

# **LONG LIVE THE 105<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE GREAT SOCIALIST OCTOBER REVOLUTION**

*Proletarians of all countries, unite!*

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The 7<sup>th</sup> of November 2022 marks the 105<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Great Socialist October Revolution, in which the proletariat would for the first time in history took power into its own hands on a large scale, not only in one, but by the end of the revolutionary civil war in multiple countries of which the Tsarist empire consisted of. On this historic day in 1917, October 25<sup>th</sup> in the Julian calendar used in Russia at the time (from now on we will only refer to dates in the modern Gregorian calendar), the Bolsheviks led the armed seizure of the capital. Within few hours, all important public buildings were in the hands of the revolutionary forces and the Bolshevik's Military Revolutionary Committee declared the removal of Kerensky's Provisional Government.

That evening the Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets assembled, in which the victory of the red faction by the Bolsheviks in the Soviets was decidedly consummated. Born from it was the provisional workers and peasants' government 'Council of People's Commissars' with the immediate task of starting negotiations to withdraw Russia from the imperialist world war, and the adoption of the Decree on Land which

abolished ownership of the landlords of the land. In the early morning of November 8<sup>th</sup>, the Winter Palace, in which Kerensky's provisional government resided, was occupied. Around the same time, Moscow and other major towns were also seized.

The October Revolution is an outstanding milestone in history of the proletariat with tremendous significance: **“the important thing is that the ice has been broken – the road is open and the path has been blazed”**, as Lenin said in appraising the significance of the October.

The history of the Russian revolution in the first quarter of the last century, which must be seen as one protracted process with three heights: The Revolution of 1905-1907, often called the general rehearsal; The Bourgeois-Democratic February Revolution of 1917, and the Great Socialist October Revolution of 1917 with the subsequent Revolutionary Civil War lasting until 1922. Lenin said that **“the Communist Party of Russia, won for itself not at once, but through its actions in the course of a 25-year struggle, the role, title and strength of ‘vanguard’”**.

During this process of armed struggle from 1905-1922, the revolution traversed the long and crooked road, in the course of which the red faction of the Bolsheviks reconstituted the party as a Party of a new type and assumed the leadership of the revolutionary movement, as the role of the vanguard of the proletariat.

All this, with ebbs and flows, bends in the road, victories and defeats, conquests and losses, with varying degrees of armed struggle and revolutionary war, in which the new power being born wrestled with that of the old, for the first time translating into reality the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat advanced by Marx and Engels and established the first state of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the history of mankind over one-sixth of the globe.

A new epoch began in the history of mankind.

A new era of world proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat began.

A new era of the oppressed nations' struggle for liberation led by the proletariat began.

Chairman Mao Tse-tung points out: **"The first imperialist world war and the first victorious socialist revolution, the October Revolution, have changed the whole course of world history and ushered in a new era."** and **"The road of the October Revolution is, fundamentally speaking, the bright common road for the progress of all mankind."**

Comrade Stalin said likely: **"The October Revolution should not be regarded merely as a revolution 'within national bounds.' It is, primarily, a revolution of an international, world order."**

The international dimension of the October Revolution is determined by our program, the Manifesto of the Communist Party, but was as well recognised by the enemy as such. The anti-Soviet crusade after the victory of the October Revolution was a grand confederation of the counter-revolutionary forces, the "Holy Alliance" of the early 20th century.

On the occasion of 105 years since the Great Socialist October Revolution, we present here a chronology, starting from 1883 with the struggle for the constitution of the Party – until 1922, with the conclusion of the Revolutionary Civil War. The chronology is largely, but not exclusively, based on *"History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course"* – a great document of Marxism elaborated and edited under the leadership of Comrade Stalin. Accordingly, we have decided to make use of the same division of periods, evident in the sub-headings.

# THE STRUGGLE FOR THE CREATION OF A SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY IN RUSSIA (1883-1901)

With the development of capitalism came the rapid growth of the industrial proletariat, and thus the workers movement in Russia was being born. In the 1880s, the organized struggle of the class would decidedly begin, marked by mass action in the form of organized strikes.

The "*Emancipation of Labour*"-group, founded by George Plekhanov in 1883, played an important role in this early period. It took the first steps in establishing connection with the workers movement, and it laid the theoretical foundations for Social-Democracy in Russia.

As we know, Marxism, as all new things, has never taken a step forward without struggle. Since the beginning it was necessary to combat erroneous lines and to establish and impose the correct proletarian line. At this point, a necessary and decisive struggle was waged against Narodism in order to clear the way for the establishment of the proletarian party. The ideological defeat of Narodism was consummated by the struggle led and waged by Lenin in the 1890s.

The establishment of "*The St. Petersburg League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class*" by Lenin in 1895 marked the beginning of a new period. The League was the proletarian party in its embryonic form.

In 1898, the First Congress of the *Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party* (R.S.D.L.P.) was held, which brought about the *formal* constitution of the party.

For the real constitution of the party as a genuine revolutionary party of the proletariat, it was necessary to establish and develop a correct ideological-political unity. In order to serve this task Lenin founded the newspaper *Iskra*

in 1900. It had the capability of reaching and disseminating the theoretical foundations of the line which was being developed to the most distant corners of Russia. Lenin stressed however, that *Iskra* could only serve this task in disseminating ideology in this way, **“But only a special central group (let us call it the Central Committee, say) can be the direct *practical* leader of the movement, maintaining *personal* connections with all the committees, embracing all the best revolutionary forces among the Russian Social-Democrats, and *managing* all the general affairs of the Party”**. (Letter to a Comrade on Organizational Tasks)

Lenin developed in the midst of the harshest class- and two-line-struggle, against revisionism and opportunism, the party as one capable of leading the class in the struggle for power. Among the principal opponents in this struggle were the “economists”, who denied the necessity of such a party, and moreover fostered the existing disunity and amateurish methods of work.

## **FORMATION OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY. APPEARANCE OF THE BOLSHEVIK AND THE MENSHEVIK GROUPS WITHIN THE PARTY (1901-1904)**

In the economic crisis of 1900-1903, quantity turned into quality, as monopolies became a foundational aspect for the whole of economic life – the leap had occurred in which capitalism entered its second and highest stage; imperialism. In the particular situation in Russia, the crisis brought about an aggravation of the hardships of the masses. With the “Russo-Japanese war” which would break out in January of 1904, the conditions for the masses would deteriorate even further. Around this time there took place a growth in the revolutionary workers movement in Russia, and the Marxist Social-Democratic organizations saw a growth in size and

strength.

Lenin and the red faction in the Social-Democratic movement united around Iskra came victoriously out of the struggle with the “economists”, and the ideological confusion and “amateurish methods of work” were overcome. But the struggle for the party, as a genuine revolutionary proletarian party capable of leading the class in the conquest of power – for the party of a new type – was far from over.

With Iskra, the red faction was built up, and so the way was prepared for the Second Party Congress. The congress, held in 1903, brought about an actual formation of the Party, in which a Party Program and Rules were adopted, and the central leading organs were established.

At the congress there emerged two groups or factions; one around the Iskra trend or the red faction, and the other, closer to the “economists”. These two groups were the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks. The contradiction between them centred on the organisational question; the question of the party. The opportunism of the Mensheviks opposed the formation of the party as the militant revolutionary party which the conquest of power demanded (i.e. the party of a new type) advocated by Lenin and the red faction. Instead, they espoused a loosely organized, or rather, unorganized and decentralized party.

In *“Letter to a Comrade On Our Organizational Tasks”*, he explains what the art of clandestine art of conspiratorial consists of: **“The whole art of running a secret organisation should consist in making use of everything possible, in “giving everyone something to do,” at the same time retaining leadership of the whole movement, not by virtue of having the power, of course, but by virtue of authority, energy, greater experience, greater versatility, and greater talent”**. In the same booklet, against those who understand clandestinity as something rigid and mechanical, Lenin states: **“Further, the**

degree of secrecy and the organisational form of the various circles will depend upon the nature of the functions: accordingly, the organisations will be most varied (ranging from the "strictest," narrowest, and most restricted type of organisation to the "freest," broadest, most loosely constituted, and open type)."

