

## The Russian Revolution and its Problems

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The failure of the Russian Revolution of 1905 and of the revolutionary movement was brought about by a combination of forces. The bourgeoisie, hoping to obtain a home market and the freedom to organize that market, had praised the creators of the Revolution and the liberators of "Great Russia," the proletariat, but now turned from it, and offered its co-operation to its former foe, the czarist government. The "unreasonable" proletarian demands frightened the bourgeoisie, whose conception of freedom was necessarily limited by its own class interests, preferring a curtailment of its own freedom to the threatening "slavery" under proletarian rule. It was ready to forsake its home market, that the liberation of Russia promised, in favor of a foreign market backed up by a strong government. And in order to create this strong government the bourgeoisie allied itself with the government of the Czar.

To the "enlightened" landlord, the agrarian, the Revolution of 1905 was a gross disappointment from beginning to end. What he wanted and needed was the freedom to organize and develop his estates on a capitalistic basis. Under the feudalistic regime of the czar this had been impossible, and therefore he greeted the Revolution, though somewhat half-heartedly. But the revolutionary proletariat, together with the revolutionary peasantry, demanded not only freedom but land as well. And while the agrarians were willing and ready to sacrifice the estates of the czar and the vast territory belonging to the clergy, they showed a natural unwillingness to commit suicide by parting with their own lands. Hence the agrarians, even more readily than the capitalists, turned to the old government and offered it their support.

Thus this holy alliance of bourgeoisie, agrarians and bureaucracy was formed. The proletariat with the revolutionary part of the peasantry were completely isolated. The defeat of the

Revolution had become inevitable, not because of the weakness of the revolutionary forces but because of the strength of the reactionary alliance. There were other forces at play. Just as to-day American, French and English imperialism are raging against the revolutionary forces of Russia, condemning the Workers' and Soldiers' Council and quite openly regretting the fall of the "liberal" czar, so in 1905 European capitalism was frightened by the possible fall of the "international gendarm" and the rise of the proletariat. But to-day imperialism has its hands full with a "war for democracy" and cannot very well afford to fight against the democracy of Russia. In 1905 the capitalist forces of Europe were free and ready to help the Russian autocracy against the Revolution. The treasuries of republican France, liberal England and autocratic Germany were open to the government of the czar. And the czar made the best use of them. The army, beaten as it was on the battlefield of Manchuria, was still an army raised by selective draft, with several years' military training and, what is more important, commanded by officers of the military and reactionary caste. With the help of the republican and the liberal money the army was perfected, and the salaries of the soldiers and officers raised. The army was with and for the reactionary alliance, and for years reaction reigned supreme. So much so that even within the social-democratic party a movement for reorientation began to grow up. A number of very influential Social-Democrats (Liquidators) were of the opinion that Russia had been germanized, that is, that another revolution in Russia in the near future was improbable, that Russia would follow, in her political development, the steps and form of Germany and that the Russian Social-Democracy must liquidate its revolutionary tactics and adapt itself to this new situation. The revolution of 1917 has shown, however, the utter fallacy of the Liquidators.

The Russian Revolution of 1905, like all revolutions, was an expression of the conflict between the ever-growing forces of production on the one hand and the "political superstructure" on the other. The semi-feudal political organization of Russia did not and could not satisfy the needs of the new industrial forces, of the new classes of society. But the revolution had failed