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Ten Days That Shook the World by John Reed.



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Introduction

With the greatest interest and with never-slackening attention I read John Reed's book, *Ten Days That Shook the World*. Unreservedly do I recommend it to the workers of the world. Here is a book which I should like to see published in millions of copies and translated into all languages. It gives a truthful and most vivid exposition of the events so significant to the comprehension of what really is the Proletarian Revolution and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. These problems are widely discussed, but before one can accept or reject these ideas one must understand the full significance of such a decision. John Reed's book will undoubtedly help to clear this question, which is the fundamental problem of the universal workers' movement.

NIKOLAI LENIN

(Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov)

Preface

This book is a slice of intensified history—history as I saw it. It does not pretend to be anything but a detailed account of the November Revolution, when the Bolsheviki, at the head of the workers and soldiers, seized the state power of Russia and placed it in the hands of the Soviets.

Naturally, most of it deals with "Red Petrograd," the capital and heart of the insurrection. But the reader must realize that what took place in Petrograd was almost exactly duplicated, with greater or lesser intensity, at different intervals of time, all over Russia.

In this book, the first of several which I am writing, I must confine myself to a chronicle of those events which I myself observed and experienced, and those supported by reliable evidence; preceded by two chapters briefly outlining the background and causes of the November Revolution. I am aware that these two chapters make difficult reading, but they are essential to an understanding of what follows.

Many questions will suggest themselves to the mind of the reader. What is Bolshevism? What kind of a government structure did the Bolsheviki set up? If the Bolsheviki championed the Constituent Assembly before the November Revolution, why did they disgorge it by force of arms afterwards? And if the bourgeoisie opposed the Constituent Assembly until the danger of Bolshevism became apparent, why did they champion it afterwards?

These and many other questions cannot be answered here. In another volume, *Kornilov to Brest-Litovsk*, I trace the course of the Revolution up to and including the German peace. There I explain the origin and functions of the Revolutionary organiza-

tions, the evolution of popular sentiment, the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, the structure of the Soviet state, and the course and outcome of the Brest-Litovsk negotiations. . . .

In considering the rise of the Bolsheviki, it is necessary to understand that Russian economic life and the Russian army were the logical result of a process which began as far back as 1915. The corrupt reactionaries in control of the Tsar's Court deliberately undertook to wreck Russia in order to make a separate peace with Germany. The lack of arms on the front, which had caused the great retreat of the summer of 1915, the lack of food in the army and in the great cities, the breakdown of manufactures and transportation in 1916—all these we know now were part of a gigantic campaign of sabotage. This was halted in time by the March Revolution.

For the first few months of the new régime, in spite of the confusion incident upon a great Revolution, when one hundred and sixty millions of the world's most oppressed peoples suddenly achieved liberty, both the internal situation and the combative power of the army actually improved.

But the "honeymoon" was short. The propertied classes wanted merely a political revolution, which would take the power from the Tsar and give it to them. They wanted Russia to be a constitutional republic, like France or the United States; or a constitutional monarchy, like England. On the other hand, the masses of the people wanted real industrial and agrarian democracy.

William English Walling, in his book, *Russia's Message*, an account of the Revolution of 1905, describes very well the state of mind of the Russian workers who were later to support Bolshevism almost unanimously:

They [the working people] saw it was possible that even under a free Government, if it fell into the hands of other social classes, they might still continue to starve. . . .

The Russian workman is revolutionary, but he is neither violent, dogmatic, nor unintelligent. He is ready for barricades, but he has studied them, and alone of the workers of the world he has learned about them from actual experience. He is ready and willing to fight his oppressor, the capitalist class, to a finish. But he does not ignore the existence of other classes. He merely asks that the other classes take one side or the other in the bitter conflict that draws near. . . .

They [the workers] were all agreed that our [American] political institutions were preferable to their own, but they were not very anxious to exchange one despot for another (i. e., the capitalist class). . . .

The working men of Russia did not have themselves shot down, executed by hundreds in Moscow, Riga, and Odessa, imprisoned by thousands in every Russian jail, and exiled to the deserts and the Arctic regions, in exchange for the doubtful privileges of the working men of Goldfields and Cripple Creek. . . .

And so developed in Russia, in the midst of a foreign war, the social revolution on top of the political revolution, culminating in the triumph of Bolshevism.

Mr. A. J. Sack, director in this country of the Russian Information Bureau, which opposes the Soviet Government, has this to say in his book *The Birth of the Russian Democracy*:

The Bolsheviki organized their own cabinet, with Nicholas Lenin as Premier and Leon Trotsky Minister of Foreign Affairs. The inevitability of their coming into power became evident almost immediately after the March Revolution. The history of the Bolsheviki, after the Revolution, is a history of their steady growth. . . .

Foreigners, and Americans especially, frequently emphasize the "ignorance" of the Russian workers. It is true they lacked the political experience of the peoples of the West, but they were very well trained in voluntary organization. In 1917 there were more than twelve million members of the Russian Consumers' Cooperative Societies; and the Soviets themselves are a wonderful demonstration of their organizing genius. Moreover, there is probably not a people in the world so well educated in Socialist theory and its practical application.

William English Walling thus characterizes them:

The Russian working people are for the most part able to read and write. For many years the country has been in such a disturbed condition that they have had the advantage of leadership not only of intelligent individuals in their midst, but of a large part of the equally revolutionary educated class, who have turned to the working people with their ideas for the political and social regeneration of Russia. . . .

Many writers explain their hostility to the Soviet Government by arguing that the last phase of the Russian Revolution was simply a struggle of the "respectable" elements against the brutal attacks of Bolshevism. However, it was the propertied classes, who, when they realized the growth in power of the popular revolutionary organizations, undertook to destroy them and to halt the Revolution. To this end the propertied classes

finally resorted to desperate measures. In order to wreck the Kerensky Ministry and the Soviets, transportation was disorganized and internal troubles provoked; to crush the Factory-Shop Committees, plants were shut down, and fuel and raw materials diverted; to break the Army Committees at the front, capital punishment was restored and military defeat connived at.

This was all excellent fuel for the Bolshevik fire. The Bolsheviks retorted by preaching the class war, and by asserting the supremacy of the Soviets.

Between these two extremes, with the other factions which whole-heartedly or half-heartedly supported them, were the so-called "moderate" Socialists, the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, and several smaller parties. These groups were also attacked by the propertied classes, but their power of resistance was crippled by their theories.

Roughly, the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries believed that Russia was not economically ripe for a social revolution—that only a *political* revolution was possible. According to their interpretation, the Russian masses were not educated enough to take over the power; any attempt to do so would inevitably bring on a reaction, by means of which some ruthless opportunist might restore the old régime. And so it followed that when the "moderate" Socialists were forced to assume the power, they were afraid to use it.

They believed that Russia must pass through the stages of political and economic development known to Western Europe, and emerge at last, with the rest of the world, into full-fledged Socialism. Naturally, therefore, they agreed with the propertied classes that Russia must first be a parliamentary State—though with some improvements on the Western democracies. As a consequence, they insisted upon the collaboration of the propertied classes in the Government.

From this it was an easy step to supporting them. The "moderate" Socialists needed the bourgeoisie. But the bourgeoisie did not need the "moderate" Socialists. So it resulted in the Socialist Ministers being obliged to give way, little by little, on their entire programme, while the propertied classes grew more and more insistent.

And at the end, when the Bolsheviks upset the whole hollow compromise, the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries found themselves fighting on the side of the propertied classes. . . . In almost every country in the world today the same phenomenon is visible.

Instead of being a destructive force, it seems to me that the Bolsheviks were the only party in Russia with a constructive programme and the power to impose it on the country. If they had not succeeded to the Government when they did, there is little doubt in my mind that the armies of imperial Germany would have been in Petrograd and Moscow in December, and Russia would again be ridden by a Tsar. . . .

It is still fashionable, after a whole year of the Soviet Government, to speak of the Bolshevik insurrection as an "adventure." Adventure it was, and one of the most marvellous mankind ever embarked upon, sweeping into history at the head of the toiling masses, and staking everything on their vast and simple desires. Already the machinery had been set up by which the land of the great estates could be distributed among the peasants. The Factory-Shop Committees and the trade unions were there to put into operation workers' control of industry. In every village, town, city, district, and province there were Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies, prepared to assume the task of local administration.

No matter what one thinks of Bolshevism, it is undeniable that the Russian Revolution is one of the great events of human history, and the rise of the Bolsheviks a phenomenon of world-wide importance. Just as historians search the records for the minutest details of the story of the Paris Commune, so they will want to know what happened in Petrograd in November 1917, the spirit which animated the people, and how the leaders looked, talked, and acted. It is with this in view that I have written this book.

In the struggle my sympathies were not neutral. But in telling the story of those great days I have tried to see events with the eye of a conscientious reporter, interested in setting down the truth.

New York, 1 January 1919

J. R.

Notes and Explanations

To the average reader the multiplicity of Russian organizations—political groups, Committees and Central Committees, Soviets, Dumas, and Unions—will prove extremely confusing. For this reason I am giving here a few brief definitions and explanations.

POLITICAL PARTIES

In the elections to the Constituent Assembly, there were seventeen tickets in Petrograd, and in some of the provincial towns as many as forty; but the following summary of the aims and composition of political parties is limited to the groups and factions mentioned in this book. Only the essence of their programmes and the general character of their constituencies can be noticed. . . .

1. *Monarchists* of various shades, *Octobrists*, etc. These once-powerful factions no longer existed openly; they either worked underground, or their members joined the *Cadets*, as the *Cadets* came by degrees to stand for their political programme. Representatives in this book, Rodzianko, Shulgin.

2. *Cadets*. So-called from the initials of its name, Constitutional Democrats. Its official name is "Party of the People's Freedom." Under the Tsar, composed of Liberals from the propertied classes, the *Cadets* were the great party of political reform, roughly corresponding to the Progressive Party in America. When the revolution broke out in March 1917 the *Cadets* formed the first Provisional Government. The *Cadet* Ministry

was overthrown in April because it declared itself in favour of Allied imperialistic aims, including the imperialistic aims of the Tsar's Government. As the revolution became more and more a *social economic* revolution, the *Cadets* grew more and more conservative. Its representatives in this book are: Milyukov, Vinaver, Shatsky.

(a) *Group of Public Men*. After the *Cadets* had become unpopular through their relations with the Kornilov counterrevolution, the *Group of Public Men* was formed in Moscow. Delegates from the *Group of Public Men* were given portfolios in the last Kerensky Cabinet. The *Group* declared itself nonpartisan, although its intellectual leaders were men like Rodzianko and Shulgin. It was composed of the more "modern" bankers, merchants, and manufacturers, who were intelligent enough to realize that the Soviets must be fought by their own weapon—economic organization. Typical of the *Group*: Lianozov, Kononov.

3. *Populist Socialists*, or *Trudoviki* (Labour Group). Numerically a small party, composed of cautious intellectuals, the leaders of the cooperative societies, and conservative peasants. Professing to be socialists, the *Populists* really supported the interests of the petty bourgeoisie—clerks, shopkeepers, etc. By direct descent, inheritors of the compromising tradition of the Labor Group in the Fourth Imperial Duma, which was composed largely of peasant representatives. Kerensky was the leader of the *Trudoviki* in the Imperial Duma when the revolution of March 1917 broke out. The *Populist Socialists* are a nationalistic party. Their representatives in this book are: Peshekanov, Chaikovsky.

4. *Russian Social Democratic Labour Party*. Originally Marxian Socialists. At a party congress held in 1903 the party split, on the question of tactics, into two factions—the Majority (Bolshinstvo), and the Minority (Menshinstvo). From this sprang the names "Bolsheviki" and "Mensheviki"—"members of the majority" and "members of the minority." These two wings became two separate parties, both calling themselves "Russian Social Democratic Labour Party," and both professing to be Marxians. Since the revolution of 1905 the Bolsheviki were really the minority, becoming again the majority in September 1917.

(a) *Mensheviki*. This party includes all shades of socialists who believe that society must progress by natural evolution towards socialism, and that the working class must conquer political power first. Also a nationalistic party. This was the party of the socialist intellectuals, which means: all the means of education having been in the hands of the propertied classes, the intellectuals instinctively reacted to their training, and took the side of the propertied classes. Among their representatives in this book are: Dan, Lieber, Tseretely.

(b) *Mensheviki Internationalists*. The radical wing of the *Mensheviki*, internationalists, and opposed to all coalition with the propertied classes yet unwilling to break loose from the conservative *Mensheviki*, and opposed to the dictatorship of the working class advocated by the *Bolsheviki*. Trotsky was long a member of this group. Among their leaders: Martov, Martinov.

(c) *Bolsheviki*. Now call themselves the *Communist Party*, in order to emphasize their complete separation from the tradition of "moderate" or "parliamentary" socialism, which dominates the *Mensheviki* and the so-called Majority Socialists in all countries. The *Bolsheviki* proposed immediate proletarian insurrection, and seizure of the reins of Government, in order to hasten the coming of socialism by forcibly taking over industry, land, natural resources, and financial institutions. This party expresses the desires chiefly of the factory workers, but also of a large section of the poor peasants.

The name "Bolshevik" can not be translated by "Maximalist." The Maximalists are a separate group. (See paragraph 5b.) Among the leaders: Lenin, Trotsky, Lunacharsky.

(d) *United Social Democrats Internationalists*. Also called the *Novaya Zhizn* (New Life) group, from the name of the very influential newspaper which was its organ. A little group of intellectuals with a very small following among the working class, except the personal following of Maxim Gorky, its leader. Intellectuals with almost the same programme as the *Mensheviki Internationalists* except that the *Novaya Zhizn* group refused to be tied to either of the two great factions. Opposed the *Bolshevik* tactics, but remained in the Soviet Government. Other representatives in this book: Avilov, Kramarov.

(e) *Yedinstvo*. A very small and dwindling group, composed

almost entirely of the personal following of Plekhanov, one of the pioneers of the Russian Social Democratic movement in the 80s, and its greatest theoretician; now an old man, Plekhanov was extremely patriotic, too conservative even for the Mensheviks. After the Bolshevik *coup d'état*, *Yedinstvo* disappeared.

5. *Socialist Revolutionary Party*. Called *Essaires* from the initials of their name. Originally the revolutionary party of the peasants, the party of the Fighting Organizations—the Terrorists. After the March Revolution, it was joined by many who had never been socialists. At that time it stood for the abolition of private property in land only, the owners to be compensated in some fashion. Finally the increasing revolutionary feeling of peasants compelled the *Essaires* to abandon the "compensation" clause, and led to the younger and more fiery intellectuals breaking off from the main party in the fall of 1917 and forming a new party, the *Left Socialist Revolutionary Party*. The *Essaires*, who were afterwards always called by the radical groups "*Right Social Revolutionaries*," adopted the political attitude of the Mensheviks, and worked together with them. They finally came to represent the wealthier peasants, the intellectuals, and the politically uneducated populations of remote rural districts. Among them there was, however, a wider difference of shades of political and economic opinion than among the Mensheviks. Among their leaders mentioned in these pages: Avksentiev, Gotz, Kerensky, Chernov, "Babushka" Breshkovskaya.

(a) *Left Socialist Revolutionaries*. Although theoretically sharing the Bolshevik programme of dictatorship of the working class, at first were reluctant to follow the ruthless Bolshevik tactics. However, the *Left Socialist Revolutionaries* remained in the Soviet Government, sharing the Cabinet portfolios, especially that of Agriculture. They withdrew from the Government several times, but always returned. As the peasants left the ranks of the *Essaires* in increasing numbers they joined the *Left Socialist Revolutionary Party*, which became the great peasant party supporting the Soviet Government, standing for confiscation without compensation of the great landed estates, and their disposition by the peasants themselves. Among the leaders: Spiridonova, Karelin, Kamkov, Kalagayev.

(b) *Maximalists*. An offshoot of the *Socialist Revolutionary Party* in the revolution of 1905, when it was a powerful peasant

movement, demanding the immediate application of the maximum socialist programme. Now an insignificant group of peasant anarchists.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Russian meetings and conventions are organized after the Continental model rather than our own. The first action is usually the election of officers and the *presidium*.

The *presidium* is a presiding committee, composed of representatives of the groups and political factions represented in the assembly, in proportion to their numbers. The *presidium* arranges the Order of Business, and its members can be called upon by the president to take the chair *pro tem*.

Each question (*vopros*) is stated in a general way and then debated, and at the close of the debate resolutions are submitted by the different factions, and each one voted on separately. The Order of Business can be, and usually is, smashed to pieces in the first half hour. On the plea of "emergency," which the crowd almost always grants, anybody from the floor can get up and say anything on any subject. The crowd controls the meeting, practically the only functions of the Speaker being to keep order by ringing a little bell, and to recognize speakers. Almost all the real work of the session is done in caucuses of the different groups and political factions, which almost always cast their votes in a body and are represented by floor-leaders. The result is, however, that at every important new point, or vote, the session takes a recess to enable the different groups and political factions to hold a caucus.

The crowd is extremely noisy, cheering or heckling speakers, overriding the plans of the *presidium*. Among the customary cries are: "*Prosim!* Please! Go on!" "*Pravilno!*" or "*Eto vierno!* That's true! Right!" "*Do volno!* Enough!" "*Doloi!* Down with him!" "*Posor!* Shame!" and "*Teeshe!* Silence! Not so noisy!"

POPULAR ORGANIZATIONS

I. *Soviet*. The word *soviet* means "council." Under the Tsar the Imperial Council of State was called *Gosudarstvennyi Soviet*. Since the Revolution, however, the term *Soviet* has come to be associated with a certain type of parliament elected by members of working-class economic organizations—the Soviet of Workers, of Soldiers, or of Peasants' Deputies. I have therefore

limited the word to these bodies, and wherever else it occurs I have translated it "Council."

Besides the local *Soviets*, elected in every city, town, and village of Russia—and in large cities, also Ward (*Raionny*) *Soviets*—there are also the *oblastny* or *gubernsky* (district or provincial) *Soviets*, and the Central Executive Committee of the All-Russian *Soviets* in the capital, called from its initials *Tsay-ee-kah*. (See below, "Central Committees.")

Almost everywhere the *Soviets* of Workers' and of Soldiers' Deputies combined very soon after the March Revolution. In special matters concerning their peculiar interests, however, the Workers' and the Soldiers' Sections continued to meet separately. The *Soviets* of Peasants' Deputies did not join the other two until after the Bolshevik *coup d'état*. They, too, were organized like the workers and soldiers, with an Executive Committee of the All-Russian Peasants' *Soviets* in the capital.

2. *Trade Unions*. Although mostly industrial in form, the Russian labour unions were still called Trade Unions, and at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution had from three to four million members. These Unions were also organized in an All-Russian body, a sort of Russian Federation of Labour, which had its Central Executive Committee in the capital.

3. *Factory-Shop Committees*. These were spontaneous organizations created in the factories by the workers in their attempt to control industry, taking advantage of the administrative breakdown incident upon the Revolution. Their function was by revolutionary action to take over and run the factories. The *Factory-Shop Committees* also had their All-Russian organization, with a Central Committee at Petrograd, which cooperated with the trade unions.

4. *Dumas*. The word *duma* means roughly "deliberative body." The old Imperial Duma, which persisted six months after the revolution, in a democratized form, died a natural death in September 1917. The *City Duma* referred to in this book was the reorganized Municipal Council, often called "Municipal Self-Government." It was elected by direct and secret ballot, and its only reason for failure to hold the masses during the Bolshevik Revolution was the general decline in influence of all purely political representation in the face of the growing power of organizations based on economic groups.

5. *Zemstvos*. May be roughly translated "country councils." Under the Tsar semi-political, semi-social bodies with very little administrative power, developed and controlled largely by intellectual Liberals among the landowning classes. Their most important function was education and social service among the peasants. During the War the *Zemstvos* gradually took over the entire feeding and clothing of the Russian army, as well as the buying from foreign countries, and work among the soldiers generally corresponding to the work of the American Y.M.C.A. at the front. After the March Revolution the *Zemstvos* were democratized, with a view to making them the organs of local government in the rural districts. But like the *City Dumas*, they could not compete with the *Soviets*.

6. *Cooperatives*. These were the workers' and peasants' Consumers' Cooperative Societies, which had several million members all over Russia before the revolution. Founded by Liberals and "moderate" socialists, the cooperative movement was not supported by the revolutionary socialist groups, because it was a substitute for the complete transference of means of production and distribution into the hands of the workers. After the March Revolution the *Cooperatives* spread rapidly, and were dominated by Populist Socialists, Mensheviks, and Socialist Revolutionaries, and acted as a conservative political force until the Bolshevik Revolution. However, it was the *Cooperatives* which fed Russia when the old structure of commerce and transportation collapsed.

7. *Army Committees*. The *Army Committees* were formed by the soldiers at the front to combat the reactionary influence of the old régime officers. Every company, regiment, brigade, division, and corps had its committee, over all of which was elected the *Army Committee*. The *Central Army Committee* cooperated with the General Staff. The administrative breakdown in the army incident upon the revolution threw upon the shoulders of the *Army Committees* most of the work of the Quartermaster's Department, and in some cases even the command of troops.

8. *Fleet Committees*. The corresponding organizations in the navy.

CENTRAL COMMITTEES

In the spring and summer of 1917, All-Russian conventions of every sort of organization were held at Petrograd. There were

national congresses of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Soviets, Trade Unions, Factory-Shop Committees, Army and Fleet Committees—besides every branch of the military and naval service, cooperatives, nationalities, etc. Each of these conventions elected a Central Committee, or a Central Executive Committee, to guard its particular interests at the seat of Government. As the Provisional Government grew weaker, these Central Committees were forced to assume more and more administrative powers.

The most important Central Committees mentioned in this book are:

Union of Unions. During the revolution of 1905, Professor Milyukov and other Liberals established unions of professional men—doctors, lawyers, physicians, etc. These were united under one central organization, the *Union of Unions*. In 1905 the *Union of Unions* acted with the revolutionary democracy; in 1917, however, the *Union of Unions* opposed the Bolshevik uprising, and united the Government employees who went on strike against the authority of the Soviets.

Tsay-ee-kah. All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. So called from the initials of its name.

Tsentroflot. "Centre-Fleet"—the Central Fleet Committee.

Vikzhel. All-Russian Central Committee of the Railway Workers' Union. So called from the initials of its name.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Red Guards. The armed factory workers of Russia. The *Red Guards* were first formed during the revolution of 1905, and sprang into existence again in the days of March 1917, when a force was needed to keep order in the city. At that time they were armed, and all efforts of the Provisional Government to disarm them were more or less unsuccessful. At every great crisis in the revolution the *Red Guards* appeared on the streets, untrained and undisciplined, but full of revolutionary zeal.

White Guards. Bourgeois volunteers, who emerged in the last stages of the revolution, to defend private property from the Bolshevik attempt to abolish it. A great many of them were university students.

Tekhintsi. The so-called "Savage Division" in the army, made up of Mohammedan tribesmen from Central Asia, and personally

devoted to General Kornilov. The *Tekhintsi* were noted for their blind obedience and their savage cruelty in warfare.

Death Battalions. Or *Shock Battalions.* The Women's Battalion is known to the world as the *Death Battalion*, but there were many *Death Battalions* composed of men. These were formed in the summer of 1917 by Kerensky, for the purpose of strengthening the discipline and combative fire of the army by heroic example. The *Death Battalions* were composed mostly of intense young patriots. These came for the most part from among the sons of the propertied classes.

Union of Officers. An organization formed among the reactionary officers in the army to combat politically the growing power of the Army Committees.

Knights of St. George. The Cross of St. George was awarded for distinguished action in battle. Its holder automatically became a *Knight of St. George*. The predominant influence in the organization was that of the supporters of the military idea.

Peasants' Union. In 1905 the *Peasants' Union* was a revolutionary peasants' organization. In 1917, however, it had become a political expression of the more prosperous peasants, to fight the growing power and revolutionary aims of the Soviets of Peasants' Deputies.

CHRONOLOGY AND SPELLING

I have adopted in this book our calendar throughout, instead of the former Russian calendar, which was thirteen days earlier.

In the spelling of Russian names and words, I have made no attempt to follow any scientific rules for transliteration, but have tried to give the spelling which would lead the English-speaking reader to the simplest approximation of their pronunciation.

SOURCES

Much of the material in this book is from my own notes. I have also relied, however, upon a heterogeneous file of several hundred assorted Russian newspapers, covering almost every day of the time described, of files of the English paper, the *Russian Daily News*, and of the two French papers, *Journal de Russie* and *Entente*. But far more valuable than these is the *Bulletin de la Presse* issued daily by the French Information Bureau in Petrograd, which reports all important happenings, speeches, and the comment of the Russian press. Of this I have an almost

complete file from the spring of 1917 to the end of January 1918.

Besides the foregoing, I have in my possession almost every proclamation, decree and announcement posted on the walls of Petrograd from the middle of September 1917 to the end of January 1918. Also the official publication of all Government decrees and orders, and the official Government publication of the secret treaties and other documents discovered in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs when the Bolsheviki took it over.

1

Background

Towards the end of September 1917, an alien professor of sociology visiting Russia came to see me in Petrograd. He had been informed by business men and intellectuals that the Revolution was slowing down. The professor wrote an article about it and then travelled around the country, visiting factory towns and peasant communities—where, to his astonishment, the Revolution seemed to be speeding up. Among the wage-earners and the land-working people it was common to hear talk of “all land to the peasants, all factories to the workers.” If the professor had visited the front, he would have heard the whole Army talking Peace. . . .

The professor was puzzled, but he need not have been; both observations were correct. The property-owning classes were becoming more conservative, the masses of the people more radical.

There was a feeling among business men and the *intelligentsia* generally that the Revolution had gone quite far enough, and lasted too long; that things should settle down. This sentiment was shared by the dominant “moderate” Socialist groups, the *oborontsi*¹ Mensheviki and Socialist Revolutionaries, who supported the Provisional Government of Kerensky.

On 14 October the official organ of the “moderate” Socialists said:

The drama of the Revolution has two acts, the destruction of the old régime and the creation of the new one. The first act has lasted long

1. References numbered in this manner refer to the Appendix, p. 227.

enough. Now it is time to go on to the second, and to play it as rapidly as possible. As a great revolutionist put it, "Let us hasten, friends, to terminate the Revolution. He who makes it last too long will not gather the fruits. . . ."

Among the worker, soldier, and peasant masses, however, there was a stubborn feeling that the "first act" was not yet played out. On the front the Army Committees were always running foul of officers who could not get used to treating their men like human beings; in the rear the Land Committees elected by the peasants were being jailed for trying to carry out Government regulations concerning the land; and the workmen² in the factories were fighting blacklists and lock-outs. Nay, furthermore, returning political exiles were being excluded from the country as "undesirable" citizens; and in some cases men who returned from abroad to their villages were prosecuted and imprisoned for revolutionary acts committed in 1905.

To the multiform discontent of the people the "moderate" Socialists had one answer: Wait for the Constituent Assembly, which is to meet in December. But the masses were not satisfied with that. The Constituent Assembly was all well and good; but there were certain definite things for which the Russian Revolution had been made and for which the revolutionary martyrs rotted in their stark Brotherhood Grave on Mars Field, that must be achieved, Constituent Assembly or no Constituent Assembly: Peace, Land, and Workers' Control of Industry. The Constituent Assembly had been postponed and postponed—would probably be postponed again, until the people were calm enough—perhaps to modify their demands! At any rate here were eight months of the Revolution gone, and little enough to show for it. . . .

Meanwhile the soldiers began to solve the peace question by simply deserting, the peasants burned manor-houses and took over the great estates, the workers sabotaged and struck. . . . Of course, as was natural, the manufacturers, landowners, and army officers exerted all their influence against any democratic compromise. . . .

The policy of the Provisional Government alternated between ineffective reforms and stern repressive measures. An edict from the Socialist Minister of Labour ordered all the Workers' Committees henceforth to meet only after working hours. Among the troops at the front, "agitators" of opposition political parties were arrested, radical newspapers closed down, and capital punishment applied—to revolutionary propagandists. Attempts were

made to disarm the Red Guard. Cossacks were sent to keep order in the provinces. . . .