With the help of Plekhanov, the Mensheviks took control of Iskra and the Central Committee, which sought to use these organs for the purpose of splitting the party. The Bolsheviks rallied the local organizations, called for a Third Congress, and established the new newspaper of the red faction, titled "Vperyod". And so at this juncture – shortly after the outbreak of the inter-imperialist "Russo-Japanese war", and shortly before the Revolution of 1905 – the two factions acted as separate political groups.

## **THE MENSHEVIKS AND THE BOLSHEVIKS IN THE PERIOD OF THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR AND THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION (1904-1907)**

In a first of its kind, the Baku Committee of the Bolsheviks led a huge and well-organized strike that took place among the oilfield workers. The strike was victorious and in December of 1904 resulted in a collective agreement between the oilfield workers and the owners. The victory of the strike marked not only the beginning of a wave in Transcaucasia, but throughout Russia. As comrade Stalin put it: **"The Baku strike was the signal for the glorious actions in January and February all over Russia."** In January of 1905 a strike began at the largest of the St. Petersburg plants. The strike grew rapidly and spread to other mills and factories in St. Petersburg, as the strike turned into a general strike.

On January 22<sup>h</sup>, over 140,000 people marched to the Winter Palace where the tsar was residing. The tsarist government sought to crush this great movement that was unfolding while

it was in its infancy. The tsar ordered his troops to fire upon the unarmed workers, killing more than two thousand. There, in between the cracks of the cobblestone of the streets, along the pavement, flowed and merged the blood of Bolsheviks together with the blood of the masses.

Already that evening, barricades were erected in the working-class districts, as the workers took to the streets. All over the country, the workers initiated strikes in protests, with the number of strikes reaching 440,000 just in January – more than the whole preceding decade. A shift took place with the deepening and increased scale of class consciousness, and the strikes which were up to that point mainly economical strikes, became mainly sympathy strikes to other political strikes, to demonstrations and to armed struggle against the tsarist troops which were carried out some places. The Bolsheviks led several of these important struggles, they opened up with lead and offering their blood.

Particularly fierce was the struggle waged in Poland. In the three days between June 22<sup>nd</sup> and June 24<sup>th</sup> 1905, the workers erected barricades in the city of Lodz and fought the tsarist troops. Here, the general strike and the armed struggle merged. With the armed struggle of the proletariat, the bells tolled in the beginning of new times.

From May to August, the Bolshevik Northern Committee led 70,000 workers in strike in Ivanovo-Voznesensk. Thousands of workers gathered in almost daily meetings in which they discussed their demands and in which the Bolsheviks addressed the crowds. During the course of the strike, a Council of Representatives was established, which was in actuality one of the first Workers Soviets in Russia.

That spring, the peasantry began to join the revolution with the struggle for land. They marched on the landlords, raided their property, distributed the grain, and in some places succeeded in land-seizures. With the wrath of the peasantry

awoken, the Social-Democratic movement spread to the countryside, with peasant committees being established and strikes among agricultural labourers being organized.

In June, a revolt had broken out on the battleship "*Potemkin*" of the Black Sea Fleet. The soldiers brought the ship to Odessa, where a general strike was in progress. Several warships were dispatched against Potemkin, but the sailors refused to fire on their revolting comrades. For several days the defying red flag waved proudly from the mast of Potemkin.

At this time, the Bolsheviki were not the only force leading the movement, as would become the case in 1917. At this time, there were various factions like the Mensheviks, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Anarchists, which were incapable of providing the masses with the necessary leadership and line to guarantee ultimate victory. On board Potemkin and the other ships, this problem manifested itself, and due to the lack of adequate *and* experienced leadership, there was a fatal tendency of wavering in decisive movements. The Potemkin revolt ended in defeat, with several executed and others imprisoned or condemned to exile. Lenin attributed great importance to this revolt.

A strike started on the Moscow-Kazan Railway in the beginning of October. Within two days it was joined by all the railwaymen of the Moscow railway junction, and shortly after, all the railways in the country was affected by the strike. Like a prairie fire, the strike spread to factory after factory, mill after mill, city after city, and region after region – as it turned into a general political strike. Moreover, it was joined by large sections of the petty bourgeoisie; minor employees, students, intellectuals, lawyers, engineers and doctors. The October political strike became an all-Russian strike which embraced nearly the whole country, including the most remote districts, and nearly all the workers, including the most backward strata. The country came to a standstill and the government was paralysed. The

might of the proletariat and the proletarian movement became strikingly clear.

The mortally frightened tsarist regime increased its machinations with the aspirations of sabotaging and hampering the movement in the short term, and crushing it with bare-faced repression on the long term. Consequently, the tsar issued his Manifesto of October 17, 1905. The Manifesto promised "the unshakable foundations of civil liberty: real inviolability of person, and freedom of conscience, speech, assembly and association." With this Manifesto, the tsarist regime hoped to deceive and sow division, in order to win time to rally his forces and initiate a campaign of repression, of counter-revolution. Rallying reactionary landlords, merchants, priests and the dangerous section of the lumpen proletariat, the reaction established police-controlled two paramilitary organizations known as the "League of the Russian People" and the "League of Michael the Archangel". The black reactionary groups were nicknamed "The Black-Hundreds" among the masses. The Black-Hundreds, with the support of the police, unleashed terror on the masses as it openly murdered workers, intellectuals and students in the streets, burned meeting places to the ground and opened fires on public assemblies.

Lenin, repeatedly reaffirmed the Marxist truth that central in any revolution is the question of power, and that central in the question of power is armed force. In order to seize power, create new power, and to defend it – it is necessary and inextricable with the existence of a Party-led armed force. Lenin, pointing out the necessity of the militarization of the ranks of the proletarian vanguard, saw the brute militarized action of the Black-Hundreds as an opportunity in which a leap in this question could occur; through the forging of the militants and of the organization in armed action, in armed struggle. In a draft article from October of 1905 he wrote: **"The fight against the Black Hundreds is an excellent type of military action, which will train the soldiers of the**

revolutionary army, give them their baptism of fire, and at the same time be of tremendous benefit to the revolution. Revolutionary army groups must at once find out who organises the Black Hundreds and where and how they are organised, and then, without confining themselves to propaganda (which is useful, but inadequate) they must act with armed force, beat up and kill the members of the Black-Hundred gangs, blow up their headquarters, etc., etc.”

In an act of throwing crumbs, the Witte Duma was established, as the liberal bourgeoisie contently settled with slight reforms to “pacify” the people and to split the forces of the revolution. Having come to terms with the liberal bourgeoisie, and having sown division among the masses, the tsarist regime was able to concentrate its forces against the proletariat in a counter-offensive and thereby the reaction initiated a period of counter-revolution.

The state of the internal contradiction in the party, in the R.S.D.L.P., was among the decisive factors for the defeat of the revolution. The party of the class lacked the necessary line, organisation and fundamentally and concretely; the unity – as it was split in two groups. During this whole period, the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks contended within the R.S.D.L.P.. While the Bolsheviks pursued the red line and strove to lead the proletariat in the overthrow of tsardom, the Mensheviks hampered the revolution by their line of compromise and capitulation. Thereby the Mensheviks sowed confusion among workers and split the workers movement. Lacking the essential unity within its own ranks, the proletariat could not become the successful leading force in the revolution through the alliance with the peasantry.

The Mensheviks ended up tailing the liberal bourgeoisie. Gladly swallowing the crumbs thrown by tsardom, they supported the State Duma, they became virtual agents of the bourgeoisie within the ranks of the workers movement. On the contrary, the Bolsheviks struggled for the extension of the revolution, for

the overthrow of tsardom by armed struggle.

