people who, in deliberate defiance of the will of the Party, try to oust consistent adherents of the Party majority from the Central Committee?

I conclude with the request for an answer to these questions and for steps to be taken to acquaint all active Party members with the situation and with this letter. I don't think there is any necessity for the present of publishing the letter.

Central Committee member *N. Lenin*

Written on August 5 (18), 1904

First published in 1930 in *Lenin Miscellany XV*

Published according to the manuscript

LETTER TO GLEBOV (V. A. NOSKOV)

September 11, 1904

Dear Comrade,

You again repeat that the wish that I join the editorial board of the Central Organ was expressed "by the Central Committee". And I for my part must repeat that this is, to say the least, inaccurate. When you formally stated that the Central Committee's declaration had been adopted unanimously by a meeting of all its members but one, I replied immediately (August 18, 1904) that this was not true. The declaration was signed by three Central Committee members[142] out of the recent total of nine; and these three quite unlawfully proclaimed Comrade Osipov no longer a member of the Central Committee, whereas he informed me in writing that he still considered himself a member. It was unlawful to declare that a comrade had resigned without having discussed the matter with him. Both the arguments with which you and your two colleagues tried to justify this unlawful act are patently unsound. You said that Comrade Osipov had formally announced his resignation at the preceding regular meeting of the Central Committee. That is not true, for at the end of May (that is, months after that meeting, which took place in February or March) the Central Committee still counted nine members, as is certified by the agreement of May 26, 1904, signed by three members of the Central Committee, and the letter appended to that agreement.* You said that after that Central Committee meeting Comrade Osipov had joined one of the local committees, which a member of the Central Committee would have had no right to do.

* See pp. 424-27 of this volume.—*Ed.*

Comrade Osipov had already written to me on this point, stating that he had gone to take part in the local work in the district in question on the instructions of those very members of the Central Committee who now declare that he has resigned, and that he had not worked as a formal member of the committee. Besides, even if it were a fact that a member of the Central Committee had irregularly and in contravention of the Rules joined a local committee, it does not at all follow that to correct this irregularity he had necessarily to resign from the Central Committee, and not from the local committee. Lastly, you yourself had to admit in your letter to me that the meeting of the three Central Committee members was informed that Comrade Osipov's resignation was a disputed matter. That this disputed matter should have been decided by three Central Committee members in the absence of Osipov, and without even hearing his opinion, was a patent and outrageous piece of lawlessness. Of course, the three Central Committee members could count on the support of the Party Council, which is controlled by the editors; of course, the three Central Committee members could rely on their formal or tacit compact with the minority adherents on the Council. But that does not make their action lawful; on the contrary, it aggravates its unlawfulness by elements of political bad faith. Similarly, it was unlawful for the three Central Committee members to accept the resignation of Comrade Travinsky, of which all members of the Central Committee had not been informed prior to the meeting. To this day you have not been able to tell me exactly when this resignation was tendered, and to whom. You disposed of the matter with a reply that sounded like a sneer: "Make inquiries of the collegium in Russia"—that is, the "collegium" (that very same collegium of three!) from which you had just come and with which I have no means of communicating except through you!!

Hence, I challenge the lawfulness of the composition of the Central Committee and of its last meeting (at which the "declaration" was adopted). I should therefore be fully entitled to leave unanswered your proposal that I join the editorial board of the Central Organ. But I regard this proposal as coming not from the Central Committee but from three members of the Party, and consider it my duty to

give a reasoned reply, the more so since you say it is the wish of the editors of the Central Organ, stated to you in writing, to have me on the editorial board.

You suggest that my joining the editorial board of the Central Organ "would secure almost complete peace in the Party, which you are so anxious to have". This "almost" of yours is highly significant! Yes, I am anxious to have peace in the Party. I made an offer of peace in printed form in December 1903, in my "Letter to the Editors of *Iskra* (Why I Resigned from the Editorial Board)".* I made another offer of peace, officially, in the Party Council in January 1904.** Peace was not accepted on the terms I offered then on behalf of the majority. I may remark that, contrary to the present fashion of mouthing hypocritical phrases about "peace", when by peace is meant complete surrender to the minority, complete ignoring of the majority, and complete oblivion of the Congress, I said quite definitely in the Council what I understood by peace in the Party. With my then fellow delegate from the Central Committee on the Council, I plainly stated that by peace I meant purging the ideological struggle of all contention over post and place, of all squabbling and underhand methods of fighting. Let the minority have the Central Organ and the majority the Central Committee I proposed then, let us call on everyone to stop all boycotts and all squabbling over posts and co-optation and argue out our differences and the causes of our divergence at the Congress in a comradely manner, let us train the Party to discuss its internal disagreements in an honest and dignified way. My appeal was ridiculed by Plekhanov and Martov. I am not surprised that they took the disgraceful decision to withhold publication of the Council minutes (in spite of the insistence of the minority of the Council, namely, the two representatives of the Central Committee), or that the three Central Committee members have now (clandestinely) endorsed that decision. People who would arrange a hypocritical peace, taking advantage of the accidents unavoidable in the lives of Russian revolutionaries and ousting from the Central Committee those who think differently from them-

* See pp. 118-24 of this volume.—*Ed.*
** See pp. 145-47 of this volume.—*Ed.*

selves,* are bound to want to conceal from the Party membership a timely attempt to achieve an honest peace. Fortunately, I have reason to believe that this miserable trick to deceive the Party will not succeed and that the Council minutes will see the light after all.

When the editors who had usurped control of the Council scornfully rejected my offer of peace, I declared then and there that I considered a congress the only honest way out. The tactics of the minority (including Plekhanov)—to keep control of the editorial board of the Central Organ and the Council and claim to represent on these central bodies the interests of the Party as a whole while in fact trying to secure, without a congress, a remodelling of the Central Committee in the interests of the minority—such tactics I cannot regard as honest fighting. I have never entered, and do not deem it possible to enter, into any bargains with people who follow such tactics. Besides, since January the complexion of the new *Iskra* has become quite clear; it is a central organ of tittle-tattle and squabbling, of muddled thinking and of flirting with the opportunists, of settling personal scores and searching out points of difference. That the new *Iskra* is the organ of a circle, the organ of a new "trend", is now clear to everyone, even to the editors themselves, who initially set themselves up as champions of "continuity" and now systematically drag the old *Iskra* through the mire. And so, in what sense can one now speak of peace? If by peace is meant purging the ideological struggle of squabbles over co-optation, I am still quite ready to agree to peace and to renew the proposal I made in the Council. But if by peace is meant cessation of the ideological struggle, conciliation with the line, or rather with the complexion of the new *Iskra*, for it has no such thing as a line, then such a "peace" can only be proposed by unprincipled or hypocritical people, or by people for whom the organs of the Party are so much newsprint (*Druckerschwärze*, printer's ink, as one of the "conciliators" called the writings of the new *Iskra*). If the editors of the new *Iskra*, whose position of "principle" has amounted almost

* This applies in the first place to Comrade Osipov, and secondly to me too, of course, for to propose that I join the editorial board of the Central Organ amounts to proposing that I resign from the Central Committee.

entirely to personal attacks on me, to a hue and cry against what they have dubbed "Leninism", and to a searching out of differences with me, now express the wish to have me on the editorial board, they are only admitting thereby that they do not take their own writings seriously, that they invented the whole controversy just "for the sake of co-optation" and are prepared to throw all their new "principles" overboard once co-optation has been secured. As for me, I reject as, unworthy the very suggestion that the majority could give up a Party struggle for its position, for the consistent line, against the circle spirit. In common with all principled supporters of the majority, whose numbers in Russia are growing, I consider it my inalienable right and duty to carry on this struggle. And it should, in my view, be carried on openly, for nine-tenths of the history of the conflict is already public knowledge and any further attempts to conceal it from the eyes of the world would only be a petty and senseless prolonging of the crisis.

You write that "numerous committees, too, undoubtedly wish" to see me join the present *Iskra* editorial board. I note with regret that here too you are uttering a deliberate untruth. In the present circumstances of the struggle, not one committee has up to now expressed any such wish. It has only been expressed by the editorial circle of the Central Organ and by three members of the Central Committee, who consider it the acme of political wisdom to join the minority in abusing the majority and the majority in abusing the minority. I make bold to believe that my duty is to heed, not the will of any group of politicians, but the will of the entire Party, which has also laid down the method of giving formal expression to that will, viz., the congress. I make bold to believe that a leader who adopts a certain line at the congress and leads a section of the Party along that line forfeits every claim to respect or even to having his words taken seriously if he then deserts to the side of his opponents.

Your reference to "numerous committees" is very instructive and significant, in spite of its ... divergence from the truth. It points to a shred of Party conscience, to some little recognition of the fact that official institutions appointed by the Party must take cognisance of the Party's will when

they undertake to revise the composition and line of the central bodies. If this recognition were not obscured in you by the confused position you have adopted, you would have no difficulty in seeing that there is no other way of really ascertaining the real wishes of really numerous committees than by convening a congress. But while your reference to "numerous committees" betrays a shred of Party conscience, it also points very clearly to an uneasy conscience. You fear a congress like the plague because you realise that your policy of adventures glaringly conflicts with the will of the Party.

My general views as to the hypocrisy of your peace-making are fully borne out by a number of additional facts. The three Central Committee members now admire the "high standard" of the Central Organ, while in March *these very same* three members of the Central Committee drew up a statement expressing regret that certain Party writers (the majority of the present editorial board of the Central Organ) should have lapsed into opportunism. While talking about "peace", these three Central Committee members dissolve the Southern Bureau (an agent body of the Central Committee) because majority adherents have been working on it and have had the audacity to agitate for a congress. While talking about reconciling the two contending sides, the three Central Committee members arrange a conference with representatives of one side, ignoring the other. What demoralisation is brought into the Party by these private, hole-and-corner transactions, which affect the whole Party's vital interests and which are so carefully kept from its knowledge, when there is absolutely no necessity for secrecy precautions! How much mutual distrust and suspicion is brought into the Party's whole life by these tricks behind the back of the Party! Only today I received a letter from a comrade in Russia describing the rumours that are circulating in connection with these transactions: it is said in Party circles that three sections have developed among the minority; one insists on the co-optation of Dan and Trotsky to the Central Committee, and will not hear of anything else; the second agrees to a conference; the third contents itself with the Central Committee's declaration, and this section includes the *Yuzhny Rabochy*-ists (who quite rightly interpret the

starting of a popular organ as nothing but a masked re-establishment of *Yuzhny Rabochy*, which the Congress closed down). I do not know what truth there is in this Party gossip. But that the minority consists of heterogeneous groups, that Comrade Brouckère, for example, probably takes no part at all in the minority's "ultimatums" or the co-optation squabble generally, and that the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group represents quite a distinct shade—these are all generally known facts, with which everyone who has studied our Party Congress is familiar. Can you really not see how degrading is all this huckstering of various groups behind the back of the Party? Is it surprising that the hypocrisy of the three Central Committee members is earning them the utter distrust of the majority, which stands aloof from all this trickery? Is it surprising that a "peace" inaugurated by dismissing people who agitate for a congress should be regarded as a prelude to the systematic faking of Party opinion? Is it surprising that the majority should suspect a deal between the Central Committee and the Central Organ (and, consequently, the Council) to force minority adherents upon the committees, to withhold publication of majority resolutions (the St. Petersburg and Ekaterinoslav resolutions have been withheld *for months already*), etc., etc.?

I hope you will now understand why, with the present situation in the Party, there can be no thought of my joining the editorial board of the Central Organ.

Your statement that I "abstained" from voting on the co-optation of three new members to the Central Committee *is not true*. I emphatically protest against considering "the elections as valid". This is another piece of lawlessness. It is the *duty* of *all three* Central Committee members to consider my protest, and only *after that* can they raise the question of co-optation. According to the Rules, co-optation must be unanimous; my consent has not been given. Consequently, without the matter being taken to the Council there can be no talk of the co-optation being valid. The decision of the Council (if you unlawfully take the co-optation issue there before a scrutiny of the composition of

the Central Committee has been made by all its members) must be sent to me together with the Council minutes.

I cannot share your regret at our not having met. After your tricks with regard to Comrade Osipov and your attitude to your pledged word (agreement of May 26, 1904), I do not wish to have anything to do with you except in a purely official way, and only in writing.

Central Committee member *N. Lenin*

Published in slightly abridged form in the pamphlet *The Fight for a Congress*, by N. Shakhov, Geneva, 1904

Published according to the manuscript

ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK

REPLY BY N. LENIN TO ROSA LUXEMBURG[143]

Comrade Rosa Luxemburg's article in Nos. 42 and 43 of the *Neue Zeit* is a criticism of my Russian book on the crisis in our Party.* I cannot but thank our German comrades for their attention to our Party literature and their attempts to acquaint German Social-Democrats with it, but I must point out that Rosa Luxemburg's *Neue Zeit* article does not acquaint the reader with my book, but with something else. This may be seen from the following instances. Comrade Luxemburg says, for example, that my book is a clear and detailed expression of the point of view of "intransigent centralism". Comrade Luxemburg thus supposes that I defend one system of organisation against another. But actually that is not so. From the first to the last page of my book, I defend the elementary principles of any conceivable system of party organisation. My book is not concerned with the difference between one system of organisation and another, but with how any system is to be maintained, criticised, and rectified in a manner consistent with the party idea. Rosa Luxemburg further says that "according to his [Lenin's] conception, the Central Committee has the right to organise all the local Party committees". Actually that is not so. What my views on this subject are can be documentarily proved by the draft Rules of Party Organisation which I proposed. In that draft there is nothing about any right to organise the local committees. That right was introduced into the Party Rules by the commission elected by the Party Congress to frame them, and the Congress adopted

---

* *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*—pp. 203-425 of this volume.—Ed.

the commission's text. But besides myself and one other majority adherent, the commission included three members of the Congress minority, so that in this commission which gave the Central Committee the right to organise the local committees, it was my opponents that had the upper hand. Comrade Luxemburg has confused two different things. In the first place, she has confused my organisational draft with the modified draft of the commission and with the Rules of Organisation as actually adopted by the Congress; secondly, she has confused the defence of a specific point relating to a specific clause of the Rules (in that defence I was by no means intransigent, for I did not object at the plenary session to the amendment made by the commission) with the defence of the thesis (truly "ultra-centralist", is it not?) that Rules adopted by a Party congress must be adhered to until amended by a subsequent congress. This thesis (a "purely Blanquist" one, as the reader may readily observe) I did indeed defend in my book quite "intransigently". Comrade Luxemburg says that in my view "the Central Committee is the only active nucleus of the Party". Actually that is not so. I have never advocated any such view. On the contrary, my opponents (the Second Party Congress minority) charged in their writings that I did not sufficiently uphold the independence of the Central Committee, that I made it too subordinate to the editorial board of the Central Organ and the Party Council, bodies located abroad. To these charges I replied in my book that when the Party majority had the upper hand in the Party Council, the latter never made any attempt to interfere with the Central Committee's independence, but that when the Party council became a weapon of the minority, this did immediately happen. Comrade Rosa Luxemburg says that there are no two opinions among the Russian Social-Democrats as to the need for a united party, and that the whole controversy is over the degree of centralisation. Actually that is not so. If Comrade Luxemburg had taken the trouble to acquaint herself with the resolutions of the many local Party committees that constitute the majority, she would readily have seen (which incidentally is also clear from my book) that our controversy has principally been over whether the Central Committee and Central Organ should represent the trend of

the majority of the Party Congress, or whether they should not. About this "ultra-centralist" and "purely Blanquist" demand the worthy comrade says not a word, she prefers to declaim against mechanical subordination of the part to the whole, against slavish submission, blind obedience, and other such bogeys. I am very grateful to Comrade Luxemburg for explaining the profound idea that slavish submission is very harmful to the Party, but I should like to know: does the comrade consider it normal for supposed party central institutions to be dominated by the minority of the Party Congress? —can she imagine such a thing?—has she ever seen it in any party? Comrade Luxemburg fathers on me the idea that all the conditions already exist in Russia for forming a large and extremely centralised workers' party. Again an error of fact. Nowhere in my book did I voice such an idea, let alone advocate it. The thesis I advanced expressed and expresses something else: I insisted, namely, that all the conditions already existed for expecting Party Congress decisions to be observed, and that the time was past when a Party institution could be supplanted by a private circle. I brought proof that certain academics in our Party had shown themselves inconsistent and unstable, and that they had no right to lay the blame for their own lack of discipline upon the Russian proletarians. The Russian workers have already pronounced repeatedly, on various occasions, for observance of the Party Congress decisions. It is nothing short of laughable when Comrade Luxemburg proclaims such a view "optimistic" (should it not rather be considered "pessimistic"?) without uttering a single word about the factual basis of my thesis. Comrade Luxemburg declares that I glorify the educational influence of the factory. That is not so. It was my opponent, not I, who said that I pictured the Party as a factory. I properly ridiculed him and proved with his own words that he confused two different aspects of factory discipline, which, unfortunately, is the case with Comrade Luxemburg too.*

Comrade Luxemburg says that I characterised my standpoint more acutely, perhaps, than any of my opponents could

---

* Cf. the Russian pamphlet *Our Misunderstandings*, the article "Rosa Luxemburg vs. Karl Marx".

have done when I defined a revolutionary Social-Democrat as a Jacobin who has identified himself with the organisation of the class-conscious workers. Yet another error of fact. It was P. Axelrod, not I, who first started talking about Jacobinism. He was the first to liken our Party trends to those of the days of the great French Revolution. I merely observed that the parallel could only be allowed in the sense that the division of present-day Social-Democracy into a revolutionary and an opportunist wing corresponded to some extent to the division into Montagnards and Girondists. The old *Iskra*, which the Party Congress endorsed, often drew such a parallel. Just because it recognised this division, the old *Iskra* fought against the opportunist wing in our Party, against the *Rabocheye Dyelo* trend. Rosa Luxemburg here confuses *comparison* of the two revolutionary trends of the eighteenth and the twentieth century with identification of those trends. If I say, for example, that the Jungfrau stands in the same relation to the Little Scheidegg as a house of four storeys to one of two, that does not mean I identify a four-storey house with the Jungfrau. Comrade Luxemxburg leaves completely out of sight the factual analysis of the different trends in our Party. Yet the greater half of my book is devoted precisely to this analysis, based on the minutes of our Party Congress, and in the preface I call special attention to the fact. Rosa Luxemburg sets out to talk about the present position in our Party while totally ignoring our Congress, which was what really laid our Party's foundation. A rash enterprise, it has to be said! Particularly since I point out a hundred times in my book that my opponents ignore our Party Congress and by so doing leave all their assertions devoid of all foundation of fact.

Comrade Luxemburg commits exactly the same basic error. She repeats naked words without troubling to grasp their concrete meaning. She raises bogeys without informing herself of the actual issue in the controversy. She puts in my mouth commonplaces, general principles and conceptions, absolute truths, and tries to pass over the relative truths, pertaining to perfectly definite facts, with which alone I operate. And then she rails against set formulas and invokes the dialectics of Marx! It is the worthy comrade's own article that consists of nothing but manufactured formulas

and runs counter to the ABC of dialectics. This ABC tells us that there is no such thing as abstract truth, truth is always concrete. Comrade Rosa Luxemburg loftily ignores the concrete facts of our Party struggle and engages in grandiloquent declamation about matters which it is impossible to discuss seriously. Let me cite one last example from Comrade Luxemburg's second article. She quotes my remark that the way the Rules of Organisation are formulated can make them a more or a less trenchant weapon against opportunism.* Just what formulations I talked about in my book and all of us talked about at the Congress, of that she does not say a word. What the controversy at the Party Congress was, and against whom I advanced my theses, she does not touch on in the slightest. Instead, she favours me with a whole lecture on opportunism ... in the parliamentary countries!! But about the peculiar, specific varieties of opportunism in Russia, the shades which it has taken on there and with which my book is concerned, we find not a word in her article. The upshot of all these very brilliant arguments is: "Party Rules are not meant in themselves [?? understand this who can!] to be a weapon of resistance to opportunism, but only an outward instrument for exerting the dominant influence of the actually existing revolutionary-proletarian majority of the Party." Quite so. But how this actually existing majority of our Party was formed Rosa Luxemburg does not say, yet that is exactly what I talk about in my book. Nor does she say what influence it was that Plekhanov and I defended with the help of this outward instrument. I can only add that never and nowhere have I talked such nonsense as that the Party Rules are a weapon "in themselves".

The best way to answer this kind of presentation of my views will be to set forth the concrete facts of our Party struggle. Anyone will then be able to see how ill Comrade Luxemburg's abstract commonplaces and formulas sort with the concrete facts.

Our Party was founded in Russia in the spring of 1898 at a congress of representatives of several Russian organisations. It was named the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party,

---

* See p. 273 of this volume.—*Ed.*

Rabochaya Gazeta[144] was made the Central Organ, and the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad became the Party's foreign representative. Very soon after the congress, the Central Committee of the Party was arrested. *Rabochaya Gazeta* had to cease publication after its second issue. The whole Party became a shapeless conglomeration of local Party organisations (known as committees). The only bond between these local committees was an ideological, purely spiritual one. A period of disunity, vacillation, and splits was bound to set in again. The intellectuals, who in our Party made up a much larger percentage than in the West-European parties, had taken up Marxism as a new vogue. This vogue very soon gave place to slavish acceptance of the bourgeois criticism of Marx, on the one hand, and an infatuation for a purely trade-unionist labour movement (strikeism—Economism), on the other. The divergence between the intellectual-opportunist and proletarian revolutionary trends led to a split in the Union Abroad. The newspaper *Rabochaya Mysl*, and the *Rabocheye Dyelo* magazine published abroad, expressed (the latter in somewhat lesser degree) the standpoint of Economism, they belittled the importance of political struggle and denied the existence of a bourgeois-democratic element in Russia. The "legal" critics of Marx—Messrs. Struve, Tugan-Baranovsky, Bulgakov, Berdyaev, and the rest—swung all the way to the Right. Nowhere in Europe do we find Bernsteinism arriving so speedily at its logical consummation—the formation of a liberal group—as was the case in Russia. There, Mr. Struve began with "criticism" in the name of Bernsteinism and ended by setting up the liberal magazine *Osvobozhdeniye*, liberal in the European sense of the term. Plekhanov and his friends, who broke away from the Union Abroad, met with support from the founders of *Iskra* and *Zarya*. These two publications waged (even Comrade Luxemburg has heard something about that) a "brilliant three-year campaign" against the opportunist wing of the Party, a campaign of the Social-Democratic "Mountain" against the Social-Democratic "Gironde" (the expression belongs to the old *Iskra*), a campaign against *Rabocheye Dyelo* (Comrades Krichevsky, Akimov, Martynov, and others), against the Jewish Bund, against the organisations in Russia that eagerly espoused this trend (notably the St. Petersburg

so-called Workers' Organisation and the Voronezh Committee).

It became more and more obvious that the purely ideological bond between the committees was not enough. The need to create a really united party, that is, to effect what was only foreshadowed in 1898, asserted itself more and more insistently. Finally, at the end of 1902 an Organising Committee was formed to convene the Second Party Congress. This Organising Committee, which was largely set up by the *Iskra* organisation in Russia, also included a representative of the Jewish Bund. In the autumn of 1903 the Second Congress was at last held; it ended, on the one hand, in the Party's formal unification, and on the other, in a split into "majority" and "minority". That division did not exist before the Congress. Only a detailed analysis of the struggle at the Congress can explain this division. Unfortunately, the supporters of the minority (including Comrade Luxemburg) shy away fearfully from any such analysis.

