

ganization attainable under the circumstances, and thus to reduce to a minimum the number of probable victims. The facts are well known. Blood has been spilled. And now the "influential" press of the bourgeoisie, and the other newspapers serving the bourgeoisie, are attempting to put on our shoulders the entire burden of responsibility for the consequences—for the poverty, the exhaustion, the disaffection and the rebelliousness of the masses. To accomplish this end, to complete this

labor of counter-revolutionary mobilization against the party of the proletariat, there issue forth rascals of anonymous, semi-anonymous, or publicly branded varieties, who circulate accusations of bribery: blood has flowed because of the Bolsheviks, and the Bolsheviks were acting under the orders of Wilhelm.

We are at present passing through days of trial. The steadfastness of the masses, their self-control, the fidelity of their "friends," all these things are being put

to the acid-test. We also are being subjected to this test, and we shall emerge from it more strengthened, more united, than from any previous trial. Life is with us and fighting for us. The new reconstruction of power, dictated by an ineluctable situation, and by the miserable half-heartedness of the ruling parties, will change nothing and will solve nothing. We must have a radical change of the whole system. We need revolutionary power.

The Tseretelli-Kerensky Policy is directly intended to disarm and weaken the left wing of the Revolution. If, with the aid of these methods, they succeed in establishing "order," they will be the first—after us, of course—to fall as victims of this "order." But they will not succeed. The contradiction is too profound, the problems are too enormous, to be disposed of by mere police measures.

After the days of trial will come the days of progress and victory.

# The Russian Revolution

By ANTON PANNEKOEK

WITH the overthrow of Czarism, the Government naturally came into the hands of those who heretofore had constituted the opposition. In the Duma this was the bourgeois opposition of the Cadets, and, from the Left, the Social Revolutionists (peasant-delegates) with Kerensky and the Mensheviks with Tschaidse as their best known representatives. At the same time that the reactionary Duma disappeared the Provisional Government was formed from the Duma opposition.

Here the same development as in a number of previous revolutions occurred again; although the masses are instrumental in making the revolution, a committee of bourgeois politicians constitutes itself as government and assumes a popular character by assimilating a few well-known leaders of the masses. But contrary to previous experiences in Western European revolutions—in which the masses fell apart in powerless atoms immediately after the action—a higher development was reached now: the revolutionary masses constituted their own powerful organization. In accordance with the example of 1905 the delegates of factories and the revolutionary army corps organized into a "Council of Workers and Soldiers" as a kind of permanent parliament, defending the active force of the revolution and the democracy of the masses against the members of the bourgeois government. From the very start this Council acted as the organ of democratic distrust of the masses against the bourgeois government; the bourgeois press lamented the intolerable accessory government; the Council considered itself the organ of the popular revolution against Imperialism and war. In its name Lenin and other Russian revolutionaries were greeted by Tschaidse on their return from Switzerland to Petrograd through Germany after the closure of other routes by the English Government. And at the same time the Council addressed all workers and Socialists in neutral as well as in warring countries with the proud appeal to break with their imperialistic governments and to hold a Congress for peace—in defiance of the Congress of the great betrayal staged in Stockholm by Troelstra, Branting and Scheidemann.

Soon the Council of Workers and Soldiers acted against the Provisional Government, and at once the inner contradictions in the groups of the revolution became clear. Not yet the deeper and general class conflicts: workers, peasants and capitalists, but the more superficial antagonism between the imperialistic policy of the bourgeoisie demanding from the revolution a more energetic carrying on of the war and the masses craving for peace. The demonstrations in the beginning of May under the auspices of the Council forced the bourgeoisie to give in: Miljukof and Gutschkof, the imperialistic leaders, abdicated. The Provisional Government was re-organized in accordance with the new balance of power: a number of Socialist (Menshevik) leaders entered the ministry as representatives of the Council.

In the Council itself this result met with opposition; there the differences based on different classes in the Russian social order appeared more clearly. The "Social Democratic Labor Party," the "Bolsheviks" (Lenine, Zinovief, Kamenev) which as a militant party had already gained great influence among the industrial proletariat even under Czarism, became more and more the representative of the Petrograd workers. But in the Council they constituted a minority; the majority of the delegates, those of the soldiers, were peasants; their mode of thought corresponded best with the moderate Socialism of the Social Revolutionists and the Mensheviks. They believed in continuing the war as a war to defend the revolution against the Germans, who wanted to re-instate the Czar; the same slogan of a "war of defence" with which, in 1914, in Germany and France the masses were swept into the war, here again served its purpose; practically they were social-patriots. They approved of their leaders, Kerensky, Skobelev, Tchernoff, Tseretelli, constituting the government in a ministry together with representatives of the bourgeoisie.

This problem forms the main point of differences between the Leninists and the majority of the Council. The Bolsheviks demand: no participation in a bourgeois government, but the government in the hands of the Council. The Council of Workers and Soldiers, together with the peasants also organized at a congress, constitute the whole of the Russian working people. This has to decide its own affairs alone—the bourgeoisie is not required for this: we don't recognize its right to count as a class.

It may seem strange that the Bolsheviks wanted to give the power to an institution in which they formed only a minority and which could not be expected to act according to their views. This, however, was perfectly logical, a body representing exclusively peasants and workers would be compelled to take such economic measures required for those classes independent of theories, and do what we wish it to do—if only it is separated completely from a coalition with the bourgeoisie in the interests of the latter.