During the course of the revolution, the Bolsheviks proved themselves as the only genuine revolutionary Marxist force in the Party and in the country. They proved themselves, albeit still in development, as the only capable leadership in of the class. They demonstrated that they were the force which was successfully able to lead with reason, advantage and limit. They showed that they knew how to advance when the situation demanded it. And they demonstrated their capacity to adapt their own ranks in accordance with a change in the situation.

The revolution of 1905 was a school for the Bolsheviks, and it is often called the general rehearsal of the revolution. The Bolsheviks learned how to advance in the front ranks and to lead the masses in attack. Moreover, the three years of revolution from 1905 to 1907 provided an immense education for the masses in revolutionary violence, particularly for the proletariat. A few years of revolution made clear what could not be made clear in the course of decades of peaceful development.

The Fourth Party Congress, held in Stockholm in 1906, resulted in a mere preserving and somewhat strengthening of the formal unity in the Party. The Bolsheviks were in minority at this congress and "suffered defeat". **"But what sort of defeat was it?"**, asked comrade Stalin rhetorically, saying: **"You had only to look at his opponents, the victors at the Stockholm Congress – Plekhanov, Axelrod, Martov and the rest. They had little of the appearance of real victors, for Lenin's merciless criticism of Menshevism had not left one whole bone in their body, so to speak."** ("Lenin", January 23, 1924)

The next year, in 1907, the Fifth Party Congress was held, in London. The red faction emerged victoriously from the congress, and unity was achieved under the line of the Bolsheviks, with the line of the Mensheviks as condemned as one of compromise. The struggle was however still far from

over, as the Mensheviks still had roots in the workers movement.

## **THE MENSHEVIKS AND THE BOLSHEVIKS IN THE PERIOD OF THE STOLYPIN REACTION. THE BOLSHEVIKS CONSTITUTE THEMSELVES AN INDEPENDENT MARXIST PARTY (1908-1912)**

The tsarist regime unleashed its campaign of counter-offensive against the upsurge in the revolutionary movement that had taken place with the Revolution of 1905, which would mark the beginning of a period called the Stolypin reaction. The Second State Duma was dissolved and the degree of legality of organisation was restricted.

This offensive of the counter-revolution, the period of the Stolypin reaction, was marked by an assault on the proletariat on multiple fronts. The police, gendarme, agents-provocateurs and the Black-Hundreds carried out vicious assaults on the workers movement. Political and economic organizations of the proletariat were persecuted, with the tsarist regime bent on their destruction.

The offensive of the counter-revolution was waged on the ideological front as well. Tendencies of degeneration, decadence and scepticism became rampant among the intelligentsia. A whole horde of intellectuals, including a section of the Party intelligentsia, launched an attack on the philosophical foundations of Marxism, against dialectical materialism. In defence of Marxism, in the struggle against this counter-revolutionary offensive on the ideological front, Lenin wrote his historical "*Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*".

The Bolsheviks were the only force in the Party who did not furl the Party banner, who remained faithful to the Party and the class. The Bolsheviks, forged in the struggle and tempered

in the ideology, fought for and safeguarded the Party and its revolutionary principles, determined to carry out the necessary preparations and work towards the seizure of power.

Lenin emphasized the clandestinity of the Party, and in developing the theory of the Party of a new type posed the thesis of the Party as the clandestine centre which would direct all forms of political work.

A leap occurred in which, except for a handful of "Mensheviks" loyal to the Party, a majority of the Mensheviks became outright Liquidators, resolutely opposing the Party as a revolutionary Party of the proletariat. In opposition to clandestinity, they endeavoured to instead create a reformist party which adapted to the restriction of legality with compromise. Accordingly, this faction earned the nickname "Stolypin Labour Party". Trotsky championed the unity of the Liquidators, using the slogan "unity of the Party" as a smokescreen.

The Fifth *All-Russian* Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. was held in December 1908 in Paris. The conference called upon all Party organisations to wage resolute struggle against the attempts of the Liquidators.

Trotsky organized the anti-Bolshevik and anti-Party "August Bloc", unifying the Liquidators and the Otzovists in the struggle against the Bolsheviks. Trotsky masked his liquidationism under the guise of centrism. In this regard, Lenin pointed out that Trotsky was more vile and pernicious than the open Liquidators.

It was clear that a rupture with the opportunists was inevitable, and that the establishment of the Party as an independent, genuine Marxist Party, was necessary. The Sixth All-Russian Party Conference was held in Prague in January of 1912 and was a historic victory in the struggle for the Party. At this conference, the Menshevik Liquidators were expelled

and the ranks of the party was purged of opportunist elements. The Bolsheviks reconstituted the party as an independent party, the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (Bolsheviks). The Prague Conference inaugurated the Bolshevik party, the Leninist party of the new type. The shattered central apparatus was restored and a Central Committee was elected, consisting of Lenin, Stalin, Sverdlov and others.

Speaking of its significance and summing up the Prague Conference, Comrade Stalin said: **“This conference was of the utmost importance in the history of our Party, for it drew a boundary line between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks and amalgamated the Bolshevik organizations all over the country into a united Bolshevik Party.”**

## **THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY DURING THE NEW RISE OF THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT BEFORE THE FIRST IMPERIALIST WAR (1912-1914)**

The Stolypin reaction would not be able to hold down the moving masses for long. On April 17<sup>th</sup>, 1912, the tsarist gendarme shot and killed over 500 workers at a strike in the Lena goldfields in Siberia. Outraged at this atrocity, political protest strikes erupted throughout Russia, with the number of striking workers quickly rising to 300,000. In this connection, comrade Stalin wrote in the St. Petersburg Bolshevik newspaper, *Zvezda* (meaning “star”): **“The Lena shooting has broken the ice of silence and the river of the people’s movement has begun to flow. The ice is broken! “**

The May Day strikes of that year involved around 400,000 workers, and the strikes were held under the Bolshevik revolutionary slogans of democratic republic, an 8-hour day, and the confiscation of the landed estates. On this, Lenin said: **“The huge May Day strike of the proletariat of all Russia and the accompanying street demonstrations, revolutionary proclamations, and revolutionary speeches to**

**gatherings of workers have clearly shown that Russia has entered the phase of a rise in the revolution”.**

An armed revolt of troops in Turkestan. Revolt was also brewing in the Baltic Fleet and in Sevastopol.

The Party founded the daily newspaper *Pravda*, a mass political newspaper designed for the broadest sections of the workers. It became a powerful instrument of the Bolsheviks which served to strengthen their organisations and extend their influence among the masses.

The beginning of a whole generation of proletarian revolutionaries was reared by *Pravda* – the generation which would be at the forefront of Great Socialist October Revolution. **“The Pravda of 1912”**, as Stalin said, **“was the laying of the corner-stone of the victory of Bolshevism in 1917.”**

The revolutionary movement in the oppressed nations in the Russian empire demanded a clear program for the national question. Only the Bolsheviks put forward a Marxist program on the national question as set forth in Comrade Stalin’s article, *“Marxism and the National Question,”* and in Lenin’s articles, *“The Right of Nations to Self-Determination”* and *“Critical Notes on the National Question.”*

A new factor appeared: The imperialist world war – which was to change the whole course of the events. On the very eve of the imperialist war, the Party led the class in its revolutionary actions, and as the war broke out, the Party entered a difficult period in which they ardently unfurled and hoisted the banners of proletarian internationalism.

**THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY IN THE PERIOD OF THE IMPERIALIST WAR. THE SECOND REVOLUTION IN**

## **RUSSIA (1914 – March 1917)**

The opportunism which had infected the Second International before the war, now consummated its bankruptcy and subsequent liquidation. The opportunist parties, now having undergone the leap and become outright social-chauvinists, warred against each other as they rallied in support of their own imperialist bourgeoisie, treacherously agitating for the class sisters and brothers of the international proletariat to kill each other in order to serve the imperialist parasites, for the subjugation of the oppressed nations to the respective imperialisms and the enslavement of oppressed people of the world.