These measures were supported by the "moderate" Socialists and their leaders in the Ministry, who considered it necessary to cooperate with the propertied classes. The people rapidly deserted them, and went over to the Bolsheviki, who stood for Peace, Land, and Workers' Control of Industry, and a Government of the working class. In September 1917, matters reached a crisis. Against the overwhelming sentiment of the country, Kerensky and the "moderate" Socialists succeeded in establishing a Government of Coalition with the propertied classes; and as a result, the Mensheviki and Socialist Revolutionaries lost the confidence of the people for ever.

An article in *Rabochi Put* (Workers' Way) about the middle of October, entitled "The Socialist Ministers," expressing the feeling of the masses of the people against the "moderate" Socialists:

Here is a list of their services.³

Tsereteli: disarmed the workmen with the assistance of General Polovtsev, checkmated the revolutionary soldiers, and approved of capital punishment in the army.

Skobeliev: commenced by trying to tax the capitalists 100 per cent of their profits, and finished—and finished by an attempt to dissolve the Workers' Committees in the shops and factories.

Avksentiev: put several hundred peasants in prison, members of the Land Committees, and suppressed dozens of workers' and soldiers' newspapers.

Chernov: signed the "Imperial" manifesto, ordering the dissolution of the Finnish Diet.

Savinkov: concluded an open alliance with General Kornilov. If this savior of the country was not able to betray Petrograd, it was due to reasons over which he had no control.

Zarudny: with the sanction of Alexinsky and Kerensky, put some of the best workers of the Revolution, soldiers and sailors, in prison.

Nikitin: acted as a vulgar policeman against the railway workers.

Kerensky: it is better not to say anything about him. The list of his services is too long. . . .

A Congress of delegates of the Baltic Fleet, at Helsingfors, passed a resolution which began as follows:

We demand the immediate removal from the ranks of the Provisional Government of the "Socialist," the political adventurer—Kerensky, as one who is scandalizing and ruining the great Revolution, and with it the

revolutionary masses, by his shameless political blackmail on behalf of the bourgeoisie. . . .

> The direct result of all this was the rise of the Bolsheviks. . . .

Since March 1917, when the roaring torrents of workmen and soldiers beating upon the Tauride Palace compelled the reluctant Imperial Duma to assume the supreme power in Russia, it was the masses of the people, workers, soldiers, and peasants which forced every change in the course of the Revolution. They hurled the Milyukov Ministry down; it was their Soviet which proclaimed to the world the Russian peace terms—"No annexations, no indemnities, and the right of self-determination of peoples"; and again, in July, it was the spontaneous rising of the unorganized proletariat which once more stormed the Tauride Palace, to demand that the Soviets take over the Government of Russia.

The Bolsheviks, then a small political sect, put themselves at the head of the movement. As a result of the disastrous failure of the rising, public opinion turned against them, and their leaderless hordes slunk back into the Viborg Quarter, which is Petrograd's St. Antoine. Then followed a savage hunt of the Bolsheviks; hundreds were imprisoned, among them Trotsky, Madame Kollontai, and Kameniev; Lenin and Zinoviev went into hiding, fugitives from justice; the Bolshevik papers were suppressed. Provocators and reactionaries raised the cry that the Bolsheviks were German agents, until people all over the world believed it.

But the Provisional Government found itself unable to substantiate its accusations; the documents proving pro-German conspiracy were discovered to be forgeries; and one by one the Bolsheviks were released from prison without trial, on nominal or no bail—until only six remained. The impotence and indecision of the ever-changing Provisional Government was an argument nobody could refute. The Bolsheviks raised again the slogan so dear to the masses, "All Power to the Soviets!"—and they were not merely self-seeking, for at that time the majority of the Soviets was "moderate" Socialist, their bitter enemy.

But more potent still, they took the crude, simple desires of the workers, soldiers, and peasants, and from them built their immediate programme. And so, while the *oborontsi* Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries involved themselves in compromise with the bourgeoisie, the Bolsheviks rapidly captured the Russian masses. In July they were hunted and despised; by September the metropolitan workmen, the sailors of the Baltic

Fleet, and the soldiers had been won almost entirely to their cause. The September municipal elections in the large cities⁴ were significant; only 18 per cent of the returns were Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary, against more than 70 per cent in June. . . .

There remains a phenomenon which puzzled foreign observers; the fact that the Central Executive Committees of the Soviets, the Central Army and Fleet Committees, and the Central Committees of some of the Unions—notably, the Post and Telegraph Workers and the Railway Workers—opposed the Bolsheviks with the utmost violence. These Central Committees had all been elected in the middle of the summer, or even before, when the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries had an enormous following; and they delayed or prevented any new elections. Thus, according to the constitution of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the All-Russian Congress *should have been called in September*; but the Tsay-ee-kah would not call the meeting, on the ground that the Constituent Assembly was only two months away, at which time, they hinted, the Soviets would abdicate. Meanwhile, one by one, the Bolsheviks were winning in the local Soviets all over the country, in the Union branches and the ranks of all the soldiers and sailors. The Peasants' Soviets remained still conservative, because in the sluggish rural districts political consciousness developed slowly, and the Socialist Revolutionary party had been for a generation the party which had agitated among the peasants. . . . But even among the peasants a revolutionary wing was forming. It showed itself clearly in October, when the left wing of the Socialist Revolutionaries split off, and formed a new political faction, the Left Socialist Revolutionaries.

At the same time there were signs everywhere that the forces of reaction were gaining confidence.⁵ At the Troitsky Farce Theatre in Petrograd, for example, a burlesque called *Sins of the Tsar* was interrupted by a group of monarchists, who threatened to lynch the actors for "insulting the Emperor." Certain newspapers began to sigh for a "Russian Napoleon." It was the usual thing among bourgeois *intelligentsia* to refer to the Soviets of Workers' Deputies (Rabochikh Deputatov) as *Sabachikh Deputatove*—Dogs' Deputies.

On 15 October I had a conversation with a great Russian Capitalist, Stepan Georgevich Lianozov, known as the "Russian Rockefeller"—a Cadet by political faith.

"Revolution," he said "is a sickness. Sooner or later the

foreign powers must intervene here—as one would intervene to cure a sick child, and teach it how to walk. Of course, it would be more or less improper, but the nations must realize the danger of Bolshevism in their own countries—such contagious ideas as ‘proletarian dictatorship,’ and ‘world social revolution’ . . . There is a chance that this intervention may not be necessary. Transportation is demoralized, the factories are closing down, and the Germans are advancing. Starvation and defeat may bring the Russian people to their senses.”

Mr. Lianozov was emphatic in his opinion that whatever happened, it would be impossible for merchants and manufacturers to permit the existence of the workers’ Shop Committees, or to allow the workers any share in the management of industry.

“As for the Bolsheviki, they will be done away with by one of two methods. The Government can evacuate Petrograd, then a state of siege declared, and the military commander of the district can deal with these gentlemen without legal formalities. . . . Or if, for example, the Constituent Assembly manifests any Utopian tendencies, it can be dispersed by force of arms. . . .”

Winter was coming on—the terrible Russian winter. I heard business men speak of it so: “Winter was always Russia’s best friend. Perhaps now it will rid us of Revolution.” On the freezing front miserable armies continued to starve and die without enthusiasm. The railways were breaking down, food lessening, factories closing. The desperate masses cried out that the bourgeoisie was sabotaging the life of the people, causing defeat on the front. Riga had been surrendered just after General Kornilov said publicly, “Must we pay with Riga the price of bringing the country to a sense of its duty?”

To Americans it is incredible that the class war should develop to such a pitch. But I have personally met officers on the Northern Front who frankly preferred military disaster to cooperation with the Soldiers’ Committees. The secretary of the Petrograd branch of the Cadet party told me that the breakdown of the country’s economic life was part of a campaign to discredit the Revolution. An Allied diplomat, whose name I promised not to mention, confirmed this from his own knowledge. I know of certain coal mines near Kharkov which were fired and flooded by their owners, of textile factories at Moscow whose engineers put the machinery out of order when they left, of railroad officials caught by the workers in the act of crippling locomotives. . . .

A large section of the propertied classes preferred the Germans

to the Revolution—even to the Provisional Government—and didn’t hesitate to say so. In the Russian household where I lived, the subject of conversation at the dinner-table was almost invariably the coming of the Germans, bringing “law and order.” . . . One evening I spent at the house of a Moscow merchant; during tea we asked the eleven people at the table whether they preferred “Wilhelm or the Bolsheviki.” The vote was ten to one for Wilhelm. . . .

The speculators took advantage of the universal disorganization to pile up fortunes, and to spend them in fantastic revelry or the corruption of Government officials. Foodstuffs and fuel were hoarded, or secretly sent out of the country to Sweden. In the first four months of the Revolution, for example, the reserve food supplies were almost openly looted from the great Municipal warehouses of Petrograd, until the two years’ provision of grain had fallen to less than enough to feed the city for one month. . . . According to the official report of the last Minister of Supplies in the Provisional Government, coffee was bought wholesale in Vladivostok for two roubles a pound, and the consumer in Petrograd paid thirteen. In all the stores of the large cities were tons of food and clothing; but only the rich could buy them.

In a provincial town I knew a merchant family turned speculator—*maradior* (bandit, ghoul) the Russians call it. The three sons had bribed their way out of military service. One gambled in foodstuffs. Another sold illegal gold from the Lena mines to mysterious parties in Finland. The third owned a controlling interest in a chocolate factory, which supplied the local Cooperative societies—on condition that the Cooperatives furnished him everything he needed. And so, while the masses of the people got a quarter pound of black bread on their bread cards, he had an abundance of white bread, sugar, tea, candy, cake, and butter. . . . Yet, when the soldiers at the front could no longer fight from cold, hunger, and exhaustion, how indignantly did this family scream “Cowards!”—how “ashamed” they were “to be Russians.” . . . When finally the Bolsheviki found and requisitioned vast hoarded stores of provisions, what “Robbers” they were.

Beneath all this external rotteness moved the old-time Dark Forces, unchanged since the fall of Nicholas the Second, secret still and very active. The agents of the notorious Okhrana still functioned, for and against the Tsar, for and against Kerensky—whoever would pay. . . . In the darkness, underground organi-

zations of all sorts, such as the Black Hundreds, were busy attempting to restore reaction in some form or other.

In this atmosphere of corruption, of monstrous half-truths, one clear note sounded day after day, the deepening chorus of the Bolsheviki, "All Power to the Soviets! All Power to the direct representatives of millions on millions of common workers, soldiers, peasants. Land, bread, an end to the senseless war, an end to secret diplomacy, speculation, treachery. . . . The Revolution is in danger and with it the cause of the people all over the world!"

The struggle between the proletariat and the middle class, between the Soviets and the Government, which had begun in the first March days, was about to culminate. Having at one bound leaped from the Middle Ages into the twentieth century, Russia showed the startled world two systems of Revolution—the political and the social—in mortal combat.

What a revelation of the vitality of the Russian Revolution, after all these months of starvation and disillusionment! The bourgeoisie should have better known its Russia. Not for a long time in Russia will the "sickness" of Revolution have run its course. . . .

Looking back, Russia before the November insurrection seems of another age, almost incredibly conservative. So quickly did we adapt ourselves to the newer, swifter life; just as Russian politics swung bodily to the Left—until the Cadets were outlawed as "enemies of the people," Kerensky became a "counter-revolutionist," the "middle" Socialist leaders, Tseretelly, Dan, Lieber, Gotz, and Avksentiev, were too reactionary for their following, and men like Victor Chernov, and even Maxim Gorky, belonged to the Right Wing. . . .

About the middle of December 1917, a group of Socialist Revolutionary leaders paid a private visit to Sir George Buchanan, the British Ambassador, and implored him not to mention the fact that they had been there because they were "considered too far Right."

"And to think," said Sir George, "one year ago my Government instructed me not to receive Milyukov, because he was so dangerously Left!"

September and October are the worst months of the Russian year—especially the Petrograd year. Under dull grey skies, in the shortening days, the rain fell drenching, incessant. The mud underfoot was deep, slippery, and clinging, tracked everywhere by heavy boots, and worse than usual because of the complete

breakdown of the Municipal administration. Bitter damp winds rushed in from the Gulf of Finland, and the chill fog rolled through the streets. At night, for motives of economy as well as fear of Zeppelins, the street-lights were few and far between; in private dwellings and apartment houses the electricity was turned on from six o'clock until midnight, with candles forty cents apiece and little kerosene to be had. It was dark from three in the afternoon to ten in the morning. Robberies and house-breaking increased. In apartment houses the men took turns at all-night guard duty, armed with loaded rifles. This was under the Provisional Government.

Week by week food became scarcer. The daily allowance of bread fell from a pound and a half to a pound, then three-quarters, half, and a quarter-pound. Towards the end there was a week without any bread at all. Sugar one was entitled to at the rate of two pounds a month—if one could get it at all, which was seldom. A bar of chocolate or a pound of tasteless candy cost anywhere from seven to ten roubles—at least a dollar. There was milk for about half the babies in the city; most hotels and private houses never saw it for months. In the fruit season apples and pears sold for a little less than a rouble apiece on the street corner. . . .

For milk and bread and sugar and tobacco one had to stand in queue long hours in the chill rain. Coming home from an all-night meeting I have seen the *kvost* (tail) beginning to form before dawn, mostly women, some with babies in their arms. . . . Carlyle, in his *French Revolution*, has described the French people as distinguished above all others by their faculty of standing in queue. Russia had accustomed herself to the practice, begun in the reign of Nicholas the Blessed as long ago as 1915, and from then continued intermittently until the summer of 1917, when it settled down as the regular order of things. Think of the poorly clad people standing on the iron-white streets of Petrograd whole days in the Russian winter! I have listened in the bread-lines, hearing the bitter, acrid note of discontent which from time to time burst up through the miraculous good nature of the Russian crowd. . . .

Of course all the theatres were going every night, including Sundays. Karsavina appeared in a new Ballet at the Marinsky, all dance-loving Russia coming to see her. Chaliapin was singing. At the Alexandrinsky they were reviving Meyerhold's production of Tolstoy's *Death of Ivan the Terrible*; and at that performance I remember noticing a student of the Imperial School

of Pages, in his dress uniform, who stood up correctly between the acts and faced the empty Imperial box, with its eagles all erased. . . . The Krivoye Zerkalo staged a sumptuous version of Schnitzler's *Reigen*.

Although the Hermitage and other picture galleries had been evacuated to Moscow, there were weekly exhibitions of paintings. Hordes of the female *intelligentsia* went to hear lectures on Art, Literature, and the Easy Philosophies. It was a particularly active season for Theosophists. And the Salvation Army, admitted to Russia for the first time in history, plastered the walls with announcements of gospel meetings, which amused and astounded Russian audiences. . . .

As in all such times, the petty conventional life of the city went on, ignoring the Revolution as much as possible. The poets made verses—but not about the Revolution. The realistic painters painted scenes from medieval Russian history—anything but the Revolution. Young ladies from the provinces came up to the capital to learn French and cultivate their voices, and the gay young beautiful officers wore their gold-trimmed crimson *ba'iliki* and their elaborate Caucasian swords around the hotel lobbies. The ladies of the minor bureaucratic set took tea with each other in the afternoon, carrying each her little gold or silver or jewelled sugar-box, and half a loaf of bread in her muff, and wished that the Tsar were back, or that the Germans would come, or anything that would solve the servant problem. . . . The daughter of a friend of mine came home one afternoon in hysterics because the woman street-car conductor had called her "Comrade!"

All around them great Russia was in travail, bearing a new world. The servants one used to treat like animals and pay next to nothing were getting independent. A pair of shoes cost more than a hundred roubles, and as wages averaged about thirty-five roubles a month the servants refused to stand in queue and wear out their shoes. But more than that. In the new Russia every man and woman could vote; there were working-class newspapers, saying new and startling things; there were the Soviets; and there were the Unions. The *izvozhiki* (cab-drivers) had a Union; they were also represented in the Petrograd Soviet. The waiters and hotel servants were organized, and refused tips. On the walls of restaurants they put up signs which read, "No tips taken here—" or, "Just because a man has to make his living waiting on table is no reason to insult him by offering him a tip!"

At the front the soldiers fought their fight with the officers and learned self-government through their committees. In the facto-

ries, those unique Russian organizations, the Factory-Shop Committees, gained experience and strength and a realization of their historical mission by combat with the old order. All Russia was learning to read, and reading—politics, economics, history—because the people wanted to know. . . . In every city, in most towns, along the front, each political faction had its newspaper—sometimes several. Hundreds of thousands of pamphlets were distributed by thousands of organizations, and poured into the armies, the villages, the factories, the streets. The thirst for education, so long thwarted, burst with the Revolution into a frenzy of expression. From Smolny Institute alone, the first six months, went out every day tons, car-loads, train-loads of literature, saturating the land. Russia absorbed reading matter like hot sand drinks water, insatiable. And it was not fables, falsified history, diluted religion, and the cheap fiction that corrupts—but social and economic theories, philosophy, the works of Tolstoy, Gogol, and Gorky. . . .

Then the Talk, beside which Carlyle's "flood of French speech" was a mere trickle. Lectures, debates, speeches—in theatres, circuses, school-houses, clubs, Soviet meeting-rooms, Union headquarters, barracks. . . . Meetings in the trenches at the front, in village squares, factories. . . . What a marvellous sight to see Putilovsky Zavod (the Putilov factory) pour out its forty thousand to listen to Social Democrats, Socialist Revolutionaries, Anarchists, anybody, whatever they had to say, as long as they would talk! For months in Petrograd, and all over Russia, every street-corner was a public tribune. In railway trains, street-cars, always the spurting up of impromptu debate, everywhere. . . .

And the All-Russian Conferences and Congresses, drawing together the men of two continents—conventions of Soviets, of Cooperatives, *Zemstvos*, nationalities, priests, peasants, political parties; the Democratic Conference, the Moscow Conference, the Council of the Russian Republic. There were always three or four conventions going on in Petrograd. At every meeting, attempts to limit the time of speakers voted down, and every man free to express the thought that was in him. . . .

We came down to the front of the Twelfth Army, back of Riga, where gaunt and bootless men sickened in the mud of desperate trenches; and when they saw us they started up, with their pinched faces and the flesh showing blue through their torn clothing, demanding eagerly, "Did you bring anything to read?"

What though the outward and visible signs of change were many, what though the statue of Catherine the Great before the

Alexandrinsky Theatre bore a little red flag in its hand, and others—somewhat faded—floated from all public buildings; and the Imperial monograms and eagles were either torn down or covered up; and in place of the fierce *gorodovoye* (city police) a mild-mannered and unarmed citizen militia patrolled the streets—still, there were many quaint anachronisms.

For example, Peter the Great's *Tabel o Rangov*—Table of Ranks—which he riveted upon Russia with an iron hand, still held sway. Almost everybody from the schoolboy up wore his prescribed uniform, with the insignia of the Emperor on button and shoulder-strap. Along about five o'clock in the afternoon the streets were full of subdued old gentlemen in uniform, with portfolios, going home from work in the huge, barrack-like Ministries or Government institutions, calculating perhaps how great a mortality among their superiors would advance them to the coveted *chin* (rank) of Collegiate Assessor, or Privy Councillor, with the prospect of retirement on a comfortable pension, and possibly the Cross of St. Anne. . . .

There is the story of Senator Sokolov, who in full tide of Revolution came to a meeting of the Senate one day in civilian clothes, and was not admitted because he did not wear the prescribed livery of the Tsar's service!

It was against this background of a whole nation in ferment and disintegration that the pageant of the Rising of the Russian Masses unrolled. . . .

2

The Coming Storm

In September General Kornilov marched on Petrograd to make himself military dictator of Russia. Behind him was suddenly revealed the mailed fist of the bourgeoisie, boldly attempting to crush the Revolution. Some of the Socialist Ministers were implicated; even Kerensky was under suspicion.⁶ Savinkov, summoned to explain to the Central Committee of his party, the Socialist Revolutionaries, refused and was expelled. Kornilov was arrested by the Soldiers' Committees. Generals were dismissed, Ministers suspended from their functions, and the Cabinet fell.

Kerensky tried to form a new Government, including the Cadets, party of the bourgeoisie. His party, the Socialist Revolutionaries, ordered him to exclude the Cadets. Kerensky declined to obey, and threatened to resign from the Cabinet if the Socialists insisted. However, popular feeling ran so high that for the moment he did not dare oppose it, and a temporary Directorate of Five of the old Ministers, with Kerensky at the head, assumed the power until the question should be settled.

The Kornilov affair drew together all the Socialist groups—"moderates" as well as revolutionists—in a passionate impulse of self-defence. There must be no more Kornilovs. A new Government must be created, responsible to the elements supporting the Revolution. So the Tsay-ee-kah invited the popular organizations to send delegates to a Democratic Conference, which should meet at Petrograd in September.

In the Tsay-ee-kah three factions immediately appeared. The Bolsheviki demanded that the All-Russian Congress of Soviets be summoned, and that they take over the power. The "centre"

Socialist Revolutionaries, led by Chernov, joined with the Left Socialist Revolutionaries, led by Kamkov and Spiridonova, the Menshevik Internationalists under Martov, and the "centre" Mensheviks, represented by Bogdanov and Skobeliev, in demanding a purely Socialist Government. Tsereteli, Dan, and Lieber, at the head of the right-wing Mensheviks, and the Right Socialist Revolutionaries under Avksentiev and Gotz, insisted that the propertied classes must be represented in the new Government.

Almost immediately the Bolsheviks won a majority in the Petrograd Soviet, and the Soviets of Moscow, Kiev, Odessa, and other cities followed suit.

Alarmed, the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries in control of the Tsay-ee-kah decided that after all they feared the danger of Kornilov less than the danger of Lenin. They revised the plan of representation in the Democratic Conference,⁷ admitting more delegates from the Cooperative Societies and other conservative bodies. Even this packed assembly at first voted for a *Coalition Government without the Cadets*. Only Kerensky's open threat of resignation, and the alarming cries of the "moderate" Socialists that "the Republic is in danger" persuaded the Conference, by a small majority, to declare in favour of the principle of coalition with the bourgeoisie, and to sanction the establishment of a sort of consultative Parliament, without any legislative power, called the Provisional Council of the Russian Republic. In the new Ministry the propertied class practically controlled, and in the Council of the Russian Republic they occupied, a disproportionate number of seats.

The fact is that the Tsay-ee-kah no longer represented the rank and file of the Soviets, and had illegally refused to call another All-Russian Congress of Soviets, due in September. It had no intention of calling this Congress or of allowing it to be called. Its official organ, *Izvestia* (News), began to hint that the function of the Soviets was nearly at an end,⁸ and that they might soon be dissolved. . . . At this time, too, the new Government announced as part of its policy the liquidation of "irresponsible organizations"—i.e., the Soviets.

The Bolsheviks responded by summoning the All-Russian Soviets to meet at Petrograd on 2 November and take over the Government of Russia. At the same time they withdrew from the Council of the Russian Republic, stating that they would not participate in a "Government of Treason to the People."⁹

The withdrawal of the Bolsheviks, however, did not bring

tranquillity to the ill-fated Council. The propertied classes, now in a position of power, became arrogant. The Cadets declared that the Government had no legal right to declare Russia a republic. They demanded stern measures in the Army and Navy to destroy the Soldiers' and Sailors' Committees, and denounced the Soviets. On the other side of the chamber the Menshevik Internationalists and the Left Socialist Revolutionaries advocated immediate peace, land to the peasants, and workers' control of industry—practically the Bolshevik programme.

I heard Martov's speech in answer to the Cadets. Stooped over the desk of the tribune like the mortally sick man he was, and speaking in a voice so hoarse it could hardly be heard, he shook his finger towards the right benches:

"You call us defeatists, but the real defeatists are those who wait for a more propitious moment to conclude peace, insist upon postponing peace until later, until nothing is left of the Russian army, until Russia becomes the subject of bargaining between the different imperialist groups. . . . You are trying to impose upon the Russian people a policy dictated by the interests of the bourgeoisie. The question of peace should be raised without delay. . . . You will see then that not in vain has been the work of those whom you call German agents, of those Zimmerwaldists* who in all the lands have prepared the awakening of the conscience of the democratic masses. . . ."

Between these two groups the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries wavered, irresistibly forced to the left by the pressure of the rising dissatisfaction of the masses. Deep hostility divided the chamber into irreconcilable groups.

This was the situation when the long-awaited announcement of the Allied Conference in Paris brought up the burning question of foreign policy. . . .

Theoretically all Socialist parties in Russia were in favour of the earliest possible peace on democratic terms. As long ago as May 1917 the Petrograd Soviet, then under control of the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, had proclaimed the famous Russian peace-conditions. They had demanded that the Allies hold a conference to discuss war aims. This conference had been promised for August; then postponed until September; then until October; and now it was fixed for 10 November.

The Provisional Government suggested two representatives—

*A term applied to those members of the organization Socialists of Europe who attended the International Conference at Zimmerwald, Switzerland, in 1915.

General Alexeyev, reactionary military man, and Tereshchenko, Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Soviets chose Skobeliev to speak for them and drew up a manifesto, the famous *nakaz*¹⁰—instructions. The Provisional Government objected to Skobeliev and his *nakaz*; the Allied ambassadors protested and finally Bonar Law in the British House of Commons, in answer to a question, responded coldly, "As far as I know the Paris Conference will not discuss the aims of the war at all, but only the methods of conducting it. . . ."

At this the conservative Russian press was jubilant, and the Bolsheviki cried, "See where the compromising tactics of the Mensheviki and Socialist Revolutionaries have led them!"

Along a thousand miles of front the millions of men in Russia's armies stirred like the sea rising, pouring into the capital their hundreds upon hundreds of delegations, crying, "Peace! Peace!"

I went across the river to the Cirque Moderne, to one of the great popular meetings which occurred all over the city, more numerous night after night. The bare, gloomy amphitheatre, lit by five tiny lights hanging from a thin wire, was packed from the ring up the steep sweep of grimy benches to the very roof—soldiers, sailors, workmen, women, all listening as if their lives depended upon it. A soldier was speaking—from the Five Hundred and Forty-Eighth Division, wherever and whatever that was:

"Comrades," he cried, and there was real anguish in his drawn face and despairing gestures. "The people at the top are always calling upon us to sacrifice more, sacrifice more, while those who have everything are left unmolested.

"We are at war with Germany. Would we invite German generals to serve on our Staff? Well we're at war with the capitalists too, and yet we invite them into our Government. . . .

"The soldier says, 'Show me what I am fighting for. Is it Constantinople, or is it free Russia? Is it the democracy, or is it the capitalist plunderers? If you can prove to me that I am defending the Revolution then I'll go out and fight without capital punishment to force me.'

"When the land belongs to the peasants, and the factories to the workers, and the power to the Soviets, then we'll know we have something to fight for, and we'll fight for it!"

In the barracks, the factories, on the street corners, endless soldier speakers, all clamouring for an end to the war, declaring that if the Government did not make an energetic effort to get peace, the army would leave the trenches and go home.

The spokesman for the Eighth Army:

"We are weak, we have only a few men left in each company. They must give us food and boots and reinforcements, or soon there will be left only empty trenches. Peace or supplies . . . either let the Government end the war or support the Army. . . ."

For the Forty-Sixth Siberian Artillery:

"The officers will not work with our Committees, they betray us to the enemy, they apply the death penalty to our agitators, and the counter-revolutionary Government supports them. We thought that the Revolution would bring peace. But now the Government forbids us even to talk of such things, and at the same time doesn't give us enough food to live on, or enough ammunition to fight with. . . ."

From Europe came rumours of peace at the expense of Russia. . . .¹¹

News of the treatment of Russian troops in France added to the discontent. The First Brigade had tried to replace its officers with Soldiers' Committees, like their comrades at home, and had refused an order to go to Salonika, demanding to be sent to Russia. They had been surrounded and starved, and then fired on by artillery, and many killed. . . .¹²

On 29 October I went to the white marble and crimson hall of the Marinsky Palace, where the Council of the Republic sat, to hear Tereshchenko's declaration of the Government's foreign policy, awaited with such terrible anxiety by all the peace-thirsty and exhausted land.

A tall, impeccably dressed young man with a smooth face and high cheek-bones, suavely reading his careful non-committal speech.¹³ Nothing. . . . Only the same platitudes about crushing German militarism with the help of the Allies—about the "State interests" of Russia, about the "embarrassment" caused by Skobeliev's *nakaz*. He ended with the keynote:

"Russia is a great power. Russia will remain a great power, whatever happens. We must all defend her, we must show that we are defenders of a great ideal, and children of a great power."