Why did the Menshevik leaders and the majority of the Council oppose this solution and why did they cling to the bourgeois politicians? Why did they not take full control at the outbreak of the revolution, why not May 2nd? Why did they turn the power, conquered by the workers in the streets, over to the bourgeoisie? The answer is not difficult: they shrank before the gigantic task of re-organizing society, backed only by the proletariat against all of the property interests. At the beginning of the revolution, they stated this clearly in a manifesto: Russia with its enormous population of peasants and its primitive capitalistic development is not yet ripe for Socialism and therefore it is necessary that at present the bourgeoisie must rule, a kind of would-be Marxian theory, that does not realize that Socialism only can result from a long process of struggles, in which the degree of ripeness of society depends upon the ripeness of

the proletariat for struggle and power. But in Russia their task looked still more hopeless, because of disorganization through the war and the mismanagement of the Czar; they did not see fit to reconstruct without the co-operation of the bourgeoisie; they relied upon the abilities of the bourgeois politicians to bring order in the chaos. All this tends to prove that those Mensheviks, although they call themselves Socialists and although they represent working classes, mentally are much closer to the bourgeoisie than to the revolutionary Socialists.

The further developments under the coalition government have shown how completely these timid views were in discord with actual conditions. Being a coalition government, it had to keep the middle of the road between the struggling classes; it could not support the workers against the capitalists nor the capitalists against the workers; it had to refer the peasants eager for land to the future constitutional assembly, because it dared not break with the land owners. It had to preach patience and compromises to all sides without satisfying anybody; it did not dare to tackle any problem seriously and had simply to let things drift along. And meanwhile the antagonism became stronger and difficulties greater.

There has been written much about the anarchy prevalent in Russia. The bourgeoisie did not mean by this the disorder in the production and distribution, but the fact that the workers were on their feet and forced the bourgeoisie and the government to recognize them—which actually meant the beginning and the necessary condition for a new social order. The bourgeoisie called for a strong government, as the only means to restore order and they emphasized that here as always a "Socialistic" government only could result in disorder. And indeed, the situation was untenable. They could only see salvation in a capitalistic government, which would keep the proletarians in submission by force, so as to have them work and slave obediently and without protest for the profits of the bourgeoisie. But there was another way out. The inefficiency of the government did not result from its "Socialism"—which only existed in fooling the proletariat with nice talk and fine slogans—but in the lack of Socialism. What a real Socialist government should have done under the circumstances has been stated repeatedly by the Bolsheviks. It is their credit to have formulated against the old phrases of the social patriots, a program of immediate demands based on the exigencies of the actual conditions in Russia, a program that could save the country and the proletariat from the untenable conditions and could pave the road for development towards Socialism. In this respect also the Bolsheviks have been the vanguard of revolutionary Socialism throughout the world.

In the first place there was the management of production. Where capitalists closed their factories as a weapon against the workers, or because they did not see fit to exploit with sufficient profit, the factories had to be expropriated and put into the hands of the workers and the technical

staff to continue production. Where landowners refused to cultivate their land, it had to be expropriated and put into the hands of the peasants. By giving land to the peasants without regard for the rights of the landowners, it could be expected that the peasants would put their products at the disposition of the rest of the population. Agricultural implements and machinery had to be given to the peasants at low prices. By regulation of the transport and strong measures against extra profits, it would be possible to reduce the high cost of living. And by socializing the most important industries, which so far made big war profits, especially also the large banks, as well as by strongly drawing on private capitals, it would be possible to open big resources of income. And no doubt a revolutionary government would start at once to repudiate national debts, which sucked the Russian people by their enormous interests to the benefit of West European bond holders. The Russians would be crazy if they patiently continued to pay interest on bonds issued by the Czar and by so doing to pay tribute to the helpers of their hangman for being his accomplices. In this way the yearly budget of the State would be materially relieved.

But for all these measures there was one necessary condition: a speedy end to the war that sacrificed all production to munition output, and tied millions of men at the front, exhausting all resources. For this reason, peace, the struggle for peace was in the center of agitation of the Bolsheviks. Peace not only was an economic necessity, in order to prevent bankruptcy and hunger: peace also was the most important demand of the class struggle against the bourgeoisie. The Russian bourgeoisie did not want peace, but war; even if for the present it had to suppress and conceal its own imperialistic aims, still it realized the necessity of sticking to co-operation with the Entente . . . in the great world struggle between Germany and England it could not be neutral. And more so because a Russian government could not bear the war expenses without the financial aid of England.

Therefore the party of the revolutionary proletariat stood opposed to the Provisional Government. What the government has been blamed for by the Bolsheviks was not only its impotence, as a result of its class character, to achieve improvements in economic conditions, but also that it followed a war policy, which characterized it as the servant of the Entente. The provisional Government considered the secret treaties, between the Czar and the English and French Governments, as an obligation on its part, and notwithstanding repeated demands and promises to publish these treaties, it failed to do so. This fact alone brands the Provisional Governments as a bourgeois government secretly plotting with other bourgeois governments about war and peace, considering the masses only as obedient tools. How far this so-called "revolutionary" government with "Socialist" ministers was from being a real revolutionary administration is shown also by the fact that it maintained the whole ex-