The Bolsheviks had foreseen its inevitability long before the war broke out. At the international Socialist congresses, Lenin had struggled for the adoption of a revolutionary line of conduct for the socialists for the outbreak of the war.

In his transcendental *“Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism”*, he combated particularly the erroneous view of the renegade Kautsky, which, detaching the politics of imperialism from its economics, reduced imperialism to a mere “preferred policy of finance capital”. As Lenin points out, **“The result is a slurring-over and a blunting of the most profound contradictions of the latest stage of capitalism, instead of an exposure of their depth; the result is bourgeois reformism instead of Marxism.”**

The Bolsheviks advanced the illuminating proletarian slogan of **“converting the imperialist war into a civil war.”** They called upon the workers and peasants, clad in soldier uniforms, to direct their weapons against their own imperialist bourgeoisie. They maintained that immortal truth that there are two kinds of wars: *Just wars* – for liberation, and, *unjust wars* – for exploitation.

From the very outbreak of the war, Lenin began the preparatory

work for a new International, the Third International. The Manifesto of the Central Committee of the Party against the war, released in November 1914, posed the formation of a new International in the place of the old. In September 1915, an international conference was held, which came to be known as the Zimmerwald Conference. Lenin called this the "first step" in the development of an international movement against the war. The Bolshevik Party led the left in this conference, but still within the left, it was the only part at this point which took a consistent stand against the war.

In 1916, a second conference was convened in the Swiss village of Kienthal, known as the Second Zimmerwald Conference. By the time of this conference, internationalist groups had been established in nearly every country and a clear line of demarcation had been placed between the internationalists and the social-chauvinists.

The Bolshevik line for **"the defeat of one's own government in the imperialist war"** called in this context for the formation of revolutionary organizations within the armed forces, forming nuclei in the army and the navy, at the front and in the rear. At the front, the Party agitated for fraternization with the soldiers of the warring armies, emphasised that it was the bourgeoisie that was the real enemy, and that the war could only be brought to an end by turning the bayonets on one's own bourgeoisie and its government. Cases of refusal of army units to take the offensive became more and more frequent. Particularly extensive was the work of the Bolsheviks in the armies on the Northern Front, in the Baltic provinces.

The war had already been in progress for three years. Millions of people had been killed. Russia faced defeat after defeat at the front, an economic disruption grew ore and more acute. Factories closed. Unemployment grew. Access to food became meagre, almost seizing some places. That is when the year of 1917 was inaugurated by a wave of strikes. In January, strike

demonstrations were held in Petrograd, Moscow, Baku and Nizhni-Novgorod. A demonstration in Petrograd was joined by soldiers. During the course of February, most of the big factories in Petrograd went on strike.

On March 8<sup>th</sup>, at the call of the Petrograd Party Committee, working women took to the streets to demonstrate against the war, starvation and against the tsar. By March 10<sup>th</sup>, practically the whole of the proletariat in Petrograd had joined the revolutionary movement. Demonstration and clashes took place everywhere. Through the streets marches thousands, with red banners lighting up the streets with the slogans "Down with the tsar!", "Down with the war", "We want bread".

On March 11<sup>th</sup>, the very next day, it began to assume the character of an uprising. The workers disarmed the police and gendarmes, arming themselves. The police opened fire at a demonstration on Znamenskaya Square. That same day, the Bureau of the Central Committee issued a manifesto calling for the continuation of armed struggle against tsardom and the formation of a Provisional Revolutionary Government.

On March 12<sup>th</sup> the troops in Petrograd refused to fire on the protesting workers and joined the ranks of the people. By that evening, the number of soldiers who had turned to the side of the rising people exceeded 60,000.

The workers and soldiers began to arrest tsarist ministers and generals, and freeing political prisoners. In the streets, shots were still exchanged with the police and gendarmes who were posed in the attics of houses with machine guns. But the troops rapidly went over to the side of the people, sealing the fate of the tsarist autocracy. When the news of the victory of the revolution in Petrograd spread to other towns and to the front, the workers and soldiers began to depose the tsarist officials all over.

With the demands of “peace, bread and liberty”, of the overthrow of the tsarist autocracy, the proletariat had played a leading role, mobilizing the millions of armed peasants clad in soldiers’ uniforms, and thereby achieved the victory of the February bourgeois-democratic revolution. As Lenin put it: **“The revolution was made by the proletariat. The proletariat displayed heroism; it shed its blood; it swept along with it the broadest masses of the toiling and poor population,”**

On the role of the Revolution of 1905 as a general rehearsal, Lenin noted: **“Without the tremendous class battles, and the revolutionary energy displayed by the Russian proletariat during the three years, 1905-07, the second revolution could not possibly have been so rapid in the sense that its initial stage was completed in a few days.”**

During the course of the revolution Soviets were once again established. The experience of the Soviets in the Revolution of 1905 lived in the minds of the workers – in the memory of the class. The Soviets in the Revolution of 1905 had taught the class in its most elementary form a lesson on new power in armed uprising. These Soviets had been new power in an embryonic form. With the overthrow of tsardom, the masses recalled these experiences and applied them.

While the Bolsheviks were leading the masses in the streets, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries focused the bulk of their effort now in seizing seats in the Soviets.

On March 12<sup>th</sup>, the members of the Fourth State Duma representing the (at the time existing) liberal faction of the bourgeoisie concluded a backstairs agreement with the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders, leading to the establishment of the new Provisional Government. In other words, the Socialist-Revolutionary and Menshevik leaders who had seized the leadership of certain Soviets surrendered the power to the bourgeoisie, integrating their parties decidedly in the bourgeois order.

With this, the situation developed into one of dual power. For alongside the new bourgeois order represented by the Provisional Government, existed still another, emerging order: the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Formed on the alliance of the workers and peasants against tsardom, these were organs of new proletarian power, in uneven level of formation. In other words, there existed the contention between the bourgeois power and the proletarian power.

The tasks of the Bolsheviks was now to open the eyes of the masses to the imperialist character of the Provisional Government, to expose the treachery of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks who had gone over to the camp of the bourgeoisie. That an end to the imperialist world war could only be secured with the overthrow of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, and the establishment, with the government of Soviets, the dictatorship of the proletariat. The masses were quickly losing their confidence in the Provisional Governments and the participating elements, and the Bolshevik Party was assuming the leadership.

In an article for Pravda, dated March 14<sup>th</sup>, 1917, Comrade Stalin writes: **"The chariot of the Russian revolution is advancing with lightning speed. The detachments of revolutionary militants are everywhere growing and spreading. The pillars of the old power are tottering on their foundations and crumbling. ... The forces of the old power are crumbling, but they are not yet destroyed. ... Glance around and you will see that the sinister work of the dark forces is going on incessantly... to destroy completely the old forces and, in conjunction with the provinces, further advance the Russian revolution – such should be the next immediate task of the proletariat of the capital."** ("The Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies")

# THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY IN THE PERIOD OF PREPARATION AND REALIZATION OF THE OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION (APRIL 1917 – 1918)

It became more and more clear that the Provisional Government had no intention of withdrawing Russia from the war. That it had no intention of solving the land question. It was after all a bourgeois dictatorship, in alliance with the big landlords. It was clear that the situation of dual power that had arisen with the February Revolution could not persist for long, as the contention for power would lead to the concentration of power in the hands of one class.

After the February Revolution, the Bolshevik Party began to develop their political and organisational work quite openly, which had to do with the concrete conditions; with the temporary situation of dual power that existed. When Lenin returned from exile and arrived in Petrograd on the night of April 16<sup>th</sup>, thousands of people assembled at the Finland Railway Station to welcome him. In Petrograd, he held a speech calling for the succession into the next stage of the revolution; He concluded his speech: **“Long live the Socialist revolution!”**

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, Milyukov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Provisional Government reassured Great Britain and France, Russia's allies in “The Triple Entente”, that the new government would uphold its tsarist treaties. The next day, when this statement, known as “Milyukov's note” became known, the masses were stirred with rage. On May 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(b) called for protests. On May 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>, 100,000 workers and soldiers demonstrated with banners carrying the demands: “Publish the secret treaties!”, “Down with the war!”, “All power to the Soviets!”