In my book, presented to the German reader by Comrade Luxemburg in such a singular manner, I devote over a hundred pages to a close study of the Congress minutes (which make up a volume of some 400 pages). This analysis caused me to divide the delegates, or rather votes (we had delegates with one vote and with two), into four main groups: 1) majority *Iskra*-ists (adherents of the trend of the old *Iskra*)—twenty-four votes; 2) minority *Iskra*-ists—nine votes; 3) "Centre" (also referred to ironically as the "Marsh")—ten votes; and, lastly, 4) anti-*Iskra*-ists—eight votes, making fifty-one votes in all. I analyse the part played by these groups in *all* the voting at the Congress, and prove that on all issues (of programme, of tactics, and of organisation) the Congress was an arena of struggle between the *Iskra*-ists and the anti-*Iskra*-ists, with the "Marsh" making various zigzags. Anyone even slightly familiar with our Party's history is bound to see that it could not have been otherwise. But all supporters of the minority (including Rosa Luxemburg) modestly close their eyes to this struggle. Why? Because this struggle makes manifest the utter falsity of the minority's present political position. Throughout the struggle at the Party Congress, on dozens of questions, in dozens of votes, the *Iskra*-ists fought the anti-*Iskra*-ists

and the "Marsh", which sided the more definitely with the anti-*Iskra*-ists, the more concrete the matter at issue, the more positively it affected the fundamentals of Social-Democratic activity, the more tangibly it involved putting into practice the old *Iskra*'s long-standing plans. The anti-*Iskra*-ists (particularly Comrade Akimov and the St. Petersburg Workers' Organisation delegate, Comrade Brouckère, who always agreed with him, and nearly always Comrade Martynov and the five delegates of the Jewish Bund) were against recognising the trend of the old *Iskra*. They defended the old separate organisations and voted against their subordination to the Party, their fusion into the Party (the Organising Committee incident, the dissolution of the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group—the leading group of the "Marsh", and so on). They fought against centralistic Rules of Organisation (14th sitting of the Congress) and accused *all* the *Iskra*-ists at that time of wanting to introduce "organised distrust", "emergency laws", and other such horrors. *All* the *Iskra*-ists, without exception, laughed at it then; it is remarkable that Comrade Rosa Luxemburg should now take these bogeys seriously. On the great majority of questions the *Iskra*-ists carried the day; they predominated at the Congress, as is clear from the figures given above. But during the second half of the Congress, when less fundamental issues were being decided, the anti-*Iskra*-ists had the better of it—some of the *Iskra*-ists voted with them. That was the case, for example, with regard to proclaiming equality of all languages in our programme; on this point the anti-*Iskra*-ists nearly succeeded in defeating the Programme Committee and getting their formulation carried. It was also the case over Paragraph 1 of the Rules, when the anti-*Iskra*-ists and the "Marsh" put through Martov's formulation. According to this formulation, Party members are not only those who belong to Party organisations (the formulation defended by Plekhanov and myself), but also all persons working under the control of Party organisations.*

* Comrade Kautsky has sided with Martov's formulation, and the argument he pleads is expediency. In the first place, at our Party Congress this point was not discussed from the standpoint of expediency, but of principle. That was the way the question was put by Axelrod. Secondly, Comrade Kautsky is mistaken if he thinks that

The same thing happened in the elections to the Central Committee and the editorial board of the Central Organ. The compact majority consisted of 24 *Iskra*-ists, and they put through the long since planned reconstitution of the editorial board; of the six former editors, three were elected. The minority consisted of nine *Iskra*-ists, ten members of the "Centre", and one anti-*Iskra*-ist (the other seven anti-*Iskra*-ists, representing the Jewish Bund and *Rabocheye Dyelo*, had withdrawn from the Congress by then). This minority was so displeased with the elections that it decided to take no part in the rest of the elections. Comrade Kautsky was quite right when he said that the reconstitution of the editorial board was the main cause of the struggle that followed. But his view that I (*sic*!) "expelled" three comrades from the editorial board can only be attributed to his being totally uninformed about our Congress. In the first place, non-election is far from the same thing as expulsion, and I certainly had no power at the Congress to expel anyone; and secondly, Comrade Kautsky seems to have no inkling that the fact of a coalition between the anti-*Iskra*-ists, the "Centre", and a small section of the *Iskra* adherents had political implications too and could not fail to influence the outcome of the elections. Anyone who does not wilfully close his eyes to what happened at our Congress is bound to see that our new division into minority and majority is only a variant of the old division into a proletarian-revolutionary and an intellectual-opportunist wing of our Party. That is a fact, and there is no explaining or laughing it away.

Unfortunately, after the Congress the principles involved in this division were obscured by squabbling over co-optation: the minority would not work under the control of the central institutions unless the three ex-editors were again co-opted. This fight went on for two months. The weapons used were boycott and disruption of the Party. Twelve committees (out of the fourteen that spoke out on the subject) severely condemned these methods of struggle. The minority

---

under the Russian police regime there is such a big difference between belonging to a Party organisation and simply working under its control. Thirdly, it is particularly misleading to compare the position in Russia today to that in Germany under the Anti-Socialist Law.[145]

would not even accept the proposal, made by Plekhanov and myself, that they should set forth their point of view in *Iskra*. At the Congress of the League Abroad the thing was carried to the length of showering the members of the central bodies with personal insults and abuse (autocrats, bureaucrats, gendarmes, liars, etc., etc.). They were accused of suppressing individual initiative and wanting to introduce slavish submission, blind obedience, and so on. Plekhanov's attempts to characterise these minority methods of struggle as anarchistic did not avail. After this Congress Plekhanov came out with his epoch-making article against me, "What Should Not Be Done" (in No. 52 of *Iskra*). In this article he said that fighting revisionism did not necessarily, mean fighting the revisionists; and it was clear to all that he was referring to our minority. He further said that one should not always fight the anarchistic individualism so deeply ingrained in the Russian revolutionary, that at times some concessions were a better way to subdue it and avoid a split. I resigned from the editorial board as I could not share this view, and the minority editors were co-opted. Then followed a fight for co-optation to the Central Committee. My offer to conclude peace on the basis of the minority keeping the Central Organ and the majority the Central Committee was rejected. The fight went on, they were fighting "on principle" against bureaucracy, ultra-centralism, formalism, Jacobinism, Schweitzerism (I was dubbed a Russian Schweitzer), and other such bogeys. I ridiculed all these accusations in my book and pointed out that they were either just a matter of squabbling about co-optation, or (if they were to be recognised, conditionally, as involving "principles") nothing but opportunist, Girondist phrases. The present minority are only repeating what Comrade Akimov and other acknowledged opportunists said at our Congress against the centralism of all the adherents of the old *Iskra*.

The committees in Russia were outraged at the conversion of the Central Organ into the organ of a private circle, an organ of co-optation squabbling and Party scandal. A number of resolutions expressing the severest censure were passed. Only the so-called St. Petersburg Workers' Organisation already mentioned and the Voronezh Committee (both of them supporters of Comrade Akimov's trend)

pronounced their satisfaction *in principle* at the trend of the new *Iskra*. Demands to have the Third Party Congress summoned became ever more numerous.

The reader who takes the trouble to make a first-hand study of the struggle in our Party will readily see that, concretely and practically, Comrade Rosa Luxemburg's talk about "ultra-centralism", about the need for centralisation to be gradual, and the like, is a mockery of our Congress, while abstractly and theoretically (if one can speak here of theory at all) it is nothing but a vulgarisation of Marxism, a perversion of true Marxian dialectics, etc.

The latest phase in our Party struggle is marked by the fact that the majority members have in part been ousted from the Central Committee, in part rendered useless, reduced to nonentities. (This happened owing to changes in the Central Committee's composition,[146] etc.) The Party Council (which after the co-optation of the old editors like wise fell into the minority's hands) and the present Central Committee have condemned all agitation for summoning the Third Congress and are taking the path of personal deals and negotiations with some members of the minority. Organisations which dared to commit such a crime as to agitate for a congress—as for instance a certain agent body of the Central Committee—have been dissolved.[147] A campaign against the summoning of the Third Congress has been proclaimed by the Party Council and the new Central Committee all along the line. The majority have replied with the slogan "Down with Bonapartism!" (that is the title of a pamphlet by Comrade Galyorka,[148] who speaks for the majority). More and more resolutions are being passed declaring that Party institutions which fight against a congress are anti-Party and Bonapartist. How hypocritical was all the minority's talk against ultra-centralism and in favour of autonomy is obvious from the fact that a new majority publishing house started by myself and another comrade (which issued the above-named pamphlet by Comrade Galyorka and some others) has been declared outside the Party.[149] This new publishing house affords the majority their only opportunity of propagating their views, for the columns of *Iskra* are as good as closed to them. Yet—or rather just because of it—the Party Council has made the above ruling, on the purely formal grounds

that our publishing house has not been authorised by any Party organisation.

It need hardly be said how greatly positive work has been neglected, how greatly the prestige of Social-Democracy has suffered, how greatly the whole Party is demoralised by this nullification of all the decisions, all the elections made by the Second Congress, and this fight which Party institutions accountable to the Party are waging against the convening of the Third Congress.

Written in the latter half of September 1904

First published in 1930 in Lenin Miscellany XV

Russian text translated from the German

Published according to the manuscript

FROM MARX TO MAO

NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

AN OBLIGING LIBERAL

Obliging services are welcome, as we know;
But shun the service or a clumsy f riend.
From such as Struve heaven us defend,
Obliging Struve's worse than any foe.[150]

The latest issue (No. 57) of Mr. Struve's *Osvobozhdeniye* contains the following instructive lines:

"The process of disintegration within the so-called Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party has entered a new phase. The extreme centralists ('Leninists', 'firm-liners', 'Bolshevists') are beginning to lose ground, and the position of their opponents is becoming stronger and stronger—at least in the 'colonies' abroad. Whereas the 'Menshevists' (Martovites) are getting the upper hand nearly everywhere and gaining control of one party organ after another, the 'Bolshevists' are losing individuals and whole groups, who, while not definitely accepting the 'platform' of the minority, nevertheless do not wish to war with the latter and endeavour to establish peace in the still discordant party. 'Conciliators' are appearing on the scene who are anxious to put an end to this unseemly wrangling in which people have ceased to understand not only each other, but even themselves. The appearance of these 'conciliators' has compelled the irreconcilable centralists to start a 'publishing house of Social-Democratic Party literature devoted to the defence of the principles of the Second Party Congress majority'. (Announcement by V. Bonch-Bruyevich and N. Lenin.) We have before us three products of this new publishing house: 1) *To the Party*, Geneva, 1904, 16 pp., price 20 cent. or 15 pf.; 2) Galyorka, *Down with Bonapartism!*, Geneva, 1904, 23 pp., price 25 cent. or 20 pf.; 3) Galyorka and Ryadovoy,[151] *Our Misunderstandings*, Geneva, 1904, price 50 cent. or 40 pf. These three pamphlets are chiefly devoted to a critical examination of certain methods—which are indeed not altogether above reproach—employed by the 'Menshevists' in their struggle against the 'majority', and to advocacy of the thesis that the convening of a third congress to settle party conflicts is not only feasible, but essential.

"While *formally*, from the standpoint of party loyalty, the position of the 'Bolshevists' is the sounder one, they yield to their opponents *in substance*. In substance, the latter are *now* defending some-

thing more vital and effectual than the 'Bolshevists'. Only it is unfortunate that this defence is being conducted by not altogether proper, or rather altogether improper, and sometimes positively indecent, means. As examples of such improper methods we may cite countless recent articles in *Iskra* and the newly published pamphlet *Our Political Tasks* (*Tactical and Organisational Questions*) by N. Trotsky, Geneva, 1904, 107 pp., price 75 cent. While marked in many places by empty phrase-mongering, this pamphlet is however quite right in taking up the cudgels for certain ideas with which those interested in Social-Democratic literature are already familiar from the writings of Messrs. Akimov, Martynov, Krichevsky, and other so-called 'Economists'. Only it is a pity that in places the author carries their views to the point of caricature."

How much malicious rejoicing we find here over the troubles of our Party! But then, by his very political nature your liberal is bound to rejoice at any weakening and demoralisation of Social-Democracy.

How much conscious and heartfelt sympathy for the Akimovite *substance* of the minority's views! But then, is it not a fact that the only hope of vitality, ideological vitality, for Russian liberalism lies in the vitality of Social-Democratic opportunism?

The new *Iskra* has no luck with its supporters.

Recall Plekhanov's celebrated, stupendous, epoch-making "What Should Not Be Done". How subtly conceived was this policy of finesse and personal concessions, and what a sad mess our diplomat landed in! How accurately did that consistent opportunist, Mr. Struve, perceive the "significant change of front" of the new *Iskra*! The "gulf" between the old and the new *Iskra* is now admitted by the leaders of the latter themselves.

Recall Plekhanov's complacent assertion in *Iskra*, No. 65, that "nobody is afraid of Akimov; you couldn't use him now even to scare the sparrows in a cabbage-patch". Plekhanov made this remark, which was not particularly mild or accommodating towards the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists, and he also declared that at our Party Congress "nobody spoke against orthodox Marxism except an Akimov or so". And then, right after these complacent assertions, the leaflet of the Voronezh Committee—which as everybody knows solidly supports Comrades Akimov and Brouckère—was reprinted *in full*; and it turned out that the editors of the new *Iskra* had *concealed* from the public (in No. 61) the whole section

of this leaflet that had to do with principles, and all its expressions of sympathy with the new *Iskra*. Who is it that has proved to resemble a sparrow? And what Party institution may now be likened to a cabbage-patch?

Recall the author of "High Time!", the article in the supplement to Nos. 73-74 of *Iskra*. As a frank and honest spokesman of the views advocated throughout our Congress by all the "Marsh" delegates, this comrade bluntly proclaimed his disagreement with Plekhanov, he bluntly stated his opinion that "at the Congress Akimov played the part of a spectre of opportunism rather than of a real representative of it". And the poor editors had once more to undergo a self-inflicted thrashing. They appended the following note to this statement of the author of "High Time!":

> "We cannot agree with this opinion. Comrade Akimov's programmatic views bear the clear stamp of opportunism, as is admitted even by an *Osvobozhdeniye* critic when he says in a recent issue that Comrade Akimov belongs to the 'realistic'—read, revisionist—trend."

Very nice, is it not? In the programmatic views of Comrade Akimov—with whom, in the disputes over the programme, Comrades Martynov, Brouckère, and the Bundists voted almost invariably, and the delegates of the Marsh very often—there is opportunism. But in his tactical and organisational views there is no opportunism—is that your idea, gentlemen? Why is it that you prefer to say nothing about these latter views? Isn't it because, after loudly announcing its new differences over organisational questions, the new *Iskra* has said just what, and only what, Martynov and Akimov used to say against the old *Iskra*? Isn't it because the new tactical differences that the new *Iskra* has lately announced also amount to nothing but a repetition of what Martynov and Akimov used to say long ago against the old *Iskra*? How useful it would be to republish today No. 10 of *Rabocheye Dyelo*!

And whom do the editors of the new *Iskra* cite as judge and witness against Comrade Akimov? Mr. Struve. And a fine judge he is, truly a specialist, connoisseur, champion, and expert in opportunism. All the more significant is the testimony of this witness, summoned by the editors themselves, on the substance of Trotsky's views. And Trotsky's

pamphlet, please do not forget, was published *under the editorship of* "*Iskra*" (No. 72, p. 10, col. 3). Trotsky's "new" views are the views of the editorial board, approved by Plekhanov, Axelrod, Zasulich, Starover, and Martov.

Empty phrase-mongering and Akimovism, the latter, unfortunately, in caricature—such is the verdict of a judge sympathetic to the new *Iskra* and appealed to by that organ itself.

This time the obliging liberal inadvertently blurted out the truth.

Written in October 1904

Published in leaflet form in Geneva in November 1904

Published according to the leaflet text

PREFACE TO N. SHAKHOV'S PAMPHLET *THE FIGHT FOR A CONGRESS*

In the pamphlet here offered to the reader we have endeavoured to give as full as possible a collection of documents showing the attitude of various Party organisations working on the spot towards the present crisis in our Party. These documents are reproduced partly from texts already published in *Iskra* and partly direct from the manuscripts, and the reader should bear in mind that owing to the conditions under which these manuscripts were delivered mistakes and omissions were sometimes bound to creep in.

The contents of the documents revolve around one central point—the fight for the party spirit against the circle spirit, the fight for a congress. Originally this was a fight for the Second Party Congress, for the recognition and honest observance of its decisions; now it is for the Third Congress, as the only method worthy of the Party of ending the present intolerable situation. We have also tried to show as fully as possible, on the basis of documentary evidence, the fight of the Party's present central institutions against a third congress.

Our work has been confined to arranging the documents in chronological order (as far as possible) and adding the briefest explanations to indicate the connection between them. We leave all comment for subsequent publications. The bare facts regarding the fight for a congress speak for themselves, and anybody who studies them will be able to form his own judgement of the internal struggle in our Party.

Published in the pamphlet
The Fight for a Congress,
by N. Shakhov, Geneva, 1904

Published according
to the manuscript

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FORMATION OF A BUREAU OF MAJORITY COMMITTEES[152]

DRAFT

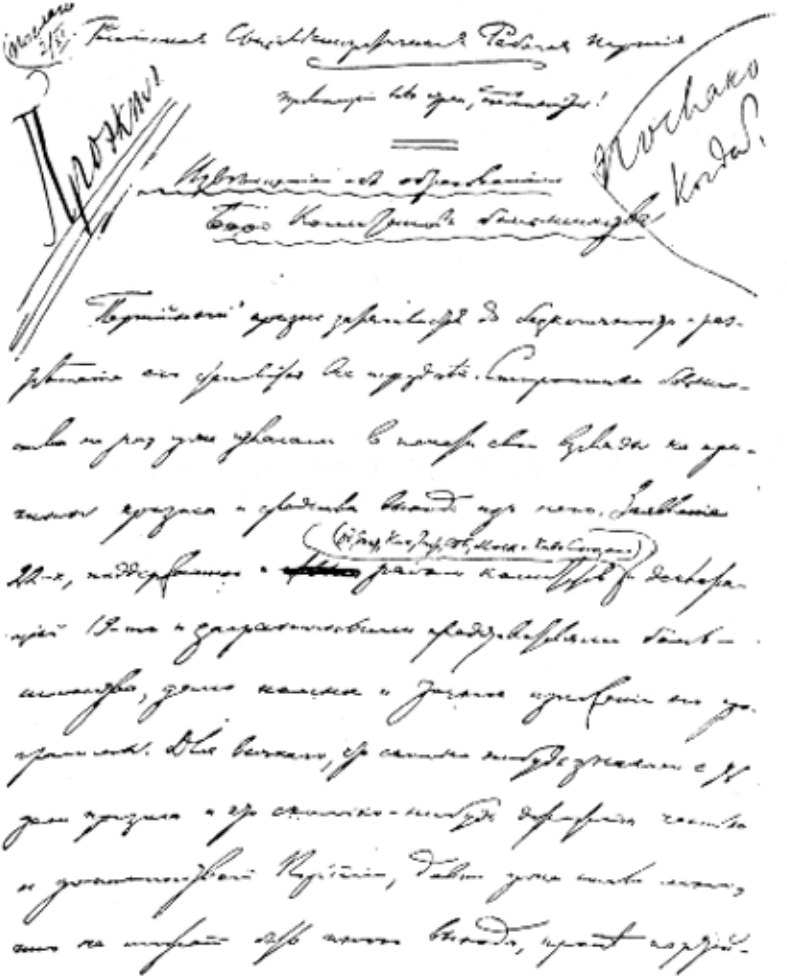
The crisis in the Party is dragging on interminably and becoming ever more difficult to resolve. The adherents of the majority have repeatedly stated in the press their views concerning the causes of the crisis and the means by which it could be ended. The statement of the twenty-two,* which was supported by a number of committees (the Odessa, Ekaterinoslav, Nikolayev, Riga, St. Petersburg, and Moscow committees and the Caucasian League), by the declaration of the nineteen,[153] and by the majority members, abroad gave a full and precise exposition of the majority's programme. Everyone at all acquainted with the development of the crisis and at all concerned for the Party's honour and dignity has long realised that the only way out is a Party congress. But now the new declaration by a section of the Central Committee and the new decisions of the Party Council aggravate the division in the Party still more. The Central Committee members who have deserted to the minority have not shrunk from the grossest violation of the rights of those members of the Central Committee who remain on the side of the majority. In proclaiming its reconciliation policy the new Central Committee has not only failed to take account of the wishes of the majority, but has totally ignored the latter and entered into a compact with the minority alone, and moreover by means of private, secret transactions. Anyone sincerely desiring a reconciliation would first of all bring together all the warring, contending,

* See pp. 452-59 of this volume.—*Ed.*

and mutually incensed, and that means calling a Party congress. To talk of peace and fear a congress, to go about peacemaking and at the same time hold up the bogey of a split because of the minority's probable defeat at the Third Congress also, is to be a hypocrite, to try to force the caprice of an émigré circle on the Party workers in Russia, to sanctify with the specious slogan of peace a complete betrayal of the majority. In the name of peace the new Central Committee is breaking up organisations which have the audacity to want a congress. In the name of peace the new Central Committee proclaims the publications of the majority to be non-Party publications and refuses to supply them to the committees. In the name of peace the new Central Committee is injecting a squabbling element into the decisions of the Party Council, which dares to talk in print about "deceit" on the part of comrades whose actions have not been investigated yet and who have not even been presented with the charges made against them. The Party Council is now directly falsifying the opinion and verdict of the Party membership, by having the committee resolutions scrutinised by a Central Committee notoriously hostile to a congress, by casting suspicion on these resolutions, delaying their publication, gerrymandering the number of votes, arrogating to itself the congress prerogative of declaring mandates invalid, and disorganising positive work by stirring up the local committees' "peripheral organisations" against them. Meanwhile the centrally conducted positive work is also at a standstill because the Central Committee and Central Organ are engrossed in resisting a congress.

No course remains to the majority committees and organisations but to unite to fight for a congress, against the so-called central institutions of the Party, which in fact are directly flouting the Party. We are making a beginning of such unity by forming a Bureau of Majority Committees, on the initiative and by the common consent of the Odessa, Ekaterinoslav, Nikolayev, Riga, St. Petersburg, and Moscow committees.

Our slogan is the fight for the party spirit against the circle spirit, the fight for the consistent revolutionary line against zigzags, confusion, and a reversion to *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ism, a



Front page of the manuscript of Lenin's "Announcement of the Formation of a Bureau of Majority Committees", 1904
Rescued

First page of the manuscript of Lenin's "Announcement of the Formation of a Bureau of Majority Committees", 1904
Reduced

fight in the name of proletarian organisation and discipline against the disrupters of organisation.

Our immediate objects are to build up ideological and organisational unity of the majority in Russia and abroad, to support and promote in every way the publishing house of the majority (started abroad by Comrades Bonch-Bruyevich and Lenin), to combat the Bonapartism of our central institutions, to ensure the correctness of measures for convening the Third Congress, and to assist the positive work of the committees, which is being disrupted by the agents of the editorial board and the new Central Committee.

Bureau of Majority Committees

In Russia the Bureau can be contacted through the majority committees, and abroad through the Bonch-Bruyevich and Lenin publishing house.

Written before October 20 (November 2), 1904

First published in 1940 in the *Proletarskaya Revolutsiya* magazine, No. 2

Published according to the manuscript

THE ZEMSTVO CAMPAIGN AND *ISKRA*'S PLAN[154]

Written in November 1904
Published in pamphlet form in Geneva in November 1904

Published according to the pamphlet text

FOR PARTY MEMBERS ONLY

The editorial board of *Iskra* has just issued ("for Party members") a letter addressed to the Party organisations. Russia has never been within such close distance of a constitution, say the editors; and they expound a complete plan for a "political campaign", a complete plan for influencing our liberal Zemstvo-ist petitioners for a constitution.

Before analysing this exceedingly instructive plan of the new *Iskra*'s, let us recall how the Russian Social-Democrats have regarded the question of their attitude towards the liberal Zemstvo-ists since a mass working-class movement arose. Everyone knows that, practically from the inception of the mass working-class movement, a struggle went on between the "Economists" and the revolutionaries over this question too. The former went so far as directly to deny the existence of a bourgeois-democratic element in Russia and ignore the proletariat's task of influencing the opposition strata of society; at the same time, by narrowing the scope of the political struggle of the proletariat, they consciously or unconsciously left the role of political leadership to the liberal elements of society, assigning to the workers "the economic struggle against the employers and the government". The adherents of revolutionary Social-Democracy fought in the old *Iskra* against this trend. This struggle may be divided into two main periods: the period before the appearance of a liberal organ—*Osvobozhdeniye*—and the period after it appeared. During the first period we directed our attack mainly against the narrowness of the Economists; we tried to "wake them up" to the fact, which they failed to perceive, of the existence of a bourgeois-democratic element in Russia; we emphasised the need for political activity by the proletariat in every sphere, we stressed that the proletariat must influence all sections of society,

that it must become the vanguard in the battle for freedom. It is the more fitting and necessary to recall this period and its main features now because the adherents of the new *Iskra* grossly falsify it (see Trotsky's *Our Political Tasks*, published under the editorship of *Iskra*), banking on the unfamiliarity of the younger generation with the recent history of our movement.

