

The Fight in the Party for a Bolsheviki Government . . . For the Policy of Lenin and Trotsky!

The question is posed of the expulsion from the party of A. V. Lunacharsky. J. G. Fenigstein-Daletsky** is opposed. The proposition is put to the vote. The expulsion is rejected.

The present situation: Reporter, J. G. Fenigstein.

J. G. FENIGSTEIN

By chance, it is I who am the reporter. Perhaps someone else will make the report? (Rejected).

Objective: How to coordinate the work in the immediate future. It is a question of the agreement with the other socialist parties (Mensheviks and Social Revolutionists). The considerations on the "spilled blood" and the lassitude of the workers should not predominate. For a political party that wants to make history, these facts should not constitute an obstacle. Task: what to do to satisfy the just demands of the workers and the peasants? What was the second revolution? It was inevitable. The class contradictions have grown. We have pointed this out. The revolution was not exclusively political. It brought with it a series of alterations in the economic and social domain. A great process has been accomplished. Illusions have disappeared. The state of mind of the Soviets and the popular masses has changed: they have lost their (collaborationist) illusions. Everybody has reached the conclusion of the necessity of the existence of the Soviet power. In the presence of this slogan we have developed ourselves and have grown. We have elaborated a series of slogans on the economic struggle, etc. Our party has grown. We have had the support of the masses.

LENIN.

I cannot make a report but I will make known to you a question which interests everybody a great deal. It is the question of the crisis in the party which broke out openly at the moment when it was already in power.

For all those who follow the life of the party, the polemic which was unfolded in the Rabotchi Put and my interventions against Kamenev and Zinoviev constitute nothing new. It was said in Dielo Naroda that the Bolsheviks would be afraid to seize the power. This compelled me to take up the pen to show all the inconsistency and unfaithfulness of the Socialist Revolutionists. I wrote "Will the Bolsheviks Maintain Power?" The question of armed intervention was posed at the Central Committee session of October 1. I was afraid of seeing opportunism on the part of the Internationalist-Unionists; but this fear disappeared. Whereas, in our party, certain (former) members of the Central Committee were not in agreement with us. This grieved me. Thus the question of power has been posed for a long time. Just the same we could not give it up now because of the disagreement of Zinoviev and Kamenev. The insurrection is "objectively" necessary; comrades Zinoviev and Kamenev began to make an agitation against the insurrection; we began to consider them as strikebreakers. I even addressed myself in writing to the Central Committee to propose to expel them from the party.

I came out violently in the press when Kamenev came forward in the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets*. I would not want (now, after the victory) to be severe with them. I regarded with friendliness Kamenev's parleys in the Central Executive Committee on the subject of the agreement, for we are not opposed to it from the point of view of principles***.

However, when the Socialist Revolutionists abandoned the power, I understood that they did it after Kerensky had begun the (armed) resistance. In Moscow (that is, on the subject of the conquest of power in Moscow), matters dragged out for a long time. Our Right wingers sank into pessimism. Moscow allegedly cannot take the power, etc. And it is then that the question of the agreement arose among them.

* Lunacharsky had come forward in favor of the coalition with the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionists; he resigned from the government because of the (imagined) destruction of the Cathedral of the Basil to the Benevolent in Moscow. The proposal to expel Lunacharsky was presented on the initiative of Lenin.

** At the present time the manager of the Telegraphic Agency of the Soviet Union (TASS).

*** On August 4-17, 1917 Kamenev came forward during a session of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets on the occasion of his arrest, as well as on August 6-19, on the subject of the International Socialist Conference of Stockholm which the social-collaborationists aimed to convene during the summer of 1917, in order to conclude as quickly as possible a peace by exercising a pressure of the socialist parties upon the governments of their countries. Kamenev spoke on August 6-19 in favor of participation in this Conference, in spite of the fact that the Central Committee of the party had decided not to participate.

** Neither Lenin nor Trotsky, in the beginning, had raised objection to parleys with the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionists concerning the coalition, on condition of having a solid majority for the Bolsheviks, and that the parties recognize the Soviet power, the decrees on peace and the land, etc. It was certain that these parleys would yield nothing, but a lesson by example was necessary.