In April 1917, the Seventh Conference of the Bolshevik Party assembled. Also known as the April Conference, or the All-Russian April Conference. This was the first time in the history of the Party in which it convened a Conference openly. The conference discussed and laid down the Party line on all basic questions of the war and revolution: the current situation, the war, the Provisional Government, the Soviets, the agrarian question, the national question, etc. The immediate task of the Party was set forth by Lenin in the slogan: **"All power to the Soviets!"**, calling for the end of the situation of dual power with the complete hegemony of the proletarian power. Only thus could Russia be withdrawn from the imperialist war, and only thus could the land question be solved.

On the basis of the decisions of the April Conference, the Party developed extensive activities in order to win over sections of the masses, including in the Soviets, in the trade unions and factory committees. Particularly extensive was the work in the army, where groups, or military organisations, began to arise on a large scale.

The Bolsheviks conducted a mass campaign, mobilizing from the proletarian districts of Petrograd a march to present the revolutionary demands to the Congress of Soviets. The campaign illustrated a growing support for the Bolsheviks. The slogans and banners of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, also in the streets, in support of the Provisional Government – was drowned in a sea of four hundred thousand demonstrators under the slogans: "Down with the war!", "Down with the ten capitalist Ministers!", "All power to the Soviets!"

On that very day, on July 1<sup>st</sup>, the Provisional Government drove the soldiers at the front in an offensive. When news of this reached the masses, a stream of indignation with no bounds flowed through the workers and soldiers. Demonstrations broke out, developing into a huge general armed demonstration, with

the demand of "All power to the Soviets!". Hundreds of thousands marched to the headquarters of the Petrograd Soviet and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of Soviets to demand the Soviets take power into their own hands and a break with the imperialist bourgeoisie – for the withdrawal of Russia from the war.

Detachments of officers and cadets were deployed against the demonstrators, and streams of blood ran through the streets of Petrograd. After the demonstration was suppressed and dispersed, the Provisional Government initiated a campaign of repression, marking the beginning of an attempted counter-offensive of the reaction. A number of Bolshevik publications were suppressed. Several detachments of Red Guards were disarmed. Revolutionary units of the Petrograd garrison were dispatched to the trenches. Arrests were carried out at the rear and at the front. A warrant for Lenin's arrest was issued. Several prominent Party members were arrested.

The situation of dual power had come to an end. The bourgeoisie was consolidating its power. The Soviets whose leadership was dominated by the Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks had become dull appendages to the Provisional Government. The Bolsheviks subsequently withdrew the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets!" The power was concentrated in the hands of the bourgeois Provisional Government, which was taking steps to disarm, and to dismantle or pacify the organisations of the proletariat. Many workers and soldiers belonging to the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries tore up their membership cards in anger and disgust, many preceding to apply for admission to the Bolshevik Party.

The Bolshevik Party, having gone underground, began to prepare for an armed uprising to overthrow the Provisional Government and to create and impose the power of the Soviets by the force of arms. The Sixth Congress of the Party met in Petrograd from the 8<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> of August, 1917. The Congress headed the Party

towards the initiation of the insurrection. The Party preceded to rally armed forces.

General Kornilov began preparations of what would become known as the Kornilov affair, a failed attempt of the counter-revolution to forestall and prevent the proletarian revolution. The Bolsheviks set out the rumour that an uprising was planned to take place in Petrograd on September 9<sup>th</sup>. Two days before, General Kornilov dispatched his troops against Petrograd in order to abolish the Soviets and set up a military regime.

The Bolsheviks called upon the workers and soldiers to rise in armed resistance to Kornilov's troops. The Red Guard detachments grew rapidly. The trade unions mobilised their members. The revolutionary military units in Petrograd prepared for battle. Trenches were dug around the city. Barbed wire was put up. The railway tracks leading to the city were destroyed. Thousands of armed soldiers arrived from Kronstadt to take part in the battle. The forces of the revolution and counter-revolution clashed, in what ended in a defeat for General Kornilov and his forces. In this illustrative battle, a balance of the relative strength of the revolution and counter-revolution was revealed.

The battle had awoken many from their slumber. A spark lit up previously lulled Soviets, leading them onto the road of revolutionary struggle. The influence of the Bolsheviks in the Soviets grew stronger than ever up until that point, as they achieved the majority in many Soviets and assumed leadership. The Bolsheviks again put forth the slogan of "All Power to the Soviets!" on the agenda. The poor peasants began to draw closer to the Party, as did the middle peasants, whose previous vacillations had been a hinder in the development. In September to November 1917, there was a great rise in land occupations and in the peasant struggle generally.

There had already been elements of armed struggle, which Lenin

characterized as civil war. With the initiation of the uprising in early November, however, the armed struggle would enter a new stage: the Great Socialist October Revolution.

Lenin outlined the plan of initiation. On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1917, the Central Committee of the Party held its historic meeting in which it passed the resolution deciding on the armed uprising. Six days later, another, enlarged meeting of the Central Committee was held which developed the plan of initiation further. The Central Committee sent representatives to the Donbas, the Urals, Helsinki, Kronstadt, the South-Western Front and other places to organize the uprising.

On instructions of the Central Committee, the Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet was established, which was to function as the headquarters of the uprising. The Central Committee designated a Party Centre to be headed by Comrade Stalin as the leadership of the Petrograd Revolutionary Military Committee. The Party sent commissars of the Revolutionary Military Committee to all revolutionary army units, in an effort to place under the command of the Party directly the armed forces which it had previously enjoyed the support of, but not had under its direct command. The commissars conducted the preparatory work among the army and navy units and in the mills and factories. Instructions were issued to the warships Aurora and Zarya Svobody.

In the camp of the reaction, bracing themselves, they formed the counter-revolutionary organisation known as the Officers' League. Forewarned by the capitulating traitors, Party members Kamenev and Zinoviev, the Provisional Government hastily summoned troops on November 1<sup>st</sup> from the front to Petrograd.

In the morning of November 6<sup>th</sup>, Kerensky ordered the suppression of the central organ of the Bolshevik Party at the time, *Rabochy Put* (meaning "Worker's Path"), and dispatched armoured cars to the editorial offices and to the printing

plant of the Bolsheviks. By 10:00, on the instructions of Comrade Stalin, Red Guards and revolutionary soldiers pressed back the armoured cars and placed reinforced guard over the printing plant and the editorial offices. Towards 11:00, Rabochy Put came out with the call for the overthrow of the Provisional Government.

Simultaneously, the Party Centre of the Revolutionary Military Committee directed detachments of Red Guards and revolutionary soldiers to Smolny in Petrograd. That night, Lenin arrived in Smolny and assumed the personal direction of the uprising. Units of the army and detachments of the Red Guard kept arriving throughout the night. The revolutionary units of the army and the navy were carrying out the orders of the Party with precision.

On November 7<sup>th</sup>, the revolutionary armed forces occupied the railway stations, post office, telegraph office, the Ministries and the State Bank. The Winter Palace, where the Provisional Government had entrenched itself, was surrounded. The next morning, it would be occupied and the ministers inside arrested. On November 7<sup>th</sup>, the battleship Aurora trained its guns on the Winter Palace, their thunder ushering in a new era: The era of proletarian revolution. The Bolsheviks issued a manifesto titled "To the Citizens of Russia", declaring that the Provisional Government had been deposed.

That very evening, the Second All-Russian Congress of the Soviets opened in Smolny at 22:45 in a revolutionary fervour without comparison. The Bolsheviks secured an overwhelming majority at the congress. The Mensheviks, Bundists and Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, seeing that their time was over, left the congress. The congress issued a proclamation of the new power that read: **"Backed by the will of the vast majority of the workers, soldiers and peasants, backed by the victorious uprising of the workers and the garrison which had taken place in Petrograd, the Congress takes the power into**

**its own hands**". The Congress passed the *Decree on Peace*, calling for an end to the imperialist war, and the *Decree on Land*, declaring the landlords ownership of land abolished.

