

tions and control of industry weights the balance in favor of the ruling class. Revolutions march from action to action: action, more action, again action, supplemented by an audacity that shrinks at nothing,—these are the tactics of the proletarian revolution. The revolution seizes power and uses the power aggressively and uncompromisingly; it allows nothing to stand in its way save its own lack of strength. But the Council hesitates and compromises until the day comes when the accomplished fact of reaction stares it in the face. The Council hampers and tries to control the instincts and action of the masses, instead of *directing* them in a way that leaves the initiative to the masses—developing that *action* of the masses out of which class power arises. Acquiring prestige through its criticism of the government, the Council lacks the revolutionary policy and consciousness of assuming full governmental power when the criticism is converted into the necessity of action. Instead of action—phrases; instead of Revolution—a paltering with the revolutionary task.

On May 2 the Council of Workers and Soldiers might have constituted itself the government in place of the overthrown Milyukov-Gutschkov regime. Its failure to act accordingly marked the decline of its power and influence *as then constituted*: the task of the Council now became that of revolutionizing itself, of discarding its old policy and personnel. And this revolutionary process could develop only out of the masses, not out of the Council's intellectual representatives: these representatives had to be thrust aside, brutally and contemptuously.

#### IV.

The Council of Soldiers and Workers, in its dominant expression and activity, gradually became the representative of a vague democracy. "The unity of all democratic elements!"—this was the slogan of the new coalition government. But democracy under the conditions of Imperialism is an instrument of reaction, useful and necessary in misleading the masses. The government, in alliance with the Council, tried to revive the war spirit of the people by speaking of a "democratic war," of a war "to defend the revolution." But under the conditions every action toward

war was counter-revolutionary, as the war was waged in alliance with French-British Imperialism, strengthening the bourgeoisie of Russia and its imperialistic interests. A war to defend the revolution could be waged only after the bourgeoisie and the social-patriotic "democratic" elements were excluded from the government; only a revolutionary war, waged by a revolutionary government for revolutionary purposes could constitute a war "to defend the Revolution." The moderate Socialists in control of the Council, whose Socialism expressed nothing more than a liberal democracy, developed under the pressure of the situation into a conservative and counter-revolutionary force. The Council was united with the government in its essentially reactionary policy. The influence of the leaders of the Council with the masses was used to mislead the masses and to support the bourgeois policy of the government. The only way out was to break the coalition—and this the Council, at this moderate stage, dared not attempt.

But the revolutionary aspirations of the masses developed increasingly, and the Council was rent in a violent struggle between the revolutionary forces represented by the Bolsheviki (Lenine, Zinovieff, Kameneff, and Trotzky who, although not a Bolshevik, adopted their program) and the moderate forces, represented by the Social-Revolutionists and the Mensheviki (Tscheidse, Skobelev, Tseretelli, Tchernov).

The Social-Revolutionists represented the peasantry, not the mass of agricultural workers, but largely the middle class peasantry, under the domination of the bourgeois ideology. They represented that conservative middle class which in previous revolutions had always acted against and betrayed the proletariat. The interests of this class of peasants moved within the orbit of the bourgeois regime of property, and its representatives acted accordingly.

The Mensheviki represented the dominant Socialism, that moderate Socialism which directed the International straight to disaster; and which, moreover, had become, in the words of Trotzky, the greatest obstacle to the revolutionary development