Introduction to the Minutes of the Petrograd Committee, November 7, 1917

We publish here the minutes of the historic session of the Petrograd Committee of the Bolshevik party which took place November 1-14, 1917. The power was already conquered, at least in the most important centers of the country. But the struggle inside the party concerning the question of power was far from having ceased. It had simply passed into a new phase. Up to October 25, the representatives of the Right wing (Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, Kallinin, Lunacharsky, etc.), demonstrated that the insurrection was premature and that it would end in a defeat. After the triumph of the insurrection they took up the job of proving that the Bolshevik party was incapable of maintaining itself in power without coalescing with the other socialist parties, that is, with the Social Revolutionists and the Mensheviks. In this new stage, the struggle of the Right wingers became exceptionally harsh and terminated with the resignation of the representatives of this wing from the Council of People's Commissars and from the Central Committee of the party. It should be recalled that this crisis took place a few days after the conquest of power.

What was the conduct, in this question, of those who are at present the Centrists, particularly Stalin? At bottom he was already then a Centrist, in so far as he was obliged to take a position by himself or to express his own opinion, but he was a Centrist who was afraid of Lenin. That is why at the most critical moments of the ideological struggle (beginning with April 4, 1917 and up to the illness of Lenin) Stalin scarcely existed from the political point of view. He existed less than ever during 1917. After his arrival in Petrograd, coming from Atchinsk with Kamenev, when he had taken possession of the editorial board of Pravda with Kamenev and the former deputy Muranov, Stalin followed a vulgarly democratic, semi-national-defensist line of conduct, a line which Kamenev formulated, all things considered, in more sensible and complete terms. After Lenin's arrival, Kamenev continued to defend his attitude and applied it in his manner all through October and November 1917. As for Stalin, he hushed up immediately and retained in himself. His activity in Pravda during the month of March, when he removed the revolutionary elements from the editorial board, was still present in the memory of all. From the psychological and political point of view,

The work of the insurrection is a new work; other forces, other qualities are needed. In Moscow, for example, in many cases the Junkers (cadets) gave proof of cruelty, shot prisoners, etc. The Junkers, sons of the bourgeoisie, under that with the advent of the power of the people comes to an end that of the bourgeoisie, for already, even at the conference, we had taken a series of measures like the confiscation of the banks, etc. To the contrary, the Bolsheviks were frequently too soft. Now if the bourgeoisie had triumphed, it would have acted as in 1848 and in 1871. Who believed therefore that we would not run foul of the sabotage of the bourgeoisie? It was clear even for a nursing. And we must apply force: arrest the bank directors, etc. The detention, even brief, of these people has already yielded very good results. That hardly surprises me; I know how little capable they are of doing any of their fighting themselves; the essential thing for them is to hold on their warm little spot. In Paris, they gullied, while we will do nothing but deprive of their food cards those who do not receive them from their trade union. In this manner we will fulfill our duty. And at such a moment, while we are in power, the split appears! Zinoviev and Kamenev say that we will not get possession of the power "in the whole country". I am in no mood to listen to this calmly. I regard this as treason. What do they want? The launching of a spontaneous battle, with danger blows? The proletariat alone can bring the country out of this. . . . as for the agreement. . . .

I cannot even speak seriously of this. Trotsky has said long ago that the union is impossible. Trotsky has understood this and since then there has not been a better Bolshevik.

Zinoviev says that we are not the power of the Soviets, that, allegedly, we are the Bolsheviks all alone, that the Socialist Revolutionists and the Mensheviks have quit, etc. But it is not our fault. We are elected by the congress of the Soviets. It is a new organization. Those who want to fight, enter it. It is not the people, it is a vanguard which draws in the mass. We are marching with the active masses and not with those who are tired. To refrain now from unfolding the insurrection (is to capitulate) before the fatigued masses, as for us we are with the vanguard. The Soviets are determined (in the struggle). The Soviets are the vanguard of the proletarian masses. Now we are invited to espouse the Municipal Duma: it's nonsense.