This Congress, the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets, formed the very first Soviet Government, the all-Bolshevik "Council of People's Commissars" with Lenin as its Chairman. The new state of the proletariat was being formed in the midst of the the armed struggle with the forces of the old state. Soon, a qualitative leap in the organisation of armed forces would take place, and the Red Army would be born.

In Moscow, it took several more days of fierce struggle before the triumph of the new power. The struggle continued throughout Russia, and in in this phase would spread at a rapid rate. The struggle was far from over. In Petrograd itself, and in several of its districts, there was in these early days the struggle of the old state for the restoration of its power. Revolutionary civil war against the white armies was on the agenda, which were to receive the support through the intervention led by the imperialist powers and their lackeys.

Lenin was to call this first period of the revolutionary civil war, from November 1917 to February 1918, the stage of "the Red Guard attack on capital." During the first half of 1918, the new state managed to capture and concentrate in its hands key positions in the national economy; mills, factories, banks, railways, foreign trade, mercantile fleet, etc. It crushed the first attempts of restoration by the counter-revolution in the central areas in which the new power first had triumphed.

From the middle of 1918, *the Committees of Poor Peasants* were created in the countryside, which played an important part in the struggle against the kulaks, and for the redistribution of the confiscated land. It was largely through these committees that the Red Army enlisted peasants. The Committees of the

Poor Peasants consolidated the new power in the countryside and were of tremendous importance in winning over the middle peasants. At the end of 1918, when their task had been completed, they merged with the rural Soviets.

There was attempted peace-negotiations, for the withdrawal of Russia from the imperialist war, in Brest-Litovsk. The attempt failed however, as negotiations were broken off on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1918. Trotsky, who was the chairman of the Soviet delegation, treacherously violated the directives of the Party. Trotsky claimed it was inextricable for the revolution to succeed without first having revolution in the advanced capitalist countries in Europe. Driven by his own naive and illusory beliefs that the unhindered march of the German armies on Russia would in itself cause a revolution in Germany, he withdrew from the negotiations and told the German delegation at Brest-Litovsk that the Soviet Republic would not fight and instead demobilise its army.

The German imperialists, exploiting this opportunity, swiftly seized enormous territory, and brought about the threat of capturing Petrograd, in which they sought to destroy the new proletarian power. But this advance of the German imperialists sparked a spirit of resistance in Russia, as the masses energetically joined the Red Army. On March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1918, the Central Committee of the Party had approved Lenin's proposal to send a telegram to the German government offering to conclude an immediate peace. But in order to secure more advantageous terms, the Germans continued to advance, and only on March 7<sup>th</sup> did the German government express its willingness to sign peace, with the terms being far worse than originally proposed. The treachery of Trotsky and Bukharin cost the Soviet Republic heavy losses, with Latvia, Estonia, Poland and Ukraine falling into the hands of the German imperialists.

At the Seventh Congress of the Party, it would change its name to the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) – R.C.P.(B).,

according to the term given by Marx and Engels – corresponding to our final goal. A special commission, which included Lenin and Stalin, was elected to draw up a new Party program, Lenin's draft program having been accepted as a basis. Anti-Party elements within the Party's ranks, the "Left Communists" and Trotskyists, were uprooted. The withdrawal of Russia from the imperialist war was concluded.

## **THE BOLSHEVIK PARTY IN THE PERIOD OF FOREIGN MILITARY INTERVENTION AND CIVIL WAR (1918 – 1920)**

The proletariat had taken power into its own hands for the first time on such a large scale in history, inaugurating the era of proletarian revolution. The Great Socialist October Revolution was a victory, giving momentum to the left in the International Communist Movement, lead by the Bolshevik Party as the red faction. A solid and favourable basis for the reconstitution of the Communist International had been laid. In March 1919, on the initiative of the Bolsheviks, lead by Lenin, the First Congress of the Communist Parties, held in Moscow, founded the Third International.

With the seizure of power by the proletariat on such a wide scale in 1917, the immediate effects could be felt throughout the world. It marked a qualitative leap, a change in the international situation. It marked the beginning of new epoch.

The various imperialists, in collusion and struggle, still significantly marked by struggle, with the imperialist world war still raging on, set about various campaigns of intervention. The Entente powers were particularly eager in the restoration of the bourgeois order in all of Russia, for in addition to the destruction of the Soviet power, they would thus be able to re-establish the eastern front against Germany in the war.

British, French, Japanese and Yankee imperialism started military intervention without any declaration of war. The British and French imperialists occupied Archangelsk and Murmansk, where they supported a Whiteguard restoration of the power of the bourgeoisie, establishing a White "Government of North Russia". Japanese imperialism landed troops in Vladivostok, seized the province, and supported Whiteguard forces in restoring the bourgeois power.

In North Caucasus, Generals Kornilov, Alexeyev and Denikin, with the support of the British and French, formed a White Guard "Volunteer Army" and initiated an offensive against the new power. With the support of German imperialism, Generals Krasnov and Mamontov occupied the Don region, battling the Soviet power on the Don. In the Middle Volga region and in Siberia, the British and the French imperialists backed Czechoslovak Corps, which engaged the kulaks in the region.

A Whiteguard-Socialist-Revolutionary government was established in the Volga region, and a Whiteguard government was created in Siberia. In Ukraine, the Whiteguard forces unleashed counter-revolutionary terror on the masses and began their offensive, severing Transcaucasia from Soviet Russia. With German and Turkish troops, German imperialism propped up Georgian and Azerbaidjani counter-revolutionary powers in Tiflis and Baku.

Soviet Russia was cut off from her principal sources of food, raw material and fuel. The new Soviet state began to organise life in the areas of the Soviet power around the gun. The Council of Workers' and Peasants' Defence was organised, supplying the front with reinforcements, food, clothing and arms.

The Red Army won counter-restoration, an expansion of the new power in several areas. General Krasnov's forces were forced back from Tsaritsyn, driven beyond the River Don. The Czechoslovak corps and the White-guard-Socialist-Revolutionary

bands were ousted from Kazan, Simbirsk and Samara and driven to the Urals. A British-led Whiteguard attempt at restoration in Yaroslavl was suppressed.

The masses throughout Europe was more and more stirred with indignation. The spirit of proletarian internationalism haunted the imperialist powers. The deceit of the social-chauvinists was in shatters. The masses resolutely opposed the imperialist war. The working people were disgusted on the one hand at the military intervention against the new proletarian power in Russia, and on the other hand awakened of the potential of withdrawing their own countries from the imperialist world war. Many places Soviets' of Workers and Soldiers were formed to oppose the war. In many other places, Workers' Soviets was established in the midst of workers struggle. In November 1918, revolution broke out in Germany. The Red Army was now able to reverse many of the losses in the Brest-Litovsk peace-agreement, and the open struggle was begun for the liberation of Estonia, Latvia, Belarus, Lithuania, Ukraine and Transcaucasia from the yoke of German imperialism.

In March 1919, the Eight Congress of the Party was held. In it, sharp two-line struggle took place over the questions that faced the day. The left, led by Lenin, seconded by Stalin, refuted victoriously the anti-Bolshevik views of Bukharin and Pyatakov. The opportunist Saprnov-Ossinsky group, which opposed the leadership of the Party of the Soviets, was repudiated. A new Party Program was adopted, in which the left advanced with the description of imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism. The new program outlines specific tasks in the struggle they were facing and outlined the beginning steps for the socialist construction.

A central question handled at the Eighth Congress was the question of the middle peasants. With the Decree on Land, there had been a steady growth in the number of middle peasants, and so there became the two sections which Chairman Mao spoke of; old middle peasants and the new middle peasants.

With the growth in the number of middle peasants, they now constituted the majority of the peasant population. The outcome of the Revolutionary Civil War, the victory of the old bourgeois power or the new proletarian power, depended on this stage heavily on which side would win them over.

