

All these elements revolted after the conquest of power by the working class. From the point of view of Socialistic theory this revolt could not possibly come to any of us as a surprise. Marx wrote apropos of the Paris Commune that the working class when it comes into power cannot mechanically appropriate the old apparatus of state but must completely rebuild it. And this fact expressed itself in two different ways—in the distrust, on the part of the laboring masses and the Soviets, of the old officials, and in the hatred of the old officials towards their new master, the working class. Hence the sabotage, the desertion, the disorganizing of all government and of many public and private institutions by the directing technical and administrative personnel. This sabotage, in as far as it was not simply a product of the panic of the intellectual elements before the heavy hand of the working class which had taken the political power into their hands, and in so far as it pursued a political aim worked toward the future Constituent Assembly as its natural object, as a new bridge to those possessing the power.

While the Russian bourgeoisie, the Russian possessing classes in general, found their political ideal, in accordance with their nature and their political interests, in a limited monarchy based upon property qualifications for suffrage, the intellectual elements, led by the compromise parties, find it, in accordance with their interests and their conceptions, most of all in the Constituent Assembly, which assigns to the petty-bourgeois intellectuals an unproportionately large part, since they, thanks to their boldly wagging tongues stand up in a parliament in the name of all the dumbest and most backward masses which still lack the power of speech, and because they, standing midway between the possessing classes and the laboring masses, would play their role of the unifying element, the middle-man and the go-between. And the Constituent Assembly would be, to their way of thinking, a great unification chamber, a great institution of agreements of the Russian Revolution.

The Soviets, that is, the working class, organized in Soviets, have rejected the Constituent Assembly, declaring that in an epoch of the direct and immediate clash of class forces only the one class or the other can openly and firmly rule, that in this moment there can be only one of two things, either the dictatorship of capital and the landowners or the dictatorship of the working class.

In dissolving the Constituent Assembly, the Soviets broke the back of the sabotage of the intellectuals. The resistance of all these technical, administrative, and official elements was

overcome. Meanwhile the immediate open civil war, as well as the fight against sabotage, to a certain extent diverted our attention from the fundamental organic, economic, and administrative tasks. On the other hand it was natural that the conviction should grow within us that now, having disposed of the Kaledins and Korniloffs, taken the power definitely into our hands, and broken the sabotage, we shall at last proceed to real, genuine creative work.

Once the military resistance of the bourgeoisie, of the Korniloffs and Kaledins, was quashed (thanks not to our military technique, which stood at the very lowest level, but to the fact that the bourgeoisie had no dependable cadres) and once the sabotage on the part of the administration—technical personnel was overcome, at least as far as principles were concerned, and it became possible to harness these mental forces to work—after all this was accomplished, we stood face to face for the first time with all the enormous tasks, difficulties, and obstacles that we had received as an inheritance of the past.

It was natural that the civil war and the methods by which we overcame the sabotage of officials in all institutions, should in themselves directly intensify the disorder which we had inherited from the War and the first period of the Revolution. We saw this ourselves and looked the facts plainly in the face. But this did not stop us, for we knew, we were deeply convinced—and this conviction we drew from our whole analysis of the historical events in Russia—we knew that here is for us only one outlet to the great stream of historical development, and that outlet leads only through the dictatorship of the working class. We knew that if in the path of this dictatorship there should be obstacles, they must be swept away. And if this sweeping away of obstacles should for the time being intensify the disorder, all this must be made up for a hundredfold through the policy of economic creation which the working class, after it had seized the reins of power, must develop.

Now, Comrades, having overcome the political obstacles, we are directly facing all these difficulties of organization. History places before you, before the working class, before its representatives, first of all the questions: Can you wrestle successfully with all the difficulties which the past decades and centuries have gathered for you, now tying them into Gordian knots, now presenting them to you in the way of entirely shapeless all-Russian disorder? Can you, can we manage these problems? In other words, will the working class, directed by the Communist Party, in the hours of the greatest trial ever imposed