From the time of the appearance of *Osvobozhdeniye*, the second period in the old *Iskra*'s fight began. When the liberals came out with an organ and political programme of their own, the proletariat's task of influencing "society" naturally underwent a modification: working-class democrats could no longer confine themselves to "shaking up" the liberal democrats and rousing their opposition spirit; they had to put the emphasis on revolutionary criticism of the half-heartedness so clearly exhibited in the political position of liberalism. The influence we brought to bear on the liberal strata now took the form of constantly pointing out the inconsistency and inadequacy of the liberals' political protest (it is sufficient to mention *Zarya*, which criticised Mr. Struve's preface to the Witte Memorandum,* also numerous articles in *Iskra).*

By the time of the Second Party Congress this new attitude of the Social-Democrats towards the now articulate liberals was already so well-defined and established that there was no question in anyone's mind about whether a bourgeois-democratic element existed in Russia and whether the opposition movement ought to receive support (and what kind of support) from the proletariat. The only question was how to formulate the Party's views on the subject; and I need only point out here that the views of the old *Iskra* were much better expressed in Plekhanov's resolution, which emphasised the anti-revolutionary and anti-proletarian character of the liberal *Osvobozhdeniye*, than in the confused resolution tabled by Starover, which, on the one hand, aimed (quite inopportunely) at an "agreement" with the liberals, and, on the other, stipulated for it conditions that were manifestly unreal, being altogether impossible for the liberals to fulfil.

---

* See present edition, Vol. 5, pp. 31-80.—*Ed.*

I

Now let us examine the new *Iskra*'s plan. The editors acknowledge that we must make full use of all material showing the irresolution and half-heartedness of the liberal democrats and the antagonism of interests between the liberal bourgeoisie and the proletariat, must do so "in accordance with the fundamental demands of our programme". "But," the editors continue, "*but* within the framework of the struggle with absolutism, notably in its present phase, our attitude towards the liberal bourgeoisie *is determined by the task* of spurring it to greater boldness and inducing it to join in the demands which the proletariat, led by the Social-Democrats, *will put forward* [? has put forward?]." We have italicised the particularly strange words in this strange tirade. For what is it if not strange to contrast criticism of half-heartedness and analysis of antagonistic interests, on the one hand, and the task of spurring these people to greater boldness and inducing them to join, on the other? How can we spur the liberal democrats to greater boldness except by relentless analysis and devastating criticism of the half-heartedness of their democracy? Insofar as the bourgeois (liberal) democrats intend to act as democrats, and are forced to act as democrats, they necessarily seek the support of the widest possible sections of the people. This inevitably produces the following contradiction. The wider these sections of the people, the more representatives are there among them of the proletarian and semi-proletarian strata, who demand the complete democratisation of the political and social system—such complete democratisation as would threaten to undermine very important pillars of all bourgeois rule (the monarchy, the standing army, the bureaucracy). Bourgeois democrats are by their very nature incapable of satisfying these demands, and are therefore, by their very nature, doomed to irresolution and half-heartedness. By criticising this half-heartedness, the Social-Democrats keep prodding the liberals on and winning more and more proletarians and semi-proletarians, and partly petty bourgeois too, from liberal democracy to working-class democracy. How then is it possible to say: we must criticise the half-heartedness of the liberal bourgeoisie, *b u t* (but!) our attitude

towards it is determined by the task of spurring it to greater boldness? Why, that is plain muddle-headedness, which shows that its authors are either marching backward, reverting to the days when the liberals did not come forward openly at all, when they had still to be roused, stirred, induced to open their mouths—or else are slipping into the idea that one can "spur" the liberals to greater boldness by subtracting from the boldness of the proletarians.

Preposterous as this idea is, we find it again, even more clearly expressed, in the very next passage of the editors' letter: "But"—again that editorial reservation—"but we should be making a fatal mistake if we tried by strong measures of *intimidation* to *force* the Zemstvos or other organs of the bourgeois opposition to give here and now, under the influence of *panic*, a formal promise to present our demands to the government. Such a tactic would discredit the Social-Democrats, because it would make our entire political campaign a lever for reaction." (Editors' italics.)

So that's how it is, is it? Before the revolutionary proletariat has dealt the tsarist autocracy a single serious blow, at a time when that autocracy is so visibly shaken and when a serious blow is so imperative, would be so useful, and might prove decisive, there are Social-Democrats who go about mumbling about levers for reaction. This is not just muddle-headedness, it is sheer inanity. This is what the editors have come to with their terrible bogey, invented specially to start this talk about becoming a lever for reaction. Just think of it: that people should talk in all seriousness, in a letter to the Social-Democratic Party organisations, of tactics of intimidating the Zemstvo-ists and forcing them to give formal promises under the influence of panic! Even among Russian officialdom, even among our Ugryum-Burcheyevs,[155] it would not be easy to find a political infant who would believe in such a bogey. We have among our revolutionists hotheaded terrorists, desperate bomb-throwers; but even the most hare-brained of the hare-brained defenders of bomb throwing have yet, I believe, to propose intimidating ... the Zemstvo-ists and striking panic into ... the opposition. Cannot the editors see that the inevitable effect of their ridiculous bogeys and inane phrases is to perplex and mislead, to befog and confuse the minds of the fighting prole-

tarians? After all, these catchwords about levers for reaction and the discrediting tactics of intimidation do not fly into empty space; they fall upon the specific soil of police-ridden Russia, so eminently suited for the sprouting of weeds. Talk about levers for reaction is indeed to be heard at every street corner nowadays, but it comes from the *Novoye Vremya* gentry.[156] The story about the discrediting tactics of intimidation has indeed been repeated *ad nauseam*—by the cowardly leaders of the bourgeois opposition.

Take Prof. Prince E. N. Trubetskoy. A sufficiently "enlightened" and—for a legal Russian personality—a sufficiently "bold" liberal, one would think. Yet how fatuously he discourses in the liberal *Pravo* (No. 39) on the "internal danger", namely, the danger from the extreme parties! There you have a live example of who really is close to panic; a graphic instance of what really does have an intimidating effect on real liberals. What they are afraid of, it need hardly be said, is not the plan conjured up by the *Iskra* editors, the plan of extorting from the Zemstvo-ists formal promises to the revolutionaries (Mr. Trubetskoy would only roar with laughter if told of such a plan); they are afraid of the revolutionary socialist aims of the "extreme" parties, they are afraid of leaflets, those first harbingers of independent revolutionary action by the proletariat, which will not stop, will not lay down its arms until it has overthrown the rule of the bourgeoisie. This fear is not inspired by ludicrous bogeys, but by the actual nature of the working-class movement; and it is a fear ineradicable from the hearts of the bourgeoisie (not counting a few individuals and groups, of course). And that is why the new *Iskra*'s talk about the discrediting tactics of intimidating the Zemstvo-ists and representatives of the bourgeois opposition rings so false. Afraid of leaflets, afraid of anything that goes beyond a qualified franchise constitution, the liberal gentry will always stand in fear of the slogan "a democratic republic" and of the call for an armed uprising of the people. But the class-conscious proletariat will indignantly reject the very idea that we could renounce this slogan and this call, or could in general be guided in our activity by the panic and fears of the bourgeoisie.

Take *Novoye Vremya*. What dulcet melodies it weaves about the lever-for-reaction theme! "The youth and reaction," we read in the "Notes" in No. 10285 (October 18). "...The words go ill together, and yet unconsidered actions, impulsive ardour, and the desire at all costs to share immediately in shaping the nation's fortunes may bring the youth to this hopeless impasse. The demonstration a few days ago in front of the Vyborg prison; then the attempt at some sort of demonstration in the heart of the capital; in Moscow, the procession of 200 students with banners and protests against the war.... All this explains the reaction.... Student disturbances, youth demonstrations—why, they are a real godsend, a trump card, an unexpected ace of trumps in the hands of the reactionaries. Truly a welcome present for them, which they will know how to make the most of. We should not make them these presents, should not go about smashing imaginary [!!!] window-bars; the very doors are open now [the doors of the Vyborg and other prisons?], wide open!"

This disquisition requires no comment. One has only to quote it to see how tactless it is to talk about a lever for reaction now—*now*, when not one door of the all-Russia prison has opened a hair's breath for the struggling workers; when the tsarist autocracy has not yet made a single concession that would affect the proletariat in the slightest; when all attention and efforts should be centred on preparing for a real and decisive battle with the Russian people's enemy. Of course, the very thought of such a battle strikes fear and panic into the Trubetskoys and the thousands of less "enlightened" liberal gentlemen. But we should be fools if we took their panic into consideration. What we should take into consideration is the state of our forces, the growth of popular ferment and indignation, the moment when the proletariat's direct onslaught on the autocracy will link up with one of the spontaneous and spontaneously growing movements.

II

In speaking above of the bogey our editors conjured up, we did not mention another characteristic little point in their argument. The editors denounce the discrediting tactics of seeking to extort from the Zemstvo-ists "a formal

promise to present our demands to the government". Over and above the absurdities already noted, the very idea that "our" demands, the demands of working-class democrats, should be presented to the government by liberal democrats is a peculiar one. On the one hand, the liberal democrats, being bourgeois democrats, can never identify themselves with "our" demands, can never uphold them sincerely, consistently, and resolutely. Even if the liberals gave, and gave "voluntarily", a formal promise to present our demands, it is a foregone conclusion that they would fail to keep that promise, would betray the proletariat. On the other hand, if we should be strong enough to exert serious influence on the bourgeois democrats generally and the Zemstvo gentlemen in particular, we should be quite strong enough to present our demands to the government ourselves.

The editors' peculiar idea is no slip of the pen, but an inevitable product of their general confused position on this issue. Listen to this: "As our focal point and guiding thread ... we must take the practical task ... of exerting powerful organised pressure upon the bourgeois opposition"; "the draft of the workers' statement to the liberal opposition organ in question" must "explain why the workers are not approaching the government, but an assembly of representatives of that opposition". To put the thing in this way is a fundamental mistake. We, the party of the proletariat, should, of course, "go to all classes of the population", openly and vigorously championing our programme and our immediate demands before the people at large; we should seek to present these demands to the Zemstvo gentlemen too; but our focal point and guiding thread must be pressure on the government, not on the Zemstvo-ists. The editors of *Iskra* have turned this question of the focal point completely upside down. The bourgeois opposition is merely bourgeois and merely an opposition because it does not itself fight, because it has no programme of its own that it unconditionally upholds, because it stands between the two actual combatants (the government and the revolutionary proletariat with its handful of intellectual supporters) and hopes to turn the outcome of this struggle to its own advantage. Accordingly, the more heated the struggle becomes, the nearer the moment of the decisive battle, the more must we focus

our attention and bring our pressure to bear on our actual enemy, and not on a *notoriously* conditional, problematic, unreliable, half-hearted ally. It would be foolish to ignore this ally, and absurd to try to intimidate and frighten him—all that is so self-evident that it is strange even to talk about it. But, I repeat, the focal point and guiding thread in our agitation must not be pressure on this ally, but preparation for the decisive battle with the enemy. For while it has been flirting with the Zemstvos and has granted them some paltry concessions, the government has not, in actual fact, conceded anything whatever to the people; it may still well revert to (or rather continue) its reactionary course, as has happened in Russia tens and hundreds of times after a momentary flash of liberalism from one autocrat or another. At a moment like this, when the government is flirting with the Zemstvos and the people are being hoodwinked and lulled with empty words, we must particularly beware of the fox's cunning, must be particularly insistent in pointing out that the enemy has yet to be defeated, must call with particular vigour for continuing and intensifying the fight against the enemy, and not shift the emphasis from "approaching" the government to approaching the Zemstvos. None other than the notorious cream-skimmers and betrayers of freedom are hard at work at this moment to put the Zemstvos in the focus of public and popular attention and to inspire confidence in them, when actually they do not in the least deserve the confidence of genuine democrats. Take *Novoye Vremya*: in the article we have already quoted you will find the following argument: "Anyone can see that once all our failings and shortcomings can be boldly and candidly discussed and there is freedom for the activity of every public personality, it should not be long before we see the last of these shortcomings and Russia is able to set foot confidently on the path of the progress and improvement she so sorely needs. We do not even have to invent the organisation to serve as the instrument of this progress: it is already to hand in the form of the Zemstvos, which only [!!] need to be given the freedom to grow; therein lies the earnest of genuinely national, not borrowed, progress." This kind of talk not only "conceals a desire for a limited monarchy and a qualified-franchise constitution" (as the

editors put it elsewhere in their letter); it directly prepares the ground for reducing the whole business to a bestowal of smiles on the Zemstvos, without even any limitation of the monarchy.

Making pressure on the Zemstvos instead of on the government the focal point leads naturally to the unfortunate idea that underlay Starover's resolution—the idea of trying to find, now at once, a basis for some sort of "agreements" with the liberals. "As regards the present Zemstvos," the editors say in their letter, "our task reduces itself [!!] to presenting to them those political demands of the revolutionary proletariat which they must support if they are to have any right to speak in the name of the people and count on the energetic support of the worker masses." A fine definition of the tasks of the workers' party, I must say! At a time when an alliance of the moderate Zemstvo-ists and the government to fight the revolutionary proletariat is only too clearly possible and probable (the editors themselves admit the possibility of such an alliance), we are to "reduce" our task, not to redoubling our efforts in the struggle against the government, but to drawing up casuistic conditions for agreements with the liberals on mutual support. If I put before someone demands which he must undertake to support to have me support him, what I am doing is concluding an agreement. And we ask all and sundry: what has become of the "conditions" for agreements with the liberals which were prescribed in Starover's resolution* (signed also by Axelrod and Martov), and which our press has already predicted could never be fulfilled? The editors' letter does not say a word about these conditions. The editors advocated the resolution at the Congress only to throw

---

* The reader will recall that Starover's resolution, which was passed by the Congress (in spite of Plekhanov's opinion and mine), lays down three conditions for temporary agreements with the liberals: 1) the liberals "shall clearly and unambiguously declare that in their struggle against the autocratic government they will resolutely side with the Social-Democrats"; 2) "they shall not include in their programmes any demands running counter to the interests of the working class or the democracy generally, or obscuring their political consciousness"; 3) "they shall make universal, equal, secret, and direct suffrage the slogan of their struggle".

it into the waste-paper basket afterwards. At the very first attempt to tackle the matter in practice it became apparent that presenting Starover's "conditions" would only provoke Homeric laughter from the Zemstvo liberals.

Let us proceed. Can it in general be acknowledged correct *in principle* to set the workers' party the task of presenting to the liberal democrats or the Zemstvo-ists political demands "which they must support if they are to have any right to speak in the name of the people"? No, such an approach is wrong in principle and can only obscure the class consciousness of the proletariat and lead to the most futile casuistry. To speak in the name of the people is what speaking as a democrat means. Any democrat (the bourgeois democrat included) has a right to speak in the name of the people, but he has this right only insofar as he champions democracy consistently, resolutely, going all the way. Consequently, *every* bourgeois democrat "has some right to speak in the name of the people" (for every bourgeois democrat, so long as he remains a democrat, champions some democratic demand); but at the same time *no* bourgeois democrat has a right to speak in the name of the people all along the line (for no bourgeois democrat is capable today of championing democracy resolutely and all the way). Mr. Struve has a right to speak in the name of the people insofar as *Osvobozhdeniye* fights against the autocracy; but Mr. Struve has no right to speak in the name of the people insofar as *Osvobozhdeniye* turns and twists, stops short at a qualified-franchise constitution, equates Zemstvo opposition with struggle, and will not commit itself to a clear and consistent democratic programme. The German National-Liberals had a right to speak in the name of the people insofar as they fought for freedom of movement. The German National-Liberals had no right to speak in the name of the people insofar as they supported the reactionary policy of Bismarck.

Therefore, to set the workers' party the task of presenting to the liberal bourgeois demands which they must support in order to have any right to speak in the name of the people is an absurd and nonsensical proceeding. There is no need for us to invent any special democratic demands over and above those contained in our programme. In the name of that programme we must support every democrat (including

the bourgeois democrat) insofar as he champions democracy, and must relentlessly expose every democrat (including the Socialist-Revolutionary) insofar as he deviates from democracy (as, for instance, in such questions as the freedom of the peasant to leave the commune or to sell his land). As for trying to establish in advance the permissible degree of turpitude, so to speak, to determine beforehand what deviations from democracy a democrat can permit himself and still have some right to speak as a democrat, that is such a clever idea that one can't help wondering whether Comrade Martynov or Comrade Dan did not lend our editors a hand in inventing it.

III

After setting forth their guiding political considerations, the editors' letter proceeds to expound the details of their great plan.

The Gubernia Zemstvo Assemblies are petitioning for a constitution. In the towns of X, Y, Z, our committeemen plus the enlightened workers draw up a plan of political campaign "according to Axelrod". The focal point in their agitation is pressure on the bourgeois opposition. An organising group is elected. The organising group elects an executive committee. The executive committee elects a special spokesman. Efforts are made "to bring the masses into direct contact with the Zemstvo Assembly, to concentrate the demonstration before the actual premises where the Zemstvo assemblymen are in session. Some of the demonstrators penetrate into the session hall, and at a suitable moment, through the spokesman specially authorised for the purpose, they ask the permission of the Assembly [? of the Marshal of the Nobility, who presides at the Assembly?] to read out a statement on behalf of the workers. If this is not granted, the spokesman enters a loud protest against the refusal of an Assembly which speaks in the name of the people to hear the voice of the people's genuine representatives".

Such is the new *Iskra*'s new plan. We shall see in a moment how modest is the editors' opinion of it; but first let us quote their highly profound explanations as to the functions of the executive committee:

"...The executive committee must take measures in advance to ensure that the appearance of several thousand workers outside the building where the Zemstvo assemblymen are in session, and of several score or hundred in the building itself, *shall not plunge the Zemstvo-ists into panic fear* [!!], under the impact of which they might throw themselves [!] under the shameful protection of the police and Cossacks, thus transforming a peaceful demonstration into an ugly fight and brutal battering, distorting its whole meaning...." (The editors themselves seem to have been taken in by the bogey of their own making. Taking the sentence in its literal, grammatical sense, they even seem to be saying that it is the Zemstvo-ists who would be transforming the demonstration into a brutal battering and distorting its meaning. We have a very low opinion of the Zemstvo liberals, but even so the editors' panic fear that the liberals in a Zemstvo Assembly might call in the police and Cossacks seems to us quite nonsensical. Anyone who has ever attended a Zemstvo Assembly will know that, in the event of so-called disorder, the police would be sent for either by the presiding Marshal of the Nobility or by the police officer unofficially present in an adjoining room. Or perhaps the members of the executive committee are to explain to this police officer that it is no part of the new *Iskra*'s "plan" to have a peaceful demonstration transformed into a brutal battering?)

"To obviate such a surprise, the executive committee must inform the liberal assemblymen beforehand [so that they may give a "formal promise" not to send for the Cossacks?] of the forthcoming demonstration and its true purpose [i.e., inform them that our true purpose does not consist in being brutally battered and so having the meaning of Axelrod's plan distorted]. Furthermore, it must try to reach some agreement [mark this!] with the representatives of the Left wing of the bourgeois opposition and secure, if not their active support, at any rate their sympathy with our political action. Its negotiations with them must, it need hardly be said, be conducted in the name of the Party and on the instructions of the workers' circles and meetings, which should not only discuss the general plan of the polit-

ical campaign but hear reports of its progress—the rules of secrecy being, of course, strictly observed."

Yes, yes, we can well see that Starover's great idea of an agreement with the liberals on the basis of exactly prescribed conditions is gaining strength and substance daily and hourly. To be sure, all these exactly prescribed conditions have been shelved "for the time being" (we are no formalists!); but, on the other hand, an agreement is being reached in practice, now, at once, viz., *an agreement not to cause panic fear*.

Whichever way one reads the editors' letter, no other meaning of its famous "agreement" with the liberals can be found than that we have indicated: either it is an agreement about the conditions on which the liberals would have a right to speak in the name of the people (and in that case the very idea of it very seriously discredits the Social-Democrats who advance it); or else it is an agreement about not causing panic fear, an agreement about sympathising with a peaceful demonstration—in which case it is just nonsense that can hardly be discussed seriously. Nor could the absurd idea of the paramount importance of pressure on the bourgeois opposition, instead of on the government, have resulted in anything but an absurdity. If we are in a position to organise an imposing mass demonstration of workers in the hall of a Zemstvo Assembly, we shall, of course, do so (though if we have forces enough for a mass demonstration it would be much better to "concentrate" them "before the premises" not of the Zemstvo, but of the police, the gendarmerie, or the censorship). But to be swayed when doing so by considerations like the Zemstvo-ists' panic fears, and to engage in negotiations on that score, would be the height of ineptitude, the height of absurdity. Among a good proportion, most likely the majority, of Russia's Zemstvo-ists, the very *content* of a speech by a consistent Social-Democrat will always and inevitably arouse panic fear. To parley with the Zemstvo-ists beforehand about the undesirability of *that* sort of panic fear would place one in the falsest and most undignified kind of position. A brutal battering, or the prospect of one, will just as inevitably arouse panic fear of another sort. To engage in negotiations with the Zemstvo-ists concerning this panic

fear would be very foolish, because not even the most moderate liberal will ever bring about such a battering or sympathise with it—but the thing does not depend upon him. What is needed here is not "negotiations", but the actual mustering of force; not pressure on the Zemstvo-ists, but pressure on the government and its agents. If we have no force behind us, better not to hold forth about great plans; and if we do have it, then it is force we must oppose to the Cossacks and police, we must try to gather a crowd of such size and in such a spot that it should be able to repel, or at least to check, the onslaught of the Cossacks and police. And if we are indeed capable of exerting "powerful organised pressure upon the bourgeois opposition", it is assuredly not by silly "negotiations" about not causing panic fear, but by force and force alone, the force of mass resistance to the Cossacks and the tsarist police, the force of a mass onslaught capable of growing into a popular uprising.

The editors of the new *Iskra* see things differently. They are so pleased with their plan for an agreement and negotiations that they cannot admire it enough, cannot find praise enough to lavish on it.

...The active demonstrators must be "imbued with an understanding of the fundamental difference between an ordinary demonstration against the police or the government in general, and a demonstration immediately designed to further the struggle against absolutism, through direct pressure by the revolutionary proletariat on the political tactics [indeed!] of the liberal elements at the *present* [italicised by the editors] moment.... To organise demonstrations of the ordinary, so to speak, general-democratic [!!] type, not aiming directly at a concrete counterposing of the revolutionary proletariat and the liberal bourgeois opposition as two independent political forces, the mere existence of strong political ferment among the masses is sufficient.... Our Party must utilise this mood of the masses even for such, so to say, a lower type [note that!] of their mobilisation against absolutism.... We are taking our first [!] steps on a new [!l path of political activity, the path of organising planned intervention by the worker masses [N.B.] in public life with the direct aim of counterposing them to the bourgeois opposition as an independent force,

which has opposite class interests, but which at the same time offers it conditions [what conditions?] for waging a vigorous joint struggle against the common enemy."