Several places, restoration by the forces of reaction had been possible due to the support of, or at the very least the neutrality of, a large section of the middle peasantry, like in the Volga region in the summer of 1918. The same was the case with the attempts at restoration by the kulaks in Central Russia. But by the autumn of 1918, arising from the extensive work of the Party, combined with the harsh reality of the return of the landlord power in areas where restoration had occurred, the mass of middle peasants began to be decidedly won over to the side of the new proletarian power.

The Red Army was rapidly growing, but young. Stalin underscored the inextricable role and necessity of the worker and peasant army, saying without it, the new power could not be defended. The Party did not have its army with the beginning of the armed struggle and revolutionary civil war. Therefore, it had to be created in the midst of struggle, under fire. Not unlike in China, where the nucleus of the army was developed into a workers' and peasants' army – a *People's Army* – in the midst of armed struggle, in the course of the People's War. Synthesizing past experience, it was later, with the Chinese Revolution that the theory was raised to the level with the distilled thesis of the three instruments of the revolution, the three magic weapons: The Party, the Army and the United Front.

The problem of the Army was an important problem of struggle on the Eight Congress. The question of the regular army was opposed by some, negating that the situation had given rise to the correctness of the regular army, combined with the partisan movement for the usurpation of the old order in the areas outside of the new power. Generally, however, this

newborn proletarian military line, for the first time in history actively and extensively developed on a large scale in combination with practice, was still in its embryonic form.

Resulting from the developments of the congress on the military question, the leadership of the Party of the Army was deepened. The congress called for the improving development of the central military apparatus. A push was initiated for the furthering of the politicization of the army, of which was carried out with decisive importance by the Communist Commissars in the Army, elevating the consciousness, raising the discipline.

After Germany's defeat, the void was filled by the British and French imperialists, who dispatched fleets to the Black Sea and landed troops in Odessa and in Transcaucasia, occupying Turkestan. The two Entente countries placed their hopes on Admiral Kolchak and forces of the old bourgeois power in Omsk, Siberia. All counter-revolutionary forces throughout the country unified under this command. Thus, the Eastern Front became the main battlefield in the country in which the old and the new power contended.

Having assembled a large army, and by the spring of 1919 having reached the Volga, the Red Army initiated its counter-offensive with great vigour, mobilising the Young Communist League and the workers, freeing the Urals and Siberia. Behind enemy lines, in the white areas of the old power enforced by Kolchak's army, a powerful partisan movement was conducted. In April of 1919, Kolchak's army suffered severe defeat and very soon began retreating along the whole front.

In the summer of 1919, in order to divert the attention of the Red Army from the Eastern Front, General Yudenich who led the counter-revolutionary forces in the Baltic region was tasked with launching an attack on Petrograd. Simultaneously, attempts at restoration were carried out in Petrograd itself. The reaction suffered defeat at the hands of the new power,

and Yudenich's offensive was driven back. With the defeat of the forces of the reaction under General Yudenich, the Red Army was able to focus more on Kolchak's army, which by the end of 1919 was completely routed.

The interventionist troops deployed to Odessa had to be withdrawn, for the revolutionary spirit had infected the ranks, leading them to rebel against their own imperialists, like the revolt of the French sailors in Odessa led by André Marty.

General Denikin, organiser of the "Volunteer Army" in the Kuba region in the south received massive backing of the Entente powers to launch an offensive north against the Soviet Government, thus making the Southern Front the chief front. Trotsky was in charge of leading the Red Army on the Southern Front, which led to heavy losses in the South. By the middle of October, the Whites had seized the whole of Ukraine, captured Orel, nearing Tula, and approaching Moscow.

Trotsky was removed from the direction of the operations of the Red Army in the south. The Central Committee of the Party sent Comrade Stalin and others to lead a counter-offensive to bring about the defeat of Denikin's army. Before their arrival, the Command of the Southern Front had already drawn up a plan to strike at Denikin through an area dominated largely by the influence of the Whiteguards. Comrade Stalin criticized the plan and submitted instead his own, which was accepted by the Central Committee of the Party, which instead directed the main blow against Denikin through regions in which they had the open sympathy of the population.

In the second half of October 1919, Denikin's army suffered defeat after fierce struggle, forcing it to flee south. At the beginning of 1920, the whole of Ukraine and the North Caucasus was liberated by the Red Army. Attempting to once again divert the attention of the Red Army, Yudenich's corps was tasked by the imperialist powers to initiate an offensive on Petrograd,

and thereby to improve the position of Denikin' army in the south. But after fierce struggle, the offensive was pushed back, and in the end, Denikin was defeated.

With the victories conquered by the Red Army, and the rising indignation of the workers throughout Europe towards the military intervention, Great Britain, France and Italy had to call off the blockade of Soviet Russia in January 1920. The counter-restoration of the power of the proletariat was conducted on a wide scale as the White armies and forces of intervention were driven out of the Northern Territory, Turkestan, Siberia, the Don region, Ukraine, among other regions.

The Ninth Party Congress, held at the end of March 1920, laid out immediate task in the construction of the economic life in the areas of the new power. At this point, the Red Army numbered nearly five million. To contribute to the economic tasks of the new state, and as to not be a burden, a part of the Red Army was engaged in economic work. The Council of Workers' and Peasants' Defence was transformed into the Council of Labour and Defence. In other words, we see here as throughout history the problem of supplying the army, and already here we see in its elementary form the converting of part of the army into a productive force, thereby not being a burden, but contributing, here to the economy in a general sense. Chairman Mao would take this further in the Chinese revolution with the thesis of the self-sufficient army, engaging in production in the particular sense, producing for its own needs – part of the theory of the Army of a new type that would develop.

At this point in the civil war, the imperialists utilized reactionary lackeys from Poland, and supported General Wrangel, who had rallied remnants of Denikin's army in Crimea. The Polish gentry and Wrangel, as Lenin put it, were the two hands with which imperialism attempted to strangle Soviet Russia. In April 1920, the Polish forces invaded Soviet

Ukraine and Belarus. Around the same time, Wrangel initiated an offensive and threatened the Donbas. The Red Army started its counter-offensive, driving the Polish warlords out of Ukraine and Belarus.

The Polish armies were on the verge of defeat. With his mind still bent on his backward conception Trotsky commanded the Western Front forward with no time for consolidation of positions, dispersing the detachments and distancing them from the supplies, a situation was created in which it was easy to force a breach in the front. Subsequently, a small force of the Polish army was able to break through on the Western Front, forcing the troops on the Southern Front to retreat. Within days, however, the counter-offensive was ready, forcing the Polish forces to eventually agree to peace on October 20<sup>th</sup> 1920. In November that year, the Red Army drove Wrangel's forces into the Crimean Peninsula, where he was surrounded and crushed, thereby clearing the peninsula of Whiteguards.

At the end of 1920 began the liberation of Transcaucasia, in which the Soviet power triumphed in Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia. Continued struggle was required before the complete victory in the Revolutionary Civil War. The imperialist intervention was not over, with the struggle against the intervention of Japanese imperialism in the Far East continuing until 1922. New attempts at intervention and restoration of the old order were made in the East and with the Finnish Whites in Karelia in 1921. But by the end of 1920, the Revolutionary Civil War had entered a new stage. By the balance of forces, the forces of the revolution far outweighed the counter-revolution. The forces of the old order was on the defensive.

## **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GREAT SOCIALIST OCTOBER REVOLUTION**

With the victory of the Great Proletarian Socialist Revolution

and the Revolutionary Civil War, the proletariat seized for the first time in history the power not only in a whole country, but in multiple countries, establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat and turning one-sixth of illuminatingly red, beginning for the first time in history the construction of socialism – the first phase of communism as Marx had called it. This victory of the international proletariat, of the oppressed people of the world, changed world history for ever. Not by chance, but by historical necessity – as our great founders Marx and Engels foresaw. The reddening flames and drumming thunders of October ushered in the new era: A new era of world proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, a new era of the oppressed nations' struggle for liberation led by the proletariat.

