

the sweetest fruits of existence, but who now are doomed by the "mob" to destruction and poverty or to "common" work. . . . Behind the exploiters stand also the great mass of the petit-bourgeoisie, who as years of historical experience in every country have shown, waver and vacillate panic-stricken, frightened at the difficulties of the revolution, when the proletariat meets the first defeat or partial defeat. They become nervous and run in terror from one camp to another . . . as did our Mensheviks and social-revolutionists

To prattle of majorities and minorities, of pure democracy, of the needlessness of dictatorship, of the equality of exploiters and exploited at this time, when a furious war has put into question the existence of privileges that have existed for hundreds and thousands of years—what narrow-mindedness, what conservatism it indicates!

Tens of years of a relatively "peaceful" period of Capitalism, from 1871 to 1914, have drawn to the Socialist parties, which were sinking into opportunism, whole Augean stables of conservatism, narrow-mindedness, betrayal

The reader has undoubtedly noticed that Kautsky, in the quotation taken from his book concerning general suffrage, refers to it as the deep source of strong moral authority; that on the other hand Engels, speaking of the same Paris Commune and discussing the same question of dictatorship, speaks of the authority of an armed people, when it must choose between the authority of a bourgeois and of a revolutionist

It is necessary to point out that the question of depriving the exploiting class of its suffrage rights is a *purely Russian* question, not one that is vitally necessary to a dictatorship of the proletariat. If Kautsky, to be sincere, had entitled his book "Against the Bolsheviks," then this title would have answered the substance of his book, and then Kautsky would have had the right to speak as he did about the suffrage. But Kautsky wished above all to appear as a "theoretician." He entitled his book *generally*: "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat." He discusses the Soviets and refers to Russia as a separate problem only in the second part of his book, beginning from the sixth chapter. The first part from which I have taken the quotation, treats of *democracy and dictatorship in general*. But when he begins to speak about suffrage, he specifically attacks the Bolsheviks, and sets aside completely his theoretical position. Discussed in the light of a theory, as the relation that exists between democracy and dictatorship in gen-

eral, without application to any one particular nation, the subject becomes not "suffrage or no suffrage" but concerns itself solely with the possibility of preserving democracy, for the *rich and the exploiters*, during that historical period in which the exploiters are being crushed and their state is being supplanted by the state of the exploited.

Only in this way can the question be treated as an abstract theory.

We know the example of the Commune, we know what the founders of Marxism have said in respect to it and on the basis of it. On the basis of this material I have studied the question of democracy and dictatorship in my book "The State and Revolution," which was written before the October revolution. *I did not mention in a single word* the question of the limitations of suffrage. But here it must be said that the question of a limitation of suffrage is particularly a national question, but not one that involves the question of proletarian dictatorship. It is necessary to study the question of the limitation of suffrage when one studies the *particular prerequisites* of the Russian revolution, the *particular method* of its development. But it would be a mistake to state beforehand that all, or most of the future proletarian revolutions in Europe absolutely will give a limited suffrage to the bourgeoisie. It may so happen. After the war and after the experience of the Russian revolution, it is probable that this will happen. But *it is not necessary* for the enforcement of proletarian dictatorship, it is not an *absolute* distinguishing mark of the logical conception of such a dictatorship, it is not a *necessary* prerequisite for the historical and class conception of the dictatorship.

The conception that underlies it and the absolute prerequisite of this dictatorship is the *forcible* crushing of the exploiters as a class, and therefore the *disregarding* of "pure democracy," i. e. equality and freedom, in regard to that *class*.

From this point of view alone can this question be theoretically set forth. And Kautsky, by failing to discuss the question from this angle, has shown that he opposes the Bolsheviks, not as a theoretician, but as an opportunist and a bourgeois.

In what country, and under what peculiar national conditions of this or that Capitalism, this or that limitation shall be used, exclusively or generally, whether or not democracy is violated when the exploiters are in question—that is a question of national traits, peculiar to this or that Capitalism, to this or that revolution.