Nobody was satisfied. The reactionaries wanted a "strong" imperialist policy; the democratic parties wanted an assurance that the Government would press for peace. . . . I reproduce an editorial in *Rabochi i Soldat* (Worker and Soldier), organ of the Bolshevik Petrograd Soviet:

THE GOVERNMENT'S ANSWER TO THE TRENCHES

The most taciturn of our Ministers, Mr. Tereshchenko, has actually told the trenches the following:

1. We are closely united with our Allies. (Not with the peoples, but with the Governments.)

2. There is no use for the democracy to discuss the possibility or impossibility of a winter campaign. That will be decided by the Governments of our Allies.

3. The 1 July offensive was beneficial and a very happy affair. (He did not mention the consequences.)

4. It is not true that our Allies do not care about us. The Minister had in his possession very important declarations. (Declarations? What about deeds? What about the behaviour of the British fleet?¹⁴ The parleying of the British king with exiled counter-revolutionary General Gurko? The Minister did not mention all this.)

5. The *nakaz* to Skobeliev is bad; the Allies don't like it and the Russian diplomats don't like it. In the Allied Conference we must all "speak one language."

And is that all? That is all. What is the way out? The solution is, faith in the Allies and in Tereshchenko. When will peace come? When the Allies permit.

That is how the Government replied to the trenches about peace!

Now in the background of Russian politics began to form the vague outlines of a sinister power—the Cossacks. *Novaya Zhizn* (New Life), Gorky's paper, called attention to their activities:

At the beginning of the Revolution the Cossacks refused to shoot down the people. When Kornilov marched on Petrograd they refused to follow him. From passive loyalty to the Revolution the Cossacks have passed to an active political offensive (against it). From the background of the Revolution they have suddenly advanced to the front of the stage. . . .

Kaledin, *ataman* of the Don Cossacks, had been dismissed by the Provisional Government for his complicity in the Kornilov affair. He flatly refused to resign, and surrounded by three immense Cossack armies lay at Novocherkask, plotting and menacing. So great was his power that the Government was forced to ignore his insubordination. More than that, it was compelled formally to recognize the Council of the Union of Cossack Armies, and to declare illegal the newly formed Cossack Section of the Soviets. . . .

In the first part of October a Cossack delegation called upon

Kerensky, arrogantly insisting that the charges against Kaledin be dropped, and reproaching the Minister-President for yielding to the Soviets. Kerensky agreed to let Kaledin alone, and then is reported to have said, "In the eyes of the Soviet leaders I am a despot and a tyrant. . . . As for the Provisional Government, not only does it not depend upon the Soviets, but it considers it regrettable that they exist at all."

At the same time another Cossack mission called upon the British ambassador, treating with him boldly as representatives of "the free Cossack people."

In the Don something very like a Cossack Republic had been established. The Kuban declared itself an independent Cossack State. The Soviets of Rostov on Don and Yekaterinburg were dispersed by armed Cossacks, and the headquarters of the Coal Miners' Union at Kharkov raided. In all its manifestations the Cossack movement was anti-Socialist and militaristic. Its leaders were nobles and great landowners, like Kaledin, Kornilov, Generals Dutov, Karaulov, and Bardizhe, and it was backed by the powerful merchants and bankers of Moscow. . . .

Old Russia was rapidly breaking up. In the Ukraine, in Finland, Poland, White Russia, the nationalist movements gathered strength and became bolder. The local Governments, controlled by the propertied classes, claimed autonomy, refusing to obey orders from Petrograd. At Helsingfors the Finnish Senate declined to loan money to the Provisional Government, declared Finland autonomous, and demanded the withdrawal of Russian troops. The bourgeois Rada at Kiev extended the boundaries of the Ukraine until they included all the richest agricultural lands of South Russia, as far east as the Urals, and began the formation of a national army. Premier Vinnichenko hinted at a separate peace with Germany—and the Provisional Government was helpless. Siberia, the Caucasus, demanded separate constituent Assemblies. And in all these countries there was the beginning of a bitter struggle between the authorities and the local Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. . . .

Conditions were daily more chaotic. Hundreds of thousands of soldiers were deserting the front and beginning to move in vast, aimless tides over the face of the land. The peasants of Tambov and Tver Governments, tired of waiting for the land, exasperated by the repressive measures of the Government, were burning manor-houses and massacring landowners. Immense strikes and lock-outs convulsed Moscow, Odessa, and the coalmines of the

Don. Transport was paralysed; the army was starving, and in the big cities there was no bread.

The Government, torn between the democratic and reactionary factions, could do nothing; when forced to act it always supported the interests of the propertied classes. Cossacks were sent to restore order among the peasants, to break the strikes. In Tashkent Government authorities suppressed the Soviet. In Petrograd the Economic Council, established to rebuild the shattered economic life of the country, came to a deadlock between the opposing forces of capital and labour, and was dissolved by Kerensky. The old régime military men, backed by Cadets, demanded that harsh measures be adopted to restore discipline in the Army and Navy. In vain Admiral Verderevsky, the venerable Minister of Marine, and General Verkhovskiy, Minister of War, insisted that only a new, voluntary, democratic discipline, based on cooperation with the soldiers' and sailors' committees, could save the army and navy. Their recommendations were ignored.

The reactionaries seemed determined to provoke popular anger. The trial of Kornilov was coming on. More and more openly the bourgeois press defended him, speaking of him as "the great Russian patriot." Burtzev's paper, *Obshchee Dielo* (Common Cause), called for a dictatorship of Kornilov, Kaledin, and Kerensky!

I had a talk with Burtzev one day in the press gallery of the Council of the Republic. A small, stooped figure with a wrinkled face, eyes near-sighted behind thick glasses, untidy hair and beard streaked with grey.

"Mark my words, young man! What Russia needs is a Strong Man. We should get our minds off the Revolution now and concentrate on the Germans. Bunglers, bunglers, to defeat Kornilov; and back of the bunglers are the German agents. Kornilov should have won. . . ."

On the extreme right the organs of the scarcely veiled Monarchists, Purishkevich's *Narodny Tribun* (People's Tribune), *Novaya Rus* (New Russia), and *Zhivoye Slovo* (Living Word), openly advocated the extermination of the revolutionary democracy. . . .

On 23 October occurred the naval battle with a German squadron in the Gulf of Riga. On the pretext that Petrograd was in danger, the Provisional Government drew up plans for evacuating the capital. First the great munitions works were to go, distributed widely throughout Russia; and then the Government itself was to move to Moscow. Instantly the Bolsheviki began to cry out that the Government was abandoning the Red Capital in

order to weaken the Revolution. Riga had been sold to the Germans; now Petrograd was being betrayed!

The bourgeois press was joyful. "At Moscow," said the Cadet paper *Ryech* (Speech), "the Government can pursue its work in a tranquil atmosphere, without being interfered with by anarchists." Rodzianko, leader of the right wing of the Cadet party, declared in *Utro Rossii* (The Morning of Russia) that the taking of Petrograd by the Germans would be a blessing, because it would destroy the Soviets and get rid of the revolutionary Baltic Fleet:

Petrograd is in danger [he wrote]. I say to myself, "Let God take care of Petrograd." They fear that if Petrograd is lost the central revolutionary organizations will be destroyed. To that I answer that I rejoice if all these organizations are destroyed; for they will bring nothing but disaster upon Russia. . . .

With the taking of Petrograd the Baltic Fleet will also be destroyed. . . . But there will be nothing to regret; most of the battleships are completely demoralized. . . .

In the face of a storm of popular disapproval the plan of evacuation was repudiated.

Meanwhile the Congress of Soviets loomed over Russia like a thundercloud, shot through with lightnings. It was opposed, not only by the Government, but by all the "moderate" Socialists. The Central Army and Fleet Committees, the Central Committees of some of the Trade Unions, the Peasants' Soviets, but most of all the Tsay-ee-kah itself, spared no pains to prevent the meeting. *Izvestia* and *Golos Soldata* (Voice of the Soldier), newspapers founded by the Petrograd Soviet but now in the hands of the Tsay-ee-kah, fiercely assailed it, as did the entire artillery of the Socialist Revolutionary party press, *Dielo Naroda* (People's Cause) and *Volia Naroda* (People's Will).

Delegates were sent through the country, messages flashed by wire to committees in charge of local Soviets, to Army Committees, instructing them to halt or delay elections to the Congress. Solemn public resolutions against the Congress, declarations that the democracy was opposed to the meeting so near the date of the Constituent Assembly, representatives from the front, from the Union of Zemstvos, the Peasants' Union, Union of Cossack Armies, Union of Officers, Knights of St. George, Death Battalions, protesting. . . . The Council of the Russian Republic was one chorus of disapproval. The entire machinery set up by

the Russian Revolution of March functioned to block the Congress of Soviets. . . .

On the other hand was the shapeless will of the proletariat—the workmen, common soldiers, and poor peasants. Many local Soviets were already Bolshevik; then there were the organizations of the industrial workers, the *Fabrichno-Zavodskiiye Comiteti*—Factory-Shop Committees; and the insurgent Army and Fleet organizations. In some places the people, prevented from electing their regular Soviet delegates, held rump meetings, and chose one of their number to go to Petrograd. In others they smashed the old obstructionist committees and formed new ones. A ground-swell of revolt heaved and cracked the crust which had been slowly hardening on the surface of revolutionary fires dormant all those months. Only a spontaneous mass movement could bring about the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. . . .

Day after day the Bolshevik orators toured the barracks and factories, violently denouncing “this Government of civil war.” One Sunday we went, on a top-heavy steam tram that lumbered through oceans of mud, between stark factories and immense churches, to Obukhovskiy Zavod, a Government munitions plant out on the Schlüsselburg Prospekt.

The meeting took place between the gaunt brick walls of a huge unfinished building, ten thousand black-clothed men and women packed around a scaffolding draped in red, people heaped on piles of lumber and bricks, perched high up on shadowy girders, intent and thunder-voiced. Through the dull, heavy sky now and again burst the sun, flooding reddish light through the skeleton windows upon the mass of simple faces upturned to us.

Lunacharsky, a slight, student-like figure with the sensitive face of an artist, was telling why the power must be taken by the Soviets. Nothing else could guarantee the Revolution against its enemies, who were deliberately ruining the country, ruining the army, creating opportunities for a new Kornilov.

A soldier from the Rumanian front, thin, tragical, and fierce, cried, “Comrades! We are starving at the front, we are stiff with cold. We are dying for no reason. I ask the American comrades to carry word to America that the Russians will never give up their Revolution until they die. We will hold the fort with all our strength until the peoples of the world rise and help us! Tell the American workers to rise and fight for the Social Revolution!”

Then came Petrovsky, slight, slow-voiced, implacable:

“Now is the time for deeds, not words. The economic situation is bad, but we must get used to it. They are trying to starve

us and freeze us. They are trying to provoke us. But let them know that they can go too far—that if they dare to lay their hands upon the organizations of the proletariat we will sweep them away like scum from the face of the earth!”

The Bolshevik press suddenly expanded. Besides the two party papers, *Rabochi Put* and *Soldat* (Soldier), there appeared a new paper for the peasants, *Derevenskaya Byednota* (Village Poorest), poured out in a daily half-million edition; and on 17 October, *Rabochi i Soldat*. Its leading article summed up the Bolshevik point of view:

The fourth year's campaign will mean the annihilation of the army and the country. . . . There is a danger for the safety of Petrograd. . . . Counter-revolutionists rejoice in the people's misfortunes. . . . The peasants brought to desperation come out in open rebellion; the landlords and Government authorities massacre them with punitive expeditions; factories and mines are closing down, workmen are threatened with starvation. . . . The bourgeoisie and its generals want to restore a blind discipline in the army. . . . Supported by the bourgeoisie, the Kornilovtzi are openly getting ready to break up the meeting of the Constituent Assembly. . . .

The Kerensky Government is against the people. He will destroy the country. . . . This paper stands for the people and by the people—the poor classes, workers, soldiers, and peasants. The people can only be saved by the completion of the Revolution . . . and for this purpose the full power must be in the hands of the Soviets. . . .

This paper advocates the following:

- All power to the Soviets—both in the capital and in the provinces.
- Immediate truce on all fronts. An honest peace between peoples.
- Landlord estates—without compensation—to the peasants.
- Workers' control over industrial production.
- A faithfully and honestly elected Constituent Assembly.

It is interesting to reproduce here a passage from that same paper—the organ of those Bolsheviks so well known to the world as German agents:

The German kaiser, covered with the blood of millions of dead people, wants to push his army against Petrograd. Let us call to the German workmen, soldiers, and peasants, who want peace not less than we do, to . . . stand up against this damned war!

This can be done only by a revolutionary Government, which would

speaking really for the workmen, soldiers, and peasants of Russia, and would appeal over the heads of the diplomats directly to the German troops, fill the German trenches with proclamations in the German language. . . . Our airmen would spread these proclamations all over Germany. . . .

In the Council of the Republic the gulf between the two sides of the chamber deepened day by day.

"The propertied classes," cried Karelin, for the Left Socialist Revolutionaries, "want to exploit the revolutionary machine of the State to bind Russia to the war-chariot of the Allies! The revolutionary parties are absolutely against this policy. . . ."

Old Nicholas Chaikovsky, representing the Populist Socialists, spoke against giving the land to the peasants, and took the side of the Cadets:

"We must have immediately strong discipline in the army. . . . Since the beginning of the war I have not ceased to insist that it is a crime to undertake social and economic reforms in war-time. We are committing that crime, and yet I am not the enemy of these reforms, because I am a Socialist."

Cries from the Left, "We don't believe you!" Mighty applause from the Right. . . .

Adzhemov, for the Cadets, declared that there was no necessity to tell the army what it was fighting for, since every soldier ought to realize that the first task was to drive the enemy from Russian territory.

Kerensky himself came twice, to plead passionately for national unity, once bursting into tears at the end. The assembly heard him coldly, interrupting with ironical remarks.

Smolny Institute, headquarters of the Tsay-ee-kah and of the Petrograd Soviet, lay miles out on the edge of the city, beside the wide Neva. I went there on a streetcar, moving snail-like with a groaning noise through the cobbled, muddy streets, and jammed with people. At the end of the line rose the graceful smoke-blue cupolas of Smolny Convent outlined in dull gold, beautiful, and beside it the great barracks-like façade of Smolny Institute, two hundred yards long and three lofty storeys high, the Imperial arms carved hugely in stone still insolent over the entrance. . . .

Under the old régime a famous convent school for the daughters of the Russian nobility, patronized by the Tsarina herself, the Institute had been taken over by revolutionary organization

of workers and soldiers. Within were more than a hundred huge rooms, white and bare, on their doors enamelled plaques still informing the passer-by that within was "Ladies' Class-room Number 4" or "Teachers' Bureau"; but over these hung crudely-lettered signs, evidence of the vitality of the new order: "Central Committee of the Petrograd Soviet" and "Tsay-ee-kah" and "Bureau of Foreign Affairs"; "Union of Socialist Soldiers," "Central Committee of the All-Russian Trade Unions," "Factory-Shop Committees," "Central Army Committee"; and the central offices and caucus-rooms of the political parties. . . .

The long, vaulted corridors, lit by rare electric lights, were thronged with hurrying shapes of soldiers and workmen, some bent under the weight of huge bundles of newspapers, proclamations, printed propaganda of all sorts. The sound of their heavy boots made a deep and incessant thunder on the wooden floor. . . . Signs were posted up everywhere: "Comrades: For the sake of your health, preserve cleanliness!" Long tables stood at the head of the stairs on every floor, and on the landings, heaped with pamphlets and the literature of the different political parties for sale. . . .

The spacious, low-ceilinged refectory downstairs was still a dining-room. For two roubles I bought a ticket entitling me to dinner, and stood in line with a thousand others, waiting to get to the long serving-tables, where twenty men and women were ladling from immense cauldrons cabbage soup, hunks of meat and piles of *kasha*, slabs of black bread. Five kopeks paid for tea in a tin cup. From a basket one grabbed a greasy wooden spoon. . . . The benches along the wooden tables were packed with hungry proletarians, wolfing their food, plotting, shouting rough jokes across the room. . . .

Upstairs was another eating-place, reserved for the Tsay-ee-kah—though everyone went there. Here could be had bread thickly buttered and endless glasses of tea. . . .

In the south wing on the second floor was the great hall of meetings, the former ballroom of the Institute. A lofty white room lighted by glazed white chandeliers holding hundreds of ornate electric bulbs, and divided by two rows of massive columns; at one end a dais, flanked with two tall many-branched light standards, and a gold frame behind, from which the Imperial portrait had been cut. Here on festal occasions had been banked brilliant military and ecclesiastical uniforms, a setting for Grand Duchesses. . . .

Just across the hall outside was the office of the Credentials

Committee for the Congress of Soviets. I stood there watching the new delegates come in—burly, bearded soldiers, workmen in black blouses, a few long-haired peasants. The girl in charge—a member of Plekhanov's Yedinstvo group—smiled contemptuously. "These are very different people from the delegates to the first *Siezd* (Congress)," she remarked. "See how rough and ignorant they look! The Dark People. . . ." It was true; the depths of Russia had been stirred, and it was the bottom which came uppermost now. The Credentials Committee, appointed by the old Tsay-ee-kah, was challenging delegate after delegate, on the ground that they had been illegally elected. Karakhan, member of the Bolshevik Central Committee, simply grinned. "Never mind," he said, "when the time comes we'll see that you get your seats. . . ."

Rabochi i Soldat said:

The attention of delegates to the new All-Russian Congress is called to attempts of certain members of the Organizing Committee to break up the Congress, by asserting that it will not take place, and that delegates had better leave Petrograd. . . . Pay no attention to these lies. . . . Great days are coming. . . .

It was evident that a quorum would not come together by 2 November, so the opening of the Congress was postponed to the seventh. But the whole country was now aroused; and the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, realizing that they were defeated, suddenly changed their tactics and began to wire frantically to their provisional organizations to elect as many "moderate" Socialist delegates as possible. At the same time the Executive Committee of the Peasants' Soviets issued an emergency call for a Peasants' Congress, to meet 13 December and offset whatever action the workers and soldiers might take. . . .

What would the Bolsheviks do? Rumours ran through the city that there would be an armed "demonstration," a *vystuplenie*—"coming out" of the workers and soldiers. The bourgeois and reactionary press prophesied insurrection, and urged the Government to arrest the Petrograd Soviet, or at least to prevent the meeting of the Congress. Such sheets as *Novaya Rus* advocated a general Bolshevik massacre.

Gorky's paper, *Novaya Zhizn*, agreed with the Bolsheviks that the reactionaries were attempting to destroy the Revolution, and that if necessary they must be resisted by force of arms; but all the parties of the revolutionary democracy must present a united front.

As long as the democracy has not organized its principal forces, so long as the resistance to its influence is still strong, there is no advantage in passing to the attack. But if the hostile elements appeal to force, then the revolutionary democracy should enter the battle to seize the power, and it will be sustained by the most profound strata of the people. . . .

Gorky pointed out that both reactionary and Government newspapers were inciting the Bolsheviks to violence. An insurrection, however, would prepare the way for a new Kornilov. He urged the Bolsheviks to deny the rumours. Potressov, in the *Menshevik Dien* (Day), published a sensational story, accompanied by a map, which professed to reveal the secret Bolshevik plan of campaign.

As if by magic the walls were covered with warnings,¹⁵ proclamations, appeals, from the Central Committees of the "moderate" and conservative factions and the Tsay-ee-kah, denouncing any "demonstrations," imploring the workers and soldiers not to listen to agitators. For instance, this from the Military Section of the Socialist Revolutionary party:

Again rumours are spreading around the town of an intended *vystuplenie*. What is the source of these rumours? What organization authorizes these agitators who preach insurrection? The Bolsheviks, to a question addressed to them in the Tsay-ee-kah, denied that they have anything to do with it. . . . But these rumours themselves carry with them a great danger. It may easily happen that, not taking into consideration the state of mind of the majority of the workers, soldiers, and peasants, individual hot-heads will call out part of the workers and soldiers on the streets, inciting them to an uprising. . . . In this fearful time through which revolutionary Russia is passing, any insurrection can easily turn into civil war, and there can result from it the destruction of all organizations of the proletariat, built up with so much labour. . . . The counter-revolutionary plotters are planning to take advantage of this insurrection to destroy the Revolution, open the front to Wilhelm, and wreck the Constituent Assembly. . . . Stick stubbornly to your posts! Do not come out!

On 28 October, in the corridors of Smolny, I spoke with Kameniev, a little man with a reddish pointed beard and Gallic gestures. He was not at all sure that enough delegates would come. "If there is a Congress," he said, "it will represent the overwhelming sentiment of the people. If the majority is Bolshevik, as I think it will be, we shall demand that the power be given to the Soviets, and the Provisional Government must resign. . . ."

Volodarsky, a tall, pale youth with glasses and a bad complexion, was more definite. "The 'Lieber-Dans' and the other compromisers are sabotaging the Congress. If they succeed in preventing its meeting—well, then we are realists enough not to depend on *that!*"

Under date of 29 October I find entered in my notebook the following items culled from the newspapers of the day:

Moghilev (General Staff Headquarters). Concentration here of loyal Guard Regiments, the Savage Division, Cossacks, and Death Battalions.

The *yunkers* of the Officers' Schools of Pavlovsk, Tsarskoye Selo Peterhof ordered by the Government to be ready to come to Petrograd. Oranienbaum *yunkers* arrive in the city.

Part of the Armoured Car Division of the Petrograd garrison stationed in the Winter Palace.

Upon orders signed by Trotsky, several thousand rifles delivered by the Government Arms Factory at Sestroretzk to delegates of the Petrograd workmen.

At a meeting of the City Militia of the Lower Liteiny Quarter, a resolution demanding that all power be given to the Soviets.

This is just a sample of the confused events of those feverish days when everybody knew that something was going to happen, but nobody knew just what.

At a meeting of the Petrograd Soviet in Smolny, the night of 30 October, Trotsky branded the assertions of the bourgeois press that the Soviet contemplated armed insurrection as "an attempt of the reactionaries to discredit and wreck the Congress of Soviets. . . . The Petrograd Soviet," he declared, "had not ordered any *vystuplenie*. If it is necessary we shall do so, and we will be supported by the Petrograd garrison. . . . They [the Government] are preparing a counter-revolution; and we shall answer with an offensive which will be merciless and decisive."

It is true that the Petrograd Soviet had not ordered a demonstration, but the Central Committee of the Bolshevik party was considering the question of insurrection. All night long the twenty-third they met. There were present all the party intellectuals, the leaders—and delegates of the Petrograd workers and garrison. Alone of the intellectuals Lenin and Trotsky stood for insurrection. Even the military men opposed it. A vote was taken. Insurrection was defeated!

Then arose a rough workman, his face convulsed with rage. "I speak for the Petrograd proletariat," he said harshly. "We are in

favour of insurrection. Have it your own way, but I tell you now that if you allow the Soviets to be destroyed, *we're through with you!*" Some soldiers joined him. . . . And after that they voted again—insurrection won. . . .

However, the right wing of the Bolsheviks, led by Riazanov, Kameniev, and Zinoviev, continued to campaign against an armed rising. On the morning of 31 October appeared in *Rabochi Put* the first instalment of Lenin's "Letter to the Comrades,"¹⁶ one of the most audacious pieces of political propaganda the world has ever seen. In it Lenin seriously presented the arguments in favour of insurrection, taking as text the objections of Kameniev and Riazanov.

"Either we must abandon our slogan, 'All Power to the Soviets,' " he wrote, "or else we must make an insurrection. There is no middle course. . . ."

That same afternoon Paul Milyukov, leader of the Cadets, made a brilliant, bitter speech¹⁷ in the Council of the Republic, branding the Skobeliev *nakaz* as pro-German, declaring that the "revolutionary democracy" was destroying Russia, sneering at Tereshchenko, and openly declaring that he preferred German diplomacy to Russian. . . . The Left benches were one roaring tumult all through. . . .

On its part the Government could not ignore the significance of the success of the Bolshevik propaganda. On the twenty-ninth a joint commission of the Government and the Council of the Republic hastily drew up two laws, one for giving the land temporarily to the peasants, and the other for pushing an energetic foreign policy of peace. The next day Kerensky suspended capital punishment in the army. That same afternoon was opened with great ceremony the first session of the new "Commission for Strengthening the Republican Régime and Fighting Against Anarchy and Counter-Revolution"—of which history shows not the slightest further trace. . . . The following morning with two other correspondents I interviewed Kerensky¹⁸—the last time he received journalists.

"The Russian people," he said bitterly, "are suffering from economic fatigue—and from disillusionment with the Allies! The world thinks that the Russian Revolution is at an end. Do not be mistaken. The Russian Revolution is just beginning. . . ." Words more prophetic, perhaps, than he knew.

Stormy was the all-night meeting of the Petrograd Soviet the thirtieth of October, at which I was present. The "moderate" Socialist intellectuals, officers, members of Army Committees,

the Tsay-ec-kah, were there in force. Against them rose up workmen, peasants, and common soldiers, passionate and simple.

A peasant told of the disorders in Tver, which he said were caused by the arrest of the Land Committees. "This Kerensky is nothing but a shield to the *pomieshchiki* (landowners)," he cried. "They know that at the Constituent Assembly we will take the land anyway, so they are trying to destroy the Constituent Assembly!"

A machinist from the Putilov works described how the superintendents were closing down the departments one by one on the pretext that there was no fuel or raw materials. The Factory-Shop Committee, he declared, had discovered huge hidden supplies.

"It is a *provocatzia*," said he. "They want to starve us—drive us to violence!"

Among the soldiers one began, "Comrades! I bring you greetings from the place where men are digging their graves and call them trenches!"

Then arose a tall, gaunt young soldier, with flashing eyes, met with a roar of welcome. It was Chudnovsky, reported killed in the July fighting, and now risen from the dead.

"The soldier masses no longer trust their officers. Even the Army Committees, who refused to call a meeting of our Soviet, betrayed us. . . . The masses of the soldiers want the Constituent Assembly to be held exactly when it was called for, and those who dare to postpone it will be cursed—and not only platonic curses either, for the Army has guns too. . . ."

He told of the electoral campaign for the Constituent Assembly now raging in the Fifth Army. "The officers, and especially the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries, are trying deliberately to cripple the Bolsheviks. Our papers are not allowed to circulate in the trenches. Our speakers are arrested—"

"Why don't you speak about the lack of bread?" shouted another soldier.

"Man shall not live by bread alone," answered Chudnovsky, sternly. . . .

Followed him an officer, delegate from the Vitebsk Soviet, a Menshevik *oboronets*. "It isn't the question of who has the power. The trouble is not with the Government, but with the war . . . and the war must be won before any change—" At this hoots and ironical cheers. "These Bolshevik agitators are demagogues!" The hall rocked with laughter. "Let us for a moment forget the class struggle—" But he got no farther. A voice yelled, "Don't you wish we would!"

Petrograd presented a curious spectacle in those days. In the factories the committee-rooms were filled with stacks of rifles, couriers came and went, the Red Guard drilled. . . . In all the barracks meetings every night, and all day long interminable hot arguments. On the streets the crowds thickened towards gloomy evening, pouring in slow voluble tides up and down the Nevsky, fighting for the newspapers. . . . Hold-ups increased to such an extent that it was dangerous to walk down side streets. . . . On the Sadovaya one afternoon I saw a crowd of several hundred people beat and trample to death a soldier caught stealing. . . . Mysterious individuals circulated around the shivering women who waited in queue long cold hours for bread and milk, whispering that the Jews had cornered the food supply—and that while the people starved, the Soviet members lived luxuriously. . . .

At Smolny there were strict guards at the door and the outer gates, demanding everybody's pass. The committee-rooms buzzed and hummed all day and all night, hundreds of soldiers and workmen slept on the floor, wherever they could find room. Upstairs in the great hall a thousand people crowded to the uproarious sessions of the Petrograd Soviet. . . .

Gambling clubs functioned hectically from dusk to dawn, with champagne flowing and stakes of twenty thousand roubles. In the centre of the city at night prostitutes in jewels and expensive furs walked up and down, crowded the cafés. . . .