We are told that we want to "introduce" socialism: that's nonsense. We do not want to make a peasant socialism. We are told that we must "stop". But it is impossible. It is even said that it is not the power of the Soviets. Then what are we? However, we are not going to fuse with the Duma! Perhaps it will still be proposed that we conclude an agreement with the Room-

cherod, the Vikzhel, etc.* That's horse-trading. Perhaps also with general Kaledin? To come to an understanding with the collaborationists who later on will throw a wrench in the spokes! It would be miserable horse-trading and not the power of the Soviets. At the conference that's just the way we must pose the question. Ninety-nine percent of the workers are for us.

If there must be a split, let it come! If they're the ones who have the majority, let them take the power in the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets and let them act; as for us, we will go to the sailors. We are in power. Who is capable at present of passing over to Novaya Zhizn** Hesitators, unprincipled people: one day with us, the next with the Mensheviks. They say that by ourselves we will not maintain power, etc. But we are not alone. We have all Europe before us. We must begin: at present, only the socialist revolution is possible. All these hesitations, these doubts (agreements), they are nonsense. When I said (at a popular meeting), we will fight (the sabotegers) with the bread cards, the faces of the soldiers lit up. (The Right wingers) asserted that the soldiers are incapable of fighting. But the speakers who spoke before, the masses tell us that they have never seen such enthusiasm. Only we shall be able to create a plan of revolutionary work. Only we are fit for the struggle, etc. And the Mensheviks? They will not follow us. There you are, at the coming conference we must put the question of the future socialist revolution. We have Kaledin before us; we have not yet triumphed (completely). When we are told (Vikzhel the sabotegers, etc.) that there is "no power", and then it is necessary to imprison, and we will do it. And let them task us on this subject of the horrors of the dictatorship of the proletariat. I understand. Let them scream about the arrests! The delegate from Tver said to the Congress of the Soviets: "Arrest them all!" That I understand; he has a certain comprehension of what the dictatorship of the proletariat is. Our present slogan is: no agreements, for a homogeneous Bolshevik government!

* Roomcherod: Joint Executive Committee of the Soldiers' Soviets on the Rumanian front, the banks of the Black Sea and the Odessa Garrison. Vikzhel: All-Russian Executive Committee of Railroad Workers. These two organizations were in the hands of the social-collaborationists.

** Novaya Zhizn (New Life). Gorky's paper, where the Right wingers, (Lunacharsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, etc.) came out against the Central Committee.

*** The Tver delegate, a peasant, demanded during the Soviet Congress on October 25 (November 7), the arrest of Avksentiev and the other collaborationist chiefs of the Peasants' League of that period.

Accordingly, so as not to distort this speech, it is not published.

It is quite true that the recording of the minutes is not perfect, that they contain not a few lacunae and obscure passages. But that applies entirely and completely to all the minutes of the Petrograd Committee of 1917. The session of November 1 was perhaps better recorded than certain others. As is known, Lenin's speeches were in general difficult to take down, even stenographically, because of the peculiarities of his methods of oratorical exposition: the extreme rapidity of speech, the complicated construction of the phrases, abrupt and brutal parentheticals, etc. Nevertheless, the essential sense of Lenin's speech of November 1-14 is perfectly clear. Lunacharsky's speech and the two speeches of Trotsky are reported in an entirely satisfactory manner. The motive for the elimination from the minutes is quite a different one. It is not hard to find. It is underlined in the margin of the proofs with a thick stroke and a huge question mark, right opposite the following words of the text:

"I cannot even speak seriously of this (of the agreement with the Mensheviks and the Social Revolutionists). Trotsky has said long ago that the union is impossible. Trotsky has understood this and since then there has not been a better Bolshevik."

It is this phrase which upset the equilibrium of the Secretariat of the Central Committee and called forth the re-making of the whole book, which is vexing enough as it is, for, even in its present censored form, it constitutes a murderous document against the falsifiers. It will suffice to say, for instance, that the point of view of the Central Committee, when it was presented in the meetings, was called the "point of view of Lenin and Trotsky" (see page 345). But Yaroslavsky himself, in spite of his assiduity, cannot attend to everything. . . . In this connection, it would be very interesting to reconstruct the contribution in the realm of ideas made in 1917 by this incompetent compiler and odious falsifier. We hope to devote a few pages to it in our archives. Here, let us simply recall a little known or forgotten fact. After the February revolution, Yaroslavsky, together with the Mensheviks, published at Yakutsk a review, the Social Democrat, which was a model of the acme of political triviality and converged upon the bourne separating Menshevism from rotten-bourgeois liberalism. Yaroslavsky was then at the head of the

LUNACHARSKY.

