

This was why the Bolsheviks did not wait for the Constituent Assembly to convene before pressing their demands. The fact of complete revolution had first to be accomplished; and they overthrew the government of Kerensky through the action of the masses.¹⁰ The use of force is not a finality but a process of revolutionary development, of intensifying class antagonisms. The dictatorship of the proletariat is not permanent, but temporary: it is a means, a necessary means of pushing on the Revolution to the point where dictatorship ceases because its function has ceased. Not force alone is used against the counter-revolutionary Cossacks: the non-propertied Cossacks are aroused in a class struggle against the propertied Cossacks through organization of a Cossack Soldiers' and Workers' Council; not force alone is used against the bourgeois Ukrainian Rada, but the development of class antagonisms through organization of an Ukrainian Council of Soldiers and Workers. Revolutions are not stationary: they develop and develop through class antagonisms. The dissolution of the Constituent Assembly in January by the government of the Councils was a *developmental* expression of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. The Revolution, declared the Bolshevik decree of dissolution, created the Workers' and Soldiers' Council—the only organization able to direct the

by the peasants; later the constituent assembly would ratify the seizure and "confiscate" the lands. Confiscation is a juridical process, and must be preceded by the *action* of seizure. Plechanov argued against the nationalization of the land, saying this was going back to the Russia of the 17th century. Lenin answered, that nationalization of land under an industrial regime was different from nationalization under an Asiatic form of production. During the Revolution of 1917, the problem of seizure had an immediate importance—the resumption of agricultural production to prevent starvation.

¹⁰ Immediately upon its assumption of power, the government issued the following decrees among others: All factories belong to the workers; confiscation of all lands in favor of the peasants, without compensation, all large properties, church and state domains together with all buildings, tools, livestock, etc., being put at the disposal of local councils; confiscation of coal fields, oil and salt mines, forests and canals, partly in the hands of the central government, partly to be organized by local authorities. Undertaken by a bourgeois government, these measures constitute State Capitalism; undertaken by a revolutionary government, as measures of a dictatorship of the proletariat, they are steps toward Socialism *in the process of the Social Revolution*.

struggle of the exploited classes for *complete* political and economic liberation; this Council constituted a revolutionary government through the November Revolution, after perceiving the illusion of an understanding with the bourgeoisie and its deceptive parliamentary organization; the Constituent Assembly, being elected from the old election lists, necessarily became the authority of the bourgeois republic, setting itself against the Revolution of November and the authority of the Workmen's and Soldiers' Councils; the old bourgeois parliamentarism has had its day and is incompatible with the tasks before Socialism, hence it was necessary and unavoidable that the Constituent Assembly, necessarily counter-revolutionary, should be dissolved. The use of *armed* and *arbitrary* force is a dynamic process in the dictatorship of the proletariat: it completely annihilates the institutions and ideology of the old parliamentary regime in the midst of its task of creating the institutions and ideology of the regime of communist Socialism.

All democracy is relative, is *class* democracy. As an historical category, democracy is the instrument of a class: bourgeois democracy is the form of expression of the tyranny of Capitalism. The democracy of Socialism annihilates the democracy of Capitalism—relative democracy is superseded by the actuality of the full and free democracy of Communist Socialism. The proletarian revolution does not allow the "ethical concepts" of bourgeois democracy to interfere in the course of events: it ruthlessly sweeps aside bourgeois democracy in the process of establishing proletarian democracy. Capitalism hypocritically insists upon a government of *all the classes*; Socialism frankly institutes the government of *one class—the proletariat*—which means the ultimate end of "government" as hitherto constituted. The Constituent Assembly was an expression of government of the classes; it was, accordingly, necessarily and essentially a reaction against the proletarian revolution.

Moreover, the Constituent Assembly was a phase of the parliamentary regime of the bourgeois republic.¹¹ The parliamentary

¹¹ It is said: if the Bolsheviks are against a Constituent Assembly, why did they press its convening, as one of their immediate demands prior to the November Revolution? A measure may correspond to an earlier