Monarchist plots, German spies, smugglers hatching schemes. . . .

And in the rain, the bitter chill, the great throbbing city under grey skies rushing faster and faster towards—what?

3

On the Eve

In the relations of a weak Government and a rebellious people there comes a time when every act of the authorities exasperates the masses, and every refusal to act excites their contempt. . . .

The proposal to abandon Petrograd raised a hurricane; Kerensky's public denial that the Government had any such intentions was met with hoots of derision.

Pinned to the wall by the pressure of the Revolution [cried *Rabochi Put*], the Government of "provisional" bourgeois tried to get free by giving out lying assurances that it never thought of fleeing from Petrograd, and that it didn't wish to surrender the capital. . . .

In Kharkov thirty thousand coal miners organized, adopting the preamble of the I.W.W. constitution: "The working class and the employing class have nothing in common." Dispersed by Cossacks, some were locked out by the mine-owners, and the rest declared a general strike. Minister of Commerce and Industry Konovalov appointed his assistant, Orlov, with plenary powers, to settle the trouble. Orlov was hated by the miners. But the Tsay-ee-kah not only supported his appointment, but refused to demand that the Cossacks be recalled from the Don Basin. . . .

This was followed by the dispersal of the Soviet at Kaluga. The Bolsheviki, having secured a majority in the Soviet, set free some political prisoners. With the sanction of the Government Commissar the Municipal Duma called in troops from Minsk, and bombarded the Soviet headquarters with artillery. The Bolsheviki yielded, but as they left the building Cossacks attacked them, crying, "This is what we'll do to all the other Bolsheviki

Soviets, including those of Moscow and Petrograd!" This incident sent a wave of panic rage throughout Russia. . . .

In Petrograd was ending a regional Congress of Soviets of the North, presided over by the Bolsheviki Krylenko. By an immense majority it resolved that all power should be assumed by the All-Russian Congress; and concluded by greeting the Bolsheviki in prison, bidding them rejoice, for the hour of their liberation was at hand. At the same time the first All-Russian Conference of Factory-Shop Committees¹⁹ declared emphatically for the Soviets, and continued significantly:

After liberating themselves politically from Tsardom, the working class wants to see the democratic régime triumphant in the sphere of its productive activity. This is best expressed by Workers' Control over industrial production, which naturally arose in the atmosphere of economic decomposition created by the criminal policy of the dominating classes. . . .

The Union of Railwaymen was demanding the resignation of Liverovsky, Minister of Ways and Communications. . . .

In the name of the Tsay-ee-kah, Skobeliev insisted that the *nakaz* be presented at the Allied Conference, and formally protested against the sending of Tereshchenko to Paris. Tereshchenko offered to resign. . . .

General Verkhovsky, unable to accomplish his reorganization of the army, only came to Cabinet meetings at long intervals. . . .

On 3 November Burtzev's *Obshee Dielo* came out with great headlines:

Citizens! Save the fatherland!

I have just learned that yesterday, at a meeting of the Commission for National Defence, Minister of War, General Verkhovsky, one of the principal persons responsible for the fall of Kornilov, proposed to sign a separate peace, independently of the Allies.

That is treason to Russia!

Tereshchenko declared that the Provisional Government had not even examined Verkhovsky's proposition.

"You might think," said Tereshchenko, "that we were in a madhouse!"

The members of the Commission were astounded at the General's words.

General Alexeyev wept.

No! It is not madness! It is worse. It is direct treason to Russia!

Kerensky, Tereshchenko, and Nekrassov must immediately answer us concerning the words of Verkhovsky.

Citizens, arise!
Russia is being sold!
Save her!

What Verkhovsky really said was that the Allies must be pressed to offer peace, because the Russian army could fight no longer. . . .

Both in Russia and abroad the sensation was tremendous. Verkhovsky was given "indefinite leave of absence for ill-health," and left the Government. *Obshchee Dielo* was suppressed. . . .

Sunday, 4 November, was designated as the day of the Petrograd Soviet, with immense meetings planned all over the city, ostensibly to raise money for the organization and the press; really, to make a demonstration of strength. Suddenly it was announced that on the same day the Cossacks would hold a *Krestni Khod*—Procession of the Cross—in honour of the Ikon of 1612, through whose miraculous intervention Napoleon had been driven from Moscow. The atmosphere was electric; a spark might kindle civil war. The Petrograd Soviet issued a manifesto, headed "Brothers—Cossacks!"

You, Cossacks, are being incited against us, workers and soldiers. This plan of Cain is being put into operation by our common enemies the oppressors, the privileged classes—generals, bankers, landlords, former officials, former servants of the Tsar. . . . We are hated by all grafters, rich men, princes, nobles, generals, including your Cossack generals. They are ready at any moment to destroy the Petrograd Soviet and crush the Revolution. . . .

On the fourth of November somebody is organizing a Cossack religious procession. It is a question of the free consciousness of every individual whether he will or will not take part in this procession. We do not interfere in this matter, nor do we obstruct anybody. . . . However, we warn you, Cossacks! Look out and see to it that under the pretext of a *Krestni Khod*, your Kaledins do not instigate you against workmen, against soldiers. . . .

The procession was hastily called off. . . .

In the barracks and the working-class quarters of the town the Bolsheviks were preaching, "All Power to the Soviets!" and agents of the Dark Forces were urging the people to rise and slaughter the Jews, shopkeepers, Socialist leaders. . . .

On one side the Monarchist press, inciting to bloody repression—on the other Lenin's great voice roaring, "Insurrection! . . . We cannot wait any longer!"

Even the bourgeois press was uneasy.²⁰ *Birzhevya Viedomosti* (Exchange Gazette) called the Bolshevik propaganda an attack on "the most elementary principles of society—personal security, and the respect for private property."

But it was the "moderate" Socialist journals which were the most hostile.²¹ "The Bolsheviks are the most dangerous enemies of the Revolution," declared *Dielo Naroda*. Said the Menshevik *Dien*, "The Government ought to defend itself and defend us." Plekhanov's paper, *Yedinstvo* (Unity),²² called the attention of the Government to the fact that the Petrograd workers were being armed, and demanded stern measures against the Bolsheviks.

Daily the Government seemed to become more helpless. Even the Municipal administration broke down. The columns of the morning papers were filled with accounts of the most audacious robberies and murders, and the criminals were unmolested.

On the other hand, armed workers patrolled the streets at night, doing battle with marauders and requisitioning arms wherever they found them.

On the first of November Colonel Polkovnikov, Military Commander of Petrograd, issued a proclamation:

Despite the difficult days through which the country is passing, irresponsible appeals to armed demonstrations and massacres are still being spread around Petrograd, and from day to day robbery and disorder increase.

This state of things is disorganizing the life of the citizens, and hinders the systematic work of the Government and the Municipal Institutions.

In full consciousness of my responsibility and my duty before my country, I command:

1. Every military unit, in accordance with special instructions and within the territory of its garrison, to afford every assistance to the Municipality, to the Commissars, and to the militia, in the guarding of Government institutions.

2. The organization of patrols, in cooperation with the District Commander and the representatives of the city militia, and the taking of measures for the arrest of criminals and deserters.

3. The arrest of all persons entering barracks and inciting to armed demonstrations and massacres, and their delivery to the headquarters of the Second Commander of the city.

4. To suppress any armed demonstration or riot at its start, with all armed forces at hand.

5. To afford assistance to the Commissars in preventing unwarranted searches in houses and unwarranted arrests.

6. To report immediately all that happens in the district under charge of the Staff of the Petrograd Military District.

I call upon all Army Committees and organizations to afford their help to the commanders in fulfilment of the duties with which they are charged.

In the Council of the Republic Kerensky declared that the Government was fully aware of the Bolshevik preparations, and had sufficient force to cope with any demonstration.²³ He accused *Novaya Rus* and *Rabochi Put* of both doing the same kind of subversive work. "But owing to the absolute freedom of the press," he added, "the Government is not in a position to combat printed lies. . . ." Declaring that these were two aspects of the same propaganda, which had for its objects the counter-revolution, so ardently desired by the Dark Forces, he went on:

"I am a doomed man, it doesn't matter what happens to me, and I have the audacity to say that the other enigmatic part is that of the unbelievable provocation created in the city by the Bolsheviks!"

On 2 November, only fifteen delegates to the Congress of Soviets had arrived. Next day there were a hundred, and the morning after that a hundred and seventy-five, of whom one hundred and three were Bolsheviks. . . . Four hundred constituted a quorum, and the Congress was only three days off. . . .

I spent a great deal of time at Smolny. It was no longer easy to get in. Double rows of sentries guarded the outer gates, and once inside the front door there was a long line of people waiting to be let in, four at a time, to be questioned as to their identity and their business. Passes were given out, and the pass system was changed every few hours; for spies continually sneaked through. . . .

One day as I came up to the outer gate I saw Trotsky and his wife just ahead of me. They were halted by a soldier. Trotsky searched through his pockets, but could find no pass.

"Never mind," he said finally. "You know me. My name is Trotsky."

"You haven't got a pass," answered the soldier stubbornly. "You cannot go in. Names don't mean anything to me."

"But I am the president of the Petrograd Soviet."

"Well," replied the soldier, "if you're as important a fellow as that you must at least have one little paper."

Trotsky was very patient. "Let me see the Commandant," he said. The soldier hesitated, grumbling something about not want-

ing to disturb the Commandant for every devil that came along. He beckoned finally to the soldier in command of the guard. Trotsky explained matters to him. "My name is Trotsky," he repeated.

"Trotsky?" The other soldier scratched his head. "I've heard the name somewhere," he said at length. "I guess it's all right. You can go on in, comrade. . . ."

In the corridor I met Karakhan, member of the Bolshevik Central Committee, who explained to me what the new Government would be like.

"A loose organization, sensitive to the popular will as expressed through the Soviets, allowing local forces full play. At present the Provisional Government obstructs the action of the local democratic will, just as the Tsar's Government did. The initiative of the new society shall come from below. . . . The form of the Government will be modelled on the Constitution of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. The new Tsar, Cezar, responsible to frequent meetings of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, will be the parliament; the various Ministries will be headed by *collegia*—committees—instead of by Ministers, and will be directly responsible to the Soviets. . . ."

On 30 October, by appointment, I went up to a small bare room in the attic of Smolny, to talk with Trotsky. In the middle of the room he sat on a rough chair at a bare table. Few questions from me were necessary; he talked rapidly for more than an hour. The substance of his talk, in his own words, I give here:

"The Provisional Government is absolutely powerless. The bourgeoisie is in control, but this control is masked by a fictitious coalition with the *oborontsi* parties. Now, during the Revolution, one sees revolts of peasants who are tired of waiting for their promised land; and all over the country, in all the toiling classes, the same disgust is evident. This domination by the bourgeoisie is only possible by means of civil war. The Kornilov method is the only way by which the bourgeoisie can control. But it is force which the bourgeoisie lacks. . . . The Army is with us. The conciliators and pacifists, Socialist Revolutionaries, and Mensheviks, have lost all authority—because the struggle between the peasants and the landlords, between the workers and the employers, between the soldiers and the officers, has become more bitter, more irreconcilable than ever. Only by the concerted action of the popular mass, only by the victory of proletarian dictatorship, can the Revolution be achieved and the people saved. . . ."

"The Soviets are the most perfect representatives of the people—perfect in their revolutionary experience, in their ideas and objects. Based directly upon the army in the trenches, the workers in the factories, and the peasants in the fields, they are the backbone of the Revolution.

"There has been an attempt to create a power without the Soviets—and only powerlessness has been created. Counter-revolutionary schemes of all sorts are now being hatched in the corridors of the Council of the Russian Republic. The Cadet party represents the counter-revolution militant. On the other side, the Soviets represent the cause of the people. Between the two camps there are no groups of serious importance. . . . It is the *lutte finale*. The bourgeois counter-revolution organizes all its forces and waits for the moment to attack us. Our answer will be decisive. We will complete the work scarcely begun in March, and advanced during the Kornilov affair. . . ."

He went on to speak of the new Government's foreign policy:

"Our first act will be to call for an immediate armistice on all fronts, and a conference of peoples to discuss democratic peace terms. The quantity of democracy we get in the peace settlement depends on the quantity of revolutionary response there is in Europe. If we create here a Government of the Soviets, that will be a powerful factor for immediate peace in Europe; for this Government will address itself directly and immediately to all peoples, over the heads of their Governments, proposing an armistice. At the moment of the conclusion of peace the pressure of the Russian Revolution will be in the direction of 'no annexations, no indemnities, the right of self-determination of peoples,' and a *Federated Republic of Europe*. . . ."

"At the end of this war I see Europe re-created, not by the diplomats, but by the proletariat. The Federated Republic of Europe—the United States of Europe—that is what must be. National autonomy no longer suffices. Economic evolution demands the abolition of national frontiers. If Europe is to remain split into national groups, then Imperialism will recommence its work. Only a Federated Republic of Europe can give peace to the world." He smiled—that fine, faintly ironical smile of his. "But without the action of the European masses, these ends cannot be realized—now. . . ."

Now while everybody was waiting for the Bolsheviks to appear suddenly on the streets one morning and begin to shoot

down people with white collars on, the real insurrection took its way quite naturally and openly.

The Provisional Government planned to send the Petrograd garrison to the front.

The Petrograd garrison numbered about sixty thousand men, who had taken a prominent part in the Revolution. It was they who had turned the tide in the great days of March, created the Soviets of Soldiers' Deputies, and hurled back Kornilov from the gates of Petrograd.

Now a large part of them were Bolsheviks. When the Provisional Government talked of evacuating the city, it was the Petrograd garrison which answered, "If you are not capable of defending the capital, conclude peace; if you cannot conclude peace, go away and make room for a People's Government which can do both. . . ."

It was evident that any attempt at insurrection depended upon the attitude of the Petrograd garrison. The Government's plan was to replace the garrison regiments with "dependable" troops—Cossacks, Death Battalions. The Army Committee, the "moderate" Socialists and the Tsay-ee-kah supported the Government. A widespread agitation was carried on at the front and in Petrograd, emphasizing the fact that for eight months the Petrograd garrison had been leading an easy life in the barracks of the capital, while their exhausted comrades in the trenches starved and died.

Naturally there was some truth in the accusation that the garrison regiments were reluctant to exchange their comparative comfort for the hardships of a winter campaign. But there were other reasons why they refused to go. The Petrograd Soviet feared the Government's intentions, and from the front came hundreds of delegates, chosen by the common soldiers, crying, "It is true we need reinforcements, but more important, we must know that Petrograd and the Revolution are well guarded. . . . Do you hold the rear, comrades, and we will hold the front!"

On 25 October, behind closed doors, the Central Committee of the Petrograd Soviet discussed the formation of a special Military Committee to decide the whole question. The next day a meeting of the Soldiers' Section of the Petrograd Soviet elected a Committee, which immediately proclaimed a boycott of the bourgeois newspapers, and condemned the Tsay-ee-kah for opposing the Congress of Soviets. On the twenty-ninth, in open session of the Petrograd Soviet, Trotsky proposed that the Soviet formally sanction the Military Revolutionary Committee. "We ought," he said, "to create our special organization to march to battle,

and if necessary to die. . . ." It was decided to send to the front two delegations, one from the Soviet and one from the garrison, to confer with the Soldiers' Committees and the General Staff.

At Pskov, the Soviet delegates were met by General Chermissov, commander of the Northern Front, with the curt declaration that he had ordered the Petrograd garrison to the trenches, and that was all. The garrison committee was not allowed to leave Petrograd. . . .

A delegation of the Soldiers' Section of the Petrograd Soviet asked that a representative be admitted to the Staff of the Petrograd District. Refused. The Petrograd Soviet demanded that no orders be issued without the approval of the Soldiers' Section. Refused. The delegates were roughly told, "We only recognize the Tsay-ee-kah. We do not recognize you; if you break any laws we shall arrest you."

On the thirtieth a meeting of representatives of all the Petrograd regiments passed a resolution: "*The Petrograd garrison no longer recognizes the Provisional Government. The Petrograd Soviet is our Government. We will obey only the orders of the Petrograd Soviet, through the Military Revolutionary Committee.*" The local military units were ordered to wait for instructions from the Soldiers' Section of the Petrograd Soviet.

Next day the Tsay-ee-kah summoned its own meeting, composed largely of officers, formed a Committee to cooperate with the Staff, and detailed Commissars in all quarters of the city.

A great soldier meeting at Smolny on the third resolved:

Saluting the creation of the Military Revolutionary Committee, the Petrograd garrison promises it complete support in all its actions, to unite more closely the front and the rear in the interests of the Revolution.

The garrison, moreover, declares that with the revolutionary proletariat it assures the maintenance of revolutionary order in Petrograd. Every attempt at provocation on the part of the Kornilovtsi or the bourgeoisie will be met with merciless resistance.

Now conscious of its power, the Military Revolutionary Committee peremptorily summoned the Petrograd Staff to submit to its control. To all printing plants it gave orders not to publish any appeals or proclamations without the Committee's authorization. Armed Commissars visited the Kronversk arsenal and seized great quantities of arms and ammunition, halting a shipment of ten thousand bayonets which was being sent to Novocherkask, headquarters of Kaledin. . . .

Suddenly awake to the danger, the Government offered immunity if the Committee would disband. Too late. At midnight, 5 November, Kerensky himself sent Malevsky to offer the Petrograd Soviet representation on the Staff. The Military Revolutionary Committee accepted. An hour later General Manikovsky, acting Minister of War, countermanded the offer. . . .

Tuesday morning, 6 November, the city was thrown into excitement by the appearance of a placard signed, "Military Revolutionary Committee attached to the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies."

To the Population of Petrograd. Citizens!

Counter-revolution has raised its criminal head. The Kornilovtsi are mobilizing their forces in order to crush the All-Russian Congress of Soviets and break the Constituent Assembly. At the same time the *pogromists* may attempt to call upon the people of Petrograd for trouble and bloodshed. The Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies takes upon itself the guarding of revolutionary order in the city against counter-revolutionary and *pogrom* attempts.

The Petrograd garrison will not allow any violence or disorders. The population is invited to arrest hooligans and Black Hundred agitators and take them to the Soviet Commissars at the nearest barracks. At the first attempt of the Dark Forces to make trouble on the streets of Petrograd, whether robbery or fighting, the criminals will be wiped off the face of the earth!

Citizens! We call upon you to maintain complete quiet and self-possession. The cause of order and Revolution is in strong hands.

Lists of regiments where there are Commissars of the Military Revolutionary Committee. . . .

On the third the leaders of the Bolsheviki had another historic meeting behind closed doors. Notified by Zalkind, I waited in the corridor outside the door; and Volodarsky as he came out told me what was going on.

Lenin spoke: "November sixth will be too early. We must have an all-Russian basis for the rising; and on the sixth all the delegates to the Congress will not have arrived. . . . On the other hand, November eighth will be too late. By that time the Congress will be organized, and it is difficult for a large organized body of people to take swift, decisive action. We must act on the seventh, the day the Congress meets, so that we may say to it, 'Here is the power! What are you going to do with it?'"

In a certain upstairs room sat a thin-faced, long-haired individual, once an officer in the armies of the Tsar, then revolutionist

and exile, a certain Avseenko, called Antonov, mathematician and chess-player; he was drawing careful plans for the seizure of the capital.

On its side the Government was preparing. Inconspicuously, certain of the most loyal regiments, from widely separated divisions, were ordered to Petrograd. The *yunker* artillery was drawn into the Winter Palace. Patrols of Cossacks made their appearance in the streets for the first time since the July days. Polkovnikov issued order after order, threatening to repress all insubordination with the "utmost energy." Kishkin, Minister of Public Instruction, the worst-hated member of the Cabinet, was appointed Special Commissar to keep order in Petrograd; he named as assistants two men no less unpopular, Rutenburg and Palchinsky. Petrograd, Kronstadt, and Finland were declared in a state of siege—upon which the bourgeois *Novoye Vremya* (New Times) remarked ironically:

Why the state of siege? The Government is no longer a power. It has no moral authority and it does not possess the necessary apparatus to use force. . . . In the most favourable circumstances it can only negotiate with anyone who consents to parley. Its authority goes no farther. . . .

Monday morning, the fifth, I dropped in at the Marinsky Palace, to see what was happening in the Council of the Russian Republic. Bitter debate on Tereshchenko's foreign policy. Echoes of the Burtzev-Verkhovsky affair. All the diplomats present except the Italian ambassador, who everybody said was prostrated by the Carso disaster. . . .

As I came in the Left Socialist Revolutionary Karelin was reading aloud an editorial from the *London Times*, which said, "The remedy for Bolshevism is bullets!" Turning to the Cadets he cried, "That's what you think, too!"

Voices from the Right, "Yes! Yes!"

"Yes, I know you think so," answered Karelin, hotly. "But you haven't the courage to try it!"

Then Skobeliev, looking like a matinée idol with his soft blond beard and wavy yellow hair, rather apologetically defended the Soviet *nakaz*. Tereshchenko followed, assailed from the Left by cries of "Resignation! Resignation!" He insisted that the delegates of the Government and of the Tsay-ee-kah to Paris should have a common point of view—his own. A few words about the restoration of discipline in the army, about war to

victory. . . . Tumult, and over the stubborn opposition of the truculent Left, the Council of the Republic passed to the simple order of the day.

There stretched the rows of Bolshevik seats—empty since that first day when they left the Council, carrying with them so much life. As I went down the stairs it seemed to me that in spite of the bitter wrangling, no real voice from the rough world outside could penetrate this high, cold hall, and that the Provisional Government was wrecked—on the same rock of War and Peace that had wrecked the Miliukov Ministry. . . . The door-man grumbled as he put on my coat, "I don't know what is becoming of poor Russia. All these Mensheviki and Bolsheviki and Trudoviki. . . . This Ukraine and this Finland and the German imperialists and the English imperialists. I am forty-five years old, and in all my life I never heard so many words as in this place. . . ."

In the corridor I met Professor Shatsky, a rat-faced individual in a dapper frock-coat, very influential in the councils of the Cadet party. I asked him what he thought of the much-talked-of Bolshevik *vystuplenie*. He shrugged, sneering.

"They are cattle—*canaille*," he answered. "They will not dare, or if they dare they will soon be sent flying. From our point of view it will not be bad, for then they will ruin themselves and have no power in the Constituent Assembly. . . ."

"But, my dear sir, allow me to outline to you my plan for a form of Government to be submitted to the Constituent Assembly. You see, I am chairman of a commission appointed from this body, in conjunction with the Provisional Government, to work out a constitutional project. . . . We will have a legislative assembly of two chambers, such as you have in the United States. In the lower chamber will be territorial representatives; in the upper, representatives of the liberal professions, *zemstvos*, Cooperatives—and Trade Unions. . . ."

Outside a chill, damp wind came from the west, and the cold mud underfoot soaked through my shoes. Two companies of *yunkers* passed swinging up the Morskaya, tramping stiffly in their long coats and singing an old-time crashing chorus, such as soldiers used to sing under the Tsar. . . . At the first cross-street I noticed that the City Militiamen were mounted, and armed with revolvers in bright new holsters; a little group of people stood silently staring at them. At the corner of the Nevsky I bought a pamphlet by Lenin, *Will the Bolsheviks be Able to Hold the*

Power? paying for it with one of the stamps which did duty for small change. The usual streetcars crawled past, citizens and soldiers clinging to the outside in a way to make Theodore P. Shonts green with envy. . . . Along the sidewalk a row of deserters in uniform sold cigarettes and sunflower seeds. . . .

Up the Nevsky in the sour twilight crowds were battling for the latest papers, and knots of people were trying to make out the multitudes of appeal²⁴ and proclamations pasted in every flat place; from the Tsay-ee-kah, the Peasants' Soviets, the "moderate" Socialist parties, the Army Committees—threatening, cursing, beseeching the workers and soldiers to stay home, to support the Government. . . .

An armoured automobile went slowly up and down, siren screaming. On every corner, in every open space, thick groups were clustered; arguing soldiers and students. Night came swiftly down, the wide-spaced street-lights flickered on, the tides of people flowed endlessly. . . . It is always like that in Petrograd just before trouble. . . .

The city was nervous, starting at every sharp sound. But still no sign from the Bolsheviks; the soldiers stayed in the barracks, the workmen in the factories. . . . We went to a moving picture show near the Kazan Cathedral—a bloody Italian film of passion and intrigue. Down front were some soldiers and sailors, staring at the screen in child-like wonder, totally unable to comprehend why there should be so much violent running about, and so much homicide. . . .

From there I hurried to Smolny. In room 10 on the top floor, the Military Revolutionary Committee sat in continuous session, under the chairmanship of a tow-headed, eighteen-year-old boy named Lazimir. He stopped, as he passed, to shake hands rather bashfully.

"Peter-Paul Fortress has just come over to us," said he, with a pleased grin. "A minute ago we got word from a regiment that was ordered by the Government to come to Petrograd. The men were suspicious, so they stopped the train at Gatchina and sent a delegation to us. 'What's the matter?' they asked. 'What have you got to say? We have just passed a resolution, 'All Power to the Soviets.' . . . The Military Revolutionary Committee sent back word. 'Brothers! We greet you in the name of the Revolution. Stay where you are until further instructions!'"

All telephones, he said, were cut off: but communication with the factories and barracks was established by means of military telephonograph apparatus. . . .

A steady stream of couriers and Commissars came and went. Outside the door waited a dozen volunteers, ready to carry word to the farthest quarters of the city. One of them, a gipsy-faced man in the uniform of a lieutenant, said in French, "Everything is ready to move at the push of a button. . . ."

There passed Podvoisky, the thin, bearded civilian whose brain conceived the *strategy of insurrection*; Antonov, unshaven, his collar filthy, drunk with loss of sleep; Krylenko, the squat, wide-faced soldier, always smiling, with his violent gestures and tumbling speech; and Dybenko, the giant bearded sailor with the placid face. These were the men of the hour—and of other hours to come.

Downstairs in the office of the Factory-Shop Committees at Seratov, signing orders on the Government Arsenal for arms—one hundred and fifty rifles for each factory. . . . Delegates waited in line, forty of them. . . .

In the hall I ran into some of the minor Bolshevik leaders. One showed me a revolver. "The game is on," he said, and his face was pale. "Whether we move or not, the other side knows it must finish us or be finished. . . ."

The Petrograd Soviet was meeting day and night. As I came into the great hall [Trotsky] was just finishing.

"We are asked," he said, "if we intend to have a *vystuplenie*. I can give a clear answer to that question. The Petrograd Soviet feels that at last the moment has arrived when the power must fall into the hands of the Soviets. This transfer of government will be accomplished by the All-Russian Congress. Whether an armed demonstration is necessary will depend on . . . those who wish to interfere with the All-Russian Congress. . . ."

"We feel that our Government, entrusted to the personnel of the Provisional Cabinet, is a pitiful and helpless Government, which only awaits the sweep of the broom of History to give way to a really popular Government. But we are trying to avoid a conflict, even now, today. We hope that the All-Russian Congress will take . . . into its hands that power and authority which rests upon the organized freedom of the people. If, however, the Government wants to utilize the short period it is expected to live—twenty-four, forty-eight, or seventy-two hours—to attack us, then we shall answer with counter-attacks, blow for blow, steel for iron!"

Amid cheers he announced that the Left Socialist Revolutionaries had agreed to send representatives into the Military Revolutionary Committee. . . .

* * *

As I left Smolny, at three o'clock in the morning, I noticed that two rapid-firing guns had been mounted, one on each side of the door, and that strong patrols of soldiers guarded the gates and the near-by street corners. Bill Shatov* came bounding up the steps. "Well," he cried, "we're off. Kerensky sent the *yunkers* to close down our papers, *Soldat* and *Rabochi Put*. But our troops went down and smashed the Government seals, and now we're sending detachments to seize the bourgeois newspaper offices!" Exultantly he slapped me on the shoulder, and ran in. . . .

On the morning of the sixth I had business with the censor whose office was in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Everywhere, on all the walls, hysterical appeals to the people to remain "calm." Polkovnikov emitted *prikaz* after *prikaz*:

I order all military units and detachments to remain in their barracks until further orders from the Staff of the Military District. . . . All officers who act without orders from their superiors will be court-martialled for mutiny. I forbid absolutely any execution by soldiers of instructions from other organizations. . . .