It is not given to everyone to appreciate all the profundity of this remarkable disquisition. The Rostov demonstration,[157] where thousands and thousands of workers were made familiar with the aims of socialism and the demands of working-class democracy, is a "lower type of mobilisation", the ordinary, *general-democratic* type; here there is no concrete counterposing of the revolutionary proletariat and the bourgeois opposition. But when a specially authorised spokesman appointed by an executive committee, which has been elected by an organising group, which has been set up by the committeemen and active workers—when that spokesman, after first negotiating with the Zemstvo-ists, enters a loud protest in the Zemstvo Assembly because it declines to hear him—that will be a "concrete" and "direct" counterposing of two independent forces, that will be "direct" pressure on the tactics of the liberals, that will be "a first step on a new path". For heaven's sake, gentlemen! Why, even Martynov in the worst days of *Rabocheye Dyelo* hardly sank quite so low as this!

The mass meetings of workers in the streets of the southern towns, dozens of worker speakers, direct clashes with the real, tangible force of the tsarist autocracy—all that is a "lower type of mobilisation". Agreements with the Zemstvo-ists about a peaceful statement by our spokesman who will undertake not to cause panic among Messrs. the liberals—that is a "new path". There you have the new tactical tasks, the new tactical views of the new *Iskra*, of which the world was informed with such pomp by the editorial Balalaikin.[158] On one point, though, this Balalaikin happened to speak the truth: between the old *Iskra* and the new there is indeed a yawning gulf. The old *Iskra* had only contempt and derision for people who could admire, as a 'new path", a theatrically staged agreement between classes. *This* new path is one we have long known, from the record of those French and German Socialist "statesmen" who similarly regard the old revolutionary tactics as a "lower type" and never weary of praising "planned and direct intervention in public life" in the form of agreements to allow

the workers' spokesmen to make peaceful and modest statements after negotiations with the Left wing of the bourgeois opposition.

The editors are in such panic fear of the panic fear of the Zemstvo liberals that they insistently enjoin "particular caution" on those who take part in their "new" plan. "As an extreme case of external caution in the way the action is actually carried out," says the letter, "we can envisage mailing the workers' statement to the assemblymen's homes and scattering a considerable number of copies in the Zemstvo Assembly hall. Only people affected with bourgeois revolutionism [*sic*!], for which the external effect is everything and the process of the systematic development of the class-consciousness and initiative of the proletariat is nothing, could have any objection to this."

Well, we are not wont to object to the mailing or scattering of leaflets, but we shall certainly always object to pompous and hollow phrase-mongering. To make the mailing and scattering of leaflets the occasion for talking with serious men about the process of the systematic development of the class-consciousness and initiative of the proletariat, one must be a veritable paragon of complacent banality. To clamour from the housetops about new tactical tasks and then reduce the whole thing to the mailing and scattering of leaflets is really priceless; and nothing could be more characteristic of the exponents of the intellectualist trend in our Party, who, now that their new words in organisation have proved a fiasco, rush about frantically in search of a new word in tactics. And then they talk, with their usual modesty, about the vanity of external effect! Can't you see, my good sirs, that at best, even supposing your so-called new plan were entirely successful, having a workingman address the Zemstvo gentry would only achieve an external effect, and that to talk of its really exerting "powerful" pressure on "the tactics of the liberal elements" is nothing but a joke? Is it not rather the other way round—that what has really exerted powerful pressure on the tactics of the liberal elements is those mass workers' demonstrations which to you are of the "ordinary, general-democratic, lower type"? And if the Russian proletariat is destined again to exert

effective pressure on the tactics of the liberals, it will, I assure you, be by a mass onslaught against the government, not by an agreement with the Zemstvo-ists.

IV

The Zemstvo campaign, launched with the gracious permission of the police; the blandishments of Svyatopolk-Mirsky[159] and the government press; the rising tone of the liberal press; the animation in what is known as educated society—all this faces the workers' party with very serious tasks indeed. But these tasks are quite wrongly formulated in the letter of the *Iskra* editors. At this of all times, the political activity of the proletariat must be focused on organising powerful pressure on the government, not on the liberal opposition. Particularly now, agreements between the workers and the Zemstvo-ists about peaceful demonstrations—agreements which would inevitably boil down to the staging of musical-comedy effects—are utterly out of place; what is needed is to rally the advanced, revolutionary elements of the proletariat in preparation for a decisive struggle for freedom. Particularly now, when our constitutional movement is beginning conspicuously to display the original sins of all bourgeois liberalism, and notably the Russian variety—phrase-mongering, inconsistency of word and action, a sheerly philistine disposition to trust the government and every adroit politician—talk about the undesirability of frightening and panicking the Zemstvo gentry, about levers for reaction, etc., etc., is especially out of place. Particularly now, it is vital to build up in the revolutionary proletariat the firm conviction that the present "emancipation movement in society" will necessarily and inevitably prove a bubble like all the others before it unless the force of the worker masses, capable of and ready for an uprising, intervenes.

The political unrest among all sections of the people—that essential condition for an uprising and earnest of its success, an earnest that the initiative of the proletariat will meet with support—is spreading, growing, becoming more intense all the time. It would therefore be very poor judgement if at this moment anyone were to start shouting

again for immediate launching of the assault, for forming at once into assault battalions,[160] etc. The whole course of events goes to show that the tsarist government will very soon find itself in a still worse tangle and faced with an even more formidable resentment. The game it has started with the Zemstvo constitutionalists is bound to get it into a tangle: whether it makes some paltry concessions or whether it makes no concessions at all, discontent and exasperation will inevitably spread still wider. And it is likewise bound to get into a tangle with its shameful and criminal Manchurian adventure, which spells a political crisis in either event: decisive military defeat, or the protraction of a war so hopeless for Russia.

What the working class must do is to broaden and strengthen its organisation and redouble its agitation among the masses, making the most of every vacillation of the government, propagating the idea of an uprising, demonstrating the necessity for it from the example of all those half-hearted and foredoomed "steps" about which so much fuss is now being made. It need hardly be said that the workers' response to the Zemstvo petitions must be to call meetings, scatter leaflets, and—where there are forces enough—organise demonstrations to present all the Social-Democratic demands, regardless of the "panic" of Mr. Trubetskoy and his like or of the philistines' cries about levers for reaction. And if one is really to risk talking in advance, and from abroad at that, about a possible and desirable higher type of *mass* demonstration (because demonstrations not of a mass nature are altogether without significance); if one is really to discuss before what particular premises the demonstrators' forces should be concentrated—we would point to the premises where the business of police persecution of the working-class movement is carried on, to the police, gendarmerie, censorship headquarters, to the places where political "offenders" are confined. The way for the workers to give serious support to the Zemstvo petitions is not by concluding agreements about the conditions on which the Zemstvo-ists would have a right to speak in the name of the people, but by striking a blow at the people's enemies. And there need be little doubt that the idea of such a demonstration will meet with the sympathy of the proletariat. The workers now-

adays hear magniloquent phrases and lofty promises on every hand, they see a real—infinitesimal but nonetheless real—extension of freedom for "society" (a slackening of the curb on the Zemstvos, the return of banished Zemstvo-ists, an abatement of the ferocity against the liberal press); but they see nothing whatever that gives *their* political struggle more freedom. Under pressure of the revolutionary onslaught of the *proletariat* the government has allowed the *liberals* to talk a little about freedom! The condition of the slaves of capital, downtrodden and deprived of rights, now comes home to the proletarians more clearly than ever. The workers do not have any regular widespread organisations for the relatively free (by Russian standards) discussion of political matters; nor halls to hold meetings in; nor newspapers of their own; and their exiled and imprisoned comrades are not coming back. The workers see now that the liberal bourgeois gentry are setting about dividing the bearskin, the skin of the bear which the workers have not yet killed, but which they, and they alone, have seriously wounded. They see that, at the very start of dividing the skin in anticipation, these liberal bourgeois gentry already snap and snarl at the "extreme parties", at the "enemies at home"—the relentless enemies of bourgeois rule and bourgeois law and order. And the workers will rise still more fearlessly in still greater numbers, to finish off the bear, to win by force *for themselves* what is promised as charity to the liberal bourgeois gentry—freedom of assembly, freedom of the workers' press, full political freedom for a broad and open struggle for the complete victory of socialism.

We are issuing this pamphlet with the superscription "For Party Members Only" inasmuch as the *Iskra* editors' "letter" was issued with that superscription. Actually, to stage "secrecy precautions" in regard to a plan that is to be circulated to dozens of towns, discussed in hundreds of workers' circles, and explained in agitation leaflets and appeals is nothing short of ridiculous. It is an instance of the bureaucratic mystification which Comrade Galyorka, in "On the New Road", has already noted to be a practice of the editors and the Council. There is just one angle from

which one might justify concealing the editorial letter from the public in general and the liberals in particular: a letter like that is altogether too discreditable to our Party....

We are cancelling the superscription restricting the readership of this pamphlet, since our so-called Party editorial board has issued a reply to it that is supposedly for the Party membership but is in fact circulated only to gatherings of the minority and withheld from Party members known to belong to the majority.

If *Iskra* has decided not to consider us Party members (while at the same time fearing to say so openly), we can only resign ourselves to our sad fate and draw the appropriate conclusions from that decision.

December 22, 1904

Manuscript of the “Outline of a Talk on the Situation Within the Party”. 1904

Reduced

Manuscript of the "Outline of a Talk on the Situation Within the Party", 1904
Reduced

OUTLINE OF A TALK ON THE SITUATION WITHIN THE PARTY

OUTLINE OF MY TALK[161]

1. Already at the Second Congress the minority *Iskra*-ists displayed instability of principle (or went astray) and in the elections found themselves in coalition with their ideological opponents.

2. After the Congress too—even at the League—the minority championed the continuity of the old *Iskra* but actually shifted further and further away from it.

3. Plekhanov at the time of his swing-over (No. 52) saw clearly that the minority constituted the opportunist wing of the Party and were fighting like anarchistic individualists.

(*Contra* Vasilyev and Lenin in the matter of circle spirit.)*

4. Defending, justifying, elevating to a principle our organisational backwardness and the organisational nullification of the Congress already constitutes opportunism. No one will today venture to support, as such, theses on programme versus Rules, etc.

5. To accuse the majority of ignoring the economic struggle, of Jacobinism, of ignoring the workers' independent initiative, is nothing but totally groundless repetition of the attacks of *Rabocheye Dyelo* on *Iskra*.

6. Fear of the Third Congress and opposition to it completes the false position of both the minority and the conciliators.

7. In the Zemstvo campaign plan the *Iskra* editors have embarked on a particularly false and harmful, an undoubt-

* See pp. 145-47 of this volume.—*Ed.*

edly opportunist tactical course by bringing up the question of panic and extolling agreements with the Zemstvo-ists about peaceful demonstrations as being a new type.

The campaign plan is connected with Starover's mistaken resolution.

Written on November 19
(December 2), 1904

First published in 1931
in *Lenin Miscellany XVI*

Published according
to the manuscript

A LETTER TO THE COMRADES

(WITH REFERENCE TO THE FORTHCOMING PUBLICATION OF THE ORGAN OF THE PARTY MAJORITY)

Dear Comrades,

Today, at a meeting of a close circle of Bolsheviks abroad, a final decision was taken on a question that in principle has long been decided: the publication of a Party periodical that will uphold and develop the principles of the majority against the organisational and tactical discord brought into the Party by the minority, and will serve the needs of the positive work of the organisations in Russia, against whom such a bitter fight is now being carried on by minority agents practically all over the country—a fight that terribly disorganises the Party at this vital historical juncture, and one that is carried on throughout by the most shameless splitting methods and tactics, amid hypocritical deploring of the split by the so-called Central Organ of the Party. We have done everything in our power to steer the struggle into a Party channel; ever since January we have been fighting for a congress, as the only worthy Party way to end this impossible situation. By now it is perfectly clear that the activities of the Central Committee following its desertion to the minority consist almost entirely in desperately resisting a congress, and that the Council is resorting to the most outrageous and unpardonable tricks to put off convening it. The Council is directly sabotaging a congress; whoever has still to be convinced of that after its latest decisions, printed in the supplement to Nos. 73-74 of *Iskra*, will see it from Orlovsky's pamphlet *The Council Against the Party*,[162] which we published the other day. It is perfectly clear now that unless

they unite and resist our so-called central institutions, the majority will not be able to uphold their position, to uphold the party spirit in its struggle against the circle spirit. Union of the Bolsheviks in Russia has long been put forward by them as an urgent need. Recall the tremendous sympathetic response to the programmatic resolution of the twenty-two* (programmatic for our struggle within the Party); recall the proclamation of the nineteen, issued in printed form by the Moscow Committee (October 1904); lastly, nearly all Party committees are aware that a number of private conferences of majority committees have lately been held, and in part are still being held,[163] and that the most vigorous and definite efforts are being made to solidly unite the majority committees for resistance to the overweening Bonapartists on the Council, Central Organ, and Central Committee.

We hope that these efforts (or rather steps) will be made generally known in the very near future, when the results will allow of a definite statement of what has already been achieved. It need hardly be said that the majority would have been quite unable to conduct their self-defence without a publishing house of their own. As you may already know from our Party literature, the new Central Committee simply ejected our pamphlets (and even the covers of pamphlets already set up) from the Party printing office, thus turning the latter into the printing office of a circle, and refused the direct request of the majority members abroad and of committees in Russia—the Riga Committee, for instance—to have majority literature delivered to Russia. It became quite evident that falsification of Party opinion was a systematic tactic of the new Central Committee. We found ourselves faced unavoidably with the necessity of expanding our publishing activities and setting up our own transport arrangements. The committees that had broken off comradely relations with the editorial board of the Central Organ (see Dan's admission in his account of the Geneva meeting of September 2, 1904[164]—an interesting pamphlet) could not and cannot do without a periodical organ. A party without an organ, an organ without a party!

* See pp. 454-61 of this volume.—*Ed.*

This tragic formulation put forward by the majority as far back as August inexorably decreed the one solution—the starting of our own organ. The young literary forces that have been coming abroad to uphold the vital cause of the majority of the comrades in Russia need a field for their energies. A number of Party writers in Russia likewise call insistently for an organ. In starting this organ, which will probably be called *Vperyod*, we are acting in full agreement with the mass of the Bolsheviks in Russia, and in full harmony with our conduct in the Party struggle. We are resorting to this weapon after a whole year spent in trying every, absolutely every way that is simpler, more economical for the Party, more perfectly in accordance with the interests of the working-class movement. We are by no means abandoning the struggle for a congress; on the contrary, we want to extend, co-ordinate, and support this struggle, want to help the committees to decide the new question now facing them—that of arranging a congress without the Council and Central Committee, and against the wishes of the Council and Central Committee—a question that requires the fullest and most serious discussion. We openly champion views and aims that have long since been stated, in a number of pamphlets, before the whole Party. We are fighting and will continue to fight for the consistent revolutionary line, against discord and wabbling in matters of both organisation and tactics (see the monstrously muddled letter of the new *Iskra* to the Party organisations, printed for Party members only and concealed from the eyes of the world[165]). The announcement about the new organ will probably appear in a week or so, and the first issue somewhere between January 1 and 10, New Style. The editorial board will include all the majority writers that have so far come to the fore (Ryadovoy, Galyorka, Lenin, Orlovsky, who contributed regularly to *Iskra* from its 46th to 51st issue, when it was conducted by Lenin and Plekhanov, and also very valuable younger forces). The body practically directing and organising the complex business of distribution, agencies, etc., etc., will be formed (has already been formed in part)[166] through direct assignment of definite functions to definite comrades by a number of Russian committees (the Odessa, Ekaterinoslav, and Niko-

layev committees, the four Caucasian committees, and several northern ones, more particulars of which you will receive shortly). We now appeal to all comrades to give us all the support they can. We shall conduct the organ on the understanding that it is the organ of the movement in Russia, not of any émigré circle. This requires, first and foremost, the most vigorous "*literary*" support, or rather literary participation, from Russia. I have put the word "literary" in italics and inverted commas in order to draw attention from the first to its special sense and caution against a misconception that is very common and highly detrimental to the work. It is a misconception that writers and only writers (in the professional sense of the term) can successfully contribute to a publication; on the contrary, it will be vital and alive only if for five leading and regularly contributing writers there are five hundred or five thousand contributors who are not writers. One of the shortcomings of the old *Iskra*, one which I always tried to rid it of (and which has grown to monstrous proportions in the new *Iskra*) was that too little was done for it from Russia. We always used to print everything, practically without exception, that we received from Russia. A really live organ should print only a tenth of what it receives, using the rest as material for the information and guidance of the journalists. We must have as many Party workers as possible correspond with us, correspond in the ordinary, not the journalistic sense of the term.

Isolation from Russia, the engulfing atmosphere of the accursed émigré slough, weighs so heavily on one here that living contact with Russia is our only salvation. Let all remember that who want in fact, and not just in word, to consider (and to *make*) our organ the organ of the entire "majority", the organ of the mass of Russian comrades. Let everyone who regards this organ as his own and who is conscious of the duties of a Social-Democratic Party member abandon once and for all the bourgeois habit of thinking and acting as is customary towards legally published papers—the habit of feeling: it is *their* business to write and ours to read. All Social-Democrats must work for the Social-Democratic paper. We ask everyone to contribute, and especially the workers. Give the workers the widest opportunity to write

for our paper, to write about positively everything, to write as much as they possibly can about their daily lives, interests, and work—without such material a Social-Democratic organ will not be worth a brass farthing and will not deserve the name. In addition, please send us *private letters*, not intended as contributions to the paper, i.e., not for publication, but by way of comradely intercourse with the editors and to keep them informed, and not only about facts and incidents, but about the prevailing sentiment and the everyday, "uninteresting", humdrum, routine side of the movement. People who have not lived abroad cannot imagine how much we need such letters (there is absolutely nothing secret about them either, and to write such an uncoded letter once or twice a week is really something the busiest person can do). So write to us about the discussions at the workers' study circles, the nature of these discussions, the subjects of study, and the things the workers ask about; about the state of propaganda and agitational work, and about contacts among the general public, in the army, and among the youth; above all write about any dissatisfaction the workers feel with us Social-Democrats, about the things that trouble them, about their suggestions, criticisms, etc. Matters relating to the practical organisation of the work are particularly interesting now, and there is no way of acquainting the editors with them except by a lively correspondence not of a journalistic nature, but simply of a comradely kind. Of course, not everyone has the ability or inclination to write, but ... don't say "I can't", say "I don't want to"; given the desire, one or two comrades who could write can be found in any circle, any group, even the smallest, even the most minor (the minor groups are often especially interesting, for they sometimes do the most important, though inconspicuous, part of the work). We here have from the start placed the secretarial work on a broad footing, drawing on the experience of the old *Iskra*; and you for your part should know that *anybody*, absolutely anybody who sets about it with patience and determination can without much difficulty make sure that all his letters, or nine-tenths of them, reach their destination. I say this on the basis of the three years' experience of the old *Iskra*, which had many such an informal correspondent (often unacquainted

with any of the editors) who wrote with the utmost regularity. The police have long been quite unequal to the task of intercepting all foreign correspondence (they only seize a letter occasionally, if the writer has been unusually careless); and the great bulk of the old *Iskra*'s material always used to arrive in the most usual way, in ordinary letters sent to our addresses. A special word of warning against the practice of concentrating correspondence only in the hands of the committee and the secretaries. Nothing could be more harmful than such a monopoly. Essential as unity is in actions and decisions, in the matter of general information, of correspondence, it is quite wrong. It very often happens that the most interesting letters are from comparative "outsiders" (people more remote from the committees), who perceive more *freshly* much that old experienced workers overlook because they are too used to it. Give every opportunity to the younger people to write to us—to the youth, to Party workers, to "centralists", to organisers, and to ordinary rank-and-filers at impromptu meetings and mass rallies.

Only given such a wide correspondence can we, by our joint efforts, make our paper a real organ of *the working-class movement in Russia*. We earnestly request, to have this letter read to every kind of meeting, study circle, subgroup, etc., etc.—as widely as possible—and to be informed how the workers receive this appeal. As to the idea of publishing a separate workers' ("popular") organ and a general—guiding—intellectual organ, we are very sceptical about it; we should like to see the Social-Democratic newspaper the organ of the whole movement, to see the workers' paper and the Social-Democratic paper fused in one. This can be achieved only if we have the most active support of the working class.

With comradely greetings, *N. Lenin*

Written on November 29 (December 12), 1904

Published in leaflet form in December 1904

Published according to the leaflet text

FROM MARX TO MAO NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

STATEMENT AND DOCUMENTS ON THE BREAK OF THE CENTRAL INSTITUTIONS WITH THE PARTY

Written in December 1904
First published in 1926
in *Lenin Miscellany V*

Published according
to the pamphlet text

In No. 77 of *Iskra*, three members of the Central Committee, claiming to act on behalf of that body as a whole, summon Comrade N[167] to a court of arbitration on the charge of "making a false statement designed to disrupt the Party". The allegedly false statement in question was made "through a member of the Central Committee who took no part in drawing up the declaration", that is, through me. In view of my close connection with the affair, and acting on the authority of Comrade N, I consider it my right and duty to participate in the arbitration proceedings, and I bring the following charges against Central Committee members Glebov, Valentin, and Nikitich.

I charge them with unlawful, improper, formally and morally impermissible behaviour towards their fellow-members of the Central Committee and towards the Party as a whole.

Inasmuch as this improper behaviour is greatly protracting and aggravating the Party crisis, and as it moreover directly affects the mass of the Party workers, I consider publicity of the proceedings absolutely essential in regard to everything that does not affect the secrecy of the organisation, and I shall therefore set forth my charges in detail.

I. *I charge the three Central Committee members, Glebov, Valentin, and Nikitich, with systematically deceiving the Party.*

1) I charge them with having used the powers conferred on them by the Second Party Congress to suppress the public opinion of the Party as expressed in the agitation for a Third Congress. They had no right to suppress this agitation, which is an inalienable right of every Party member. In particular, they had no right to dissolve the Southern Bureau for agitating on behalf of a congress. They had neither the formal nor the moral right to censure me, a mem-

ber of the Party Council, for having voted in the Council in favour of a congress.

2) I charge them with having concealed from the Party the committee resolutions in favour of a congress, and with taking advantage of the confidence they enjoy as members of one of the Party's highest institutions to mislead the committees by a deliberately false account of the state of affairs in the Party. They have obstructed the elucidation of the truth by refusing to meet the Riga Committee's request to have the resolution of the twenty-two printed and distributed and to have majority literature delivered to Russia, on the pretext that it is not Party literature.

3) I charge them with not having hesitated, in their agitation against a congress, even to disrupt the work on the spot by appealing against the pro-congress committees to their peripheral organisations, doing everything to discredit these committees in the eyes of the local workers, and thus tending to destroy that confidence between the committees and their periphery without which all work is impossible.

4) I charge them with having, through the Central Committee delegate on the Council, shared in devising the Council rulings as to the conditions for summoning the Third Congress—rulings which made a congress impossible and thus deprived the Party of the opportunity of settling the, conflict within it in a normal way.

5) I charge them with having told the committees that they agreed in principle with the position of the majority and that any agreement with the minority was only possible if the latter gave up its secret separate organisation and its demand for co-optation to the Central Committee, yet having at the same time, *in secret from the Party and in deliberate defiance of its will*, made a deal with the minority on the following terms: 1) preservation of the autonomy of the minority's technical enterprises, and 2) co-optation to the Central Committee of three of the most inveterate minority adherents.

6) I charge them with having taken advantage of their authority as members of one of the Party's highest institutions to cast aspersions on their political opponents. They have behaved dishonourably towards Comrade P.[168]

in resolving *last July* on an investigation into his alleged false statement to the Northern Committee and *to this day* (December 22) not even presenting him with the charges made against him, although Glebov has met P. several times, and although this same Glebov, in his capacity of member of the Party Council, allowed himself to apply the term "deceit" in *Iskra* to the action of this comrade, who had no opportunity to defend himself. They told a deliberate untruth when they declared that Lidin[169] was not a representative (*Vertrauensmann*) of the Central Committee. They deceived the Party members, with the object of discrediting in their eyes Comrade Bonch-Bruyevich and his associates in the Distribution Centre, by publishing a statement in *Iskra* (No. 77) in which only the liabilities of the Distribution Centre were shown (and that inaccurately)—and this after they had, through their representatives, issued Comrade Bonch-Bruyevich a written certificate to the effect that he had conducted the business properly and that the accounts were in good order.

