

ously, it creates the conditions under which the proletariat may express its revolutionary action for the overthrow of Capitalism.

The bourgeois democratic revolution is not an indispensable necessity at all stages of the development of Capitalism; it occurs at particular stages and under certain conditions, and may be dispensed with, as was the case in Germany. Imperialism negates democracy, projecting a new autocracy necessary to maintain the proletariat in subjection, expressing the requirements of concentrated industry, and indispensable in the armed struggles produced by imperialistic competition. Without a class conscious proletariat in Russia, there would in all probability have been no revolution; the situation, after the abortive revolution of 1905, was shaping itself as in Germany, where the imperialistic bourgeoisie compromises with and accepts autocracy as an instrument for promoting its brutal class interests. The requirements of Imperialism are incompatible with bourgeois democracy, with the paltry democracy of the bourgeoisie in its earlier "liberal" era. What other meaning is there in the international reactionary trend *away* from democracy and *toward* autocracy?

Imperialism, moreover, means, generally, Capitalism at the climax of its development, Capitalism ripe for the introduction of Socialism. The Western European countries are ripe for the Socialist community: they have that material basis in the maturity of the industrial development of Capitalism which is indispensable for the establishment of Socialism. Russia, geographically and economically, is an integral part of Europe; this being the case, the introduction of Socialism in Europe generally would necessarily, under the historic conditions, mean the Socialist community in Russia. This is precisely what the Bolsheviks meant by "a civil war of the oppressed against the oppressors, and for Socialism." Not in Russia alone, but throughout Europe, the revolutionary proletariat is called to action, Russian revolutionary Socialism using its power and strategic position to arouse that international class struggle which would transform itself into the Social Revolution. Two forces are necessary to establish Socialism—the material, Capitalism in

the fullness of its development of the forces of production; the dynamic, a revolutionary, class conscious proletariat. The material force exists in West Europe, but not in Russia; the dynamic exists in Russia, but, as yet, not in West Europe. Now consider Europe as one great social arena, as it is in fact. The revolutionary energy of the Russian proletariat, uniting with the impulse of a war that is developing intense revolutionary currents, may conceivably arouse the European proletariat for the Social Revolution. The Social Revolution of the proletariat is an international revolution; and it is precisely the international aspirations of the Russian Revolution, in its Bolshevik phase, that is a proof of its proletarian character.

The proletarian revolution in Russia marks a complete break with the traditions and the ideology of the past. To compare it with previous revolutions is to miss the significance of its fundamental character. There are no historic standards by which to measure the proletarian revolution in Russia; it is making its own history, creating the standards by which alone it and subsequent proletarian revolutions may be measured. The circumstance is pivotal in interpreting the course of events in Russia and the meaning of this first general revolution of the proletariat.

In the *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Marx declares that bourgeois revolutions hark to the past for inspiration; the old figures and ideology appear as means to intoxicate people with their revolutionary task. At one moment, the French Revolution is cloaked in the forms of the Roman Republic; at another moment, in the forms of Roman Empire. Cromwell and the English people drew from the Old Testament the figures and the ideology for their bourgeois revolution. But, says Marx, "the Social Revolution [of the proletariat] cannot draw its poetry from the past, it can draw that only from the future. It cannot start upon its work before it has stricken off all superstition concerning the past. Former revolutions required historic reminiscences in order to intoxicate themselves with their own issues. The revolution [of the proletariat] must let the dead bury their dead in order to reach its issue. With the