The morning paper announced that the Government had suppressed the papers *Novaya Rus*, *Zhivoye Slovo*, *Rabochi Put*, and *Soldat*, and decreed the arrest of the leaders of the Petrograd Soviet and the members of the Military Revolutionary Committee. . . .

As I crossed the Palace Square several batteries of *yunkers* artillery came through the Red Arch at a jingling trot, and drew up before the Palace. The great red building of the General Staff was unusually animated, several armoured automobiles ranked before the door, and motors full of officers were coming and going. . . . The censor was very much excited, like a small boy at a circus. Kerensky, he said, had just gone to the Council of the Republic to offer his resignation. I hurried down to the Marinsky Palace, arriving at the end of that passionate and almost incoherent speech of Kerensky's, full of self-justification and bitter denunciation of his enemies.

"I will cite here the most characteristic passage from a whole series of articles published in *Rabochi Put* by Ulyanov-Lenin, a state criminal who is in hiding and whom we are trying to find. . . . This state criminal has invited the proletariat and the

*A prominent labor leader in the U.S.

Petrograd garrison to repeat the experience of 16-18 July, and insists upon the immediate necessity for an armed rising. . . . Moreover, other Bolsheviki leaders have taken the floor in a series of meetings, and also made an appeal to immediate insurrection. Particularly should be noticed the activity of the present president of the Petrograd Soviet, Bronstein-Trotsky. . . .

"I ought to bring to your notice . . . that the expressions and the style of a whole series of articles in *Rabochi Put* and *Soldat* resemble absolutely those of *Novaya Rus*. . . . We have to do not so much with the movement of such and such political party, as with the exploitation of the political ignorance and criminal instincts of a part of the population, a sort of organization whose object it is to provoke in Russia, cost what it may, an unconscious movement of destruction and pillage; for, given the state of mind of the masses, any movement at Petrograd will be followed by the most terrible massacres, which will cover with eternal shame the name of free Russia. . . .

" . . . By the admission of Ulyanov-Lenin himself, the situation of the extreme left wing of the Social-Democrats in Russia is very favourable."

Here Kerensky read the following quotation from Lenin's article:

Think of it! . . . The German comrades have only one Liebknecht, without newspapers, without freedom of meeting, without a Soviet. . . . They are opposed by the incredible hostility of all classes of society—and yet the German comrades try to act; while we, having dozens of newspapers, freedom of meeting, the majority of the Soviets, we, the best-placed international proletarians of the entire world, can we refuse to support the German revolutionists and insurrectionary organizations? . . .

Kerensky then continued:

"The organizers of rebellion recognize thus implicitly that the most perfect conditions for the free action of a political party obtain now in Russia, administered by a Provisional Government, at the head of which is, in the eyes of this party, 'a usurper and a man who has sold himself to the bourgeoisie, the Minister-President Kerensky. . . .'

" . . . The organizers of the insurrection do not come to the aid of the German proletariat, but of the German governing classes, and they open the Russian front to the iron fists of Wilhelm and his friends. . . . Little matter to the Provisional

Government the motives of these people, little matter if they act consciously or unconsciously; but in any case, from this tribune, in full consciousness of my responsibility I qualify such acts of a Russian political party as acts of treason to Russia!

"... I place myself at the point of view of the Right, and I propose immediately to proceed to an investigation and make the necessary arrests." (Uproar from the Left.) "Listen to me!" he cried in a powerful voice. "At the moment when the state is in danger, because of conscious or unconscious treason, the Provisional Government, and myself among others, prefer to be killed rather than betray the life, the honour, and the independence of Russia. . . ."

At this moment a paper was handed to Kerensky.

"I have just received the proclamation which they are distributing to the regiments. Here is the contents." Reading:

"The Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies is menaced. We order immediately the regiments to mobilize on a war footing and to await new orders. All delay or non-execution of this order will be considered as an act of treason to the Revolution. The Military Revolutionary Committee. For the President, Podvoisky. The Secretary, Antonov."

"In reality this is an attempt to raise the populace against the existing order of things, to break the Constituent and to open the front to the regiments of the iron fist of Wilhelm. . . ."

"I say 'populace' intentionally, because the conscious democracy and its Tsay-ee-kah, all the Army organizations, all that free Russia glorifies, the good sense, the honour and the conscience of the great Russian democracy, protests against these things. . . ."

"I have not come here with a prayer, but to state my firm conviction that the Provisional Government, which defends at this moment our new liberty—that the new Russian state, destined to a brilliant future, will find unanimous support except among those who have never dared to face the truth. . . ."

"... The Provisional Government has never violated the liberty of all citizens of the State to use their political rights. . . . But now the Provisional Government . . . declares: in this moment those elements of the Russian nation, those groups and parties who have dared to lift their hands against the free will of the Russian people, at the same time threatening to open the front to Germany, must be liquidated with decision! . . ."

"Let the population of Petrograd understand that it will counter a firm power, and perhaps at the last moment go

sense, conscience, and honour will triumph in the hearts of those who still possess them. . . ."

All through this speech the hall rang with deafening clamour. When the Minister-President had stepped down, pale-faced and wet with perspiration, and strode out with his suite of officers, speaker after speaker from the Left and Centre attacked the Right, all one angry roaring. Even the Socialist Revolutionaries, through Gotz:

"The policy of the Bolsheviki is demagogic and criminal in their exploitation of the popular discontent. But there is a whole series of popular demands which have received no satisfaction up to now. . . . The questions of peace, land, and the democratization of the army ought to be stated in such a fashion that no soldier, peasant, or worker would have the least doubt that our Government is attempting, firmly and infallibly, to solve them. . . ."

"We Mensheviki do not wish to provoke a Cabinet crisis, and we are ready to defend the Provisional Government with all our energy, to the last drop of our blood—if only the Provisional Government, on all these burning questions, will speak the clear and precise words awaited by the people with such impatience. . . ."

Then Martov, furious:

"The words of the Minister-President, who allowed himself to speak of 'populace' when it is the question of the moment of important sections of the proletariat and the army—although led in the wrong direction—are nothing but an incitement to civil war."

The order of the day proposed by the Left was voted. It amounted practically to a vote of lack of confidence:

1. The armed demonstration which has been preparing for some days past has for its object a *coup d'état*, threatens to provoke civil war, creates conditions favourable to pogroms and counter-revolution, the mobilization of counter-revolutionary forces, such as the Black Hundreds, which will inevitably bring about the impossibility of convoking the Constituent, will cause a military catastrophe, the death of the Revolution, paralyse the economic life of the country and destroy Russia;

2. The conditions favourable to this agitation have been created by delay in passing urgent measures, as well as objective conditions caused by the war and the general disorder. It is necessary before everything to promulgate at once a decree transmitting the land to the peasants' Land Committees, and to adopt an energetic course of action abroad in proposing to the Allies to proclaim their peace terms and to begin peace parleys;

3. To cope with Monarchist manifestations and pogromist movements

it is indispensable to take immediate measures to suppress these movements, and for this purpose to create at Petrograd a Committee of Public Safety, composed of representatives of the Municipality and the organs of the revolutionary democracy, acting in contact with the Provisional Government. . . .

It is interesting to note that the Mensheviki and Socialist Revolutionaries all rallied to this resolution. . . . When Kerensky saw it, however, he summoned Avksentiev to the Winter Palace to explain. If it expressed a lack of confidence in the Provisional Government, he begged Avksentiev to form a new Cabinet. Dan, Gotz, and Avksentiev, the leaders of the "compromisers," performed their last compromise. . . . They explained to Kerensky that it was not meant as a criticism of the Government!

At the corner of the Morskaya and the Nevsky, squads of soldiers with fixed bayonets were stopping all private automobiles, turning out the occupants, and ordering them towards the Winter Palace. A large crowd had gathered to watch them. Nobody knew whether the soldiers belonged to the Government or the Military Revolutionary Committee. Up in front of the Kazan Cathedral the same thing was happening, machines being directed back up the Nevsky. Five or six sailors with rifles came along, laughing excitedly, and fell into conversation with two of the soldiers. On the sailors' hat bands were *Avrora* and *Zaria Svobody*—the names of the leading Bolshevik cruisers of the Baltic Fleet. One of them said, "Kronstadt is coming!" . . . It was as if, in 1792, on the streets of Paris, someone had said "The Marseillais are coming!" For at Kronstadt were twenty-five thousand sailors, convinced Bolsheviks and not afraid to die. . . .

Rabochi i Soldat was just out, all its front page one huge proclamation:

SOLDIERS! WORKERS! CITIZENS!

The enemies of the people passed last night to the offensive. The Kornilovists of the Staff are trying to draw in from the suburbs *yunkers* and volunteer battalions. The Oranienbaum *yunkers* and the Tsarskoye Selo volunteers refused to come out. A stroke of high treason is being contemplated against the Petrograd Soviet. . . . The campaign of the counter-revolutionists is being directed against the All-Russian Congress of Soviets on the eve of its opening, against the Constituent Assembly, against the people. The Petrograd Soviet is guarding the Revolution. The Military Revolutionary Committee is directing the repulse of the conspir-

ators' attack. The entire garrison and proletariat of Petrograd are ready to deal the enemy of the people a crushing blow.

The Military Revolutionary Committee decrees:

1. All regimental, division, and battleship Committees, together with the Soviet Commissars, and all revolutionary organizations, shall meet in continuous session, concentrating in their hands all information about the plans of the conspirators.

2. Not one soldier shall leave his division without permission of the Committee.

3. To send to Smolny at once two delegates from each military unit and five from each Ward Soviet.

4. All members of the Petrograd Soviet and all delegates to the All-Russian Congress are invited immediately to Smolny for an extraordinary meeting.

Counter-revolution has raised its criminal head.

A great danger threatens all the conquests and hopes of the soldiers and workers.

But the forces of the Revolution by far exceed those of its enemies.

The cause of the People is in strong hands. The conspirators will be crushed.

No hesitation or doubts! Firmness, steadfastness, discipline, determination!

Long live the Revolution!

The Military Revolutionary Committee

The Petrograd Soviet was meeting continuously at Smolny, a centre of storm, delegates falling down asleep on the floor and rising again to take part in the debate, Trotsky, Kameniev, Volodarsky speaking six, eight, twelve hours a day. . . .

I went down to room 18 on the first floor where the Bolshevik delegates were holding caucus, a harsh voice steadily booming, the speaker hidden by the crowd: "The compromisers say that we are isolated. Pay no attention to them. Once it begins they must be dragged along with us, or else lose their following. . . ."

Here he held up a piece of paper. "We are dragging them! A message has just come from the Mensheviki and Socialist Revolutionaries! They say that they condemn our action, but that if the Government attacks us they will not oppose the cause of the proletariat!" Exultant shouting. . . .

As night fell the great hall filled with soldiers and workmen, a monstrous dun mass, deep-humming in a blue haze of smoke. The old Tsay-ee-kah had finally decided to welcome the delegates to that new Congress which would mean its own ruin—and perhaps the ruin of the revolutionary order it had built. At this

meeting, however, only members of the Tsay-ee-kah could vote. . . .

It was after midnight when Gotz took the chair and Dan rose to speak, in a tense silence, which seemed to me almost menacing.

"The hours in which we live appear in the most tragic colors," he said "The enemy is at the gates of Petrograd, the forces of the democracy are trying to organize to resist him, and yet we await bloodshed in the streets of the capital, and famine threatens to destroy, not only our homogeneous Government but the Revolution itself. . . .

"The masses are sick and exhausted. They have no interest in the Revolution. If the Bolsheviki start anything, that will be the end of the Revolution. . . ." (Cries, "That's a lie!") "The counter-revolutionists are waiting with the Bolsheviki to begin riots and massacres. . . . If there is any *vystuplenie*, there will be no Constituent Assembly. . . ." (Cries, "Lie! Shame!")

"It is inadmissible that in the zone of military operations the Petrograd garrison shall not submit to the orders of the Staff. . . . You must obey the orders of the Staff and of the Tsay-ee-kah elected by you. All Power to the Soviets—that means death! Robbers and thieves are waiting for the moment to loot and burn. . . . When you have such slogans put before you, 'Enter the houses, take away the shoes and clothes from the bourgeoisie—' " (Tumult. Cries, "No such slogan! A lie! A lie!") "Well, it may start differently, but it will end that way!

"The Tsay-ee-kah has full power to act, and must be obeyed. . . . We are not afraid of bayonets. . . . The Tsay-ee-kah will defend the Revolution with its body. . . ." (Cries, "It was a dead body long ago!")

Immense continued uproar, in which his voice could be heard screaming, as he pounded the desk, "Those who are urging this are committing a crime!"

Voice: "You committed a crime long ago, when you captured the power and turned it over to the bourgeoisie!"

Gotz, ringing the chairman's bell: "Silence, or I'll have you put out!"

Voice: "Try it!" (Cheers and whistling.)

"Now concerning our policy about peace." (Laughter.) "Unfortunately Russia can no longer support the continuation of the war. There is going to be peace, but not permanent peace—not a democratisation peace. . . . Today, at the Council of the Republic, in order to avoid bloodshed, we passed an order of the day demanding the surrender of the land to the Land Committees and

immediate peace negotiations. . . ." (Laughter, and cries, "Too late!")

Then for the Bolsheviki, Trotsky mounted the tribune, borne on a wave of roaring applause that burst into cheers and a rising house, thunderous. His thin, pointed face was positively Mephistophelian in its expression of malicious irony.

"Dan's tactics prove that the masses—the great, dull, indifferent masses—are absolutely with him!" (Titanic mirth.) He turned towards the chairman, dramatically. "When we spoke of giving the land to the peasants you were against it. We told the peasants, 'If they don't give it to you, take it yourselves!' and the peasants followed our advice. And now you advocate what we did six months ago. . . .

"I don't think Kerensky's order to suspend the death penalty in the army was dictated by his ideals. I think Kerensky was persuaded by the Petrograd garrison, which refused to obey him. . . .

"Today Dan is accused of having made a speech in the Council of the Republic which proves him to be a secret Bolsheviki. . . . The time may come when Dan will say that the flower of the Revolution participated in the rising of 16 and 18 July. . . . In Dan's resolution today at the Council of the Republic there was no mention of enforcing discipline in the army, although that is urged into the propaganda of his party. . . .

"No. The history of the last seven months shows that the masses have left the Mensheviki. The Mensheviki and the Socialist Revolutionaries conquered the Cadets, and then when they got the power they gave it to the Cadets. . . .

"Dan tells you that you have no right to make an insurrection. Insurrection is the right of all revolutionists! When the down-trodden masses revolt it is their right. . . ."

Then the long-faced, cruel-tongued Lieber, greeted with groans and laughter.

"Engels and Marx said that the proletariat had no right to take power until it was ready for it. In a bourgeois revolution like this . . . the seizure of power by the masses means the tragic end of the Revolution. . . . Trotsky, as a Social-Democratic theorist, is himself opposed to what he is now advocating. . . ." (Cries, "Enough! Down with him!")

Martov constantly interrupted: "The Internationalists are not opposed to the transmission of power to the democracy, but they disapprove of the methods of the Bolsheviki. This is not the moment to seize the power. . . ."

Again Dan took the floor, violently protesting against the action of the Military Revolutionary Committee, which had sent a Commissar to seize the office of *Izvestia* and censor the paper. The wildest uproar followed. Martov tried to speak, but could not be heard. Delegates of the Army and the Baltic Fleet stood up all over the hall, shouting that the Soviet was *their* Government. . . .

Amid the wildest confusion Ehrlich offered a resolution, appealing to the workers and soldiers to remain calm and not to respond to provocations to demonstrate, recognizing the necessity of immediately creating a Committee at once to pass decrees transferring the land to the peasants and beginning peace negotiations. . . .

Then up leaped Volodarsky, shouting harshly that the Tsay-ee-kah, on the eve of the Congress, had no right to assume the functions of the Congress. The Tsay-ee-kah was practically dead, he said, and the resolution was simply a trick to bolster up its waning power. . . .

"As for us, Bolsheviki, we will not vote on this resolution!" Whereupon all the Bolsheviki left the hall and the resolution was passed. . . .

Towards four in the morning I met Zorin in the outer hall, a rifle slung from his shoulder.

"We're moving!"²⁵ said he, calmly, but with satisfaction. "We pinched the Assistant Minister of Justice and the Minister of Religions. They're down cellar now. One regiment is on the march to capture the Telephone Exchange, another the Telegraph Agency, another the State Bank. The Red Guard is out. . . ."

On the steps of Smolny, in the chill dark, we first saw the Red Guard—a huddled group of boys in workmen's clothes, carrying guns with bayonets, talking nervously together.

Far over the still roofs westward came the sound of scattered rifle fire, where the *yunkers* were trying to open the bridges over the Neva, to prevent the factory workers and soldiers of the Viborg quarter from joining the Soviet forces in the centre of the city; and the Kronstadt sailors were closing them again. . . .

Behind us great Smolny, bright with lights, hummed like a gigantic hive. . . .

4

The Fall of the Provisional Government

Wednesday, 7 November, I rose very late. The noon cannon boomed from Peter-Paul as I went down the Nevsky. It was a raw, chill day. In front of the State Bank some soldiers with fixed bayonets were standing at the closed gates.

"What side do you belong to?" I asked. "The Government?"

"No more Government," one answered with a grin. "*Slava Bogu!* Glory to God!" That was all I could get out of him. . . .

The street-cars were running on the Nevsky, men, women, and small boys hanging on every projection. Shops were open, and there seemed even less uneasiness among the street crowds than there had been the day before. A whole crop of new appeals against insurrection had blossomed out on the walls during the night—to the peasants, to the soldiers at the front, to the workmen of Petrograd. One read:

FROM THE PETROGRAD MUNICIPAL DUMA

The Municipal Duma informs the citizens that in the extraordinary meeting of 6 November the Duma formed a Committee of Public Safety, composed of members of the Central and Ward Dumas, and representatives of the following revolutionary democratic organizations: The Tsay-ee-kah, the All-Russian Executive Committee of Peasant Deputies, the Army organizations, the Tsentroflot, the Petrograd Soviet Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies (!), the Council of Trade Unions, and others.

Members of the Committee of Public Safety will be on duty in the building of the Municipal Duma. Telephones No. 15-40, 223-7, 138-36.

7 November 1917

Though I didn't realize it then, this was the Duma's declaration of war against the Bolsheviks.

I bought a copy of *Rabochi Put*, the only newspaper which seemed on sale, and a little later paid a soldier fifty kopeks for a second-hand copy of *Dien*. The Bolshevik paper, printed on large-sized sheets in the conquered office of the *Russkaya Volia*, had huge headlines: "ALL POWER—TO THE SOVIETS OF WORKERS, SOLDIERS, AND PEASANTS! PEACE! BREAD! LAND!" The leading article was signed "Zinoviev"—Lenin's companion in hiding. It began:

Every soldier, every worker, every real Socialist, every honest democrat, realizes that there are only two alternatives to the present situation.

Either—the power will remain in the hands of the bourgeois-landlord crew, and this will mean every kind of repression for the workers, soldiers, and peasants, continuation of the war, inevitable hunger and death. . . .

Or—the power will be transferred to the hands of the revolutionary workers, soldiers, and peasants; in that case it will mean a complete abolition of landlord tyranny, immediate check of the capitalists, immediate proposal of a just peace. Then the land is assured to the peasants, then control of industry is assured to the workers, then bread is assured to the hungry, then the end of this nonsensical war! . . .

Dien contained fragmentary news of the agitated night. Bolsheviks capture of the Telephone Exchange, the Baltic station, the Telegraph Agency; the Peterhof *yunkers* unable to reach Petrograd; the Cossacks undecided; arrest of some of the Ministers; shooting of Chief of the City Militia Meyer; arrests, counter-arrests, skirmishes between clashing patrols of soldiers, *yunkers*, and Red Guards.²⁶

On the corner of the Morskaya I ran into Captain Comberg, Menshevik *oboronets*, secretary of the Military Section of his party. When I asked him if the insurrection had really happened he shrugged his shoulders in a tired manner and replied, "*Chort znayet!* The devil knows! Well, perhaps the Bolsheviks can seize the power, but they won't be able to hold it more than three days. They haven't the men to run a government. Perhaps it's a good thing to let them try—that will finish them. . . ."

The Military Hotel at the corner of St. Isaac's Square was picketed by armed sailors. In the lobby were many of the smart young officers, walking up and down or muttering together; the sailors wouldn't let them leave. . . .

Suddenly came the sharp crack of a rifle outside, followed by

a scattered burst of firing. I ran out. Something unusual was going on around the Marinsky Palace, where the Council of the Russian Republic met. Diagonally across the wide square was drawn a line of sailors, rifles ready, staring at the hotel roof.

"*Provocatzia!* Shot at us!" snapped one, while another went running towards the door.

At the western corner of the Palace lay a big armoured car with a red flag flying from it, newly lettered in red paint: "S.R.S.D." (*Soviet Rabochikh Soldatskikh Deputatov*); all the guns trained towards St. Isaac's. A barricade had been heaped up across the mouth of Novaya Ulitsa—boxes, barrels, an old bed-spring, a wagon. A pile of lumber barred the end of the Moika quay. Short logs from a neighbouring wood-pile were being built up along the front of the building to form breastworks. . . .

"Is there going to be any fighting?" I asked.

"Soon, soon," answered a soldier, nervously. "Go away, comrade, you'll get hurt. They will come from that direction," pointing towards the Admiralty.

"Who will?"

"That I couldn't tell you, brother," he answered, and spat.

Before the door of the Palace was a crowd of soldiers and sailors. A sailor was telling of the end of the Council of the Russian Republic. "We walked in there," he said, "and filled all the doors with comrades. I went up to the counter-revolutionist Kornilovits who sat in the president's chair. 'No more Council,' I says. 'Run along home now!'"

There was laughter. By waving assorted papers I managed to get around to the door of the press gallery. There an enormous smiling sailor stopped me, and when I showed my pass, just said, "If you were Saint Michael himself, comrade, you couldn't pass here!" Through the glass of the door I made out the distorted face and gesticulating arms of a French correspondent, locked in. . . .

Around in front stood a little, grey-moustached man in the uniform of a general, the centre of a knot of soldiers. He was very red in the face.

"I am General Alexeyev," he cried. "As your superior officer and as a member of the Council of the Republic I demand to be allowed to pass!" The guard scratched his head, looking uneasily out of the corner of his eye, he beckoned to an approaching officer, who grew very agitated when he saw who it was and saluted before he realized what he was doing.

"*Vashe Vuisokoprevoskhoditelstvo*—your High Excellency—"

he stammered in the manner of the old régime. "Access to the Palace is strictly forbidden—I have no right—"

An automobile came by, and I saw Gotz sitting inside, laughing apparently with great amusement. A few minutes later another, with armed soldiers on the front seat, full of arrested members of the Provisional Government. Peters, Lettish member of the Military Revolutionary Committee, came hurrying across the Square.

"I thought you bagged all those gentlemen last night," said I, pointing to them.

"Oh," he answered, with the expression of a disappointed schoolboy. "The damn fools let most of them go again before we made up our minds. . . ."

Down the Voskressensky Prospect a great mass of sailors were drawn up, and behind them came marching soldiers, as far as the eye could reach.

We went towards the Winter Palace by way of the Admiralteisky. All the entrances to the Palace Square were closed by sentries, and a cordon of troops stretched clear across the western end, besieged by an uneasy throng of citizens. Except for far-away soldiers who seemed to be carrying wood out of the Palace courtyard and piling it in front of the main gateway, everything was quiet.

We couldn't make out whether the sentries were pro-Government or pro-Soviet. Our papers from Smolny had no effect, however, so we approached another part of the line with an important air and showed our American passports, saying, "Official business!" and shouldered through. At the door of the Palace the same old *shveitzari*, in their brass-buttoned blue uniforms with the red-and-gold collars, politely took our coats and hats and we went upstairs. In the dark, gloomy corridor, stripped of its tapestries, a few old attendants were lounging about, and in front of Kerensky's door a young officer paced up and down, gnawing his moustache. We asked if we could interview the Minister-President. He bowed and clicked his heels.

"No, I am sorry," he replied in French. "Alexander Feodorovich is extremely occupied just now. . . ." He looked at us for a moment. "In fact, he is not here. . . ."

"Where is he?"

"He has gone to the front.²⁷ And do you know, there wasn't enough gasoline for his automobile. We had to send to the English Hospital and borrow some."

"Are the Ministers here?"

"They are meeting in some room—I don't know where."

"Are the Bolsheviki coming?"

"Of course. Certainly they are coming. I expect a telephone call every minute to say that they are coming. But we are ready. We have *yunkers* in the front of the Palace. Through that door there."

"Can we go in there?"

"No. Certainly not. It is not permitted." Abruptly he shook hands all round and walked away. We turned to the forbidden door, set in a temporary partition dividing the hall and locked on the outside. On the other side were voices, and somebody laughing. Except for that the vast spaces of the old Palace were as silent as the grave. An old *shveitzar* ran up. "No, *barin*, you must not go in there."

"Why is the door locked?"

"To keep the soldiers in," he answered. After a few minutes he said something about having a glass of tea and went back up the hall. We unlocked the door.

Just inside a couple of soldiers stood on guard, but they said nothing. At the end of the corridor was a large, ornate room with gilded cornices and enormous crystal lustres, and beyond it several smaller ones, wainscoted with dark wood. On both sides of the parquered floor lay rows of dirty mattresses and blankets, upon which occasional soldiers were stretched out; everywhere was a litter of cigarette butts, bits of bread, cloth, and empty bottles with expensive French labels. More and more soldiers with the red shoulder-straps of the *yunker* schools, moved about in a stale atmosphere of tobacco-smoke and unwashed humanity. One had a bottle of white Burgundy, evidently filched from the cellars of the Palace. They looked at us with astonishment as we marched past, through room after room, until at last we came out into a series of great state-salons, fronting their long and dirty windows on the Square. The walls were covered with huge canvases in massive gilt frames—historical battle scenes. . . . "12 October 1812" and "6 November 1812" and "16/28 August 1813". . . . One had a gash across the upper right-hand corner.

The place was all a huge barrack, and evidently had been for weeks, from the look of the floor and walls. Machine-guns were mounted on window-sills, rifles stacked between the mattresses.

As we were looking at the pictures an alcoholic breath assailed me from the region of my left ear, and a voice said in thick but fluent French, "I see, by the way you admire the paintings, that

you are foreigners." He was a short, puffy man with a baldish head as he removed his cap.

"Americans? Enchanted. I am Stabs-Captain Vladimir Artzi-bashev, absolutely at your service." It did not seem to occur to him that there was anything unusual in four strangers, one a woman, wandering through the defences of an army awaiting attack. He began to complain of the state of Russia.

"Not only these Bolsheviki," he said, "but the fine traditions of the Russian army are broken down. Look around you. These are all students in the officers' training schools. But are they gentlemen? Kerensky opened the officers' schools to the ranks, to any soldier who could pass an examination. Naturally there are many, many who are contaminated by the Revolution. . . ."

Without consequence he changed the subject. "I am very anxious to get away from Russia. I have made up my mind to join the American army. Will you please go to your Consul and make arrangements? I will give you my address." In spite of our protestations he wrote it on a piece of paper, and seemed to feel better at once. I have it still—"Oranienbaumskaya Shkola Praporshchikov 2nd, Staraya Peterhof."

"We had a review this morning early," he went on, as he guided us through the rooms and explained everything. "The Women's Battalion decided to remain loyal to the Government."

"Are the women soldiers in the Palace?"

"Yes, they are in the back rooms, where they won't be hurt if any trouble comes." He sighed. "It is a great responsibility," said he.

For a while we stood at the window, looking down on the Square before the Palace, where three companies of long-coated *yunkers* were drawn up under arms, being harangued by a tall, energetic-looking officer I recognized as Stankievich, chief Military Commissar of the Provisional Government. After a few minutes two of the companies shouldered arms with a clash, barked three sharp shouts, and went swinging off across the Square, disappearing through the Red Arch into the quiet city.

"They are going to capture the Telephone Exchange," said someone. Three cadets stood by us, and we fell into conversation. They said they had entered the schools from the ranks, and gave their names—Robert Olev, Alexei Vasilienko, and Erni Sachs, an Estonian. But now they didn't want to be officers any more, because officers were very unpopular. They didn't seem to know what to do, as a matter of fact, and it was plain that they were not happy.