7) I charge them with having taken advantage of the absence of Comrade Vasilyev and Comrade Zverev, the former foreign representatives of the Central Committee, to discredit Party institutions (the library and archives of the R.S.D.L.P. in Geneva). They published a statement in *Iskra*, signed by a Central Committee "representative" unknown to me, in which the history and true character of these institutions was absolutely distorted.

II. *In addition, I charge the three members of the Central Committee, Glebov, Valentin, and Nikitich, with a number of morally and formally impermissible actions towards fellow-members of that body.*

1) They violated every principle of Party organisation and discipline by presenting me (through Comrade Glebov) with an ultimatum to resign from the Central Committee or cease agitating for a congress.

2) They broke the agreement concluded in their name by Central Committee member Glebov, when, as a result of the altered composition of the Central Committee, it was no longer to their advantage to observe this agreement.

3) They had no right, at their meeting in July, to declare Comrade N as having resigned from the Central Committee

without hearing either his statement or mine, particularly as these three members of the Central Committee were aware of our demand (the demand of four Central Committee members[170]) to have this disputed matter examined at a general meeting of the Central Committee. To declare Comrade N no longer a member of the Central Committee was also impermissible in itself, for in doing so the three Central Committee members took improper advantage of a statement which Comrade N had made conditionally (and of which not all the comrades had been informed).

4) The three Central Committee members had no right to conceal from me the change in-their views and intentions. Comrade Glebov assured me at the end of May that their views were expressed in the declaration they had drawn up in March.[171] Thus the July declaration, which conflicts basically with the March declaration, was adopted in secret from me, and Glebov's statements were a piece of deception.

5) Glebov broke the agreement he had made with me that in the report to the Amsterdam Congress,[172] which was to be written by Dan (as delegate from the Central Organ) and himself, Glebov (as delegate from the Central Committee), there would be no reference to the differences in the Party. The report, which was written by Dan alone, proved to be full of veiled controversy and permeated through and through with the views of the "minority". Glebov did not protest against Dan's report, and thus indirectly shared in this attempt to deceive the international Social-Democratic movement.

6) The three Central Committee members had no right to deny me the opportunity to announce and publish my dissenting opinion on an important issue of Party life. The July declaration was sent to the Central Organ *for publication* before I had been given a chance to express an opinion about it. On August 24, I sent the Central Organ a protest against this declaration. The Central Organ declared that it would print it only if so desired by the three Central Committee members who had written the declaration. They did not so desire, and thus they concealed my protest from the Party.

7) They had no right to withhold from me the minutes of the Council and to deprive me, without formally expel-

ling me from the Central Committee, of all information about what was happening in the Central Committee, about the appointment of new agents in Russia and abroad, the negotiations with the "minority", the state of the Party funds, etc., etc.

8) They had no right to co-opt three new comrades (conciliators) to the Central Committee without taking the matter to the Council, as required by the Party Rules in the absence of unanimity; and there was no unanimity, since I had lodged a protest against the co-optation.

Appendix

In view of the importance attaching to the position of the Central Committee in the conflict within the Party, I deem it necessary to publish the following documents.

I. Letters from Comrade Glebov to members of the "collegium".[173]

a) September.

"Relations with the Central Organ and the League have not been settled yet. I must say that since our declaration they have become impudent and their appetites have been growing. Our position here is very difficult: control of things abroad is in the hands of the League, private sources are in the hands of the Central Organ, and so we are up to our ears in debt. In these straits (with a debt of 9,000 round our necks), I have to think about finding some solution. I have therefore asked the minority to let me have an outline of their desired reforms."

b) September 7.

"Last night I had a business meeting, in the presence of S., with three spokesmen of the minority: Popov, Blumenfeld, and Martov."

Of the questions discussed at this meeting, which, in Glebov's words, turned into "a preliminary meeting for the arrangement of peace", let me mention the following:

1) Organisational relations abroad.

"Responsibility for the movement in Russia to be assumed by the Central Committee, the Central Organ, and the League. With a view to removing mutual friction and creating a greater interest in the

work and complete confidence, the general direction of affairs to be entrusted to a commission of representatives of the Central Committee, the Central Organ, and the League. The Central Committee to have two votes and the right of veto...."

2) Transport.

"The Central Organ to come under the Central Committee's control with a certain amount of autonomy, as follows: There must only be one distribution centre abroad, the Central Committee's. But the Central Organ is to keep charge of its own part of the border. Literature distribution in Russia to be in the Central Committee's hands. To give it greater autonomy, however, the Central Organ is to have charge of the South. Let me explain. The Central Organ has its own transport arrangements It fears that in the event of a change of administration it might be deprived of its routes. It therefore requests to be guaranteed them by organisational means."

c) September 7.

"Dan and possibly others here too are furious over yesterday's agreement as to the management of affairs. What a greedy lot! What they would like is to set up abroad a committee of representatives of the Central Organ, the Central Committee, and the League, which would decide everything abroad- each only to have one vote, of course. Not bad, eh?"

d) September.

"I want to draw your attention to the desire the Council has expressed for replenishment [this refers to replenishment of the Central Committee representation on the Council]. Somebody will have to be elected in place of Lenin, who will, of course, proclaim it unlawful. I would suggest Dan or Deutsch—with the express proviso that they are being appointed only for the purpose of representation on the Council. There is nobody else we can elect, it seems to me."

II. Letter from a Central Committee agent (*now officially co-opted to the Central Committee*) *to Comrade Glebov*:

September 4.

"Over the declaration there's such a to-do that it's hard to sort things out. The one thing that's clear is that all the committees except the Kharkov, Crimea, Mining Area, and Don are majority committees. The Don Committee is neutral, I think, but I don't know for certain. Of the 'majority' committees, the Riga, Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Northern have, as I informed you before, expressed lack of confidence in the Central Committee on account of the declaration. Full confidence in it has been expressed by only a very few committees. The rest have expressed confidence in it as regards attempts at reconciliation—with the proviso that if these should fail a special congress is to be called

immediately. Of these last-named committees, some make it a condition of reconciliation that the minority should cease to regard themselves as a 'contracting party' and abandon their demand for co-optation as a 'contracting party'(?). That is the picture. If the reconciliation doesn't come off, the Central Committee forfeits the confidence of the majority of the committees and will, consequently itself be obliged to agitate for a congress in order to surrender its mandate. **And the committees' frame of mind makes it quite clear that a congress would pass decisions along the lines proposed by the twenty two, viz., to dismiss the editors and hand over the editorship to the majority, to reform the party Council, etc.** But, as I have already told you, if the reconciliation is to satisfy the committees, the minority must accept the declaration and cease to regard themselves as a 'contracting party'. If they do that, I think Lenin will lose all support in Russia and it will be possible to restore peace. Your remark that matters with Martov are straightening out 'little by little' surprised me. The editors' obstinacy is becoming positively exasperating, and in spite of my sympathies for them ideologically and otherwise, I am beginning to lose confidence in them as political 'leaders'. They now have the organisational question cleared up, and if they persist in their obstinacy in the absence of support from Russia **(the minority are powerless here)**, it will show that they are only fighting for posts."

That was the beginning of the bargain; and here is the finale.

The Central Committee circulated a letter to the committees informing them that

"The negotiations will be completed very shortly (in a couple of weeks at the outside), and meanwhile we can inform you that (1) the Central Committee has not co-opted any minority members (somebody is circulating a slander to that effect); ... (3) the negotiations with the minority are being conducted precisely along the lines that Valentin reported to you, namely, that if there are to be any concessions, they can only be on the part of the minority and must consist in the Central Organ abandoning factional controversy and in the minority dissolving their secret organisation, renouncing their demand for co-optation to the Central Committee, and turning over all their enterprises (technical equipment, transport arrangements, contacts) to the Central Committee. Only on these conditions can peace be restored in the Party. And there is reason to hope that is how it will be. At all events if the minority should now evince a desire to continue their old policy, the Central Committee will immediately break off the negotiations and proceed to summon a special congress."

That is how the Central Committee tried to soothe the committees, which expressed lack of confidence in it; and here are some *letters of "prominent" members of the minority*. The letters were received in the middle of December 1904, Old Style.

"At last we have had a meeting with the riffraff. Their reply was as follows: they agree to autonomy for our technical enterprises; but as regards the agitation commission, they object, considering that to be a direct function of the Central Committee (direction of agitation), and prefer reform of the Central Committee to this plan; **however, they cannot co-opt officially just now, and propose instead the de facto (unofficial) co-optation of three members of the minority (Popov, Fomin, and Fischer). Naturally, X. and I at once agreed, and henceforth the Menshevik opposition is officially dissolved.** It is a veritable load off our minds. The entire Central Committee is to have a meeting with us in a day or two, after which we shall arrange a conference of the committees closest to us....

"**We are, of course, quite certain that we shall gain control of the Central Committee and direct it along the lines we want.** That will be all the easier since many of them already admit the correctness of the minority's criticism on points of principle.... In all the consistent firm-liner committees (Baku, Odessa, Nizhni-Novgorod, and St. Petersburg) the workers are demanding the system of office by election. That is a clear symptom that the firm-liners are in their death-agony."

Simultaneously with this another letter was received:

"An agreement has been reached between 'minority' representatives and the Central Committee. The representatives signed an undertaking. But as there had been no canvass of the 'minority' first, the undertaking, not unnaturally, turned out not altogether satisfactory: it expresses 'confidence' in the Central Committee, instead of in its unity policy; it speaks both of absorption in the Party and of terminating our separate existence, whereas the latter alone would be sufficient. Lastly, the undertaking does not contain the 'credo' of the 'minority'. In view of this, it has been decided to have all the 'minority' organisations pass a resolution containing the 'credo' and the amendments indicated, while of course recognising our representatives' agreement with the Central Committee as valid."

* *
*

It is very likely that the individuals caught red-handed and exposed by these documents will, with their usual "moral sensitivity", do their best to divert the Party's attention from the contents of the documents to the moral issue of the right to publish them. I am certain that the Party will not allow itself to be fooled, by this sleight-of-hand. I declare that I take upon myself full moral responsibility for this exposure, and will give all necessary explanations to the court of arbitration that investigates the matter as a whole.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FORMATION OF AN ORGANISING COMMITTEE AND THE CONVENING OF THE THIRD REGULAR CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY[174]

The severe crisis our Party has been experiencing for a year and a half, ever since the time of the Second Congress, has led to an inevitable and long-foreseen result: to a complete break of the central institutions with the Party. We shall not recapitulate here the painful history of that crisis and repeat facts sufficiently dealt with in the Party press, and in particular in numerous resolutions and statements by the committees in Russia and conferences of them. It is sufficient to state that the last such conference, the Northern, in which the St. Petersburg, Riga, Tver, Moscow, Northern, and Nizhni-Novgorod committees took part, elected a Bureau which it instructed to act as an Organising Committee for the immediate convening of the Third Regular Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party.

After waiting beyond all time limits set by the committees for an answer from the so-called Central Committee, the Bureau has come to an understanding with representatives of the three Southern (Odessa, Ekaterinoslav, and Nikolayev) and four Caucasian committees. It is now coming forward in the capacity of Organising Committee to convene the Third Regular Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, without the consent of the central bodies, which are accountable to the Party but have shirked their responsibility to it.

This is a time of unprecedented political upsurge in Russia, and the proletariat is faced with immense historic tasks in the struggle against the autocracy. All Social-Democrats working in Russia know what tremendous harm the division within our Party has done to the work of organising and rallying the forces of the proletariat; what infinite damage the work of propaganda, agitation, and achievement of workers' unity in Russia has suffered through the pernicious influence of the émigré circle spirit. And if it is not possible to unite the émigré circles and their placemen, let there be unity at least among all Social-Democratic Party workers in Russia, all who uphold the consistent line of revolutionary Social-Democracy. Their unification is the only true road to complete and lasting unity in future among all Russian Social-Democrats.

Long live Russian, long live international revolutionary Social-Democracy!

Concerning the arrangements for convening the Congress, the Organising Committee considers it necessary to make the following announcement:

1) The Organising Committee recognises the unqualified right to representation at the Third Regular Congress, with voice and vote, of all Russian committees and organisations endorsed by the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (the St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kharkov, Kiev, Odessa, Nikolayev, Don, Ekaterinoslav, Saratov, Ural, Northern, Tula, Tver, Nizhni-Novgorod, Baku, Batum, Tiflis, Mining Area, Siberian, and Crimean committees).

2) The Organising Committee recognises the conditional right to representation at the Congress of committees endorsed by the Central Committee after the Second Congress (the Mingrelian, Astrakhan, Orel-Bryansk, Samara, Smolensk, Riga, Kursk, and Voronezh committees, and also the League Abroad). All these committees were endorsed by central bodies which have forfeited the confidence of the Party. We are in duty bound to invite them to the Third Congress, but only the Congress itself can make the final decision as to their participation (actual status of the committee, its right to voice only or to voice and vote, etc.).

3) On behalf of the majority of the Russian committees, the Organising Committee expresses the wish that *all* organisations of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, both abroad and in Russia, and particularly all workers' organisations that consider themselves part of it, should be represented at its Third Regular Congress. The participation of the last-named appears to us especially desirable because the Party crisis and the demagogic preaching of office by election and of democracy *à la Rabocheye Dyelo* have already caused several splits. We must take advantage of the Congress to try, with the participation of representatives from most of the Russian committees, to heal these splits or lessen the harm from them.

4) The Organising Committee accordingly invites all wishing to participate in the Congress to respond immediately and communicate with it (through one of the thirteen committees named above).

5) The question of *invitation* to the Congress shall in disputed cases be decided by the two nearest committees and a third person representing the Organising Committee.

6) The terms of *representation* at the Congress (with voice only or with voice and vote) for committees and other organisations not endorsed by the Second Party Congress shall be determined by the Third Congress itself.

7) The time and place of the Congress will be fixed by the Organising Committee.

Written in December 1904

First published in 1926 in *Lenin Miscellany V*

Published according to the manuscript

NOTES

[1] The *Account of the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.*, written at the time of the Bolsheviks' bitter struggle against the disruptive, splitting activities of the Mensheviks after the Second Congress, played a big part in exposing the Mensheviks' opportunist tactics and rallying the supporters of the majority. Until the publication of the Congress minutes (in January 1904) it was the only Party document dealing with the results of the Second Congress and the causes of the split in the Party. The ideas contained in it were further developed in subsequent articles, letters, and speeches by Lenin, and particularly in his book *One Step Forward*, *Two Steps Back* (pp. 201-423 of this volume) p. 15

[2] Lenin here gives the figures of voting rights as they stood at the time of the Credentials Committee report at the second sitting of the Congress, on July 18 (31), 1903. 42 voting delegates had arrived at the Congress by then: 33 with one vote each, 8 with two votes each, and one of the two delegates from the Foreign Committee of the Bund also had two votes temporarily, pending the arrival of the other. After the arrival of this latter on July 22 (August 4), there were 43 voting delegates, 35 of them with one vote each and 8 with two. p. 19

[3] *The Bund* (General Jewish Workers' Union of Lithuania, Poland, and Russia), founded at a congress of Jewish Social-Democratic groups held in Vilno in 1897, was an association mainly of semi-proletarian Jewish artisans in Russia's western regions. It joined the R.S.D.L.P. at the First Congress (1898) "as an autonomous organisation independent only in regard to questions specifically concerning the Jewish proletariat" (*The C.P.S.U. in Resolutions and Decisions of Its Congresses, Conferences, and Plenary Meetings of the Central Committee*, 1954, Part I, p. 14).

The Bund brought nationalist and separatist tendencies into the Russian working-class movement. Its Fourth Congress, in April 1901, voted to replace the autonomy relationship established by the First Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. by a relationship based on the federal principle. This congress of the Bund also declared, in a resolution on methods of political struggle, that "the best way to draw the broad masses into the movement is the economic struggle".

After the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. rejected its demand to be recognised as the sole representative of the Jewish proletariat, the Bund withdrew from the Party. It rejoined in 1906 on the basis of a decision of the Fourth (Unity) Congress.

Within the R.S.D.L.P., the Bundists always supported the opportunist wing (the Economists, the Mensheviks, the Liquidators) and fought against the Bolsheviks and Bolshevism. As against the Bolsheviks' programme demand for the right of nations to self-determination, they called for national cultural autonomy. During the First World War the Bund took a social-chauvinist stand. In 1917 it supported the counter-revolutionary Provisional Government and fought on the side of the enemies of the Great October Socialist Revolution. In the years of foreign military intervention and civil war the Bund leadership joined forces with the counter-revolution. At the same time, the Bund rank and file began to show a change of heart and favour co-operation with the Soviet government. In March 1921 the Bund dissolved itself, part of its membership joining the Communist Party on the basis of the general rules of admission. p. 19

[4] *Rabocheye Dyelo* (*Workers' Cause*) was an Economist journal, organ of the Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad, published at irregular intervals in Geneva from April 1899 to February 1902 under the editorship of B. N. Krichevsky, P. F. Teplov (Sibiryak), V. P. Ivanshin, and later A. S. Martynov. Nine issues (three of them double ones, thus making twelve) appeared in all. The editorial board of *Rabocheye Dyelo* was the Economists' centre abroad. It supported Bernstein's slogan of "freedom of criticism" of Marxism, took an opportunist stand on the tactical and organisational problems of the Russian Social-Democratic movement, and denied the revolutionary potentialities of the peasantry. The journal propagated the opportunist idea of subordinating the workers' political struggle to the economic and glorified spontaneity in the working-class movement, denying the leading role of the Party. One of its editors, V. P. Ivanshin, also took part in editing *Rabochaya Mysl*, organ of the avowed Economists, which *Rabocheye Dyelo* supported. At the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P., the *Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists represented the extreme Right, opportunist wing of the Party. p. 19

[5] *The Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad* was founded in 1894 in Geneva, on the initiative of the Emancipation of Labour group. The latter was at first the leader in it and edited its publications, but afterwards the opportunist elements—the Economist "younger group"—secured the upper hand. At the Union's First Congress in November 1898 the Emancipation of Labour group refused to edit the Union publications; and at the Second Congress, in April 1900, it broke with the Union finally, withdrawing with its supporters from the Congress to establish an independent organisation called *Sotsial-Demokrat*. p. 19

[6] The *League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class*, organised by Lenin in the autumn of 1895, embraced some twenty Marxist workers' study circles in St. Petersburg and was headed by a Central Group led by Lenin. It was the first organisation in Russia to link up socialism with the working-class movement, going over from the propagation of Marxism among a small number of advanced workers to political agitation among the broad masses of the proletariat, it was significant because, as Lenin put it, it was the rudiment of a revolutionary party based on the working-class movement and directing the class struggle of the proletariat.

On the night of December 8 (20), 1895, the League was dealt a severe blow: many of the leading members, headed by Lenin, were arrested. The first issue of its paper *Rabocheye Dyelo* (*Workers' Cause*), all ready for the press, was also seized.

While in prison Lenin continued to direct the work of the League; he helped it with advice, smuggled out coded letters and leaflet texts, and wrote the pamphlet *On Strikes* (unfortunately not found so far) and his "Draft and Explanation of a Programme for the Social-Democratic Party" (present edition, Vol. 2, pp. 93-121). Those of the old League members who escaped arrest helped to prepare and arrange the First Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. and to draw up the Manifesto issued in its name. However, the long absence of the League's founders, who had been exiled to Siberia, and above all of Lenin, gave freer scope to the opportunist policies of the Economist "younger group" of Social-Democrats, who from 1897 on preached through their newspaper *Rabochaya Mysl* the ideas of mere trade unionism and Bernsteinism. Beginning with the latter half of 1898 the leadership of the League was in the hands of the extreme Economists of the *Rabochaya Mysl* persuasion. p. 19

[7] *Yuzhny Rabochy* (*Southern Worker*) was a Social-Democratic group formed in the South of Russia in the autumn of 1900 around an illegal newspaper of that name (the first issue was published in January 1900 by the Ekaterinoslav Committee of the R.S.D.L.P., the twelfth and last—in April 1903). Among the members of the group and the editors of the paper were, at various times, I. K. Lalayants, A. Vilensky, O. A. Kogan, B. S. Zeitlin, Y. Y. and Y. S. Levin, and V. N. Rozanov.

In contrast to the Economists, the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group considered the proletariat's political struggle, the overthrow of the autocracy, to be the prime task; they opposed terrorism, upheld the need to develop a mass revolutionary movement, and carried out extensive revolutionary activities in the South of Russia. At the same time, they overestimated the role of the liberal bourgeoisie and ignored the importance of the peasant movement. As against the *Iskra* plan of building a centralised Marxist party by uniting all revolutionary Social-Democrats around *Iskra*, the *Yuzhny Rabochy* group advocated a plan of restoring the Party by creating regional Social-Democratic associations. A practical attempt to carry out this plan was made through convening in

December 1901 a conference of the Party committees and organisations of the South, at which a League of Southern Committees and Organisations of the R.S.D.L.P. was formed, with *Yuzhny Rabochy* as its press organ. The attempt proved impracticable (as was the group's entire organisational plan), and following wholesale arrests in the spring of 1902, the League fell to pieces. In August 1902 those *Yuzhny Rabochy* members who remained at liberty entered into negotiations with the *Iskra* editorial board about working together to restore Party unity. The group's statement of solidarity with *Iskra* (published in No. 27 of *Iskra*, November 1, 1902, and in No. 10 of *Yuzhny Rabochy*, December 1902) was of much importance in consolidating the Social-Democratic forces. In November 1902 *Yuzhny Rabochy* joined with the *Iskra* organisation in Russia and the St. Petersburg Committee and Northern League of the R.S.D.L.P. in establishing the Organising Committee for convening the Second Party Congress, and they shared in that committee's work. But in this period too the group did not adhere to the consistent revolutionary line and evinced separatist tendencies (proposing, for example, to set up another all-Russia newspaper in addition to *Iskra*). Lenin classed *Yuzhny Rabochy* among the organisations "which, while verbally recognising *Iskra* as the leading organ, actually pursued plans of their own and were unstable in matters of principle" (p. 209 of this volume). At the Second Party Congress the *Yuzhny Rabochy* delegates adopted a "Centre" position (that of "middling opportunists", as Lenin called the "Centre").

The Second Party Congress voted to dissolve *Yuzhny Rabochy*, like all other separate, independently existing Social-Democratic groups and organisations. p. 19

[8] *Iskra* (*The Spark*) was the first all-Russia illegal Marxist newspaper, it was founded by Lenin in 1900, and it played a vital part in building the Marxist revolutionary party of the working class of Russia.

It was impossible to publish the paper in Russia on account of police persecution, and while still in exile in Siberia Lenin evolved a detailed plan for its publication abroad. When his term of exile ended (January 1900) he at once set about putting his plan into effect. In February he negotiated in St. Petersburg with Vera Zasulich (who had come illegally from abroad) on the participation of the Emancipation of Labour group. At the end of March and beginning of April, Lenin, Martov (Y. O. Zederbaum), A. N. Potresov, and S. I. Radchenko held a conference in Pskov with the "legal Marxists" P. B. Struve and M. I. Tugan-Baranovsky; this conference discussed Lenin's draft declaration of the editorial board of the all-Russia newspaper (*Iskra*) and theoretical and political journal (*Zarya*) on the programme and aims of these publications. Lenin also travelled to various cities (Moscow, St. Petersburg, Riga, Smolensk, Samara, Nizhni-Novgorod, Ufa, Syzran), establishing contacts with Social-Democratic groups and individual Social-Democrats and obtaining their support for *Iskra*.

In August 1900, when Lenin arrived in Switzerland, he and Potresov held discussions with the Emancipation of Labour group on the programme and aims of *Iskra* and *Zarya*, on possible contributors, and on the membership and location of the editorial board. These negotiations very nearly ended in failure, but finally agreement was reached on all disputed questions.

The first issue of Lenin's *Iskra* appeared in December 1900 in Leipzig; afterwards the paper was published in Munich, in London (from July 1902), and, beginning with the spring of 1903, in Geneva. Considerable help in getting the paper going was afforded by the German Social-Democrats Clara Zetkin, Adolf Braun, and others, by the Polish revolutionary Julian Marchlewski, who was living in Munich at the time, and by Harry Quelch, one of the leaders of the British Social-Democratic Federation.