During its course, the class generated the great leadership of Lenin, who by applying Marxism on the concrete conditions of the Russian revolution, and thereby creatively solving unsolved problems, made contributions which developed Marxism in its three constituent parts: Marxist philosophy, Political Economy and Scientific Socialism – and thereby gave rise to the second stage of our ideology: Marxism-Leninism.

The October Revolution created a front of revolutions against imperialism. It widened the scope of the national question to a general question of emancipating the oppressed peoples, colonies and semi-colonies from imperialism. Like Chairman Mao says: **“The October Revolution has opened up wide possibilities for the emancipation of the peoples of the world and opened up the realistic paths towards it; it has created a new front of revolutions against world imperialism”** (“Revolutionary Forces of the World Unite, Fight Against Imperialist Aggression!”, November 1948). It drew two forces – the international proletarian movement and the national liberation movement – together, in the International Communist Movement, the first leading with the second as base.

It fundamentally changed the international situation. It

spearheaded a wave in the World Proletarian Revolution, and with Lenin at its helm, successfully constituting the Third International. It gave rise to the first dictatorship of the proletariat, which brought about the first socialist construction, the great defeat of fascism in the Second World War, all along giving impulse and support to the proletarian revolutions and national liberation struggles, paving the way for a new stage in the World Proletarian Revolution. As Chairman Mao put it: **“After the October Revolution the face of the world underwent a fundamental change. After the Second World War this change developed in a new direction.”** (“Mao’s Talk to Music Workers”, August 24, 1956) Onward, the world situation changed in certain ways which can never be reversed: **“Revolution is the main trend in the world today”** (“People of the World Unite, Defeat the U.S. Aggressors and All Their Running Dogs”, May 1970) as Chairman Mao pointed out. As the *“Programme of Struggle against Imperialism”* proclaimed **“Countries want independence, nations want liberation and peoples want revolution; this has become an irresistible historical trend”** (Peking Review, 25 May 1971) Today, as of the 105<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the October Revolution, we are in a new period of revolutions that is developing, with the People’s War already being fought in India, Peru, Turkey and the Philippines with many more to follow.

The October Revolution traversed a long, crooked and arduous road – the road to the conquest of power – a road full of bends. The October Revolution birthed the child that is the Party of a new type, which it gave to the world. The history of the October Revolution is the history of the struggle for the party as the proletarian vanguard party. It is the history of the armed struggle and the first birth of the new power with the Revolution of 1905, a general rehearsal in which the vanguard could be schooled in the highest school that is the struggle for power. It is the history of the bourgeois-democratic revolution of February 1917, in which the Bolshevik Party correctly participated and played an important role, and

which marks the end of bourgeois revolutions led by the bourgeoisie. It is the history of the October Insurrection and the all-round defeat of whites and interventionists in which the Party as the vanguard of the class began and led the all-out struggle of power, achieved through the Great Revolutionary Civil War. A war most complex and diverse in its forms of combat and the terrains fought on, offensive and defensive, usage of most primitive forms of weapons to the most modern ones. A war of the deepest and most profound masses. A bitter struggle between restoration and counter-restoration. When the new power is born, it is born fragile. But with time, through struggle, it grows into a mighty force which is capable of smashing the power of the old order.

With the October Revolution, the international proletariat generated Marxism-Leninism, and with it, the theory of the Party of a new type – the proletarian vanguard party – which is of fundamental and transcendental importance.

The most important, most decisive, factor for the victory of the October Revolution was the existence of the Bolshevik Party. Chairman Mao says: **“If there is to be a revolution, there must be a revolutionary Party. Without a revolutionary Party, without a revolutionary Party built on the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary theory and in Marxist Leninist revolutionary style, it is impossible to lead the working class and broad masses of the people to defeat imperialism and its running dogs. In the more than one hundred years since the birth of Marxism, it is only through the example of the Russian Bolsheviks in leading the October Revolution, in leading socialist construction and in defeating fascist aggression that revolutionary Parties of the new type were formed and developed in the world. With the birth of revolutionary parties of this type, the face of the world revolution has changed. The change has been so great that transformations utterly inconceivable to people of the older generation have come into being through fire and thunder.”**

("Revolutionary Forces of the World Unite, Fight Against Imperialist Aggression!", November 1948)

The Party of a new type, Lenin says, has a program which: **"consists of the organization of the proletariat's class struggle and the leadership of this struggle whose final objective is the conquest of political power for the proletariat and the organization of socialist society."** He teaches us that the proletariat, in its struggle for power, has no weapon other than organisation. That it **"can only become, and will inevitably become, an invincible force when its ideological union by means of Marxist principles secures itself through the organization's material unity, which gives cohesion to the millions of workers in the army of the working class. Before this army neither the decrepit power of the Russian aristocracy nor the decaying power of international capitalism will be able to sustain itself. Each day this army will extend its ranks farther, despite all the zigzags and steps backwards, despite the opportunist phrases of the puppets of contemporary social democracy, despite the fatuous eulogies of the backward circular spirit, despite the tinsel and the intellectual's own anarchist bankruptcy."** (Lenin, Collected Works, Vol. 7, p. 415) In that manner Lenin set forth the problem of the construction of the Party, a problem of organisation, which he pointed out, will not be solved in a short time, but through a protracted process.

The Communist Party of Peru summarises the core of the theory of the Party of a new type as Lenin developed it, as follows:

**"1) The Party is a military detachment of the working class, a part of it. But it is a vanguard detachment which goes ahead, which leads. It is a conscious detachment who knows the laws of the revolutionary process, and it is a Marxist detachment which firmly sustains itself in the working classes' revolutionary conception.**

**2) The Party is an organized detachment, it is a system of**

organizations which “as a vanguard detachment of the working class, combines the maximum organization possible and only brings within it those elements who admit, at least, a minimal level of organization” for which it has its own obligatory discipline for all its members.

3) The Party is the proletariat’s “highest form of organization” called on to lead the other class organizations for which goal it counts on being composed of the best children of the class (steeped in Marxism, learned in the laws of the class struggle), and with their own experience and that of the global working class.

4) “The Party is the incarnation of the ties that unite the vanguard detachment of the working class with the masses.” As such, it will not live or develop separated from the masses and, on the contrary, its life and development demand that it “multiply its links with the masses and win the masses’ trust.”

5) The Party should be organized along the principle of democratic centralism, with single statutes and with an equal discipline for all and “with a single leadership organ at its head, to be known as the Party congress. And in the intervals between the congress and the central committee’s congress, with the submission of the minority to the majority, of the district organizations to the central organisms, and of the inferior organizations to the superior.”

6) To maintain unity in its ranks the Party requires a single discipline applicable to all, a unity which demands great attention because, as Stalin would say, “Comrade Lenin gave us the legacy to care for the unity of the Party like children care for their eyes.”” (“On the Construction of the Party”)

The 7<sup>th</sup> of November is an epoch-marking day forever engraved in the history of the international proletariat and mankind as both a seal and an opening; closing the era of bourgeois

revolutions and inaugurating the era of world proletarian revolution.

**“For thousands of years”, says Chairman Mao, “the working people of the world and all progressive humanity have dreamed of building a society in which there would be no exploitation of man by man. This dream was realized on one-sixth of the earth’s land surface for the first time in history by the October Revolution.”** (Speech at Moscow Celebration Meeting, November 6, 1957)

He says: **“It was through the Russians that the Chinese found Marxism. Before the October Revolution, the Chinese were not only ignorant of Lenin and Stalin, they did not even know of Marx and Engels. The salvos of the October Revolution brought us Marxism-Leninism. The October Revolution helped progressives in China, as throughout the world, to adopt the proletarian world outlook as the instrument for studying a nation’s destiny and considering anew their own problems.”** (“On the People’s Democratic Dictatorship”, June 30, 1949)