But soon they began to boast. "If the Bolsheviki come we shall show them how to fight. They do not dare to fight, they are cowards. But if we should be overpowered, well, every man keeps one bullet for himself. . . ."

At this point there was a burst of rifle-fire not far off. Out on the Square all the people began to run, falling flat on their faces, and the *izvozchiki* standing on the corners galloped in every direction. Inside all was uproar, soldiers running here and there, grabbing up guns, rifle-belts and shouting, "Here they come! Here they come!" . . . But in a few minutes it quieted down again. The *izvozchiki* came back, the people lying down stood up. Through the Red Arch appeared the *yunkers*, marching a little out of step, one of them supported by two comrades.

It was getting late when we left the Palace. The sentries in the Square had all disappeared. The great semi-circle of Government buildings seemed deserted. We went into the Hotel France for dinner, and right in the middle of soup the waiter, very pale in the face, came up and insisted that we move to the main dining room at the back of the house, because they were going to put out the lights in the café. "There will be much shooting," he said.

When we came out on the Morskaya again it was quite dark, except for one flickering street-light on the corner of the Nevsky. Under this stood a big armoured automobile, with racing engine and oil smoke pouring out of it. A small boy had climbed up the side of the thing and was looking down the barrel of a machine-gun. Soldiers and sailors stood around, evidently waiting for something. We walked back up to the Red Arch, where a knot of soldiers was gathered staring at the brightly lighted Winter Palace and talking in loud tones.

"No, comrades," one was saying. "How can we shoot at them? The Women's Battalion is in there—they will say we have fired on Russian women."

As we reached the Nevsky again another armoured car came around the corner, and a man poked his head out of the turret-top. "Come on!" he yelled. "Let's go on through and attack!"

The driver of the other car came over, and shouted so as to be heard above the roaring engine. "The Committee says to wait. They have got artillery behind the wood-piles in there. . . ."

Here the streetcars had stopped running, few people passed, and there were no lights; but a few blocks away we could see the trams, the crowds, the lighted shop-windows and the electric signs of the moving-picture shows—life going on as usual. We

had tickets to the Ballet at the Marinsky Theatre—all the theatres were open—but it was too exciting out of doors. . . .

In the darkness we stumbled over lumber-piles barricading the Police Bridge, and before the Stroganov Palace made out some soldiers wheeling into position a three-inch field-gun. Men in various uniforms were coming and going in an aimless way, and doing a great deal of talking. . . .

Up the Nevsky the whole city seemed to be out promenading. On every corner immense crowds were massed around a core of hot discussion. Pickets of a dozen soldiers with fixed bayonets lounged at the street crossings, red-faced old men in rich fur coats shook their fists at them, smartly-dressed women screamed epithets; the soldiers argued feebly, with embarrassed grins. . . . Armoured cars went up and down the street, named after the first Tsars—Oleg, Rurik, Svietoslav—and daubed with huge red letters, "R.S.D.R.P." (*Rossiskaya Sotsial-Democrateeskaya Rabochaya Partia*). At the Mikhailovsky a man appeared with an armful of newspapers, and was immediately stormed by frantic people, offering a rouble, five roubles, ten roubles, tearing at each other like animals. It was *Rabochi i Soldat*, announcing the victory of the Proletarian Revolution, the liberation of the Bolsheviks still in prison, calling upon the Army front and rear for support . . . a feverish little sheet of four pages, running to enormous type, containing no news. . . .

On the corner of the Sadovaya about two thousand citizens had gathered, staring up at the roof of a tall building, where a tiny red spark glowed and waned.

"See!" said a tall peasant, pointing to it. "It is a provocator. Presently he will fire on the people. . . ." Apparently no one thought of going to investigate.

The massive façade of Smolny blazed with lights as we drove up, and from every street converged upon it streams of hurrying shapes dim in the gloom. Automobiles and motor-cycles came and went; an enormous elephant-coloured armoured automobile, with two red flags flying from the turret, lumbered out with screaming siren. It was cold, and at the outer gate the Red Guards had built themselves a bonfire. At the inner gate, too, there was a blaze, by the light of which sentries slowly spelled out our passes and looked us up and down. The canvas covers had been taken off the four rapid-fire guns on each side of the doorway, and the ammunition-belts hung snake-like from their breeches. A dun herd of armoured cars stood under the trees in

the courtyard, engines going. The long, bare, dimly illuminated halls roared with the thunder of feet, calling, shouting. . . . There was an atmosphere of recklessness. A crowd came pouring down the staircase, workers in black blouses and round black fur hats, many of them with guns slung over their shoulders, soldiers in rough dirt-coloured coats and grey fur *shapki* pinched flat, a leader or so—Lunacharsky, Kameniev—hurrying along in the centre of a group all talking at once, with harassed anxious faces, and bulging portfolios under their arms. The extraordinary meeting of the Petrograd Soviet was over. I stopped Kameniev—a quick-moving little man, with a wide, vivacious face set close to his shoulders. Without preface he read in rapid French a copy of the resolution just passed:

The Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, saluting the victorious Revolution of the Petrograd proletariat and garrison, particularly emphasizes the unity, organization, discipline, and complete cooperation shown by the masses in this rising; rarely has less blood been spilled, and rarely has an insurrection succeeded so well.

The Soviet expresses its firm conviction that the Workers' and Peasants' Government which, as the government of the Soviets, will be created by the Revolution, and which will assure the industrial proletariat of the support of the entire mass of poor peasants, will march firmly towards Socialism, the only means by which the country can be spared the miseries and unheard-of horrors of war.

The new Workers' and Peasants' Government will propose immediately a just and democratic peace to all the belligerent countries.

It will suppress immediately the great landed property, and transfer the land to the peasants. It will establish workmen's control over production and distribution of manufactured products, and will set up a general control over the banks, which it will transform into a state monopoly.

The Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies calls upon the workers and peasants of Russia to support with all their energy and all their devotion the Proletarian Revolution. The Soviet expresses its conviction that the city workers, allies of the poor peasants, will assure complete revolutionary order, indispensable to the victory of Socialism. The Soviet is convinced that the proletariat of the countries of Western Europe will aid us in conducting the cause of Socialism to a real and lasting victory.

"You consider it won then?"

He lifted his shoulders. "There is much to do. Horribly much. It is just beginning. . . ."

On the landing I met Riazanov, vice-president of the Trade

Unions, looking black and biting his grey beard. "It's insane! Insane!" he shouted. "The European working class won't move! All Russia—" He waved his hand distractedly and ran off. Riazanov and Kameniev had both opposed the insurrection, and felt the lash of Lenin's terrible tongue. . . .

It had been a momentous session. In the name of the Military Revolutionary Committee Trotsky had declared that the Provisional Government no longer existed.

"The characteristic of bourgeois governments," he said, "is to deceive the people. We, the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies, are going to try an experiment unique in history; we are going to found a power which will have no other aim but to satisfy the needs of the soldiers, workers, and peasants."

Lenin had appeared, welcomed with a mighty ovation, prophesying world-wide Social Revolution. . . . And Zinoviev, crying, "This day we have paid our debt to the international proletariat, and struck a terrible blow at the war, a terrible body-blow at all the imperialists, and particularly at Wilhelm the Executioner. . . ."

Then Trotsky, that telegrams had been sent to the front announcing the victorious insurrection, but no reply had come. Troops were said to be marching against Petrograd—a delegation must be sent to tell them the truth.

Cries, "You are anticipating the will of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets!"

Trotsky, coldly, "The will of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets has been anticipated by the rising of the Petrograd workers and soldiers!"

So we came into the great meeting-hall, pushing through the clamorous mob at the door. In the rows of seats, under the white chandeliers, packed immovably in the aisles and on the sides, perched on every window-sill, and even the edge of the platform, the representatives of the workers and soldiers of all Russia waited in anxious silence or wild exultation the ringing of the chairman's bell. There was no heat in the hall but the stifling heat of unwashed human bodies. A foul blue cloud of cigarette smoke rose from the mass and hung in the thick air. Occasionally someone in authority mounted the tribune and asked the comrades not to smoke; then everybody, smokers and all, took up the cry, "Don't smoke, comrades!" and went on smoking. Petrovsky, Anarchist delegate from the Obukhov factory, made a seat for me beside him. Unshaven and filthy, he was reeling from three nights' sleepless work on the Military Revolutionary Committee.

On the platform sat the leaders of the old Tsay-ee-kah—for the last time dominating the turbulent Soviets, which they had ruled from the first days, and which were now risen against them. It was the end of the first period of the Russian revolution, which these men had attempted to guide in careful ways. . . . The three greatest of them were not there: Kerensky, flying to the front through country towns all doubtfully heaving up; Chkheidze, the old eagle, who had contemptuously retired to his own Georgian mountains, there to sicken with consumption; and the high-souled Tsereteli, also mortally stricken, who, nevertheless, would return and pour out his beautiful eloquence for the lost cause. Gotz sat there, Dan, Lieber, Bogdanov, Broido, Fillipovsky—white-faced, hollow-eyed and indignant. Below them the second *siezd* of the All-Russian Soviets boiled and swirled, and over their heads the Military Revolutionary Committee functioned white-hot, holding in its hands the threads of insurrection and striking with a long arm. . . . It was 10:40 p.m.

Dan, a mild-faced, baldish figure in a shapeless military surgeon's uniform, was ringing the bell. Silence fell sharply, intense, broken by the scuffling and disputing of the people at the door. . . .

"We have the power in our hands," he began sadly, stopped for a moment, and then went on in a low voice. "Comrades! The Congress of Soviets is meeting in such unusual circumstances and in such an extraordinary moment that you will understand why the Tsay-ee-kah considers it unnecessary to address you with a political speech. This will become much clearer to you if you will recollect that I am a member of the Tsay-ee-kah, and that at this moment our Party comrades are in the Winter Palace under bombardment, sacrificing themselves to execute the duty put on them by the Tsay-ee-kah." (Confused uproar.)

"I declare the first session of the Second Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies open!"

The election of the presidium took place amid stir and moving about. Avanesov announced that by agreement of the Bolsheviks, Left Socialist Revolutionaries, and Menshevik Internationalists, it was decided to base the presidium upon proportionality. Several Mensheviks leaped to their feet protesting. A bearded soldier shouted at them, "Remember what you did to us Bolsheviks when we were in the minority!" Result—14 Bolsheviks, 7 Socialist Revolutionaries, 3 Mensheviks, and 1 Internationalist (Gorky's group). Hendelmann, for the right and centre Socialist Revolutionaries, said that they refused to take part in the presid-

ium, the same from Khinchuk, for the Mensheviks; and from the Menshevik Internationalists, that until the verification of certain circumstances, they too could not enter the presidium. Scattering applause and hoots. One voice, "Renegades, you call yourselves Socialists!" A representative of the Ukrainian delegates demanded, and received, a place. Then the old Tsay-ee-kah stepped down, and in their places appeared Trotsky, Kameniev, Lunacharsky, Madame Kollontai, Nogin. . . . The hall rose, thundering. How far they had soared, these Bolsheviks, from a despised and hunted sect less than four months ago, to this supreme place, the helm of great Russia in full tide of insurrection!

The order of the day, said Kameniev, was first Organization of Power; second, War and Peace; and third, the Constitutional Assembly. Lozovsky, rising, announced that upon agreement of the bureaux of all factions, it was proposed to hear and discuss the report of the Petrograd Soviet, then to give the floor to members of the Tsay-ee-kah and the different parties, and finally to pass to the order of the day.

But suddenly a new sound made itself heard, deeper than the tumult of the crowd, persistent, disquieting—the dull shock of guns. People looked anxiously towards the clouded windows, and a sort of fever came over them. Martov, demanding the floor, croaked hoarsely, "The civil war is beginning, comrades! The first question must be a peaceful settlement of the crisis. On principle and from a political standpoint we must urgently discuss a means of averting civil war. Our brothers are being shot down in the streets! At this moment, when before the opening of the Congress of Soviets the question of Power is being settled by means of a military plot organized by one of the revolutionary parties—" for a moment he could not make himself heard above the noise, "All of the revolutionary parties must face the fact!

"The first *vopros* (question) before the Congress is the question of power, and this question is already being settled by force of arms in the streets! . . . We must create a power which will be recognized by the whole democracy. If the Congress wishes to be the voice of the revolutionary democracy it must not sit with folded hands before the developing civil war, the result of which may be a dangerous outburst of counter-revolution. . . . The possibility of a peaceful outcome lies in the formation of a united democratic authority. . . . We must elect a delegation to negotiate with the other Socialist parties and organizations. . . ."

Always the methodical muffled boom of cannon through the windows, and the delegates, screaming at each other. . . . So,

with the crash of artillery, in the dark, with hatred, and fear, and reckless daring, new Russia was being born.

The Left Socialist Revolutionaries and the United Social Democrats supported Martov's proposition. It was accepted. A soldier announced that the All-Russian Peasants' Soviets had refused to send delegates to the Congress; he proposed that a committee be sent with a formal invitation. "Some delegates are present," he said. "I move that they be given votes." Accepted.

Kharash, wearing the epaulettes of a captain, passionately demanded the floor. "The political hypocrites who control this Congress," he shouted, "told us we were to settle the question of Power—and it is being settled behind our backs, before the Congress opens! Blows are being struck against the Winter Palace, and it is by such blows that the nails are being driven into the coffin of the political party which has risked such an adventure!" Uproar. Followed him Gharra: "While we are here discussing propositions of peace, there is a battle on in the streets. . . . The Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks refuse to be involved in what is happening, and call upon all public forces to resist the attempt to capture the power. . . ." Kuchin, delegate of the 12th Army and representative of the Trudoviki: "I was sent here only for information, and I am returning at once to the front, where all the Army Committees consider that the taking of power by the Soviets, only three weeks before the Constituent Assembly, is a stab in the back of the Army and a crime against the people—" Shouts of "Lie! You lie!" . . . When he could be heard again, "Let's make an end of this adventure in Petrograd! I call upon all the delegates to leave this hall in order to save the country and the revolution!" As he went down the aisle in the midst of a deafening noise, people surged upon him, threatening. . . . Then an officer with a long brown goatee, speaking suavely and persuasively: "I speak for the delegates from the front. The Army is imperfectly represented in this Congress, and furthermore, the Army does not consider the Congress of Soviets necessary at this time, only three weeks before the opening of the Constituent—" shouts and stamping, always growing more violent. "The Army does not consider that the Congress of the Soviets has the necessary authority—" Soldiers began to stand up all over the hall.

"Who are you speaking for? What do you represent?" they cried.

"The Central Executive Committee of the Soviet of the Fifth

Army, the Second F—Regiment, the First N—Regiment, the Third S—Rifles. . . .”

“When were you elected? You represent the officers, not the soldiers! What do the soldiers say about it?” Jeers and hoots.

“We, the front group, disclaim all responsibility for what has happened and is happening, and we consider it necessary to mobilize all self-conscious revolutionary forces for the salvation of the Revolution! The front group will leave the Congress. . . . The place to fight is out on the streets!”

Immense bawling outcry. “You speak for the Staff—not for the Army!”

“I appeal to all reasonable soldiers to leave this Congress!”

“Kornilovist! Counter-revolutionist! Provocator!” were hurled at him.

On behalf of the Mensheviki, Khinchuk then announced that the only possibility of a peaceful solution was to begin negotiations with the Provisional Government for the formation of a new Cabinet, which would find support in all strata of society. He could not proceed for several minutes. Raising his voice to a shout he read the Menshevik declaration:

“Because the Bolsheviks have made a military conspiracy with the aid of the Petrograd Soviet, without consulting the other factions and parties, we find it impossible to remain in the Congress, and therefore withdraw, inviting the other groups to follow us and to meet for discussion of the situation!”

“Deserter!” At intervals in the almost continuous disturbance Hendelmann, for the Socialist Revolutionaries, could be heard protesting against the bombardment of the Winter Palace. . . .

“We are opposed to this kind of anarchy. . . .”

Scarcely had he stepped down when a young, lean-faced soldier, with flashing eyes, leaped to the platform, and dramatically lifted his hand:

“Comrades!” he cried, and there was a hush. “My *familia* (name) is Peterson—I speak for the Second Lettish Rifles. You have heard the statements of two representatives of the Army committees; these statements would have some value *if their authors had been representatives of the Army*—” Wild applause. “*But they do not represent the soldiers!*” Shaking his fist. “The Twelfth Army has been insisting for a long time upon the re-election of the Great Soviet and the Army Committee, but just as your own Tsay-ee-kah, our Committee refused to call a meeting of the representatives of the masses until the end of September, so that the reactionaries could elect their own false

delegates to this Congress. I tell you now, the Lettish soldiers have many times said, ‘No more resolutions! No more talk! We want deeds—the Power must be in our hands!’ Let these impostor delegates leave the Congress! The Army is not with them!”

The hall rocked with cheering. In the first moments of the session, stunned by the rapidity of events, startled by the sound of cannon, the delegates had hesitated. For an hour hammer-blow after hammer-blow had fallen from that tribune, welding them together but beating them down. Did they stand then alone? Was Russia rising against them? Was it true that the Army was marching on Petrograd? Then this clear-eyed young soldier had spoken, and in a flash they knew it for the truth. . . . *This* was the voice of the soldiers—the stirring millions of uniformed workers and peasants were men like them, and their thoughts and feelings were the same. . . .

More soldiers. . . . Gzhelshakh; for the Front delegates, announcing that they had only decided to leave the Congress by a small majority, and that *the Bolshevik members had not even taken part in the vote*, as they stood for division according to political parties, and not groups. “Hundreds of delegates from the front,” he said, “are being elected without the participation of the soldiers because the Army Committees are no longer the real representatives of the rank and file. . . .” Lukianov, crying that officers like Kharash and Khinchuk could not represent the Army in this Congress—but only the high command. “The real inhabitants of the trenches want with all their hearts the transfer of Power into the hands of the Soviets, and they expect very much from it!” . . . The tide was turning.

Then came Abramovich, for the *Bund*, the organ of the Jewish Social-Democrats—his eyes snapping behind thick glasses, trembling with rage.

“What is taking place now in Petrograd is a monstrous calamity! The *Bund* group joins with the declaration of the Mensheviki and Socialist Revolutionaries and will leave the Congress!” He raised his voice and hand. “Our duty to the Russian proletariat doesn’t permit us to remain here and be responsible for these crimes. Because the firing on the Winter Palace doesn’t cease, the Municipal Duma together with the Mensheviki and Socialist Revolutionaries, and the Executive Committee of the Peasants’ Soviet, has decided to perish with the Provisional Government, and we are going with them! Unarmed we will expose our breasts to the machine-guns of the Terrorists. . . . We invite all

delegates to this Congress—" The rest was lost in a storm of hoots, menaces, and curses which rose to a hellish pitch as fifty delegates got up and pushed their way out. . . .

Kameniev jangled the bell, shouting, "Keep your seats and we'll go on with our business!" And Trotsky, standing up with a pale, cruel face, letting out his rich voice in cool contempt, "All these so-called Socialist compromisers, these frightened Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries, *Bund*—let them go! They are just so much refuse which will be swept away into the garbage-heap of history!"

Riazanov, for the Bolsheviks, stated that at the request of the City Duma the Military Revolutionary Committee had sent a delegation to offer negotiations to the Winter Palace. "In this way we have done everything possible to avoid bloodshed. . . ."

We hurried from the place, stopping for a moment at the room where the Military Revolutionary Committee worked at furious speed, engulfing and spitting out panting couriers, dispatching Commissars armed with power of life and death to all corners of the city, amid the buzz of the telephonographs. The door opened, a blast of stale air and cigarette-smoke rushed out, we caught a glimpse of dishevelled men bending over a map under the glare of a shaded electric-light. . . . Comrade Josephov-Dukhviski, a smiling youth with a mop of pale yellow hair, made out passes for us.

When we came into the chill night, all the front of Smolny was one huge park of arriving and departing automobiles, above the sound of which could be heard the far-off slow beat of the cannon. A great motor-truck stood there, shaking to the roar of its engine. Men were tossing bundles into it, and others receiving them, with guns beside them.

"Where are you going?" I shouted.

"Down-town—all over—everywhere!" answered a little workman, grinning, with a large exultant gesture.

We showed our passes. "Come along!" they invited. "But there'll probably be shooting—" We climbed in: the clutch slid home with a raking jar, the great car jerked forward, we all toppled backward on top of those who were climbing in; past the huge fire by the gate, and then the fire by the outer gate, glowing red on the faces of the workmen with rifles who squatted around it, and went bumping at top speed down the Suvorovsky Prospect, swaying from side to side. . . . One man tore the wrapping from a bundle and began to hurl handfuls of papers into the air. We imitated him, plunging down through the dark street with

tail of white papers floating and eddying out behind. The late passer-by stooped to pick them up; the patrols around bonfires on the corners ran out with uplifted arms to catch them. Sometimes armed men loomed up ahead, crying "Stoi!" and raising their guns, but our chauffeur only yelled something unintelligible and we hurtled on. . . .

I picked up a copy of the paper, and under a fleeting street-light read:

TO THE CITIZENS OF RUSSIA!

The Provisional Government is deposed. The State Power has passed into the hands of the organ of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, the Military Revolutionary Committee, which stands at the head of the Petrograd proletariat and garrison.

The cause for which the people were fighting: immediate proposal of a democratic peace, abolition of landlord property-rights over the land, labour control over production, creation of a Soviet Government—that cause is securely achieved.

LONG LIVE THE REVOLUTION OF WORKMEN, SOLDIERS, AND PEASANTS!

Military Revolutionary Committee

Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies

A slant-eyed, Mongolian-faced man who sat beside me, dressed in a cape of Caucasian goatskin, snapped, "Look out! Here the provocators always shoot from the windows!" We turned into Znamensky Square, dark and almost deserted, careened around Trubetskoy's brutal statue and swung down the wide Nevsky, three men standing up with rifles ready, peering at the windows. Behind us the street was alive with people running and stooping. We could no longer hear the cannon, and the nearer we drew to the Winter Palace end of the city the quieter and more deserted were the streets. The City Duma was all brightly lighted. Beyond that we made out a dark mass of people, and a line of sailors, who yelled furiously at us to stop. The machine slowed down, and we climbed out.

It was an astonishing scene. Just at the corner of the Ekaterina Canal, under an arc-light, a cordon of armed sailors was drawn across the Nevsky, blocking the way to a crowd of people in column of fours. There were about three or four hundred of them, men in frock coats, well-dressed women, officers—all sorts and conditions of people. Among them we recognized many of the delegates from the Congress, leaders of the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries; Avksentiev, the lean, red-bearded

president of the Peasants' Soviets, Sarokin, Kerensky's spokesman, Khinchuk, Abramovich; and at the head white-bearded old Schreider, Mayor of Petrograd, and Prokopovich, Minister of Supplies in the Provisional Government, arrested that morning and released. I caught sight of Malkin, reporter for the *Russian Daily News*. "Going to die in the Winter Palace," he shouted cheerfully. The procession stood still, but from the front of it came loud argument. Schreider and Prokopovich were bellowing at the big sailor who seemed in command.

"We demand to pass!" they cried. "See, these comrades come from the Congress of Soviets! Look at their tickets! We are going to the Winter Palace!"

The sailor was plainly puzzled. He scratched his head with an enormous hand, frowning. "I have orders from the Committee not to let anybody go to the Winter Palace," he grumbled. "But I will send a comrade to telephone to Smolny. . . ."

"We insist upon passing! We are unarmed! We will march on whether you permit us or not!" cried old Schreider, very much excited.

"I have orders—" repeated the sailor sullenly.

"Shoot us if you want to! We will pass! Forward!" came from all sides. "We are ready to die, if you have the heart to fire on Russians and comrades! We bare our breasts to your guns!"

"No," said the sailor, looking stubborn. "I can't allow you to pass."

"What will you do if we go forward? Will you shoot?"

"No, I'm not going to shoot people who haven't any guns. We won't shoot unarmed Russian people. . . ."

"We will go forward! What can you do?"

"We will do something!" replied the sailor, evidently at a loss. "We can't let you pass. We will do something."

"What will you do? What will you do?"

Another sailor came up, very much irritated. "We will spank you!" he cried energetically. "And if necessary we will shoot you too. Go home now, and leave us in peace!"

At this there was a great clamour of anger and resentment. Prokopovich had mounted some sort of box, and waving his umbrella, he made a speech:

"Comrades and citizens!" he said. "Force is being used against us! We cannot have our innocent blood upon the hands of these ignorant men! It is beneath our dignity to be shot down here in the streets by switchmen—" (What he meant by "switch-

men" I never discovered.) "Let us return to the Duma and discuss the best means of saving the country and the Revolution!"

Whereupon, in dignified silence, the procession marched around and back up the Nevsky, always in column of fours. And taking advantage of the diversion we slipped past the guards and set off in the direction of the Winter Palace.

Here it was absolutely dark, and nothing moved but pickets of soldiers and Red Guards grimly intent. In front of the Kazan Cathedral a three-inch field-gun lay in the middle of the street, slewed sideways from the recoil of its last shot over the roofs. Soldiers were standing in every doorway talking in loud tones and peering down towards the Police Bridge. I heard one voice saying: "It is possible that we have done wrong. . . ." At the corners patrols stopped all passers-by—and the composition of these patrols was interesting, for in command of the regular troops was invariably a Red Guard. . . . The shooting had ceased.

Just as we came to the Morskaya somebody was shouting: "The *yunkers* have sent word that they want us to go and get them out!" Voices began to give commands, and in the thick gloom we made out a dark mass moving forward, silent but for the shuffle of feet and the clinking of arms. We fell in with the first ranks.

Like a black river, filling all the street, without song or cheer we poured through the Red Arch, where the man just ahead of me said in a low voice: "Look out, comrades! Don't trust them. They will fire, surely!" In the open we began to run, stooping low and bunching together, and jammed up suddenly behind the pedestal of the Alexander Column.

"How many of you did they kill?" I asked.

"I don't know. About ten. . . ."

After a few minutes huddling there, some hundreds of men, the Army seemed reassured and without any orders suddenly began again to flow forward. By this time, in the light that streamed out of all the Winter Palace windows, I could see that the first two or three hundred men were Red Guards, with only a few scattered soldiers. Over the barricade of fire-wood we clambered, and leaping down inside gave a triumphant shout as we stumbled on a heap of rifles thrown down by the *yunkers* who had stood there. On both sides of the main gateway the doors stood wide open, light streamed out, and from the huge pile came not the slightest sound.

Carried along by the eager wave of men we were swept into the right-hand entrance, opening into a great bare vaulted room,

the cellar of the east wing, from which issued a maze of corridors and staircases. A number of huge packing cases stood about, and upon these the Red Guards and soldiers fell furiously, battering them open with the butts of their rifles, and pulling out carpets, curtains, linen, porcelain, plates, glass-ware. . . . One man went strutting around with a bronze clock perched on his shoulder; another found a plume of ostrich feathers, which he stuck in his hat. The looting was just beginning when somebody cried, "Comrades! Don't take anything. This is the property of the People!" Immediately twenty voices were crying, "Stop! Put everything back! Don't take anything! Property of the People!" Many hands dragged the spoilers down. Damask and tapestry were snatched from the arms of those who had them; two men took away the bronze clock. Roughly and hastily the things were crammed back in their cases, and self-appointed sentinels stood guard. It was all utterly spontaneous. Through corridors and up staircases the cry could be heard growing fainter and fainter in the distance, "Revolutionary discipline! Property of the People. . . ."

We crossed back over to the left entrance, in the west wing. There order was also being established. "Clear the Palace!" bawled a Red Guard, sticking his head through an inner door. "Come, comrades, let's show that we're not thieves and bandits. Everybody out of the Palace except the Commissars, until we get sentries posted."