The editorial hoard of *Iskra* consisted of Lenin, G. V. Plekhanov, Martov, P. B. Axelrod, Potresov, and Vera Zasulich. Its secretary in the initial days was I. G. Smidovich-Leman; then, in the spring of 1901, the post was taken over by N. K. Krupskaya, who also conducted all *Iskra*'s correspondence with the Social-Democratic organisations in Russia. Lenin was actually editor-in-chief and the leading figure in *Iskra*. His articles in it dealt with all major issues in the work of building the Party and in the class struggle of the Russian proletariat, as well as with important developments in world affairs.

Iskra became the centre around which the unification of the Party proceeded and Party forces were mustered and trained. Party committees and groups adhering to Lenin's *Iskra* line were formed in many places in Russia (St. Petersburg, Moscow, Samara, and others), and a conference of *Iskra*-ists held in Samara in January 1902 founded the *Iskra* Organisation in Russia. The *Iskra*-ist organisations grew up and worked under the immediate leadership of Lenin's associates and disciples—N. E. Bauman, I. V. Babushkin, S. I. Gusev, M. I. Kalinin, G. M. Krzhizhanovsky, and others. The paper played a decisive role in the fight for a Marxist party, in the defeat of the Economists and the unification of the scattered and isolated Social-Democratic circles.

On the initiative and with the immediate participation of Lenin the *Iskra* editorial board drafted the Party programme (the draft was published in *Iskra*, No. 21) and prepared the Second Party Congress, which was held in July-August 1903. By the time of the Congress most of the local Social-Democratic organisations in Russia had associated themselves with *Iskra*, approved its programme, tactical line, and organisational plan, and recognised it as their leading organ. A special resolution of the Congress noted *Iskra*'s exceptional role in the struggle to build the Party and adopted the paper as the Central Party Organ. The Congress appointed an editorial board consisting of Lenin, Plekhanov, and Martov; but Martov, who insisted that all six of the old- editors should be retained, refused to serve on the board, in spite of the Congress decision, and Nos. 46-51 of *Iskra* were edited by Lenin and Plekhanov. Subsequently Plekhanov went over to the Men-

sheviks and demanded the co-optation to the board of all the old Menshevik editors whom the Congress had rejected. Lenin could not agree to this, and on October 19 (November 1), 1903, he resigned his editorship; he was co-opted to the Central Committee and struck at the Menshevik opportunists from this position. Issue No. 52 of *Iskra* was edited by Plekhanov alone. On November 13 (26), 1903, Plekhanov, acting on his own and in violation of the will of the Congress, co-opted all the Menshevik ex-editors to the editorial board. Beginning with issue No. 52, *Iskra* became the organ of the Mensheviks. p. 19

[9] The *Organising Committee for convening the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.* was originally elected at the Belostok Conference held in March (April) 1902, but soon after the conference all the committee members but one were arrested. At Lenin's suggestion, a new Organising Committee was set up at a conference of Social-Democratic committees held in November 1902 in Pskov. On this committee the *Iskra*-ists had an overwhelming majority.

Under Lenin's guidance, the Organising Committee carried out extensive preparatory work for the Second Congress. Draft Regulations for the convening of the Congress were adopted at a plenary session held in Orel in February 1903. Following this plenary session, members of the Organising Committee twice visited the local Party organisations with a view to assisting them in their work. With their participation, the local committees discussed the draft Regulations, after which the Organising Committee finally endorsed the Regulations and approved a list of the local organisations entitled under them to representation at the Congress.

The Organising Committee prepared for the Congress a detailed written report on its activities. p. 20

[10] *T* was the Bolshevik P. A. Krasikov (referred to in the Congress minutes as Pavlovich). p. 21

[11] *Borba* (*Struggle*) was a group of writers residing abroad, which considered itself part of the R.S.D.L.P.; it took shape as an independent group in Paris in 1901. Since it departed from Social-Democratic views and tactics, engaged in disorganising activities, and had no contacts with Social-Democratic organisations in Russia, the group was not allowed representation at the Second Party Congress. It was dissolved by decision of that Congress. p. 22

[12] *N* or *NN* was the Menshevik Yekaterina Alexandrova (referred to in the Congress minutes as Stein). p. 22

[13] The "*renegade*" was I. V. Chernyshov: originally an Economist, he then went over to the *Iskra* organisation abroad but in April 1903 again deserted to the Economists. p. 22

[14] The *Emancipation of Labour group* was the first Russian Marxist group, it was founded by G. V. Plekhanov in Geneva in 1883. Apart from Plekhanov, the members were P. B. Axelrod, L. G. Deutsch, Vera Zasulich, and V. N. Ignatov.

The Emancipation of Labour group did a great deal for the propagation of Marxism in Russia. They translated into Russian, published abroad, and distributed in Russia Marx's and Engels's *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Marx's *Wage-Labour and Capital*, Engels's *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, and other works of the founders of Marxism; their work dealt a severe blow to Narodism. Plekhanov's two drafts of a programme for Russian Social-Democrats, written in 1883 and 1885 and published by the group, were an important step towards the formation of a Social-Democratic Party in Russia; and his essays *Socialism and the Political Struggle* (1883), *Our Differences* (1885), and *The Development of the Monist View of History* (1895) played a big part in spreading Marxist views. At the same time, however, the Emancipation of Labour group were guilty of serious errors; they clung to certain remnants of Narodnik views, underestimated the revolutionary capacity of the peasantry, and overestimated the role of the liberal bourgeoisie. These errors were the embryo of the future Menshevik views of Plekhanov and other members of the group. The Emancipation of Labour group had no practical ties with the working-class movement. Lenin pointed out that it "only founded Social-Democracy theoretically and took the first step in the direction of the working-class movement" (present edition, Vol. 20, "The Ideological Struggle in the Working-Class Movement").

At the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. the Emancipation of Labour group proclaimed itself dissolved. p. 28

[15] The *League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad* was founded in October 1901 on Lenin's initiative, incorporating the *Iskra-Zarya* organisation abroad and the *Sotsial-Demokrat* organisation (which included the Emancipation of Labour group). The objects of the League were to propagate the ideas of revolutionary Social-Democracy and help to build a militant Social-Democratic organisation. Actually, the League was the foreign representative of the *Iskra* organisation. It recruited supporters for *Iskra* among Social-Democrats living abroad, gave the paper material support, organised its delivery to Russia, and published popular Marxist literature. The Second Party Congress endorsed the League as the sole Party organisation abroad, with the status of a Party committee and the obligation of working under the Central Committee's direction and control.

After the Second Party Congress, the Mensheviks entrenched themselves in the League and used it in their fight against Lenin and the Bolsheviks. At the Second Congress of the League, in October 1903, they adopted new League Rules that ran counter to the Party Rules adopted at the Party Congress. From that time on the League was a bulwark of Menshevism. It continued in existence until 1905. p. 30

[16] This refers to the explanatory comments Lenin appended to his draft agenda and Standing Orders of the Congress, submitted by him under the title "Programme for the Second Regular Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.". p. 31

[17] *Starover*—pseudonym of the Menshevik A. N. Potresov. p. 31

[18] *Zarya* (*Dawn*) was a Marxist theoretical and political journal published in Stuttgart by the editors of *Iskra* in 1901-02. Four issues appeared.

The following articles by Lenin were published in *Zarya*: "Casual Notes", "The Persecutors of the Zemstvo and the Hannibals of Liberalism", the first four chapters of "The Agrarian Question and the 'Critics of Marx'" (the *Zarya* title was "The 'Critics' on the Agrarian Question"), "Review of Home Affairs", and "The Agrarian Programme of Russian Social-Democracy". *Zarya* also printed theoretical articles by Plekhanov. p. 31

[19] The *Party Council* (1903-05), established under the Rules adopted by the Second Congress, was the supreme institution of the Party. The Council was to co-ordinate and harmonise the activities of the Central Committee and the editorial board of the Central Organ, to restore either of these institutions in the event of its entire membership no longer being able to function, and to represent the Party in relations with other parties. Convening the Party Congress was also the function of the Council, and it was obligated by the Rules to do so at stated intervals or at the demand of Party organisations together entitled to half of the votes at the Congress. The Council consisted of five members: two delegated by the Central Committee, two by the Central Organ, and the fifth elected by the Congress. The fifth member elected at the Second Congress was Plekhanov. Lenin was on the Council first as delegate of the Central Organ, then, after his resignation from the editorial board—as delegate of the Central Committee. After Plekhanov swung over to the Menshevik opportunists and they captured the Central Organ, the Council became a weapon in their fight against the Bolsheviks. Lenin battled consistently on the Council for Party unity, exposing the Mensheviks' disruptive, splitting activities (pp. 143-85 and 433-41 of this volume). Under the Rules adopted by the Third Party Congress, the Party Council was abolished. p. 33

[20] The *Socialist-Revolutionaries* (S.R.s) were a petty-bourgeois party formed in Russia at the end of 1901 and beginning of 1902 through the amalgamation of Narodnik groups and circles with the newspaper *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* (*Revolutionary Russia*; 1900-05) and the magazine *Vestnik Russkoi Revolutsii* (*Herald of the Russian Revolution*; 1901-05) as its official organs. The views of the Socialist-Revolutionaries were an eclectic mixture of Narodism and revisionism; they tried, as Lenin put it, to "mend the holes in Narodism" with "patches of the fashionable opportunist 'criticism' of Marxism" (see present edition, Vol. 9, "Socialism and the Peas-

antry"). They failed to see the class distinctions between proletariat and peasantry, glossed over the class differentiation and antagonisms within the peasantry, and rejected the leading role of the proletariat in the revolution. The individual terrorism which they advocated as the principal means of fighting the autocracy did great harm to the revolutionary movement, for it interfered with organising the masses for revolutionary struggle.

The Socialist-Revolutionaries' agrarian programme envisaged the abolition of private ownership of the land and its transfer to the village communes on the basis of equalised tenure, and also the development of co-operatives of all kinds. There was nothing socialist in this programme of so-called "socialisation of the land", since, as Lenin pointed out, abolition of private ownership of the land alone cannot end the domination of capital and the poverty of the masses. The actual, and historically progressive, content of the Socialist-Revolutionary agrarian programme was a struggle for the abolition of landlordism; objectively that programme expressed the interests and aspirations of the peasantry in the period of the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

The Bolsheviks exposed the Socialist-Revolutionaries' attempts to masquerade as socialists, battled stubbornly with them for influence over the peasantry, and showed how harmful their tactics of individual terrorism were to the working-class movement. At the same time they were prepared, under certain conditions, to make temporary agreements with the Socialist-Revolutionaries in the struggle against tsarism.

The heterogeneous class character of the peasantry was responsible, in the final analysis, for political and ideological instability and organisational disunity among the Socialist-Revolutionaries and their constant vacillation between the liberal bourgeoisie and the proletariat. There was a split in the Socialist-Revolutionary Party already in the years of the first Russian revolution (1905-07): its Right wing formed the legal Labour Popular-Socialist Party, akin in its views to the bourgeois Constitutional Democrats (Cadets); the "Left" wing took shape as the semi-anarchist Maximalist League. During the years of reaction that followed the 1905-07 Revolution, the Socialist-Revolutionaries were in a state of complete ideological and organisational breakdown, and the First World War saw most of them adopt the standpoint of social-chauvinism.

After the victory of the February bourgeois-democratic revolution in 1917, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, together with the Mensheviks and Cadets, were the mainstay of the counter-revolutionary bourgeois-landlord Provisional Government, of which leaders of the party (Kerensky, Avksentyev, Chernov) were members. In face of the revolutionary spirit of the peasantry the "Left" wing of the party founded at the end of November 1917 an independent Left Socialist-Revolutionary Party and, in an effort to maintain their influence among the peasant masses, formally recognised the Soviet government and entered into an agreement with the Bolsheviks; but as the class struggle in the countryside

developed, they set out to fight Soviet power. During the years of foreign military intervention and civil war, the Socialist-Revolutionaries actively supported the interventionists and white-guard generals, engaged in counter-revolutionary subversion and plotting, and organised terrorist acts against Soviet leaders. After the civil war, they continued their anti-Soviet activities within the country and as whiteguard émigrés abroad. p. 33

[21] *Ivan Ivanovich*, *Ivan Nikiforovich*—an allusion to Gogol's *Tale of How Ivan Ivanovich Quarrelled with Ivan Nikiforovich*. p. 34

[22] *Revolutsionnaya Rossiya* (*Revolutionary Russia*) was a Socialist-Revolutionary newspaper published from the close of 1900 to 1905; from January 1902 on, the central organ of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. p. 36

[23] *The affair of April 2*—the reference is to the assassination of Minister of the Interior Sipyagin on April 2 (15), 1902, by the student Balmashov. p. 36

[24] *Nozdrev*—a notorious braggart and cheat in Gogol's *Dead Souls*. p. 37

[25] The *Petrashevsky circle* was a group of progressive-minded commoner-intellectuals formed in St. Petersburg in the mid-forties of the last century around M. V. Butashevich-Petrashevsky, a follower of the French utopian socialist Fourier. Among the members were writers, teachers, students, minor government officials, army officers, and so on. While not uniform in their political views, most of them were opponents of the tsarist autocracy and the serf system.

Among those connected with the Petrashevsky circle were the writers Dostoyevsky and Saltykov-Shchedrin and the poets Pleshcheyev, Maikov, and Taras Shevchenko. p. 41

[26] No subsequent letters appeared. The article was reprinted as a mimeographed pamphlet under the title "To the Students. The Tasks of the Revolutionary Youth (Social-Democracy and the Intelligentsia)"; and Department of Police documents for 1904-05 show that copies of the pamphlet were discovered during arrests and house-searches in Ekaterinoslav, Nizhni-Novgorod, Kazan, Odessa, Arzamas, and the Smolensk and Minsk gubernias. p. 43

[27] *Student*—a revolutionary student newspaper. Three issues appeared: No. 1 in April and No. 2-3 in September 1903. p. 43

[28] *Osvobozhdeniye* (*Emancipation*)—a fortnightly journal of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie, published abroad in 1902-05 under the editorship of P. B. Struve. The followers of *Osvobozhdeniye* later made up the core of the Constitutional-Democratic (Cadet) Party, the principal bourgeois party in Russia. p. 43

[29] The *raznochintsy* (i.e., "men of different estates") were the Russian commoner-intellectuals, drawn from the small townsfolk, the clergy, the merchant classes, the peasantry, as distinct from those drawn from the nobility. p. 47

[30] *Zemstvos*—the so-called local self-government bodies, dominated by the nobility, were set up in the central gubernias of tsarist Russia in 1864. Their competence was confined to purely local economic and welfare matters (hospital and road building, statistics, insurance, etc.), and they functioned under the control of the provincial governors and the Ministry of the Interior, who could invalidate any decisions the government found undesirable. p. 47

[31] No article of Lenin's written according to this plan has been discovered. The last paragraph of the plan, relating to the Bund, is expanded in the article "Maximum Brazenness and Minimum Logic" (pp. 59-65 of this volume). p. 57

[32] "*End of 'nomad' period*"—the end of the ideological and organisational disunity among the Social-Democratic organisations. p. 57

[33] *Posledniye Izvestia* (*News*)—a periodical bulletin issued by the Foreign Committee of the Bund from 1901 to 1906. p. 59

[34] *Arakcheyev, A. A.* (1769-1834)—the powerful favourite of Paul I and Alexander I, whose name is associated with a period of crushing police tyranny and jackboot rule. p. 64

[35] Lenin says that the Central Committee "*has not been born yet*" out of secrecy considerations; actually, the Central Committee already existed—it had been elected at the Second Party Congress on August 7 (20), 1903. p. 64

[36] This member of the Central Committee was F. V. Lengnik (pseudonyms—Vasilyev, Kol). p. 66

[37] The *Second Congress of the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad* was held in Geneva on October 13-18 (26-31), 1903; it was called at the insistence of the Mensheviks. Fifteen of the delegates (with 18 votes) were majority adherents, headed by Lenin; 18 delegates (22 votes) were minority adherents; and one delegate (with two votes) belonged to neither majority nor minority.

The main item on the agenda was the report by Lenin, who had been the League's delegate at the Second Party Congress. A co-report was then made by Martov, who defended the opportunism of the Mensheviks and indulged in calumnious attacks upon the Bolsheviks. Lenin and his supporters thereupon withdrew from the Congress. For refusal to submit to the decisions of the Second Party Congress, the Central Committee and the Party Council pronounced the League Congress unlawful. p. 69

[38] This paper on the national question Lenin later worked up into an article for *Iskra*, under the title "The National Question in Our Programme" (present edition, Vol. 6, pp. 454-63). p. 74

[39] The *Polish Socialist Party* (P.S.P.), founded in 1892, was a petty-bourgeois nationalist party. p. 74

[40] The "*Iskra*" organisation in Russia served to unite the *Iskra* supporters working within the country. Even before the paper began publication and during the first year of its existence (December 1900-December 1901), a network of *Iskra* "agents" (P. N. and O. B. Lepeshinsky, P. A. Krasikov, A. M. Stopani, G. M. and Z. P. Krzhizhanovsky, S. I. and L. N. Radchenko, A. D. Tsurupa, N. E. Bauman, I. V. Babushkin, and others) was set up in various parts of the country, and in a number of towns (St. Petersburg, Pskov, Samara, Poltava, and others), groups for assistance to *Iskra* were formed. These groups and agents collected funds for the paper, acted as its correspondents, arranged for its transport and distribution, and set up facilities for reprinting it in Russia. During this period, however, they had little contact with each other and for the most part communicated directly with the editorial board.

But as the revolutionary movement mounted and the volume of practical work increased, it became essential to concert their efforts, to work on planned and organised lines to counter the parochial amateurishness which the Economists were fostering and win the Social-Democratic committees to *Iskra* 's side. Lenin accordingly put forward a plan for an all-Russia *Iskra* organisation, which was to pave the way for uniting Russia's scattered Social-Democratic organisations into a single centralised Marxist party. This plan he originally outlined in his article "Where To Begin?" (May 1901), and subsequently elaborated in detail in *What Is To Be Done?* (autumn 1901-February 1902).

In carrying out this plan Lenin and his associates had to combat parochial tendencies among some of the *Iskra* practical workers. "We must say," Lenin wrote in a letter to S. O. Zederbaum in July 1901 (present edition, Vol. 34), "that we in general regard any plan for the publication of any district or local organ by the *Iskra* organisation in Russia as absolutely incorrect and harmful. The *Iskra* organisation exists in order to support and build up *Iskra* and to *unite* the Party thereby, not to cause a *dispersion* of forces, of which there is quite enough without it."

In January 1902 a conference of *Iskra*-ists was held in Samara, with G. M. and Z. P. Krzhizhanovsky, F. V. Lengnik, M. A. Silvin, V. P. Artsybushev, and D. I. and M. I. Ulyanov taking part. This conference set up a Bureau of the *Iskra* organisation in Russia, established regular arrangements for contacts among members of the organisation and with the editorial board and for the collection and allocation of funds, and mapped out the line in relation to the committees and local publications. It was further decided, with a view to the cardinal objective of securing the committees' adherence to *Iskra* and recognition of it as the general Party organ, to

send members out to various parts of the country. "Your initiative," Lenin wrote to the organisers of the conference, "has heartened us tremendously. Hurrah! That's the right way! Reach out wider! And operate more independently, with greater initiative you are the first to have begun in such a broad way, and that means the continuation, too, will be successful" (*Lenin Miscellany VIII*, p. 221).

Although the arrest of a number of *Iskra*-ists in February 1902 put added difficulties in the way of carrying out the conference decisions, the *Iskra* organisation, with *What Is To Be Done?* to guide it, launched a vigorous drive to propagate and practically execute Lenin's plan for building a real party. It achieved far-reaching results in effecting actual unity of the Social-Democratic organisations on the principles of revolutionary Marxism. By the end of 1902 nearly all the leading committees had proclaimed their solidarity with *Iskra*.

The *Iskra*-ists were the leading spirits in setting up, at the Pskov conference of November 2-3 (15-16), 1902, the Organising Committee for convening the Second Party Congress, and to this committee they handed over all their contacts. The *Iskra* organisation, which remained in existence until the Second Party Congress played a vital part in preparing and arranging that Congress which brought into being a revolutionary Marxist party in Russia. p. 74

[41] The *Statement Concerning Martov's Report* was read by Lenin at the third sitting of the League Congress and handed in to the Congress Bureau. No court of arbitration to examine Martov's slanderous accusations was ever held, as Martov was obliged to admit, in a letter of November 16 (29), 1903, that he had no doubts of Lenin's sincerity and good faith. p. 84

[42] This *Unsubmitted Statement* was to have been presented to the Second Congress of the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad, but Lenin confined himself, at the Congress sitting of October 16 (29), 1903, to some brief oral remarks. p. 86

[43] Lenin resigned from the Party Council and the editorial board of the Central Organ after Plekhanov openly swung over to the Mensheviks and proposed co-opting to the *Iskra* editorial board all the former editors the Second Party Congress had rejected.

On November 5 (18) Lenin requested Plekhanov to insert in *Iskra* an announcement of his resignation from the editorial board (p. 113 of this volume). The changes in the membership of the board were announced in No. 53 of the new, Menshevik *Iskra* (November 25, 1903). p. 91

[44] The *Arbeiterstimme* (*Worker's Voice*) was the Central Organ of the Bund; it appeared from 1897 to 1905. p. 92

[45] The reference is to the decision of the First Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. that the Bund "is affiliated to the Party as an autonomous organisation independent only in regard to questions specifically concerning the Jewish proletariat". (*The C.P.S.U. in Resolutions and Decisions of Its Congresses, Conferences, and Plenary Meetings of the Central Committee*, 1954, Part I, p. 14.) p. 92

[46] Mephistopheles' injunction to the student in Goethe's *Faust*. p. 97

[47] The incident of the Bund's campaign against the Ekaterinoslav Party Committee is described in Lenin's article "Does the Jewish Proletariat Need an 'Independent Political Party'?" (present edition, Vol. 6, pp. 330-35). p. 97

[48] "*Tail-ism*" (*khvostism*), "*tail-enders*"—expressions originally coined by Lenin to describe the Economists (see Note 59), who denied the leading role of the Party and the importance of theory in the working-class movement; their position implied that the Party should trail after the spontaneously developing movement, follow in the tail of events. p. 98

[49] *Neue Zeit* (*New Times*)—the theoretical journal of the German Social-Democratic Party, published in Stuttgart from 1883 to 1923; edited until October 1917 by Karl Kautsky and subsequently by Heinrich Cunow. Some of the works of Marx and Engels were first published in its columns, among them Marx's "Critique of the Gotha Programme" (in No. 18 for 1890-91) and Engels's "Contribution to the Critique of the Draft Social-Democratic Programme" (in No. 1 for 1901-02). While Engels was alive he constantly helped the editors with suggestions and advice, and not infrequently criticised them for departures from Marxism. Contributors included August Bebel, Wilhelm Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Franz Mehring, Clara Zetkin, G. V. Plekhanov, Paul Lafargue, and other leading figures in the German and international working-class movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Beginning with the latter half of the nineties, the *Neue Zeit* made a practice of publishing the writings of the revisionists, notably Bernstein's series "Problems of Socialism", which inaugurated the revisionists' campaign against Marxism. During the First World War it adopted a Centrist, Kautskian position, in effect supporting the social-chauvinists. p. 99

[50] The quotations are from Alfred Naquet's article "Drumont and Bernard Lazare", published on September 24, 1903, in the Paris *La Petite République*, at that time the organ of the French reformist Socialists. The paper was founded in 1875- its contributors included Jaurès, Millerand, and other well-known personalities. p. 99

[51] The *Pale of Settlement* in tsarist Russia was the territory outside which Jews were not allowed to live. p. 100

[52] *Ernest Renan* was a prominent French philologist and historian. The quotation is from his lecture "Judaism as a Race and as a Religion", published in *Discours et Conférences par Ernest Renan*, Paris, 1887, p. 373. p. 100

[53] *V. V.* and *Nikolai—on* were the pseudonyms of V. P. Vorontsov and N. F. Danielson—ideologues of the liberal Narodism of the eighties and nineties. p. 103

[54] *Millerand*—a French reformist "Socialist" who in 1899 joined a reactionary bourgeois government. p. 105

[55] The *cut-off lands* (*otrezki*) were the portions of the land cut off from the peasant holdings by the landlords at the time of the abolition of serfdom in 1861. p. 107

[56] This *Unissued Statement* was proposed by Lenin as a decision of the Central Committee at a meeting of the latter on November 14 (27), 1903. It was not adopted because of the conciliationist attitude of some of the Central Committee members towards the Mensheviks. p. 113

[57] *The Central Committee's ultimatum* to the Mensheviks was presented on November 12 (25) 1903. On October 22 (November 4) Lenin had sent the Central Committee a letter (present edition, Vol. 34) in which he proposed offering the Mensheviks the following conditions:

1) co-optation of three of the ex-editors to the editorial board of the Central Organ;

2) re-establishment of the status quo in the League Abroad;

3) allowing the Mensheviks one seat on the Party Council.

