

coalition cabinet as their victory, and in some socialist quarters of the United States it was considered a victory for socialism. It was of course neither of the two, it was a hard blow to socialism, to the socialist movement of the world. True, one more "coalition cabinet" would hardly add anything to the setback given to socialism by the Burgfrieden orgies that have taken place during the war, were it not for the fact that it was the *Russian Social Democracy* that had entered the bourgeois cabinet. For it had become almost a commonplace to every socialist that Russia had no revisionism. The Social Democracy of Russia had been known as the party of Marxian socialism, as the "orthodox" party. And if the coalition cabinets of Belgium, France and Great Britain and the entire "Burgfrieden" policy of the socialist parties of most of the countries now at war could be explained as the "triumph of opportunism," the Russian coalition cabinet can not be thus explained.

But the situation in Russia at the time of the creation of the coalition cabinet was such that the socialists had no alternative. It must be borne in mind—and this has been said many times—that the Russian revolution came too late. It came at a time when the working class had already become numerically strong and socialistically highly developed. The bourgeoisie, or at least its dominant part, face to face with its grave digger, the proletariat, had long ago lost its revolutionary spirit and could not be entrusted with the problems created by the revolution. It could not and did not have the confidence of the revolutionary forces. In fact, the leaders of the bourgeoisie realized that in a government of their own they would be powerless and compelled to acquiesce in the will of the proletariat. To the bourgeoisie a socialist cabinet appealed much more than a coalition cabinet, for (notwithstanding the joy of a New York socialist paper over the possibility of a majority of socialists in the cabinet) it knew that a socialist government without the objective conditions necessary for the establishment of socialism and with an imperialistic war still in progress, would discredit socialism and the socialist movement for many years to come.

But the Russian revolution had been made by the proletariat,

had been aided by the revolutionary soldiery and supported by the revolutionary peasantry. The socialist parties of Russia, the logical and lawful representatives of these revolutionary forces, were, therefore, responsible for its success. Nay, more, the socialist parties and the masses behind them were the only social forces that are deeply concerned in the bringing of the revolution to its logical conclusion. The council was thus bound—for the sake of the success of the revolution—to enter the cabinet, to form a coalition government.

The object of the coalition cabinet was primarily "to solve the problem of government" created by the revolution, to form a government that would have the confidence of the people. And for a time it seemed as if it had succeeded. The coalition cabinet with its socialist minority was still dominated by the council. And while a part of the bourgeoisie, still interested in democracy and without imperialistic motives, was willing to march together with the revolutionary forces of Russia, another part, the one that dominates the capitalist class of Russia, the imperialists, who fear the rule of the people, started a half concealed, half open campaign against the coalition cabinet the moment it was formed. Imperialists like Milyukoff and Guchkoff naturally could not and would not support a government that propounded a program of "no annexation and no indemnities," forbid the sale of land by the large land-owners, who fearing confiscation were selling their lands to peasants and speculators, and in the midst of war and revolution introduced an eight-hour day. They bitterly and constantly attacked the coalition government which they themselves had promised to support, attacked the revolutionary democracy in general and the council in particular. Following the old Machiavellian strategy—divide et impera—they tried to divide the revolutionary forces, prejudicing the army against the workers and the peasants against the army, although with doubtful success.

The constant counter-revolutionary activities of the imperialistic bourgeoisie, together with the "super-revolutionary" activities of the bolsheviks, of which more will be said further on, have, however, succeeded in intensifying the inevitable proc-