Two Red Guards, a soldier and an officer, stood with revolvers in their hands. Another soldier sat at a table behind them, with pen and paper. Shouts of "All out! All out!" were heard far and near within, and the Army began to pour through the door, jostling, expostulating, arguing. As each man appeared he was seized by the self-appointed committee, who went through his pockets and looked under his coat. Everything that was plainly not his property was taken away, the man at the table noted it on his paper, and it was carried into a little room. The most amazing assortment of objects were thus confiscated; statuettes, bottles of ink, bed-spreads worked with the Imperial monogram, candles, a small oil-painting, desk blotters, gold-handled swords, cakes of soap, clothes of every description, blankets. One Red Guard carried three rifles, two of which he had taken away from *yunkers*; another had four portfolios bulging with written documents. The culprits either sullenly surrendered or pleaded like children. All talking at once the committee explained that stealing was not worthy of the people's champions; often those who

had been caught turned around and began to help go through the rest of the comrades.²⁸

Yunkers came out in bunches of three or four. The committee seized upon them with an excess of zeal, accompanying the search with remarks like, "Ah, Provocators! Kornilovists! Counter-revolutionists! Murderers of the People!" But there was no violence done, although the *yunkers* were terrified. They too had their pockets full of small plunder. It was carefully noted down by the scribe, and piled in the little room. . . . The *yunkers* were disarmed. "Now, will you take up arms against the People any more?" demanded clamouring voices.

"No," answered the *yunkers*, one by one. Whereupon they were allowed to go free.

We asked if we might go inside. The committee was doubtful, but the big Red Guard answered firmly that it was forbidden. "Who are you anyway?" he asked. "How do I know that you are not all Kerenskys?" (There were five of us, two women.)

"*Pazhal'st*, *tovarishchi*! Way, Comrades!" A soldier and a Red Guard appeared in the door, waving the crowd aside, and other guards with fixed bayonets. After them followed single file half a dozen men in civilian dress—the members of the Provisional Government. First came Kishkin, his face drawn and pale, then Rutenberg, looking sullenly at the floor; Tereshchenko was next, glancing sharply around; he stared at us with cold fixity. . . . They passed in silence; the victorious insurrectionists crowded to see, but there were only a few angry mutterings. It was only later that we learned how the people in the street wanted to lynch them, and shots were fired—but the sailors brought them safely to Peter-Paul. . . .

In the meanwhile unrebuked we walked into the Palace. There was still a great deal of coming and going, of exploring new-found apartments in the vast edifice, of searching for hidden garrisons of *yunkers* which did not exist. We went upstairs and wandered through room after room. This part of the Palace had been entered also by other detachments from the side of the Neva. The paintings, statues, tapestries, and rugs of the great state apartments were unharmed; in the offices, however, every desk and cabinet had been ransacked, the papers scattered over the floor, and in the living-rooms beds had been stripped of their coverings and wardrobes wrenched open. The most highly prized loot was clothing, which the working people needed. In a room where furniture was stored we came upon two soldiers ripping

the elaborate Spanish leather upholstery from chairs. They explained it was to make boots with. . . .

The old Palace servants in their blue and red and gold uniforms stood nervously about, from force of habit repeating, "You can't go in there, *barin!* It is forbidden—" We penetrated at length to the gold and malachite chamber with crimson brocade hangings where the Ministers had been in session all that day and night, and where the *shveitzari* had betrayed them to the Red Guards. The long table covered with green baize was just as they had left it, under arrest. Before each empty seat was pen, ink, and paper; the papers were scribbled over with beginnings of plans of action, rough drafts of proclamations and manifestoes. Most of these were scratched out, as their futility became evident, and the rest of the sheet covered with absent-minded geometrical designs, as the writers sat despondently listening while Minister after Minister proposed chimerical schemes. I took one of these scribbled pages, in the handwriting of Kononov, which read, "The Provisional Government appeals to all classes to support the Provisional Government—"

All this time, it must be remembered, although the Winter Palace was surrounded, the Government was in constant communication with the front and with provincial Russia. The Bolsheviks had captured the Ministry of War early in the morning, but they did not know of the military telegraph office in the attic, nor of the private telephone line connecting it with the Winter Palace. In that attic a young officer sat all day, pouring out over the country a flood of appeals and proclamations; and when he heard the Palace had fallen, put on his hat and walked calmly out of the building. . . .

Interested as we were, for a considerable time we didn't notice a change in the attitude of the soldiers and Red Guards around us. As we strolled from room to room a small group followed us, until by the time we reached the great picture-gallery where we had spent the afternoon with the *yunkers*, about a hundred men surged in upon us. One giant of a soldier stood in our path, his face dark with sullen suspicion.

"Who are you?" he growled. "What are you doing here?" The others massed slowly around, staring and beginning to mutter. "*Provocatori!*" I heard somebody say, "Looters!" I produced our passes from the Military Revolutionary Committee. The soldier took them gingerly, turned them upside down, and looked at them without comprehension. Evidently he could not read. He handed them back and spat on the floor. "*Bumagi!*

Papers!" said he with contempt. The mass slowly began to close in, like wild cattle around a cow-puncher on foot. Over their heads I caught sight of an officer, looking helpless, and shouted to him. He made for us, shouldering his way through.

"I'm the Commissar," he said to me. "Who are you? What is it?" The others held back, waiting. I produced the papers.

"You are foreigners?" he rapidly asked in French. "It is very dangerous. . . ." Then he turned to the mob, holding up our documents. "Comrades!" he cried, "These people are foreign comrades—from America. They have come here to be able to tell their countrymen about the bravery and the revolutionary discipline of the proletarian army!"

"How do you know that?" replied the big soldier. "I tell you they are provocators! They say they came here to observe the revolutionary discipline of the proletarian army, but they have been wandering freely through the Palace, and how do we know they haven't their pockets full of loot?"

"*Pravilno!*" snarled the others, pressing forward.

"Comrades! Comrades!" appealed the officer, sweat standing out on his forehead. "I am Commissar of the Military Revolutionary Committee. Do you trust me? Well, I tell you that these passes are signed with the same names that are signed to my pass!"

He led us down through the Palace and out through a door opening on to the Neva quay, before which stood the usual committee going through pockets. . . . "You have narrowly escaped," he kept muttering, wiping his face.

"What happened to the Women's Battalion?" we asked.

"Oh—the women!" He laughed. "They were all huddled up in a back room. We had a terrible time deciding what to do with them—many were in hysterics, and so on. So finally we marched them up to the Finland Station and put them on a train to Levashovo, where they have a camp. . . ." ²⁹

We came out into the cold, nervous night, murmurous with obscure armies on the move, electric with patrols. From across the river, where loomed the darker mass of Peter-Paul came a hoarse shout. . . . Underfoot the sidewalk was littered with broken stucco, from the cornice of the Palace where two shells from the battleship *Aurora* had struck; that was the only damage done by the bombardment.

It was now after three in the morning. On the Nevsky all the street-lights were again shining, the cannon gone, and the only signs of war were Red Guards and soldiers squatting around

fires. The city was quiet—probably never so quiet in its history; on that night not a single hold-up occurred, not a single robbery.

But the City Duma Building was all illuminated. We mounted to the galleried Alexander Hall, hung with its great gold-framed, red-shrouded Imperial portraits. About a hundred people were grouped around the platform, where Skobeliev was speaking. He urged that the Committee of Public Safety be expanded, so as to unite all the anti-Bolshevik elements in one huge organization, to be called the Committee for Salvation of Country and Revolution. And as we looked on, the Committee for Salvation was formed—that Committee which was to develop into the most powerful enemy of the Bolsheviks, appearing, in the next week, sometimes under its own partisan name, and sometimes as the strictly non-partisan Committee of Public Safety. . . .

Dan, Gotz, Avksentiev were there, some of the insurgent Soviet delegates, members of the Executive Committee of the Peasants' Soviets, old Prokopovich, and even members of the Council of the Republic—among whom Vinaver and other Cadets. Lieber cried that the convention of the Soviets was not a legal convention, that the old Tsay-ee-kah was still in office. . . . An appeal to the country was drafted.

We hailed a cab. "Where to?" But when we said "Smolny," the *izvozchik* shook his head. "Niet!" said he, "there are devils. . . ." It was only after weary wandering that we found a driver willing to take us—and he wanted thirty roubles, and stopped two blocks away.

The windows of Smolny were still ablaze, motors came and went, and around the still-leaping fires the sentries huddled close, eagerly asking everybody the latest news. The corridors were full of hurrying men, hollow-eyed and dirty. In some of the committee-rooms people lay sleeping on the floor, their guns beside them. In spite of the seceding delegates, the hall of meetings was crowded with people roaring like the sea. As we came in, Kameniev was reading the list of arrested Ministers. The name of Tereshchenko was greeted with thunderous applause, shouts of satisfaction, laughter; Rutenberg came in for less; and at the mention of Palchinsky, a storm of hoots, angry cries, cheers burst forth. . . . It was announced that Chudnovsky had been appointed Commissar of the Winter Palace.

Now occurred a dramatic interruption. A big peasant, his bearded face convulsed with rage, mounted the platform and pounded with his fist on the presidium table.

"We, Socialist Revolutionaries, insist on the immediate re-

lease of the Socialist Ministers arrested in the Winter Palace! Comrades! Do you know that four comrades who risked their lives and their freedom fighting against tyranny of the Tsar, have been flung into Peter-Paul prison—the historical tomb of Liberty?" In the uproar he pounded and yelled. Another delegate climbed up beside him and pointed at the presidium.

"Are the representatives of the revolutionary masses going to sit here quietly while the Okhrana of the Bolsheviks tortures their leaders?"

Trotsky was gesturing for silence. "These 'comrades' who are now caught plotting the crushing of the Soviets with the adventurer Kerensky—is there any reason to handle them with gloves? After 16 and 18 July they didn't use much ceremony with us!" With a triumphant ring in his voice he cried, "Now that the *oboronsi* and the faint-hearted have gone, and the whole task of defending and saving the Revolution rests on our shoulders, it is particularly necessary to work—work—work! We have decided to die rather than give up!"

Followed him a Commissar from Tsarskoye Selo, panting and covered with the mud of his ride. "The garrison of Tsarskoye Selo is on guard at the gates of Petrograd, ready to defend the Soviets and the Military Revolutionary Committee!" Wild cheers. "The Cycle Corps sent from the front has arrived at Tsarskoye, and the soldiers are now with us; they recognize the power of the Soviets, the necessity of immediate transfer of land to the peasants and industrial control to the workers. The Fifth Battalion of Cyclists, stationed at Tsarskoye, is ours. . . ."

Then the delegate of the Third Cycle Battalion. In the midst of delirious enthusiasm he told how the cycle corps had been ordered *three days before* from the south-west front to the "defence of Petrograd." They suspected, however, the meaning of the order; and at the station of Peredolsk were met by representatives of the Fifth Battalion from Tsarskoye. A joint meeting was held, and it was discovered that "among the cyclists not a single man was found willing to shed the blood of his fathers, or to support a Government of bourgeois and landowners!"

Kapelinsky, for the Menshevik Internationalists, proposed to elect a special committee to find a peaceful solution to the civil war. "There isn't any peaceful solution!" bellowed the crowd. "Victory is the only solution!" The vote was overwhelmingly against, and the Menshevik Internationalists left the Congress in a whirlwind of jocular insults. There was no longer any panic fear. . . . Kameniev from the platform shouted after them, "The

Menshevik Internationalists claimed 'emergency' for the question of 'peaceful solution,' but they always voted for suspension of the order of the day in favour of declarations of factions which wanted to leave the Congress. It is evident," finished Kameniev, "that the withdrawal of all these renegades was decided upon beforehand!"

The assembly decided to ignore the withdrawal of the factions, and proceed to the appeal to the workers, soldiers, and peasants of all Russia.

TO WORKERS, SOLDIERS, AND PEASANTS

The Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies has opened. It represents the great majority of the Soviets. There are also a number of Peasant deputies. Based upon the will of the great majority of the workers, soldiers, and peasants, based upon the triumphant uprising of the Petrograd workmen and soldiers, the Congress assumes power.

The Provisional Government is deposed. Most of the members of the Provisional Government are already arrested.

The Soviet authority will at once propose an immediate democratic peace to all nations, and an immediate truce on all fronts. It will assure the free transfer of landlord, crown, and monastery lands to the Land Committees, defend the soldiers' rights, enforcing a complete democratization of the Army, establish workers' control over production, ensure the convocation of the Constituent Assembly at the proper date, take means to supply bread to the cities and articles of first necessity to the villages, and secure to all nationalities living in Russia a real right to independent existence.

The Congress resolves: that all local power shall be transferred to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies, which must enforce revolutionary order.

The Congress calls upon the soldiers in the trenches to be watchful and steadfast. The Congress of Soviets is sure that the revolutionary Army will know how to defend the Revolution against all attacks of Imperialism, until the new Government shall have brought about the conclusion of the democratic peace which it will directly propose to all nations. The new Government will take all necessary steps to secure everything needful to the revolutionary Army, by means of a determined policy of requisition and taxation of the propertied classes, and also to improve the situation of the soldiers' families.

The Kornilovtsi—Kerensky, Kaledin, and others, are endeavouring to lead troops against Petrograd. Several regiments, deceived by Kerensky, have sided with the insurgent People.

Soldiers! Make active resistance to the Kornilovets—Kerensky! Be on guard!

Railway men! Stop all troop-trains being sent by Kerensky against Petrograd!

Soldiers, Workers, Clerical employees! The destiny of the Revolution and democratic peace is in your hands!

Long live the Revolution!

The All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies Delegates from the Peasants' Soviets

It was exactly 5:17 a.m. when Krylenko, staggering with fatigue, climbed to the tribune with a telegram in his hand.

"Comrades! From the Northern Front. The Twelfth Army sends greetings to the Congress of Soviets, announcing the formation of a Military Revolutionary Committee which has taken over the command of the Northern Front!" Pandemonium, men weeping, embracing each other. "General Chermissoff has recognized the Committee—Commissar of the Provisional Government Voitinsky has resigned!"

So, Lenin and the Petrograd workers had decided on insurrection, the Petrograd Soviet had overthrown the Provisional Government, and thrust the *coup d'état* upon the Congress of Soviets. Now there was all great Russia to win—and then the world! Would Russia follow and rise? And the world—what of it? Would the peoples answer and rise, a red world-tide?

Although it was six in the morning, night was yet heavy and chill. There was only a faint unearthly pallor stealing over the silent streets, dimming the watch-fires, the shadow of a terrible dawn grey-rising over Russia. . . .

5

Plunging Ahead

Thursday, 8 November. Day broke on a city in the wildest excitement and confusion, a whole nation heaving up in long hissing swells of storm. Superficially all was quiet; hundreds of thousands of people retired at a prudent hour, got up early and went to work. In Petrograd the streetcars were running, the stores and restaurants open, theatres going, an exhibition of paintings advertised. . . . All the complex routine of common life—hum-drum even in war-time—proceeded as usual. Nothing is so astounding as the vitality of the social organism—how it persists, feeding itself, clothing itself, amusing itself, in the face of the worst calamities. . . .

The air was full of rumours about Kerensky, who was said to have raised the front, and to be leading a great army against the capital. *Volia Naroda* published a *prikaz* launched by him at Pskov:

The disorders caused by the insane attempt of the Bolsheviki place the country on the verge of a precipice, and demand the effort of our entire will, our courage and the devotion of every one of us, to win through the terrible trial which the fatherland is undergoing. . . .

Until the declaration of the composition of the new Government—one is formed—everyone ought to remain at his post and fulfil his duty towards bleeding Russia. It must be remembered that the least interference with existing Army organizations can bring on irreparable misfortunes by opening the front to the enemy. Therefore it is indispensable to preserve at any price the morale of the troops, by assuring complete order and the preservation of the Army from new shocks, and by maintaining absolute confidence between officers and their subordinates.

I order all the chiefs and Commissars, in the name of the safety of the country, to stay at their posts as I myself retain the post of Supreme Commander, until the Provisional Government of the Republic declares its will. . . .

In answer, this placard on all the walls:

FROM THE ALL-RUSSIAN CONGRESS OF SOVIETS

The ex-Ministers Konovalov, Kishkin, Tereshchenko, Maliantovich, Nikitin, and others have been arrested by the Military Revolutionary Committee. Kerensky has fled. All Army organizations are ordered to take every measure for the immediate arrest of Kerensky and his conveyance to Petrograd.

All assistance given to Kerensky will be punished as a serious crime against the State.

With brakes released the Military Revolutionary Committee whirled, throwing off orders, appeals, decrees, like sparks. . . .³⁰ Kornilov was ordered to be brought into Petrograd. Members of the Peasant Land Committees imprisoned by the Provisional Government were declared free. Capital punishment in the army was abolished. Government employees were ordered to continue their work, and threatened with severe penalties if they refused. All pillage, plunder, and speculation were forbidden under pain of death. Temporary Commissars were appointed in the various Ministries: Foreign Affairs, Uritsky and Trotsky; Interior and Justice, Rykov; Labour, Shliapnikov; Finance, Menzhinsky; Public Welfare, Madame Kollontai; Commerce, Ways, and Communications, Riazanov; Navy, the sailor Korbir; Posts and Telegraphs, Spiro; Theatres, Muraviov; State Printing Office, Gherbychev; for the City of Petrograd, Lieutenant Nesterov; for the Northern Front, Pozern. . . .

To the Army, appeal to set up Military Revolutionary Committees. To the railway workers, to maintain order, especially not to delay the transport of food to the cities and the front. . . . In return, they were promised representation in the Ministry of Ways and Communications.

Cossack brothers! [said one proclamation]. You are being led against Petrograd. They want to force you into battle with the revolutionary workers and soldiers of the capital. Do not believe a word that is said by our common enemies, the landowners and the capitalists.

At our Congress are represented all the conscious organizations of

workers, soldiers, and peasants of Russia. The Congress also wishes to welcome into its midst the worker-Cossacks. The Generals of the Black Band, henchmen of the landowners, of Nikolai the Cruel, are our enemies.

They tell you the Soviets wish to confiscate the land of the Cossacks. This is a lie. It is only from the great Cossack landlords that the Revolution will confiscate the land to give it to the people.

Organize Soviets of Cossacks' Deputies! Join with the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies!

Show the Black Band that you are not traitors to the People, and that you do not wish to be cursed by the whole of revolutionary Russia. . . .

Cossack brothers, execute no orders of the enemies of the people. Send your delegates to Petrograd to talk it over with us. . . . The Cossacks of the Petrograd garrison, to their honour, have not justified the hope of the People's enemies. . . .

Cossack brothers! The All-Russian Congress of Soviets extends to you a fraternal hand. Long live the brotherhood of the Cossacks with the soldiers, workers, and peasants of all Russia!

On the other side, what a storm of proclamations posted up, handbills scattered everywhere, newspapers—screaming and cursing and prophesying evil. Now raged the battle of the printing-press—all other weapons being in the hands of the Soviets.

First, the appeal of the Committee for Salvation of Country and Revolution, flung broadcast over Russia and Europe:

TO THE CITIZENS OF THE RUSSIAN REPUBLIC

Contrary to the will of the revolutionary masses, on 7 November the Bolsheviks of Petrograd criminally arrested part of the Provisional Government, dispersed the Council of the Republic, and proclaimed an illegal power. Such violence committed against the Government of revolutionary Russia at the moment of its greatest external danger is an indescribable crime against the fatherland.

The insurrection of the Bolsheviks deals a mortal blow to the cause of national defence, and postpones immeasurably the moment of peace so greatly desired.

Civil war, begun by the Bolsheviks, threatens to deliver the country to the horrors of anarchy and counter-revolution, and cause the failure of the Constituent Assembly, which must affirm the republican régime and transmit to the People for ever their right to the land.

Preserving the continuity of the only legal Governmental power, the Committee for Salvation of Country and Revolution, established on the night of 7 November, takes the initiative in forming a new Provisional Government; which, basing itself on the forces of democracy, will

conduct the country to the Constituent Assembly and save it from anarchy and counter-revolution. The Committee for Salvation summons you, citizens, to refuse to recognize the power of violence. Do not obey its orders!

Rise for the defence of the country and the Revolution!
Support the Committee for Salvation!

Signed by the Council of the Russian Republic, the Municipal Duma of Petrograd, the Tsay-ee-kah (*First Congress*), the Executive Committee of the Peasants' Soviets, and from the Congress itself the Front group, the factions of Socialist Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, Populist Socialists, Unified Social Democrats, and the group "Yedinstvo."

Then posters from the Socialist Revolutionary party, the Mensheviks *oborontsi*, Peasants' Soviets again; from the Central Army Committee, the Tsentroflot. . . .

. . . Famine will crush Petrograd! (they cried). The German armies will trample on our liberty. Black Hundred pogroms will spread over Russia, if we all—conscious workers, soldiers, citizens—do not unite. . . .

Do not trust the promises of the Bolsheviks! The promise of immediate peace—is a lie! The promise of bread—a hoax! The promise of land—a fairy tale. . . .

They were all in this manner.

Comrades! You have been basely and cruelly deceived! The seizure of power has been accomplished by the Bolsheviks alone. . . . They concealed their plots from the other Socialist parties composing the Soviet. . . .

You have been promised land and freedom, but the counter-revolution will profit by the anarchy called forth by the Bolsheviks, and will deprive you of land and freedom. . . .

The newspapers were as violent.

Our duty (said the *Dielo Naroda*) is to unmask these traitors to the working-class. Our duty is to mobilize all our forces and mount guard over the cause of the Revolution! . . .

Izvestia, for the last time, speaking in the name of the old Tsay-ee-kah, threatened awful retribution:

"As for the Congress of Soviets, we affirm that there has been no Congress of Soviets! We affirm that it was merely a private conference of the Bolshevik faction! And in that case, they have no right to cancel the powers of the Tsay-ee-kah. . . ."

Novaya Zhizn, while pleading for a new Government that should unite all the Socialist parties, criticized severely the action of the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks in quitting the Congress, and pointed out that the Bolshevik insurrection meant one thing very clearly: that all illusions about coalition with the bourgeoisie were henceforth demonstrated vain. . . .

Rabochi Put blossomed out as *Pravda*, Lenin's newspaper which had been suppressed in July. It crowded, bristling:

Workers, soldiers, peasants! In March you struck down the tyranny of the clique of nobles. Yesterday you struck down the tyranny of the bourgeois gang. . . .

The first task is to guard the approaches to Petrograd.

The second is definitely to disarm the counter-revolutionary elements of Petrograd.

The third is definitely to organize the revolutionary power and assure the realization of the popular programme. . . .

What few Cadet organs appeared, and the bourgeoisie, generally, adopted a detached, ironical attitude towards the whole business, a sort of contemptuous "I told you so" to the other parties. Influential Cadets were to be seen hovering around the Municipal Duma, and on the outskirts of the Committee for Salvation. Other than that, the bourgeoisie lay low, abiding its hour—which could not be far off. That the Bolsheviks would remain in power longer than three days never occurred to anybody—except perhaps to Lenin, Trotsky, the Petrograd workers, and the simpler soldiers. . . .

In the high, amphitheatrical Nikolai Hall that afternoon I saw the Duma sitting in *permanence*, tempestuous, grouping around it all the forces of opposition. The old Mayor, Schreider, majestic with his white hair and beard, was describing his visit to Smolny the night before, to protest in the name of the Municipal Self-Government. "The Duma, being the only existing legal Government in the city, elected by equal, direct and secret suffrage, would not recognize the new power," he had told Trotsky. And Trotsky had answered, "There is a constitutional remedy for that. The Duma can be dissolved and re-elected. . . ." At this report there was a furious outcry.

"If one recognizes a Government by bayonet," continued the old man, addressing the Duma, "well, we have one; but I consider legitimate only a Government recognized by the people, by a majority, and not one created by the usurpation of a

minority!" Wild applause on all benches except those of the Bolsheviks. Amid renewed tumult the Mayor announced that the Bolsheviks were violating Municipal autonomy by appointing Commissars in many departments.

The Bolshevik speaker shouted, trying to make himself heard, that the decision of the Congress of Soviets meant that all Russia backed up the action of the Bolsheviks.

"You!" he cried. "You are not the real representative of the people of Petrograd!" Shrieks of "Insult! Insult!" The old Mayor, with dignity, reminded him that the Duma was elected by the freest possible popular vote. "Yes," he answered, "but that was a long time ago—like the Tsay-ee-kah—like the Army Committee." "There has been no new Congress of Soviets!" they yelled at him.

"The Bolshevik faction refuses to remain any longer in this nest of counter-revolution—" Uproar. "—and we demand a re-election of the Duma. . . ." Whereupon the Bolsheviks left the chamber, followed by cries of "German agents! Down with the traitors!"

Shingariov, Cadet, then demanded that all Municipal functionaries who had consented to be Commissars of the Military Revolutionary Committee be discharged from their position and indicted. Schreider was on his feet, putting a motion to the effect that the Duma protested against the menace of the Bolsheviks to dissolve it, and as the legal representative of the population, it would refuse to leave its post.

Outside, the Alexander Hall was crowded for the meeting of the Committee for Salvation, and Skobeliev was again speaking. "Never yet," he said, "was the fate of the Revolution so acute, never yet did the question of the existence of the Russian State excite so much anxiety, never yet did history put so harshly and categorically the question—is Russia to be or not to be! The great hour for the salvation of the Revolution has arrived, and in consciousness thereof we observe the close union of the live forces of the revolutionary democracy, by whose organized will a centre for the salvation of the country and the Revolution has already been created. . . ." And much of the same sort. "We shall die sooner than surrender our post!"

Amid violent applause it was announced that the Union of Railway Workers had joined the Committee for Salvation. A few moments later the Post and Telegraph Employees came in; then some Menshevik Internationalists entered the hall, to cheers. The Railway men said they did not recognize the Bolsheviks and

had taken the entire railroad apparatus into their own hands, refusing to entrust it to any usurpatory power. The Telegraphers' delegate declared that the operators had flatly refused to work their instruments as long as the Bolshevik Commissar was in the office. The Postmen would not deliver or accept mail at Smolny. . . . All the Smolny telephones were cut off. With great glee it was reported how Uritsky had gone to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to demand the secret treaties and how Neratov had put him out. The Government employees were all stopping work. . . .

It was war—war deliberately planned, Russian fashion: war by strike and sabotage. As we sat there the chairman read a list of names and assignments; so-and-so was to make the round of the Ministries; and another was to visit the banks; some ten or twelve were to work the barracks and persuade the soldiers to remain neutral—"Russian soldiers, do not shed the blood of your brothers!"; a committee was to go and confer with Kerensky; still others were dispatched to provincial cities, to form branches of the Committee for Salvation, and link together the anti-Bolshevik elements.

The crowd was in high spirits. "These Bolsheviks *will* try to dictate to the *intelligentsia*? We'll show them!" . . . Nothing could be more striking than the contrast between this assemblage and the Congress of Soviets. There, great masses of shabby soldiers, grimy workmen, peasants—poor men, bent and scarred in the brute struggle for existence; here the Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary leaders—Avksentiev, Dans, Liebers—the former Socialist Ministers—Skobeliev, Chernov—rubbed shoulders with Cadets like oily Shatsky, sleek Vinaver; with journalists, students, intellectuals of almost all camps. This Duma crowd was well fed, well dressed; I did not see more than three proletarians among them all. . . .

News came. Kornilov's faithful Tekhintsi had slaughtered his guards at Bykhov, and he had escaped. Kaledin was marching north. . . . The Soviet of Moscow had set up a Military Revolutionary Committee, and was negotiating with the commandant of the city for possession of the arsenal, so that the workers might be armed.

With these facts was mixed an astounding jumble of rumours, distortions, and plain lies. For instance, an intelligent young Cadet, formerly private secretary to Milyukov and then to Tereshchenko, drew us aside and told us all about the taking of the Winter Palace.

"The Bolsheviks were led by German and Austrian officers," he affirmed.

"Is that so?" we replied, politely. "How do you know?"

"A friend of mine was there and saw them."

"How could he tell they were German officers?"

"Oh, because they wore German uniforms!"

There were hundreds of such absurd tales, and they were not only solemnly published by the anti-Bolshevik press, but believed by the most unlikely persons—Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks who had always been distinguished by their sober devotion to facts. . . .

But more serious were the stories of Bolshevik violence and terrorism. For example, it was said and printed that the Red Guards had not only thoroughly looted the Winter Palace, but that they had massacred the *yunkers* after disarming them, had killed some of the Ministers in cold blood; and as for the women soldiers, most of them had been violated, and many had committed suicide because of the tortures they had gone through. . . . All these stories were swallowed whole by the crowd in the Duma. But worse still, the mothers and fathers of the students and the women read these frightful details (often accompanied by lists of names), and towards nightfall the Duma began to be besieged by frantic citizens. . . .