These initial conditions did not meet with the support of the conciliationist members of the Central Committee. In the same letter Lenin outlined and proposed simultaneously approving but not yet presenting to the Mensheviks the main points of an ultimatum, that is, a statement of the practical concessions the Central Committee could permissibly make to them: 1) co-optation of the four ex-editors to the editorial board; 2) co-optation to the Central Committee of two members of the opposition, to be chosen by the Central Committee itself; 3) re-establishment of the status quo in the League; 4) allowing the Mensheviks one seat on the Party Council. "If the ultimatum is rejected," Lenin wrote, "then—war to a finish. An extra condition: 5) cessation of all talk, gossip, and arguments about the dissensions at the Second Party Congress and after." These proposals of Lenin's (except the extra condition) were included in the ultimatum of November 12 (25), but were toned down somewhat by the conciliationist members of the Central Committee.

The Mensheviks, whom Plekhanov helped greatly by co-opting all the ex-editors to the editorial board the day after the Central Committee's ultimatum, rejected the ultimatum and took the way of open war against the majority of the Party.

An evaluation of the Central Committee's ultimatum is given at Lenin in *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* (pp, 373-75 of this volume). p. 113

[58] This *Letter to* "*Iskra*" was written by Lenin in reply to Plekhanov's article "What Should Not Be Done" in *Iskra*, No. 52 (November 7, 1903). p. 114

[59] *Economism* was the opportunist trend in Russian Social-Democracy at the turn of the century, a Russian variety of international opportunism; its organs were the newspaper *Rabochaya Mysl* (*Worker's Thought*; 1897-1902), published in Russia, and the journal *Rabocheye Dyelo* (*Workers' Cause*, 1899-1902), published abroad.

The Economists restricted the tasks of the working-class movement to the economic struggle for higher wages, better working conditions, etc., asserting that the political struggle was the business of the liberal bourgeoisie, and denied the leading role of the workers' party, which, they considered, should merely observe the spontaneous development of the movement and follow in its wake. In their glorifying of "spontaneity" they belittled the importance of revolutionary theory and consciousness, declaring that the socialist ideology could grow out of the spontaneous movement; and by thus denying the need to imbue the workers' movement with socialist consciousness, they cleared the way for bourgeois ideology. They championed the scattered, isolated circles, with their parochial amateurish approach, fostering disunity, confusion, and wavering in the Social-Democratic ranks and opposing the creation of a centralised working-class party. Economism threatened to divert the working class from the revolutionary, class path and reduce it to a political appendage of the bourgeoisie.

The Economists' programme was set forth in the *Credo*, a manifesto drawn up in 1899 by Y. D. Kuskova. When this *Credo* reached Lenin, then in exile in Siberia, he replied with *A Protest by Russian Social-Democrats*—a trenchant criticism of the Economist ideas. This protest was discussed and unanimously adopted by a meeting of 17 Marxists serving terms of political exile, held in the village of Yermakovskoye, Minusinsk Region.

A major part in the fight against Economism was played by Lenin's *Iskra*; and by his book *What Is To Be Done?*, published in March 1902, Lenin completed its ideological defeat. p. 114

[60] *Sobakevich*—the reference is to the notorious character in Gogol's *Dead Souls*. p. 114

[61] This *Letter to the Editors of* "*Iskra*" played a big part in exposing the opportunist tactics of the Mensheviks, their disruptive activity at the Second Party Congress and after it. After the Menshevik editors refused pusillanimously to print the "Letter" in *Iskra*, the Bolsheviks published it in leaflet form. It had a wide circulation in Russia, where it was illegally reprinted. Police documents for 1904-05 show that copies were found during house-searches and

arrests in Moscow, Kharkov, Tula, Tomsk, Riga, Nikolayev, Poltava, Astrakhan, and the Donbas coalfield. p. 118

[62] *Aus der Weltpolitik* (*From the Realm of World Politics*)—a weekly bulletin published by Parvus in Munich from 1898 to 1905. p. 121

[63] This pamphlet was *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* (pp. 201-423 of this volume). p. 129

[64] It was on November 13 (26), 1903, that Plekhanov co-opted the Mensheviks Martov, Axelrod, Zasulich, and Potresov to the editorial board of *Iskra*. p. 136

[65] *Vorwärts* (*Forward*)—the daily Central Organ of the German Social-Democratic Party. Originally founded in 1876 in Leipzig, it was banned under the Anti-Socialist Law, but in January 1891 resumed publication in Berlin as successor to the *Berliner Volksblatt* (*Berlin People's Gazette*, founded in 1884), under the editorship of Wilhelm Liebknecht. Engels fought in the columns of the Vorwärts against every manifestation of opportunism; but in the late nineties, after Engels's death, the paper fell into the hands of the Right wing of the party and from then on regularly printed the writings of the opportunists who dominated in the German Social-Democratic movement and the Second International. The *Vorwärts* gave a tendentious picture of the fight against opportunism and revisionism in the R.S.D.L.P., supporting the Economists and later, after the split in the Party, the Mensheviks. In the years of reaction that followed the defeat of the Russian Revolution of 1905-07 it published slanderous articles by Trotsky while denying Lenin and the Bolsheviks the opportunity to controvert him and give an objective account of the state of affairs in the Party.

During the First World War the *Vorwärts* took a social-chauvinist stand. After the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia it became one of the fountain-heads of anti-Soviet propaganda. It ceased publication in 1933. p. 137

[66] The author of this letter was the worker N. Y. Vilonov, a member of the Ekaterinoslav Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. Lenin replied to the letter on December 9 (22), 1903. p. 138

[67] This appeal was written by Lenin in connection with Martov's article "Problems of the Day (A Circle or a Party?)" in *Iskra*, No. 56 (January 1, 1904). p. 139

[68] The Party Council session held in Geneva on January 15-17 (28-30), 1904, was "called on the initiative of the representatives of the Central Organ to discuss measures for harmonising the activities of the Central Committee and Central Organ in the publication of Party literature" (*Lenin Miscellany X*, p. 181). It was attended by Lenin, Lengnik, Plekhanov, Axelrod, and Martov.

On Lenin's proposal, the Council resolved to include in the agenda and discuss as the first item the question of measures to restore peace in the Party. On January 15 (28) Lenin, on behalf of the Central Committee, moved a resolution on this question (pp. 145-47 of this volume). When the debate showed that the Mensheviks would not agree to this resolution, Lenin and Lengnik proposed, on January 16 (29), another resolution on restoring peace in the Party, which the Council adopted by three votes (Lenin, Lengnik, and Plekhanov) to two (Martov and Axelrod). However, instead of then practically discussing what must be done to restore peace, the Council, over Lenin's protest, proceeded to vote Plekhanov's resolution, which demanded co-optation of Mensheviks to the Central Committee. By the votes of Plekhanov, Martov, and Axelrod, this resolution was passed. Thereupon the Central Committee representatives (Lenin and Lengnik) recorded on January 17 (30) a dissenting opinion which censured Plekhanov's resolution as ignoring the will of the majority of the Second Party Congress. The text of the dissenting opinion (pp. 148-51 of this volume) was drawn up by Lenin.

After the Mensheviks frustrated every effort to establish peace in the Party, Lenin moved a resolution on convening the Third Party Congress, as the only way out of the situation (p. 152 of this volume). By the votes of Plekhanov, Martov, and Axelrod this resolution was rejected and Martov's resolution against a congress was passed. Concerning the publication of Party literature no agreement was reached either. Rejecting the resolutions moved on this subject by Lenin (p. 155 of this volume), the Council adopted resolutions which endorsed the factional, disruptive activities of the Menshevik editorial board of *Iskra*.

The Council session of January 1904 made it plain that with Plekhanov's defection to the Mensheviks the Council had become an instrument of the Mensheviks' fight against the Party.

p. 143

[69] *Travinsky*—pseudonym of G. M. Krzhizhanovsky, member of the Central Committee. p. 157

[70] In Point 3 of its ultimatum of November 12 (25), 1903, the Central Committee had offered to co-opt two members of the minority. The Central Committee consisted at that time of Lenin, Krzhizhanovsky, Lengnik, Noskov (Glebov), Gusarov, Zemlyachka, Krasin, Essen, and Galperin. p. 162

[71] *Ru*—pseudonym of L. Y. Galperin, also referred to as Y. Valentin, and Konyagin. p. 165

[72] The document in question was the Central Committee's ultimatum of November 12 (25), 1903, presented to the Mensheviks on Lenin's proposal. p. 167

[73] This letter, which Central Committee member Lengnik (Vasilyev) sent on November 29 (December 12), 1903, to the *Iskra* editorial board, was written by Lenin. p. 170

[74] Lenin is referring to his letter to Potresov of August 31 (September 13), 1903. He published it in slightly abridged form in *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* (see pp. 348-50 of this volume). p. 170

[75] These Central Committee members were Lengnik, who was appointed the Central Committee's official foreign representative, and Krzhizhanovsky, who came to Switzerland in November 1903 specially to negotiate with the Mensheviks. p. 171

[76] Resolutions censuring the Central Committee for its concessions to the League Abroad and condemning the Mensheviks' conduct at the Second Congress of the League were adopted, for example, by the Saratov and Odessa committees. They were published in N. Shakhov's pamphlet *The Fight for a Congress*, Geneva, 1904, p. 28. p. 174

[77] This refers to the preceding speech of Plekhanov, who claimed that Krzhizhanovsky (Travinsky) had conceded in negotiations with him that the composition of the *Iskra* editorial board with the Mensheviks co-opted to it would be normal, and went on to add: "And if the truth of my words were to be called in question, I would reply as a certain Minister once did to Louis Philippe, who questioned his words: 'I say that it was so. You say that it was not. We shall see whom France will believe.'" (*Lenin Miscellany X*, p. 238.) p. 175

[78] *Zagorsky*—pseudonym of the Menshevik V. N. Krokhmal. p. 180

[79] Lenin is quoting a letter of December 24, 1903 (January 6, 1904), from I. K. Lalayants to N. K. Krupskaya. p. 181

[80] *Martyn*—pseudonym of the Menshevik V. N. Rozanov. p. 181

[81] Lenin is quoting a letter of January 1 (14), 1904, from L. B. Krasin to the Foreign Branch of the Central Committee. p. 181

[82] In his first letter the Central Committee's distribution secretary, M. Leibovich, asked the editors of the Menshevik *Iskra* to tell him for his report to the Central Committee what they did with the fifty copies of *Iskra* allotted to the editorial board. The editors refused to give him this information, and demanded to be given a larger number of copies. In his second letter the distribution secretary refused to supply more than the allotted fifty copies without permission from the Central Committee. p. 182

[83] Lenin is quoting a letter sent the editors of *Iskra* on December 14 (27), 1903, in the name of Central Committee Foreign Representa-

tive Lengnik. The letter was written by Lenin (see present edition, Vol. 34). p. 183

[84] Lenin is quoting a letter sent the *Iskra* editorial board on December 26, 1903 (January 8, 1904), in the name of Central Committee Foreign Representative Lengnik. The passage quoted was written by Lenin (see present edition, Vol. 34). p. 184

[85] *Starover's ultimatum*—Potresov's letter to Plekhanov of October 21 (November 3), 1903. In this letter Potresov, speaking for the Menshevik opposition, demanded to have the old editorial board of *Iskra* reinstated, Mensheviks co-opted to the Central Committee and the Party Council, and the decisions of the Congress of the League Abroad recognised as lawful. p. 184

[86] By *Z* is meant V. N. Krokhmal. p. 185

[87] Characters in Gogol's *Dead Souls* and *Inspector-General*. p. 196

[88] Lenin devoted several months to the writing of *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* (*The Crisis in Our Party*), making a careful study of the minutes and resolutions of the Second Party Congress, of the speeches of each of the delegates and the political groupings at the Congress, and of the Central Committee and Party Council documents.

The book evoked fury among the Mensheviks. Plekhanov demanded that the Central Committee disavow it. The conciliators on the Central Committee tried to prevent its publication and circulation.

Though published abroad, *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* had a wide circulation among advanced workers in Russia. Copies of the book were found during arrests and house-searches in Moscow St. Petersburg, Riga, Saratov, Tula, Orel, Ufa, Perm, Kostroma Shchigri, Shavli (Kovno Gubernia), and elsewhere. Lenin included the book in the *Twelve Years* collection published in 1907 (the date on the title-page is 1908), omitting sections J, K, L, M, O, and P making abridgements in other sections, and adding a few explanatory notes.

The present edition contains the full text as originally published in 1904 and all the additions made by the author in 1907. p. 201

[89] "*Practical Worker*"—pseudonym of the Menshevik M. S. Makadzyub, also referred to as Panin. p. 207

[90] The *conference of 1902*—a conference of representatives of R.S.D.L.P. committees held on March 23-28 (April 5-10), 1902, in Belostok. The Economists and Bundists intended to proclaim this conference a Party Congress; a report drawn up by Lenin and presented by the *Iskra* delegate proved that the gathering lacked proper preparation and authority to constitute itself such. The

FROM MARX TO MAO NOT FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRIBUTION

conference set up an Organising Committee to convene the Second Party Congress, but nearly all its members were arrested soon after. A new Organising Committee to convene the Second Congress was formed in November 1902 at a conference in Pskov. Lenin's views on the Belostok conference are set forth in his "Report of the *Iskra* Editorial Board to the Meeting (Conference) of R.S.D.L.P. Committees" (present edition, Vol. 6, pp. 97-106). p. 207

[91] Pavlovich, *Letter to the Comrades on the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.*, Geneva, 1904. p. 215

[92] *Sorokin*—pseudonym of the Bolshevik N. E. Bauman; *Lange*—pseudonym of the Bolshevik A. M. Stopani. p. 215

[93] *Rabochaya Mysl* (*Worker's Thought*) was an Economist group which published a paper under this name. The paper, edited by K. M. Takhtarev and others, appeared from October 1897 to December 1902; 16 issues were published altogether.

Rabochaya Mysl advocated frankly opportunist views. It opposed the political struggle and restricted the tasks of the working-class movement to "the interests of the moment", to pressing for individual partial reforms, chiefly of an economic nature. Glorifying "spontaneity" in the movement, it opposed the creation of an independent proletarian party and belittled the importance of revolutionary theory and consciousness, maintaining that the socialist ideology could grow out of the spontaneous movement.

The views expounded by *Rabochaya Mysl*, as the Russian variety of international opportunism, were criticised by Lenin in the article "A Retrograde Trend in Russian Social-Democracy" (present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 255-85), in his *Iskra* articles, and in *What Is To Be Done?* p. 223

[94] By this was meant general redistribution of all the land (*chorny peredel*)—a slogan widespread among the peasantry of tsarist Russia. p. 235

[95] *Kostrov*—pseudonym of the Caucasian Menshevik N. N. Jordania. p. 236

[96] *Zemlya i Volya* (*Land and Freedom*) was a revolutionary Narodnik organisation formed in St. Petersburg in the autumn of 1876; originally known as the Northern Revolutionary Narodnik Group, it took the name Zemlya i Volya in 1878. Among the members were Mark and Olga Natanson, G. V. Plekhanov, O. V. Aptekman, A. D. and A. F. Mikhailov, A. A. Kvyatkovsky, M. R. Popov, S. M. Kravchinsky, D. A. Klements, A. D. Oboleshev, Sophia Perovskaya and other prominent revolutionaries of the seventies. While not renouncing socialism as the ultimate goal, Zemlya i Volya put forward as the immediate aim the satisfaction of "the people's demands and desires as they are at the moment", namely, the demand for "land and freedom". "Needless to say", its programme

declared, "this formula can be made a reality *only through violent revolution*", with a view to which it advocated exciting "popular discontent" and "disorganising the power of the state". For the purpose of agitation among the peasantry, members of the organisation set up rural "colonies", chiefly in the agricultural gubernias along the Volga and in the fertile central regions. They also carried on agitation among the workers and the student youth. On December 6 (18), 1876, they organised a demonstration in the Kazan Square in St. Petersburg. In the course of 1878-79 Zemlya i Volya published five issues of a journal of the same name.

Although connected with some of the workers' circles, Zemlya i Volya could not and did not want to be the leader of the working-class movement, since in common with other Narodniks it denied the vanguard role of the working class. Nor did it understand the importance of political struggle, which in its view only diverted the revolutionaries' energies and might weaken their ties with the people.

Unlike the Narodnik groups of the early seventies, Zemlya i Volya built up a close-knit organisation, based on principles of strict centralisation and discipline. There was a central "core" and around it there were territorial and specialised groups (for work among the peasantry and among the workers, for "disorganising" activities, and so on); the "core" was headed by an "administration" (or "commission") which controlled the activities of the groups and supplied them with literature, funds, etc. The Zemlya i Volya Rules, adopted in the winter of 1876-77, stipulated subordination of minority to majority, bound every member to dedicate and sacrifice to the organisation's interests "all his energies, means, connections, sympathies and antipathies, and even life itself", and imposed absolute secrecy in regard to all the organisation's internal affairs.

By 1879, with their socialist agitation among the peasants having little effect and with government persecution increasing, the majority of the members began to lean towards political terrorism as the principal means of achieving their programme. There were sharp disagreements about this, and at its Voronezh Congress in June 1879 Zemlya i Volya split in two: the adherents of the old tactics (headed by Plekhanov) formed an organisation called *Chorny Peredel* (General Redistribution), while the advocates of terrorism (A. I. Zhelyabov and others) founded Narodnaya Volya (People's Will). p. 256

[97] *Narodnaya Volya* (*People's Will*)—the secret political organisation of the terrorist Narodniks, formed in August 1879 following the split in Zemlya i Volya. It was headed by an Executive Committee consisting of A. I. Zhelyabov, A. D. Mikhailov, M. F. Frolenko, N. A. Morozov, Vera Figner, Sophia Perovskaya, A. A. Kvyatkovsky, and others.

While still adhering to the Narodnik utopian-socialist ideas, Narodnaya Volya believed in political struggle also, regarding the overthrow of the autocracy and the achievement of political freedom

as a major aim. Its programme envisaged a "permanent popular representative body" elected by universal suffrage, the proclamation of democratic liberties, the transfer of the land to the people, and measures to put the factories in the hands of the workers. "The Narodnaya Volya members," Lenin wrote, "made a step forward when they took up the political struggle, but they failed to connect it with socialism" (see present edition, Vol. 8, "Working-Class Democracy and Bourgeois Democracy").

Narodnaya Volya fought heroically against the tsarist autocracy. But, going by the erroneous theory of "active" heroes and a "passive" mass, it expected to achieve the remaking of society without the participation of the people, by its own efforts, through individual terrorism that would intimidate and disorganise the government. After the assassination of Alexander II on March 1, 1881, the government was able, by savage reprisals, death sentence and acts of provocation, to crush it out of existence.

Repeated attempts to revive the organisation during the eighties ended in failure. Thus, in 1886 a group in the Narodnaya Volya tradition was formed by A. I. Ulyanov (elder brother of Lenin) and P. Y. Shevyryov; but after an unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Alexander III in 1887, the group was uncovered and its active members executed.

While criticising Narodnaya Volya's erroneous, utopian programme, Lenin expressed great respect for its members' selfless struggle against tsarism. In *A Protest by Russian Social-Democrats* (1899) he pointed out that "the members of the old Narodnaya Volya managed to play an enormous role in the history of Russia, despite the fact that only narrow social strata supported the few heroes, and despite the fact that it was by no means a revolutionary theory which served as the banner of the movement" (see present edition, Vol. 4, p. 181). p. 256

[98] *Manilovism* (from the name of Manilov in Gogol's *Dead Souls*)—smug complacency, empty sentimental day-dreaming. p. 258

[99] The reference is to an incident which took place in Hamburg in 1900 in connection with the conduct of a group of members of the Free Bricklayers' Union who performed piece work during a strike in violation of the instructions of the trade union centre. The Hamburg Bricklayers' Union complained to the local Social-Democratic Party organisation about the strike-breaking activities of the Social-Democrat members of the group. A court of arbitration appointed by the Central Executive of the Social-Democratic Party condemned the conduct of these Social-Democrats but turned down the proposal that they be expelled from the Party. p. 262

[100] There were sixteen members of the *Iskra* organisation present at the Second Party Congress—9 majority adherents, headed by Lenin, and 7 minority adherents, headed by Martov. p. 277

[101] *Sablina*—pseudonym of N. K. Krupskaya, Lenin's wife and closest Party associate. p. 280

[102] *Hertz*—pseudonym of the Bolshevik D. I. Ulyanov, younger brother of Lenin. p. 287

[103] For *Arakcheyev* see Note 34. p. 291

[104] *Osipov*—pseudonym of the Bolshevik Rosalia Zemlyachka, co-opted after the Congress to the Central Committee. p. 327

[105] Lenin is referring to a speech made by the Economist Akimov during the Congress discussion of the Party programme. One of Akimov's objections against the *Iskra* draft programme was that it did not mention the word "proletariat" in the nominative case, as subject of the sentence, but only in the genitive ("party of the proletariat"). This, Akimov claimed, showed a tendency to exalt the party above the proletariat. p. 331

[106] Lenin is alluding to the following passage in Marx's Introduction to his "Critique of the Hegelian Philosophy of Law":

"The weapon of criticism cannot, of course, take the place of criticism with weapons; it is by material force that material force must be overthrown." p. 332

[107] *Mountain and Gironde*—the two political groups of the bourgeoisie during the French bourgeois revolution at the close of the eighteenth century. Montagnards, or Jacobins, was the name given to the more resolute representatives of the bourgeoisie, the revolutionary class of the time; they stood for the abolition of absolutism and the feudal system. The Girondists, in distinction to them vacillated between revolution and counter-revolution, and their policy was one of compromise with the monarchy.