I would like to have you know my impressions about the masses who have fought. I have heard with astonishment the speech of Vladimir Ilich about Kamenev allegedly not recognizing the socialist revolution. Yet, who is now in power? The Bolsheviks: that already speaks for itself. Kamenev, as far as I know, has not a Menshevik point of view. His influence is growing. The masses are coming over to our side. The city worker also understands that the question of the land is not a matter of indifference to him. We adopt as the basis for the decree on the land the resolution of the Social Revolutionists. We introduce it into the program of our activity; we can also introduce it into the nomination of the government*. We, the Right wing Opposition, have dwelled on the necessity of a homogeneous socialist government. We say: not a single place to the Cadets!

We have, furthermore, pointed out the necessity of workers' control, of the regulation of production by the shop and factory committees; the other parties consent to that. We will oblige everybody to admit it. That is what our program consists of, plus the power of the Soviets. Does this mean that we abandon the Domes? It is our people who are seated in the power. If the Dumas want to take the power, we will demolish them. Does that mean that we give the Dumas a part of the power? No. Simply representation (in the Soviet government). And should we really continue the civil war because of that? No, we shouldn't. To have new elections to the Dumas, that is another matter. Here it is eight days that we are in power. But we do not know if the decree on peace has been brought to the attention of the people? What is the reason for it? The technical apparatus, which is bourgeois or petty bourgeois. It sabotages us. If the Municipal Duma demanded that the principal line of conduct be changed, that would be another matter; but if it only wants representation in the power, there is nothing to talk about. Only, we will settle nothing. The famine will begin. If those who sabotage, that is, the technical apparatus, are not with us, nobody will know about our agitation beyond the frontier, and we will settle nothing. We can, of course, act by means of the terror, but why, towards what end?

We will endeavor to obtain an agreement, but if they grab us by the hands, we are resolute people, capable of resisting. . . . At present we must, first of all, take possession of the whole apparatus. This means to act by following the line of least resistance and not by

* Lunacharsky's idea is the following: If the Bolsheviks have introduced into their decree on the land the demands of the peasants, permeated with a Social Revolutionist spirit, the Bolsheviks must also share the power with the Social Revolutionists.

Conciliation Chamber of Yakutsk in order to protect the splendors of the democratic revolution from the conflicts between workers and capitalists. All the articles of the review edited by Yaroslavsky were penetrated with the same spirit. The other collaborators, who did not jar with the spirit of this publication, were Ordjonikidze and Petrovsky, the present president of the Executive Committee of the Ukrainian Soviets. In a leading article, which might seem incredible were it not printed black on white, Petrovsky shed tears of emotion over 50 rubles contributed by some official or other for charitable works and expressed the conviction that the revolution would really bloom from the moment when the possessing classes would follow the example of the noble honorary—and perhaps even Court—Councillor. It is these rigorously consistent "Marxists", these inflexible "revolutionists" who now edit Lenin and seek to remodel all history. They write with assurance on the proofs of the minutes of the session of November 1: "Throw away the composition." That's it precisely: "Throw away the composition!" Lenin, "Throw away the composition!" Set up all over again the history of Russia for a third of a century. Yaroslavsky, author, corrector and compositor of the new Stalinist history.

But, alas for Yaroslavsky, there have been some "lacks" this time too. He has not succeeded in "throwing away the composition". It cannot be done without making use of living people. The proofs, with all the annotations, immediately made their way into the hands of the Opposition. It is not the only document of this type! As for the correction of the text we publish, we have applied in general and on the whole the rules which were used also by the editors of the collection of the Petrograd minutes mentioned above. In cases where the sense of the phrase left no doubt, we have corrected the grammar or the syntax, taking into account the interest of the reader. In spite of all the defects of recording, the general procedure of the whole session and of the tendencies and groups which were represented there, appears without leaving room for any dispute and carries a conviction which penetrates to the depths of the mind. In publishing the present document, we are saving for history a living portion, not without its importance, of the October revolution. —Archives of the Opposition.

