

of Imperialism, or through the acquisition of revolutionary reserves for action in the days to come.

A peace of this character means the revolutionary waging of the international class struggle, means the unity of proletarian action against *all* imperialistic governments. The Bolsheviki, accordingly, adopted a policy of appealing to the belligerent proletariat, particularly to the proletariat of Germany. The proposal for an armistice on all belligerent fronts was a means of developing proletarian action, by placing the question of peace before the people, getting the soldiers out of the trenches and encouraging fraternizing. Once an armistice is concluded, and German Imperialism were to hold out for an imperialistic peace, the German soldiers would scarcely return meekly to the trenches, but would turn their guns upon their own ruling class. It is claimed by moderate Socialists and by Socialists whose Marxism and revolutionary spirit have equally atrophied, that the Bolsheviki discarded their policy of discussing peace with the proletariat of Germany by discussing it with German diplomats. Do they imagine for a moment that it is the simplest thing in the world to reach the German workers? Do they imagine that the Bolsheviki expect to make peace with those diplomats, that they are not using the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk as a means of reaching the German workers with the message of revolution? Revolutions are not made in a day; and the resources of the Bolsheviki are equal to using *every* opportunity of reaching the proletariat with their call to revolutionary action. Inflexible in purposes, the Revolution may still, within the limits of these purposes, adopt a flexible policy of action.

The Bolshevik rejection of the German terms of peace is an illustration of their resourceful policy. Their preparations for waging a revolutionary war against Germany, if necessary, are as much a part of their international revolutionary policy as the proposal for a general armistice. Should the Bolsheviki wage a revolutionary war against Germany it would be *their own war* waged for *their own purposes*; it would cease the moment the workers of Germany acted; and it is conceivable that the revolutionary proletariat of Russia and Germany might wage together a

war against world Imperialism. This was not the war Kerensky waged, nor is it a war desired by the Allies. Peace is a means to an end: *the Social Revolution* in Europe. The international policy of revolutionary Russia is to arouse this proletarian response. Every move, every expression of this policy is calculated to promote this response. Without this response there cannot be an actual democratic peace, nor can there be a *permanent* revolutionary Russia.

A revolutionary peace is the indispensable condition for the proletarian revolution in Russia. The moderates in the Councils sensed this vital fact, in a vague way; but their policy, in accord with the moderates among all the belligerents, directly hampered the revolutionary action of the proletariat. How could one expect the proletariat of Germany to revolt against its government, when revolutionary Russia was directed by a bourgeois-Menshevik government that secretly plotted war and conspired against the Revolution? In Germany, where bourgeoisie and autocracy are one, a revolution would from the start have to be a proletarian revolution. How could the workers of Germany unite with the proletarian revolution in Russia, seeing that the bourgeoisie was represented in the government, and the revolutionary government pursued essentially a bourgeois policy? It was a psychological and political contradiction. The Menshevik-bourgeois republic could not inspire international proletarian action. This was the crucial problem of revolutionary Russia: either the Social Revolution in Europe, or the collapse of revolutionary hopes in Russia.¹²

¹² This problem was a central one in Bolshevik policy since the Revolution of 1905. In the unification report previously mentioned, Lenine declared that the Russian Revolution has enough power to conquer, but not enough power of itself to maintain its gains and the fruits of its victory. External assistance is necessary from the Socialist proletariat of the West, whom Lenine designated as "revolutionary reserves." In this connection, Lenine placed great faith in the "guarantees" of the German proletariat. The epochal significance of the Bolsheviki policy is that in practically every essential it was formulated during the revolutionary period of 1905, was consistently adhered to in spite of discouragement and the sneers of the right and the centre, and is one reason why its application to Russia to-day is a brilliant performance in applied tactics. In this, as in all other matters, the Bolsheviki are characteristic of revolutionary Socialism, pioneering the Social Revolution.