Lenin applied the term "Socialist Gironde" to the opportunist trend in the Social-Democratic movement, and the term "Mountain" or proletarian Jacobins, to the revolutionary Social-Democrats. p. 341

[108] The *Voronezh Committee* and the *St. Petersburg* "*Workers' Organisation*" were in the hands of the Economists and were hostile to Lenin's *Iskra* and its organisational plan for building a Marxist party. p. 343

[109] This new member of the Central Committee was F . V . Lengnik. p. 351

[110] Probably Carouge and Cluse, where the supporters of the majority and the minority lived. p. 368

[111] *Orthodox*—pseudonym of the Menshevik Lyubov Axelrod. p. 369

[112] *Bazarov*—the main character in Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*. p. 372

[113] Together with Lenin's "Letter to *Iskra*" (pp. 113-16 of this volume), *Iskra*, No. 53 (November 25, 1903) had printed an editorial reply written by Plekhanov. Lenin in his letter proposed a full discussion in the paper of the differences of principle between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. Plekhanov rejected this, describing the differences as "the squabbling of circle life". p. 372

[114] *Y* was L. Y. Galperin (also referred to as Ru, Valentin, and Konyagin), a Central Organ delegate to the Party Council, afterwards co-opted to the Central Committee. p. 375

[115] *Schweitzer, J. B.* (1833-1875)—a leader of the German Lassalleans in the sixties; after Lassalle's death, president of the German General Labour League, of which he made himself virtual dictator arousing widespread resentment among the membership. p. 377

[116] The reference is to the views of P. B. Struve, leading representative of "legal Marxism", and his book *Critical Remarks on the Subject of Russia's Economic Development* (1894). Already in this early work Struve's bourgeois-apologetic thinking was clearly discernible. The views of Struve and the other "legal Marxists" were assailed by Lenin in a paper read to a St. Petersburg Marxist circle in the autumn of 1894, entitled "The Reflection of Marxism in Bourgeois Literature". This paper Lenin then worked up, at the close of 1894 and the beginning of 1895, into his essay "The Economic Content of Narodism and the Criticism of It in Mr. Struve's Book" (present edition, Vol. 1, pp. 333-507). p. 379

[117] Lenin is referring to Martov's *Iskra* article "Is This the Way To Prepare?", in which Martov opposed preparations for an all-Russia armed uprising, regarding them as utopian conspiracy. p. 381

[118] A quotation from Lermontov's poem "Journalist, Reader, and Writer". p. 382

[119] A line from the satirical "Hymn of the Contemporary Russian Socialist" published in No. 1 of *Zarya* (April 1901) and ridiculing the Economists with their trailing after the spontaneous movement. Signed Nartsis Tuporylov (Narcissus Blunt-Snout), the "Hymn" was written by Martov. p. 388

[120] *Oblomov*—the landowner hero of Goncharov's novel of the same name, an embodiment of supine inertia and a passive, vegetating existence. p. 390

[121] The *Dresden Congress of the German Social-Democratic Party* was held on September 13-20, 1903. It condemned the revisionists Bern-

stein, Braun, Göhre, David, and others, but did not expel them from the party, and they continued to have full scope for preaching their opportunist views. p. 395

[122] The *Sozialistische Monatshefte* (*Socialist Monthly*), published in Berlin from 1897 to 1933, was the chief organ of the opportunists in the German Social-Democratic Party and one of the organs of international opportunism. During the First World War it took a social-chauvinist stand. p. 395

[123] "*Ministerial*" *tactics*, "ministerialism", "ministerial socialism" (or Millerandism)—the opportunist tactics of participation by Socialists in reactionary bourgeois governments. The term originated when in 1899 the French Socialist Millerand joined the bourgeois government of Waldeck-Rousseau. p. 402

[124] *Dyedov*—pseudonym of the Bolshevik Lydia Knipovich. p. 416

[125] *Trepov, F. F.*—Governor of St. Petersburg, whom Vera Zasulich fired at in 1878 in protest against his orders to flog the political prisoner Bogolyubov. p. 420

[126] *Boris*, *Loshad*, *Valentin*, *Mitrofan*—pseudonyms of the conciliators V. A. Noskov (Glebov), L. B. Krasin, L. Y. Galperin, and F. V. Gusarov. p. 424

[127] *Zverev*—pseudonym of the Bolshevik Maria Essen, member of the Central Committee. p. 428

[128] *Nikitich*—pseudonym of L. B. Krasin. p. 429

[129] In a letter printed in *Iskra*, No. 66 (May 15, 1904), Karl Kautsky had urged that no Party Congress to discuss the differences between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks should be called until a "truce" was established in the Party. p. 430

[130] The Party Council session of May 31 and June 5 (June 13 and 18), 1904, was held in Geneva, with Lenin, Plekhanov, Noskov, Axelrod, and Martov attending. The first sitting discussed the convening of an inter-party conference of all revolutionary and opposition parties in Russia, and the forthcoming Amsterdam International Congress. The second dealt with internal Party affairs: 1) the right of the central Party institutions (the Central Organ and Central Committee) to recall their representatives from the Council, 2) the number of votes required under the Rules for effecting co-optation to the local committees; 3) co-optation to the committees and the right of the Central Committee to appoint new members to them; 4) the voting qualifications of Party organisations on the question of convening the Third Party Congress, and certain other items.

On the more important questions of internal Party life, Menshevik decisions were passed. p. 433

[131] The *Proletariat Party* was a socialist party formed in Poland in 1900 of groups that had broken away from the Polish Socialist Party (P.S.P.). While in general accepting the Social-Democratic programme, it believed in individual terrorism and the federal principle of organisation. The party stood for closer contact between the Polish and Russian revolutionary movement; its immediate aim was a democratic constitution for Russia with autonomy for Poland. The Proletariat Party did not play any noticeable part in the Polish revolutionary movement, and went out of existence after the Revolution of 1905-07. p. 436

[132] This resolution was unanimously adopted by the Council. p. 441

[133] *Rassvet* (*Dawn*) was a Social-Democratic paper for members of the religious sects, started under a decision of the Second Party Congress. The first issue appeared in January 1904. Although the Party Council session in June 1904 ruled that publication be discontinued, the paper went on appearing until September of that year. Nine issues were published in all. p. 442

[134] *What We Are Working For* was the initial variant of the appeal "To the Party" (pp. 452-59 of this volume). p. 443

[135] Lenin is referring to a resolution passed by the St. Petersburg Committee on June 23 (July 6), 1904, which demanded the speedy convening of the Third Party Congress. p. 448

[136] This refers to the Party Council resolution of June 5 (18), 1904, restricting the Central Committee's right to appoint new members to the local Party committees. p. 448

[137] This conference of twenty-two Bolsheviks, under Lenin's leadership, was held in Switzerland in August (New Style) 1904. Nineteen persons actually attended, and three others subscribed to its decisions. The present appeal "To the Party", adopted by the conference became the Bolsheviks' programme of struggle for the convening of the Third Party Congress. p. 452

[138] *Konyagin*—pseudonym of L. Y. Galperin. p. 460

[139] Lenin is speaking of the "July Declaration"—a resolution adopted in the name of the Central Committee in July 1904 by the conciliator members Krasin, Noskov (Glebov), and Galperin it was published in *Iskra*, No. 72 (August 25, 1904) under the title "Statement by the Central Committee". In this resolution the conciliators recognised as legitimate the Plekhanov-co-opted Menshevik editorial board of *Iskra* and defended the opportunism of the Mensheviks; they co-opted to the Central Committee three other conciliators—Lyubimov, Karpov, and Dubrovinsky; they came out against convening the Third Party Congress and dissolved the

Central Committee's Southern Bureau, which had been agitating for a congress. They deprived Lenin of the powers of foreign representative of the Central Committee and forbade his writings to be published without their sanction.

The adoption of the "July Declaration" meant total betrayal of the Second Party Congress decisions and the open defection of the conciliators on the Central Committee to the side of the Mensheviks. p. 460

[140] *Mitrofanov*—pseudonym of F. V. Gusarov. p. 460

[141] Of these documents, the letter to the members of the Central Committee, the agreement between three Central Committee members, and the protest impeaching the lawfulness of the Central Committee resolution are published in this volume (pp. 424-29 and 460-61). The Central Committee resolution is the "July Declaration" of the conciliators Krasin, Noskov, and Galperin. p. 462

[142] The "July Declaration" (see Note 139) was signed by the conciliators Krasin, Noskov, and Galperin, referred to on p. 467 as the Central Committee "collegium in Russia". p. 464

[143] This article, written in reply to Rosa Luxemburg's article "Organisational Issues in the Russian Social-Democratic Movement", was sent to Kautsky for publication in the German Social-Democratic journal *Neue Zeit*, but Kautsky would not print it. p. 472

[144] *Rabochaya Gazeta* (*Workers' Gazette*) was an illegal paper published in 1897 by the Kiev group of Social-Democrats. Two issues appeared: No. 1 in August and No. 2 in December (dated November). The First Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. adopted *Rabochaya Gazeta* as the official organ of the Party, but the paper had to cease publication as a result of a police raid on the printing press and the arrest of the Central Committee. Concerning attempts to resume publication in 1899, see present edition, Vol. 4, pp. 207-09. p. 477

[145] The *Anti-Socialist Law* in Germany was promulgated in 1878. It suppressed all organisations of the Social-Democratic Party mass working-class organisations, and the labour press; socialist literature was confiscated, and many Social-Democrats were deported. The law was annulled in 1890 under pressure of the mass working-class movement. p. 480

[146] The members elected to the Central Committee at the Second Party Congress were Lengnik, Krzhizhanovsky, and Noskov. In October (New Style) 1903, Zemlyachka, Krasin, Essen, and Gusarov were co-opted; in November, Lenin and Galperin were co-opted. In July September 1904 further changes took place in the Central Committee's composition: Lengnik and Essen—supporters of Lenin—

were arrested; the conciliators Krzhizhanovsky and Gusarov resigned; over Lenin's protests, the conciliators Krasin, Noskov, and Galperin unlawfully ousted the majority adherent Zemlyachka and co-opted three conciliators: Lyubimov, Karpov, and Dubrovinsky. As a result of these changes, the majority of the Central Committee now consisted of conciliators. p. 482

[147] Lenin is referring to the Central Committee's decision to dissolve its Southern Bureau, which had been agitating for the convening of the Third Party Congress. p. 482

[148] *Galyorka*—pseudonym of the Bolshevik M. S. Olminsky (Alexandrov). p. 482

[149] This refers to the Bonch-Bruyevich and Lenin Publishing House of Social-Democratic Party Literature, started by the Bolsheviks after the Menshevik editors of *Iskra* closed the columns of the paper to them and refused to print statements by Party organisations and members upholding the Second Party Congress decisions and demanding the convening of the Third Congress. It issued a number of pamphlets directed against the Mensheviks and conciliators: Lenin, *The Zemstvo Campaign and "Iskra's" Plan*; Galyorka, *Down with Bonapartism!*; Orlovsky, *The Council Against the Party*, and others. p. 482

[150] A modification of a quatrain in Krylov's fable "The Hermit and the Bear". p. 484

[151] *Ryadovoy*—pseudonym of A. A. Malinovsky, better known as Bogdanov. p. 484

[152] The *Announcement of the Formation of a Bureau of Majority Committees* was sent to Russia in a letter to Bogdanov on October 20 (November 2), 1904; it was not published. p. 489

[153] The *declaration of the nineteen*, published by the Moscow Party Committee in October 1904 under the title "Appeal to Members of the R.S.D.L.P.", was a response to the appeal "To the Party" issued by the conference of twenty-two Bolsheviks under Lenin's leadership. p. 489

[154] *The Zemstvo Campaign and "Iskra's" Plan* is a criticism of a letter to the Party organisations issued by the editors of the Menshevik *Iskra* in November 1904. It evoked a reply from the editors, in the form of a second letter; both letters bore the superscription "For Party Members Only". The second letter was, however, circulated exclusively among Mensheviks, and this caused Lenin to add a postscript to his pamphlet (last two paragraphs on p. 516). As the pamphlet had already been printed and circulated to the committees, the postscript was printed separately and pasted into the copies still on hand. The date "December 22, 1904" relates to the postscript only.

The Zemstvo Campaign and "Iskra's" *Plan* had a wide circulation among the local Party organisations: during house-searches and arrests copies were discovered in Smolensk, Batum, Riga, Saratov, Suvalki, and elsewhere. p. 495

[155] *Ugryum-Burcheyev*—the type of the stolid, narrow-minded dignitary, depicted by Saltykov-Shchedrin in his *History of a Town*. By "our Ugryum-Burcheyevs" Lenin meant the palace clique of Nicholas II. p. 500

[156] *Novoye Vremya* (*New Times*)—a paper published in St. Petersburg from 1868 to October 1917. Originally moderately liberal, after 1876 it became the organ of the reactionary nobility and bureaucracy, fighting not only the revolutionary, but also the liberal-bourgeois movement. Starting with 1905 it was one of the mouthpieces of the Black Hundred arch-reactionaries. p. 501

[157] The *Rostov demonstration*—the great political demonstration, with 30,000 workers taking part, which grew out of the strike in Rostov in November 1902. The strike, which began on November 2 (15) as an economic one, was led by the *Iskra*-ist Don Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. Lenin discussed the Rostov strike in his article "New Events and Old Questions" (present edition, Vol. 6, pp. 276-81). p. 511

[158] *Balalaikin*—a character in Saltykov-Shchedrin's "Modern Idyll", a liberal windbag, adventurer, and liar. By the "editorial Balalaikin" of the Menshevik *Iskra* Lenin meant Trotsky. p. 511

[159] *Svyatopolk-Mirsky*—Minister of the Interior in the latter half of 1904, whose tenure of the post was marked by a brief "liberal season" of minor concessions by the autocracy to the liberal bourgeoisie. p. 513

[160] Lenin is referring to the adventurist calls of the Economists (*Rabocheye Dyelo*-ists) in the spring of 1901 for an immediate assault on "the fortress of despotism". p. 514

[161] This talk on the situation within the Party was given by Lenin shortly after he wrote *The Zemstvo Campaign and* "Iskra's" *Plan* at meetings of Russian political émigrés in Paris on November 19 (December 2), in Zurich on November 23 and 24 (December 6 and 7), and in Berne on November 25 (December 8), 1904. p. 519

[162] The *Council Against the Party*, by Orlovsky (V. V. Vorovsky), was issued in Geneva in November 1904 by the Bolshevik Bonch-Bruyevich and Lenin Publishing House of Social-Democratic Party Literature. p. 521

[163] Three conferences of Bolshevik local committees were held in September-December 1904: 1) the Southern (Odessa, Ekaterino-

slav, and Nikolayev committees); 2) the Caucasian (Baku, Batum, Tiflis, and Imeretian-Mingrelian committees); and 3) the Northern (St. Petersburg, Moscow, Tver, Riga, Northern, and Nizhni-Novgorod committees).

At Lenin's suggestion, the conferences elected a Bureau of Majority Committees for preparing and convening the Third Party Congress, consisting of Gusev, Zemlyachka, Lyadov, Litvinov, and others. The Bureau, of which Lenin became a member, was formally constituted in December 1904. p. 522

[164] The meeting in Geneva on August 20 (September 2), 1904, was called by the Mensheviks by way of providing support for the "July Declaration" of the Central Committee. Both Mensheviks and Bolsheviks were invited. The Bolsheviks refused, however, to take part, and their representative withdrew after announcing that the meeting was not competent to pass resolutions in the name of both minority and majority. The Mensheviks were obliged to admit at this meeting that the Party committees in Russia opposed the conciliation policy of the Central Committee and that the great majority of them had broken off all relations with the Menshevik *Iskra*. p. 522

[165] Lenin is referring to the letter to the Party organisations issued by the Menshevik *Iskra* in November 1904, a criticism of which will be found in *The Zemstvo Campaign and "Iskra's" Plan* (pp. 495-516 of this volume). p. 523

[166] Lenin is referring to the Bureau of Majority Committees. p. 523

[167] By *N* is meant Central Committee member Rosalia Zemlyachka. p. 529

[168] By *P.* is meant P. A. Krasikov. p. 530

[169] *Lidin*—pseudonym of M. N. Lyadov. p. 531

[170] These four Central Committee members were Lenin, Lengnik, Essen, and Zemlyachka. p. 532

[171] Concerning the contents of this declaration see pp. 428-29 of this volume. p. 532

[172] The reference is to the Amsterdam Congress of the Second International, held on August 14-20, 1904. The report presented to it in the name of the R.S.D.L.P. delegation was a Menshevik document; to counterbalance it the Bolsheviks presented a report of their own, in the form of a pamphlet entitled *Material for an Understanding of the Party Crisis in the Social-Democratic Labour Party of Russia*, which Lenin helped to compile and edit. p. 532

[173] For the "*collegium*" see Note 142. p. 534

[174] The *Announcement of the Formation of an Organising Committee and the Convening of the Third Regular Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party* was written by Lenin in December 1904 and sent at that time to members of the Bureau of Majority Committees. It formed the basis of the official Announcement of the convening of the Third Party Congress published in *Vperyod*, No. 8 (February 28 [15], 1905) over the signature of the Bureau of Majority Committees. p. 538

THE LIFE AND WORK OF

V. I. LENIN

Chronology

(*September 1903-December 1904*)

1903

Early part of September	Lenin writes his "Account of the Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P".
September 12-15 (*25-28*)	Lenin and Plekhanov negotiate with Dan concerning terms of agreement with the minority. The negotiations fail.
September 21 (*October 4*)	Lenin, with Plekhanov and Lengnik, negotiates with Martov, Axelrod, Potresov, and Zasulich concerning agreement. The negotiations fail.
September	Lenin's article "The Tasks of the Revolutionary Youth" is published in No. 2-3 of the newspaper *Student*.
October 1 (*14*)	Lenin's article "Maximum Brazenness and Minimum Logic" is published in No. 49 of *Iskra*.
October 13-17 (*26-30*)	Lenin attends the Second Congress of the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad, held in Geneva.
October 14 (*27*)	At the second sitting, of the League Congress, Lenin makes the report on the Second Party Congress.
October 15 (*28*)	At the third sitting of the League Congress, Lenin protests against the unworthy methods of struggle employed by Martov, and with the other majority adherents withdraws from the sitting.
October 16 (*29*)	At the fourth sitting of the League Congress, Lenin refuses to participate in or reply to the debate on the report on the Second Party Congress.
October 19 (*November 1*)	Lenin resigns from the editorial board of *Iskra* in order to entrench himself in the Central Committee and strike at the opportunists from that position.

October 22 (*November 4*)	Lenin's article "The Position of the Bund in the Party" is published in No. 51 of *Iskra*.
October 24 or 25 (*November 6 or 7*)	Lenin attends a meeting of the Geneva Bolshevik group, which condemns Plekhanov's defection to the Mensheviks.
November 5 (*18*)	Lenin finishes and sends Plekhanov his article "The Narodnik-Like Bourgeoisie and Distraught Narodism", published in *Iskra*, No. 54 (December 1, 1903).
November 6-8 (*19-21*)	Lenin is co-opted to the Central Committee.
November 12 (*25*)	Lenin attends a Central Committee meeting in Geneva, which on his proposal draws up an ultimatum to the Mensheviks regarding terms for peace in the Party.
November 14 (*27*)	Lenin proposes in the Central Committee a statement denouncing Plekhanov's co-optation of the Menshevik ex-editors to the *Iskra* editorial board.
November 16 (*29*)	Lenin is delegated by the Central Committee to the Party Council.
Between November 25 and 29 (*December 8 and 12*)	Lenin writes his open letter to the editors of the Menshevik *Iskra*—"Why I Resigned from the *Iskra* Editorial Board", which is published in leaflet form and sent to Russia.
November 27 (*December 10*)	In a letter to the Central Committee members in Russia Lenin calls for the convening of the Third Party Congress.
December 9 (*22*)	Lenin protests against a Central Committee statement circulated to the committees and declaring that peace has been made with the Mensheviks.
December 17 (*30*)	In a letter to the Central Committee Lenin demands that its members should state their attitude on the question of convening a Party congress.
Before December 31 (*January 13 1904*)	Lenin writes a Preface and Postscript to his pamphlet *A Letter to a Comrade on Our Organisational Tasks*.

1904

After January 4 (17)	Lenin drafts the appeal "To the Party Membership" assailing the opportunist views of the Menshevik *Iskra*.
January 15-17 (28-30)	Lenin attends a session of the Party Council in Geneva and speaks on measures to restore peace in the Party and on the convening of the Third Party Congress.
Between January 20 and 25 (February 2 and 7)	In a letter to Central Committee member Krzhizhanovsky Lenin warns of the danger of the Mensheviks usurping the Central Committee and insists that preparations should be launched in the local committees for convening the Third Party Congress.
Latter part of January (beginning of February)	Lenin begins work on *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*.
End of January (early part of February)	Lenin drafts the appeal "To the Party" on the subject of the Party crisis and the splitting activities of the Mensheviks.
January	Lenin discusses with a group of Bolsheviks in Geneva the organisation of propaganda of the Party programme.
February 7 (20)	Lenin writes a letter to the compilers of the Commentary on the Minutes of the Second Congress of the League of Russian Revolutionary Social-Democracy Abroad, explaining the circumstances of his resignation from the *Iskra* editorial board.
March 1 (14)	Lenin resigns provisionally from the Party Council.
March 9 (22)	Lenin addresses a meeting of Social-Democrats in Geneva commemorating the anniversary of the Paris Commune.
End of March (early part of April)	Lenin drafts a May Day leaflet, which is issued over the signatures of the Central Committee and Central Organ of the Party.
March-April	Lenin leads a group among Social-Democrats in Geneva for study of the Party Rules.
May 6 (19)	Publication of Lenin's book *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back* (*The Crisis in Our Party*).

May 13 (*26*)	Lenin writes a letter to the members of the Central Committee discussing the aggravation of the differences within the Central Committee and announcing that he is resuming his seat on the Party Council.
After May 15 (*28*)	Lenin draws up a plan of an appeal to the Party calling on the committees to decide the issue of convening the Third Party Congress.
May 31 and June 5 (*June 13 and 18*)	Lenin attends a session of the Party Council.
May or June	Lenin writes a letter to Bogdanov criticising his book *Empirio-Monism*.
June 11-12 (*24-25*)	Lenin rejects the proposal of the conciliator Central Committee member Noskov that he should join the *Iskra* editorial board and consent to the co-optation of two Mensheviks to the Central Committee.
Between July 22 and 30 (*August 4 and 12*)	Lenin edits the Bolsheviks' report to the Amsterdam Congress of the Second International.
End of July (*early part of August*)	Under Lenin's leadership, a conference of 22 Bolsheviks is held in Switzerland; it adopts the appeal "To the Party", written by Lenin, which becomes the Bolsheviks' programme of struggle for the convening of the Third Party Congress.
August 5 (*18*)	In a letter to the members of the Central Committee Lenin protests against the "July Declaration" adopted by its conciliator members.
August	Lenin directs the organisation abroad of a Bolshevik publishing house of Social-Democratic Party literature. In a letter to the majority committees Lenin urges collecting literary contributions for the Bolshevik publishing house.
Early part (*latter part*) *of September*	Lenin writes the article "One Step Forward, Two Steps Back. Reply by N. Lenin to Rosa Luxemburg".
After September 22 (*October 5*)	In a letter to the Central Committee's Southern Bureau Lenin proposes that the Organising Commit-

	tee for convening the Third Congress should be called the Bureau of Majority Committees.
After October 2 (15)	Lenin writes the article "An Obliging Liberal".
Before October 20 (November 2)	Lenin drafts an Announcement of the Formation of a Bureau of Majority Committees.
Between November 1 and 8 (14 and 21)	Publication of Lenin's pamphlet *The Zemstvo Campaign and "Iskra"s" Plan.*
Before November 19 (December 2)	Lenin gives a talk for Party members in Geneva on the Zemstvo campaign and *Iskra*'s *plan*.
November 19 and 21 (December 2 and 4)	At a meeting of Party members in Paris Lenin delivers a talk on the situation within the Party and speaks in the discussion.
November 20 (December 3)	In a letter to the members of the Bureau of Majority Committees Lenin urges at once setting up a Bolshevik organ abroad.
November 23 and 24 (December 6 and 7)	Lenin delivers his talk on the situation within the Party at a meeting in Zurich.
November 25 (December 8)	Lenin delivers his talk on this subject in Berne.
November 26 (December 9)	Lenin returns to Geneva.
November 27 (December 10)	In a letter to Bureau of Majority Committees member Zemlyachka Lenin demands speedy publication in Russia of a printed announcement of the Bureau's formation.
November 29 (December 12)	Lenin leads a meeting of Bolsheviks which decides on the publication of an organ of the Party majority—the newspaper *Vperyod*. Lenin writes "A Letter to the Comrades (With Reference to the Forthcoming Publication of the Organ of the Party Majority)".
After November 29 (December 12)	Lenin receives the resolution of a conference of the Caucasian committees on the convening of the Third Party Congress.
December 9 (22)	Lenin writes the pamphlet *Statement and Documents on the Break of the Central Institutions with the Party*.

Before December 13 (26)	Lenin receives the resolutions of a conference of the northern committees on the convening of the Third Party Congress and the election of the Bureau of Majority Committees.
December	Lenin sends the members of the Bureau of Majority Committees in Russia a draft Announcement of the Formation of an Organising Committee and the Convening of the Third Regular Congress of the R.S.D.L.P.

В. И. ЛЕНИН

Сочинения

Том 7

На английском языке

6