hands of the workers. We can count upon that up to a certain point. Nevertheless, we cannot work at present for we have no apparatus. It will not last a long time like this. We must show that we can build up as realists, and not simply say: "Fight, fight", and clear a road for ourselves with bayonets; that will lead to nothing. It is easier to compel people working badly to do it better than to coerce the idle to work by force. In the face of all these difficulties, I consider that it would be desirable to reach an agreement. None of your proofs about the Mensheviks can convince the masses. I know well that it is not possible to work as it is being done now. It is not possible from the principled point of view and also because we cannot risk a number of lives. Do not give forth to divergences of views (they exist already); the masses regard that nervously.

trotsky. We are told that we are incapable of building up. But in that case we should quite simply give up the power to those who were right in the fight against us. But we have already done a great work. It is said that we cannot support ourselves upon bayonets. But neither can we exist without bayonets. We need the bayonets there in order to be able to sit here. All the experience we have gone through should already teach us something. There have been battles in Moscow; yes, there were serious combats there against the Junkers. But in the end, they did not submit either to the Mensheviks or to the Vikzhel; the agreement with the latter will not detach the struggle against the Junkers' detachments of the bourgeoisie disappear. No, in the future a cruel class struggle will continue to be conducted against us. All this petty bourgeois rabble which, for the moment, is in no position to take a stand on one side or the other—when it will know that our power is strong, it will be with us, and with it, the Vikzhel. . . . Because we crushed Krasnov's Cossacks under Petersburg, we received a mass of telegrams of sympathy the next day. The petty bourgeois submit itself the force to which it should submit itself. Whoever does not understand that understands nothing in the world, much less the apparatus of the State. Back in 1871, Karl Marx said that the new class cannot simply utilize the old apparatus. It has its interests and its customs which cause resistance. We must break it and renew it; it is only then that we can work.

If that were not so, if the former Czarist apparatus suited our new aims, the whole revolution would not be worth a blown egg. We must create an apparatus which can, in reality, proclaim that the general interests of the popular masses are higher than the particular interests of the apparatus itself. The question of the classes and of their struggle has remained purely book stuff for many of our circles. When they felt the revolutionary reality, they spoke differently (of agreement and not of struggle). What we are living through at present is one of the deepest social crises. At present the proletariat is demolishing the apparatus of the power and replacing it. Its resistance is a reflection of the process of our growth. No word will be able to moderate their hatred against us. It is said that we have the same program as they. Give them a few seats and that will be all. Then why do they help Kaledin if they have the same program as we? No, the bourgeoisie is against us out of all its class interests. What will we accomplish against that with an agreement with the Vikzhel people? Against us is rising armed violence; how shall we beat it? Also by violence. Lunacharsky says that blood is flowing. Then what should be done? Perhaps we should not have begun? Then recognize that the greatest mistake was committed, not so much in October but at the end of February when the arena of the future civil war was opened.

It is said that an agreement with the Vikzhel would help us against Kaledin. But why, then, don't they support us if they are closer to us? They understand that bad as the counter-revolution is for them, it will give more to the upper strata of the Vikzhel than the dictatorship of the proletariat. For the moment they are preserving a neutrality which is not friendly to us. They are letting the shock troops and the partisans of Krasnov approach. I was personally forbidden at the Vikzhel from communicating by direct wire with Moscow in order to say that our affairs are going well in the struggle against Krasnov, because that might, so they said, "improve the morale there"; but the Vikzhel people, you see, are neutral. To come to an understanding is to continue the policy of Gotz, of Dan and the others.

We are told: we have neither cotton nor oil, that is why the agreement is necessary. But I ask for the thousand and first time: how can the agreement with Gotz and Dan give us oil? Why are the Tchernovs against us? They protest out of their entire bourgeois psychology. They are not capable of applying serious measures against the bourgeoisie. They are hostile to us just because we are applying brutal measures against it. Nobody yet knows what rigorous measures we shall still be compelled to have executed. All that the Tchernovs are capable of introducing into our work are hesitations. But in the struggle against the enemy, hesitations will kill our authority in the eyes of the masses.

What does the agreement with Tchernovs mean? (Continued on page 4)