

antagonism of the proletariat to the bourgeois policy is not disorganized, inchoate, unaware of means and purposes: but organized and disciplined, the instincts of the masses unerringly pointing the way to future action, in spite of immediate hesitations, compromises and defeats. The significant fact was the immediate formation of *two* governments: the government of the bourgeoisie, the imperialistic Provisional Government of Milyukov-Gutschkov; and the government of the revolutionary masses, the Council of Soldiers and Workers. Immediate antagonisms developed between these two governments, antagonisms that acted as an educator of the masses and as a means of converting the general revolution into a revolution definitely of the proletariat and proletarian peasantry.

It was a fortunate coincidence of events that the revolution occurred in the midst of an imperialistic war, in which world power was at stake. Under these circumstances, the bourgeoisie could not conceal or compromise its class interests: *the imperialistic war had to be continued*; the masses wanted peace, and it was through the issue of peace, which could not be avoided or compromised, that class antagonisms developed acutely and aroused the revolutionary consciousness of the masses. In the normal times of peace, it would have been much more difficult to drive on the bourgeoisie to the fatal conclusion of its class policy, it would have been much more difficult to deliver the masses from the deceptions and ideology of the bourgeoisie. Moreover, the war developed the potentiality of the European Social Revolution, without which the proletarian revolution in Russia might never develop or become smothered in its own isolation. **The issue of peace** assisted mightily in accomplishing the work of clarification; and while at first peace concealed the sharper class antagonisms, the course of events proved to the masses that *peace itself was a class issue*: the imperialistic bourgeoisie and its democratic sycophants wanted war, the proletarian and peasant masses wanted peace. "Peace, land and liberty" was the slogan of the Revolution; the Milyukov-Gutschkov government promised land and liberty—in the future; while it prepared to wage a new and more aggressive war. This government accepted the Czar's obligations

with the Allies; it differed from the old regime only in this, that instead of the Czarism waging the war, the bourgeoisie was to wage a war in the interests of Imperialism. But the masses acted again, and the government of Gutschkov-Milyukov was overthrown, because of its imperialistic peace policy. The Council of Workers and Soldiers acted as the centre of the great demonstrations which brought the downfall of the first Provisional Government.

The Council constituted itself as the active representative of the revolutionary masses. But it consisted, as yet, of the old revolutionary opposition: it did not express the new revolutionary activity and requirements. The Council dared not assume power, it dared not act aggressively. The split between the masses and their intellectual representatives widens; and this process becomes vital in the revolutionary course of events. The Council realized the immense task it had to perform, but shrank before the immensity of the revolutionary requirements.

The Council appeals to the proletariat to overthrow their imperialistic governments, and allows the imperialistic bourgeoisie to assume power; it calls for the proletarian revolution in Europe and acquiesces in the formation of a new coalition government; moreover, it allows its leaders, Tscheidse, Skobeleff, Tseretelli, Tchernov, to participate in this government *together* with representatives of the bourgeoisie. The Council hesitates; and out of hesitancy comes compromise. It imagines that the course of the Revolution may be determined by interminable discussions among the intellectuals: it acts only under pressure of the revolutionary masses. It talks revolution, while the government acts reaction. It takes refuge in proclamations, in discussion, in appeals to a pseudo-theory, in everything save the revolutionary action of the masses directed aggressively to a solution of the pressing problems of the day. They who had always preached Socialism now shelve Socialism as a problem of the future. Where revolutions do not act immediately, particularly the proletarian revolution, reaction appears and controls the situation; and the formerly revolutionary representatives of the masses accept and strengthen this reaction. Once revolutionary ardor cools, the force of bourgeois institu-