A typical case is that of Prince Tumanov, whose body it was announced in many newspapers had been found floating in the Moika Canal. A few hours later this was denied by the Prince's family, who added that the Prince was under arrest, so the press identified the dead man as General Denisov. The General having also come to life, we investigated, and could find no trace of any body having been found whatever. . . .

As we left the Duma building two boy scouts were distributing handbills³¹ to the enormous crowd which blocked the Nevsky in front of the door—a crowd composed almost entirely of business men, shopkeepers, *chinovniki*, clerks. One read:

FROM THE MUNICIPAL DUMA

The Municipal Duma in its meeting of 26 October, in view of the events of the day, decrees: To announce the *inviolability* of private dwellings. Through the House of Committees it calls upon the population of the town of Petrograd to meet with decisive repulse all attempts to enter by force private apartments, not stopping at the use of arms, in the interests of the self-defence of citizens.

Up on the corner of the Liteiny, five or six Red Guards and a couple of sailors had surrounded a newsdealer and were demanding that he hand over his copies of the Menshevik *Rabochaya Gazeta* (Workers' Gazette). Angrily he shouted at them, shaking his fist, as one of the sailors tore the papers from his stand. An ugly crowd had gathered around, abusing the patrol. One little workman kept explaining doggedly to the people and the newsdealer, over and over again, "It has Kerensky's proclamation in it. It says we killed Russian people. It will make bloodshed. . . ."

Smolny was tenser than ever, if that were possible. The same running men in the dark corridors, squads of workers with rifles, leaders with bulging portfolios arguing, explaining, giving orders as they hurried anxiously along, surrounded by friends and lieutenants. Men literally out of themselves, living prodigies of sleeplessness and work—men unshaven, filthy, with burning eyes who drove upon their fixed purpose full speed on engines of exaltation. So much they had to do, so much! Take over the Government, organize the City, keep the garrison loyal, fight the Duma and the Committee for Salvation, keep out the Germans, prepare to do battle with Kerensky, inform the provinces what had happened, propagandize from Archangel to Vladivostok. . . . Government and Municipal Employees refusing to obey their Commissars, post and telegraph refusing them communication, railroads stonily ignoring their appeals for trains, Kerensky coming, the garrison not altogether to be trusted, the Cossacks waiting to come out. . . . Against them not only the organized bourgeoisie, but all the other Socialist parties except the Left Socialist Revolutionaries, a few Menshevik Internationalists, and the Social Democrat Internationalists, and even they undecided whether to stand by or not. With them, it is true, the workers and the soldier-masses—the peasants an unknown quantity—but after all the Bolsheviks were a political faction not rich in trained and educated men. . . .

Riazanov was coming up the front steps, explaining in a sort of humorous panic that he, Commissar of Commerce, knew nothing whatever of business. In the upstairs café sat a man all by himself in the corner, in a goatskin cape and clothes which had been—I was going to say "slept in," but of course he hadn't slept—and a three days' growth of beard. He was anxiously figuring on a dirty envelope, and biting his pencil meanwhile. This was Menzhinsky, Commissar of Finance, whose qualifications were that he had once been a clerk in a French

bank. . . . And these four half-running down the hall from the office of the Military Revolutionary Committee, and scribbling on bits of paper as they run—these were Commissars dispatched to the four corners of Russia to carry the news, argue, or fight—with whatever arguments or weapons came to hand. . . .

The Congress was to meet at one o'clock, and long since the great meeting-hall had filled, but by seven there was yet no sign of the presidium. . . . The Bolshevik and Left Socialist Revolutionary factions were in session in their own rooms. All the live-long afternoon Lenin and Trotsky had fought against compromise. A considerable part of the Bolsheviks were in favour of giving way so far as to create a joint all-Socialist government. "We can't hold on!" they cried. "Too much is against us. We haven't got the men. We will be isolated, and the whole thing will fall." So Kameniev, Riazanov, and others.

But Lenin, with Trotsky beside him, stood firm as a rock. "Let the compromisers accept our programme and they can come in! We won't give way an inch. If there are comrades here who haven't the courage and the will to dare what we dare, let them leave with the rest of the cowards and conciliators! Backed by the workers and the soldiers we shall go on."

At five minutes past seven came word from the left Socialist Revolutionaries to say that they would remain in the Military Revolutionary Committee.

"See!" said Lenin. "They are following!"

A little later, as we sat at the press table in the big hall, an Anarchist who was writing for the bourgeois papers proposed to me that we go and find out what had become of the presidium. There was nobody in the Tsay-ee-kah office, nor in the bureau of the Petrograd Soviet. From room to room we wandered, through vast Smolny. Nobody seemed to have the slightest idea where to find the governing body of the Congress. As we went my companion described the ancient revolutionary activities, his long and pleasant exile in France. . . . As for the Bolsheviks, he confided to me that they were common, rude, ignorant persons, without aesthetic sensibilities. He was a real specimen of the Russian *intelligentsia*. . . . So we came at last to room 17, office of the Military Revolutionary Committee, and stood there in the midst of all the furious coming and going. The door opened and out shot a squat, flat-faced man in a uniform without insignia, who seemed to be smiling—which smile, after a minute, one saw to be the fixed grin of extreme fatigue. It was Krylenko.

My friend, who was a dapper, civilized-looking young man gave a cry of pleasure and stepped forward.

"Nikolai Vasilievich!" he said, holding out his hand. "Don't you remember me, comrade? We were in prison together."

Krylenko made an effort and concentrated his mind and sight. "Why, yes," he answered finally, looking the other up and down with an expression of great friendliness. "You are S—*Zdra'-stvuyte!*" They kissed. "What are you doing in all this?" He waved his arm around.

"Oh, I'm just looking on. . . . You seem very successful."

"Yes," replied Krylenko, with a sort of doggedness, "the proletarian Revolution is a great success." He laughed. "Perhaps—perhaps, however, we'll meet in prison again!"

When we got out into the corridor again my friend went on with his explanations. "You see, I'm a follower of Kropotkin. To us the Revolution is a great failure; it has not aroused the patriotism of the masses. Of course that only proves that the people are not ready for Revolution. . . ."

It was just 8:40 when a thundering wave of cheers announced the entrance of the presidium, with Lenin—great Lenin—among them. A short, stocky figure, with a big head set down on his shoulders, bald and bulging. Little eyes, a snubbish nose, wide generous mouth, and heavy chin; clean-shaven now but already beginning to bristle with the well-known beard of his past and future. Dressed in shabby clothes, his trousers much too long for him. Unimpressive, to be the idol of a mob, loved and revered as perhaps few leaders in history have been. A strange popular leader—a leader purely by virtue of intellect; colourless, humourless, uncompromising and detached, without picturesque idiosyncrasies—but with the power of explaining profound ideas in simple terms, of analysing a concrete situation. And combined with shrewdness, the greatest intellectual audacity.

Kameniev was reading the report of the actions of the Military Revolutionary Committee; abolition of capital punishment in the Army, restoration of the free right of propaganda, release of officers and soldiers arrested for political crimes, orders to arrest Kerensky and confiscation of food supplies in private store-houses. . . . Tremendous applause.

Again the representative of the *Bund*. The uncompromising attitude of the Bolsheviks would mean the crushing of the Revolution; therefore, the *Bund* delegates must refuse any longer to sit in the Congress. Cries from the audience, "We thought you

walked out last night! How many more times are you going to walk out?"

Then the representative of the Menshevik Internationalists, shouts "What! You here still?" The speaker explained that only part of the Menshevik Internationalists left the Congress; the rest were going to stay—

"We consider it dangerous and perhaps even mortal for the Revolution to transfer the power to the Soviets"—interruptions—"but we feel it our duty to remain in the Congress and vote against the transfer here!"

Other speakers followed, apparently without any order. A delegate of the coal-miners of the Don Basin called upon the Congress to take measures against Kaledin, who might cut off coal and food from the capital. Several soldiers just arrived from the front brought the enthusiastic greetings of their regiments. . . . Now Lenin, gripping the edge of the reading stand, letting his little winking eyes travel over the crowd as he stood there waiting, apparently oblivious to the long-rolling ovation, which lasted several minutes. When it finished, he said simply, "We shall now proceed to construct the Socialist order!" Again that overwhelming human roar.

"The first thing is the adoption of practical measures to realize peace. . . . We shall offer peace to the peoples of all the belligerent countries upon the basis of the Soviet terms—no annexations, no indemnities, and the right of self-determination of peoples. At the same time, according to our promise, we shall publish and repudiate the secret treaties. . . . The question of War and Peace is so clear that I think that I may, without preamble, read the project of a Proclamation to the Peoples of All the Belligerent Countries. . . ."

His great mouth, seeming to smile, opened wide as he spoke; his voice was hoarse—not unpleasantly so, but as if it had hardened that way after years and years of speaking—and went on monotonously, with the effect of being able to go on for ever. . . . For emphasis he bent forward slightly. No gestures. And before him, a thousand simple faces looking up in intent adoration.

PROCLAMATION TO THE PEOPLES AND GOVERNMENTS OF
ALL THE BELLIGERENT NATIONS

The Workers' and Peasants' Government, created by the revolution of 6 and 7 November and based on the Soviet of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies, proposes to all the belligerent peoples and to their

Governments to begin immediately negotiations for a just and democratic peace.

The Government means by a just and democratic peace, which is desired by the majority of the workers and the labouring classes, exhausted and depleted by the war—that peace which the Russian workers and peasants, after having struck down the Tsarist monarchy, have not ceased to demand categorically—immediate peace without annexations (that is to say without conquest of foreign territory, without forcible annexation of other nationalities), and without indemnities.

The Government of Russia proposes to all the belligerent peoples immediately to conclude such a peace, by showing themselves willing to enter upon decisive steps of negotiations aiming at such a peace, at once, without the slightest delay, before the definitive ratification of all the conditions of such a peace by the authorized assemblies of the people of all countries and of all nationalities.

By annexation or conquest of foreign territory the Government means—conformably to the conception of democratic rights in general, and the rights of the working class in particular—all union to a great and strong State of a small or weak nationality, without the voluntary, clear, and precise expression of its consent and desire; whatever be the moment when such an annexation by force was accomplished, whatever be the degree of civilization of the nation annexed by force or maintained outside the frontiers of another State, no matter if that nation be in Europe or in the far countries across the sea.

If any nation is retained by force within the limits of another State; if, in spite of the desire expressed by it (it matters little if that desire be expressed by the press, by popular meetings, decisions of political parties, or by disorders and riots against national oppression), that nation is not given the right of deciding by free vote—without the slightest constraint, after the complete departure of the armed forces of the nation which has annexed it or wishes to annex it or is stronger in general—the form of its national and political organization, such a union constitutes an annexation—that is to say, conquest and an act of violence.

To continue their war in order to permit the strong and rich nations to divide among themselves the weak and conquered nationalities is considered by the Government the greatest possible crime against humanity, and the Government solemnly proclaims its decision to sign a treaty of peace which will put an end to this war upon the above conditions, equally fair for all nationalities without exception.

The Government abolishes secret diplomacy, expressing before the whole country its firm decision to conduct all the negotiations in the light of day before the people, and will proceed immediately to the full publication of all secret treaties confirmed or concluded by the Government of the landowners and capitalists from March until 7 November 1917. All the clauses of the secret treaties which, as occur in the

majority of cases, have for their object to procure advantages and privileges for Russian imperialists, are denounced by the Government immediately and without discussion.

In proposing to all Governments and all peoples to engage in public negotiations for peace, the Government declares itself ready to carry on these negotiations by telegraph, by post, or by pourparlers between the different countries, or at a conference of these representatives. To facilitate these pourparlers, the Government appoints its authorized representatives in the neutral countries.

The Government proposes to all the governments and to all the peoples of all the belligerent countries to conclude an immediate armistice, at the same time suggesting that the armistice ought to last three months, during which time it is perfectly possible, not only to hold the necessary pourparlers between the representatives of all the nations and nationalities without exception drawn into the war or forced to take part in it, but also to convoke authorized assemblies of representatives of the people of all countries, for the purpose of the definite acceptance of the conditions of peace.

In addressing this offer of peace to the Governments and to the peoples of all the belligerent countries, the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government of Russia addresses equally and in particular the conscious workers of the three nations most devoted to humanity and the three most important nations among those taking part in the present war—England, France, and Germany. The workers of these countries have rendered the greatest services to the cause of progress and Socialism. The splendid examples of the Chartist movement in England, the series of revolutions, of world-wide historical significance, accomplished by the French proletariat—and finally, in Germany, the historic struggle against the Laws of Exception, an example for the workers of the whole world of prolonged and stubborn action, and the creation of formidable organizations of German proletarians—all these models of proletarian heroism, these monuments of history, are for us a sure guarantee that the workers of these countries will understand the duty imposed upon them to liberate humanity from the horrors and consequences of war; and that these workers, by decisive, energetic, and continued action, will help us to bring to a successful conclusion the cause of peace—and at the same time, the cause of the liberation of the exploited working masses from all slavery and all exploitation.

When the grave thunder of applause had died away, Lenin spoke again:

“We propose to the Congress to ratify this declaration. We address ourselves to the Governments as well as to the peoples, for a declaration which would be addressed only to the peoples

of the belligerent countries might delay the conclusion of peace. The conditions of peace, drawn up during the armistice, will be ratified by the Constituent Assembly. In fixing the duration of the armistice at three months, we desire to give to the peoples as long a rest as possible after this bloody extermination, and ample time for them to elect their representatives. This proposal of peace will meet with resistance on the part of the imperialist governments—we don't fool ourselves on that score. But we hope that revolution will soon break out in all the belligerent countries; that is why we address ourselves to the workers of France, England, and Germany. . . .

"The revolution of 6 and 7 November," he ended, "has opened the era of the Social Revolution. . . . The labour movement, in the name of peace and Socialism, shall win, and fulfil its destiny. . . ."

There was something quiet and powerful in all this, which stirred the souls of men. It was understandable why people believed when Lenin spoke. . . .

By crowd vote it was quickly decided that only representatives of political factions should be allowed to speak on the motion and that speakers be limited to fifteen minutes.

First Karelin from the Left Socialist Revolutionaries. "Our faction had no opportunity to propose amendments to the text of the proclamation; it is a private document of the Bolsheviks. But we will vote for it because we agree with its spirit. . . ."

For the Social Democrat Internationalists Kramarov, long, stoop-shouldered, and near-sighted—destined to achieve some notoriety as the Clown of the Opposition. Only a Government composed of all the Socialist parties, he said, could possess the authority to take such important action. If a Socialist-coalition was formed, his faction would support the entire programme; if not, only part of it. As for the proclamation, the Internationalists were in thorough accord with its main points. . . .

Then one after another, amid rising enthusiasm; Ukrainian Social Democracy, support; Lithuanian Social Democracy, support; Populist Socialists, support; Polish Social Democracy, support; Polish Socialists, support—but would prefer a Socialist coalition; Lettish Social Democracy, support. . . . Something was kindled in these men. One spoke of the "coming World-Revolution, of which we are the advance-guard"; another of "the new age of brotherhood, when all the peoples will become one great family. . . ." An individual member claimed the floor. "There is contradiction here," he said. "First you offer peace

without annexations and indemnities, and then you say you will consider all peace offers. To consider means to accept. . . ."

Lenin was on his feet. "We want a just peace, but we are not afraid of a revolutionary war. . . . Probably the imperialist Governments will not answer our appeal—but we shall not issue an ultimatum to which it will be easy to say no. . . . If the German proletariat realizes that we are ready to consider all offers of peace, that will perhaps be the last drop which overflows the bowl—revolution will break out in Germany. . . ."

"We consent to examine all conditions of peace, but that doesn't mean that we shall accept them. . . . For some of our terms we shall fight to the end—but possibly for others will find it impossible to continue the war. . . . Above all, we want to finish the war. . . ."

It was exactly 10:35 when Kameniev asked all in favour of the proclamation to hold up their cards. One delegate dared to raise his hand against, but the sudden outburst around him brought it swiftly down. . . . Unanimous.

Suddenly, by common impulse, we found ourselves on our feet, mumbling together into the smooth lifting unison of the *Internationale*. A grizzled old soldier was sobbing like a child. Alexandra Kollontai rapidly winked the tears back. The immense sound rolled through the hall, burst windows and doors and soared into the quiet sky. "The war is ended! The war is ended!" said a young workman near me, his face shining. And when it was over, as we stood there in a kind of awkward hush, someone in the back of the room shouted, "Comrades! Let us remember those who have died for liberty!" So we began to sing the Funeral March, that slow, melancholy, and yet triumphant chant, so Russian and so moving. The *Internationale* is an alien air, after all. The Funeral March seemed the very soul of those dark masses whose delegates sat in this hall, building from their obscure visions a new Russia—and perhaps more.

You fell in the fatal fight

For the liberty of the people, for the honour of the people.

You gave up your lives and everything dear to you,

You suffered in horrible prisons,

You went to exile in chains. . . .

Without a word you carried your chains because you could not ignore your suffering brothers,

Because you believed that justice is stronger than the sword. . . .

The time will come when your surrendered life will count.

That time is near; when tyranny falls the people will rise, great and free!

Farewell, brothers, you chose a noble path,
At your grave we swear to fight, to work for freedom and the people's happiness. . . .

For this did they lie there, the martyrs of March, in their cold Brotherhood Grave on Mars Field; for this thousands and tens of thousands had died in the prisons, in exile, in Siberian mines. It had not come as they expected it would come, nor as the *intelligentsia* desired it; but it had come—rough, strong, impatient of formulas, contemptuous of sentimentalism; *real*. . . .

Lenin was reading the Decree on Land:

(1) All private ownership of land is abolished immediately without compensation.

(2) All landowners' estates and all lands belonging to the Crown, to monasteries, church lands with all their live stock and inventoried property, buildings and all appurtenances, are transferred to the disposition of the township Land Committees and the district Soviets of Peasants' Deputies until the Constituent Assembly meets.

(3) Any damage whatever done to the confiscated property, which from now on belongs to the whole People, is regarded as a serious crime, punishable by the revolutionary tribunals. The district Soviets of Peasants' Deputies shall take all necessary measures for the observance of the strictest order during the taking over of the landowners' estates, for the determination of the dimensions of the plots of land and which of them are subject to confiscation, for the drawing up of an inventory of the entire confiscated property, and for the strictest revolutionary protection of all the farming property on the land, with all buildings, implements, cattle, supplies of products, etc., passing into the hands of the people.

(4) For guidance during the realization of the great land reforms until their final resolution by the Constituent Assembly, shall serve the following peasant *nakaz* (instructions),³² drawn up on the basis of 242 local peasant *nakazi* by the editorial board of the "Izvestia of the All-Russian Soviet of Peasants' Deputies," and published in No. 88 of said "Izvestia" (Petrograd, No. 88, 29 August 1917).

The lands of peasants and of Cossacks serving in the Army shall not be confiscated.

"This is not," explained Lenin, "the project of former Minister Chernov, who spoke of 'erecting a framework' and tried to realize reforms from above. From below, on the spot will be decided the questions of division of the land. The amount of land received by each peasant will vary according to the locality. . . .

"Under the Provisional Government, the *pomieshchiki* flatly refused to obey the orders of the Land Committees—those Land Committees projected by Lvov, brought into existence by Shingariov, and administered by Kerensky!"

Before the debates could begin a man forced his way violently through the crowd in the aisle and climbed upon the platform. It was Pianikh, member of the Executive Committee of the Peasants' Soviets, and he was mad clean through.

"The Executive Committee of the All-Russian Soviets of Peasants' Deputies protests against the arrest of our comrades, the Ministers Salazkin and Mazlov!" he flung harshly in the faces of the crowd. "We demand their instant release! They are now in Peter-Paul fortress. We must have immediate action! There is not a moment to lose!"

Another followed him, a soldier with a disordered beard and flaming eyes. "You sit here and talk about giving the land to the peasants, and you commit an act of tyrants and usurpers against the peasants' chosen representatives! I tell you"—he raised his fist—"if one hair of their heads is harmed you'll have a revolt on your hands!" The crowd stirred confusedly.

Then up rose Trotsky, calm and venomous, conscious of power, greeted with a roar. "Yesterday the Military Revolutionary Committee decided to release the Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik Ministers, Mazlov, Salazkin, Gvozdoz, and Maliantovich—on principle. That they are still in Peter-Paul is only because we have had so much to do. . . . They will, however, be detained at their homes under arrest until we have investigated their complicity in the treacherous acts of Kerensky during the Kornilov affair!"

"Never," shouted Pianikh, "in any revolution have such things been seen as go on here!"

"You are mistaken," responded Trotsky. "Such things have been seen even in this revolution. Hundreds of our comrades were arrested in the July days. . . . When Comrade Kollontai was released from prison by the doctor's orders, Avksentiev placed at her door two former agents of the Tsar's secret police!" The peasants withdrew, muttering, followed by ironical hoots.

The representative of the Left Socialist Revolutionaries spoke on the Land Decree. While agreeing in principle, his faction could not vote on the question until after discussion. The Peasants' Soviets should be consulted. . . .

The Menshevik Internationalists, too, insisted on a party caucus.

Then the leader of the Maximalists, the Anarchist wing of the peasants: "We must do honour to a political party which puts such an act into effect the first day, without jawing about it!"

A typical peasant was in the tribune, long hair, boots and sheepskin coat, bowing to all corners of the hall. "I wish you well, comrades and citizens," he said. "There are some Cadets walking around outside. You arrested our Socialist peasants—why not arrest them?"

This was the signal for a debate of excited peasants. It was precisely like the debate of soldiers of the night before. Here were the real proletarians of the land. . . .

"Those members of our Executive Committee, Avksentiev and the rest, whom we thought were the peasants' protectors—they are only Cadets too! Arrest them! Arrest them!"

Another, "Who are these Pianikhs, these Avksentievs? They are not peasants at all! They only wag their tails!"

How the crowd rose to them, recognizing brothers!

The Left Socialist Revolutionaries proposed a half-hour intermission. As delegates streamed out, Lenin stood up in his place.

"We must not lose time, comrades! News all-important to Russia must be on the press tomorrow morning. No delay!"

And above the hot discussion, argument, shuffling of feet, could be heard the voice of an emissary of the Military Revolutionary Committee, crying, "Fifteen agitators wanted in room 17 at once! To go to the front! . . ."

It was almost two hours and a half later that the delegates came straggling back, the presidium mounted the platform, and the session commenced by the reading of telegrams from regiment after regiment, announcing their adhesion to the Military Revolutionary Committee.

In leisurely manner the meeting gathered momentum. A delegate from the Russian troops on the Macedonian front spoke bitterly of their situation. "We suffer there more from the friendship of our 'Allies' than from the enemy," he said. Representatives of the Tenth and Twelfth Armies, just arrived in hot haste, reported, "We support you with all our strength!" A peasant soldier protested against the release of "the traitor Socialists Mazlov and Salazkin"; as for the Executive Committee of the Peasants' Soviets, it should be arrested *en masse*! Here was real revolutionary talk. . . . A deputy from the Russian Army in Persia declared he was instructed to demand all power to the Soviets. . . . A Ukrainian officer, speaking in his native tongue: "There is no nationalism in this crisis. . . . *Da zdravstvuyet* the

proletarian dictatorship of all lands!" Such a deluge of high and hot thoughts that surely Russia would never again be dumb!

Kameniev remarked that the anti-Bolshevik forces were trying to stir up disorders everywhere, and read an appeal of the Congress to all the Soviets of Russia:

The All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, including some Peasants' Deputies, calls upon the local Soviets to take immediate energetic measures to oppose all counter-revolutionary anti-Jewish action and all *pogroms* whatever they may be. The honour of the Workers', Peasants', and Soldiers' Revolution demands that no *pogrom* be tolerated.

The Red Guard of Petrograd, the revolutionary garrison and the sailors have maintained complete order in the capital.

Workers, soldiers, and peasants, you should follow everywhere the example of the workers and soldiers of Petrograd.

Comrade soldiers and Cossacks, on us falls the duty of assuring real revolutionary order.

All revolutionary Russia and the entire world have their eyes on us. . . .

At two o'clock the Land Decree was put to the vote, with only one against and the peasant delegates wild with joy. . . . So plunged the Bolsheviki ahead, irresistible, overriding hesitation and opposition—the only people in Russia who had a definite programme of action while the others talked for eight long months.

Now arose a soldier, gaunt, ragged and eloquent, to protest against the clause of the *nakaz* tending to deprive military deserters from a share in village land allotments. Bawled at and hissed at first, his simple, moving speech finally made silence. "Forced against his will into the butchery of the trenches," he cried, "which you yourselves, in the Peace decree, have voted senseless as well as horrible, he greeted the Revolution with hope of peace and freedom. Peace? The Government of Kerensky forced him again to go forward into Galicia to slaughter and be slaughtered; to his pleas for peace, Tereshchenko simply laughed. . . . Freedom? Under Kerensky he found his Committees suppressed, his newspapers cut off, his party speakers put in prison. . . . At home in his village, the landlords were defying his Land Committees, jailing his comrades. . . . In Petrograd the bourgeoisie, in alliance with the Germans, were sabotaging the food and ammunition for the Army. . . . He was without boots or

clothes. . . . Who forced him to desert? The Government of Kerensky, which you have overthrown!" At the end there was applause.

But another soldier hotly denounced it: "The Government of Kerensky is not a screen behind which can be hidden dirty work like desertion! Deserters are scoundrels, who run away home and leave their comrades to die in the trenches alone! Every deserter is a traitor and should be punished. . . ." Uproar, shouts of "*Do volno! Teeshe!*" Kameniev hastily proposed to leave the matter to the Government for decision.³³

At 2:30 a.m. fell a tense hush. Kameniev was reading the decree of the Constitution of Power:

Until the meeting of the Constituent Assembly, a provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government is formed, which shall be named the Council of People's Commissars.³⁴

The administration of the different branches of state activity shall be entrusted to commissions, whose composition shall be regulated to ensure the carrying out of the programme of the Congress, in close union with the mass organizations of working-men, working-women, sailors, soldiers, peasants, and clerical employees. The governmental power is vested in a *collegium* made up of the chairmen of these commissions, that is to say, the Council of the People's Commissars.

Control over the activities of the People's Commissars, and the right to replace them, shall belong to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants', and Soldiers' Deputies, and its Central Committee.

Still silence; as he read the list of Commissars, bursts of applause after each name, Lenin's and Trotsky's especially.

President of the Council: Vladimir Ulyanov (Lenin).

Interior: A. I. Rykov.

Agriculture: V. P. Milyutin.

Labour: A. G. Shliapnikov.

Military and Naval Affairs: A committee composed of V. A. Avseenko (Antonov), N. V. Krylenko, and F. M. Dybenko.

Commerce and Industry: V. P. Nogin.

Popular Education: A. V. Lunacharsky.

Finance: I. I. Skvortsov (*Stepanov*).

Foreign Affairs: L. D. Bronstein (*Trotsky*).

Justice: G. E. Oppokov (*Lomov*).

Supplies: E. A. Teodorovich.

Post and Telegraph: N. P. Avilov (*Gliebov*).

Chairman for Nationalities: I. V. Djughashvili (*Stalin*).

Railroads: To be filled later.

There were bayonets at the edges of the room, bayonets pricking up among the delegates; the Military Revolutionary Committee was arming everybody, Bolshevism was arming for the decisive battle with Kerensky, the sound of whose trumpets came up the south-west wind. . . . In the meanwhile nobody went home; on the contrary, hundreds of newcomers filtered in, filling the great room solid with stern-faced soldiers and workmen who stood for hours and hours, indefatigably intent. The air was thick with cigarette smoke, and human breathing, and the smell of coarse clothes and sweat.

Avilov of the staff of *Novaya Zhizn* was speaking in the name of the Social Democratic Internationalists and the remnant of the Menshevik Internationalists; Avilov, with his young, intelligent face, looking out of place in his smart frock-coat.

"We must ask ourselves where we are going. . . . The ease with which the Coalition Government was upset cannot be explained by the strength of the left wing of the democracy, but only by the incapacity of the Government to give the people peace and bread. And the left wing cannot maintain itself in power unless it can solve these questions. . . .

"Can it give bread to the people? Grain is scarce. The majority of the peasants will not be with you, for you cannot give them the machinery they need. Fuel and other primary necessities are almost impossible to procure. . . .

"As for peace, that will be even more difficult. The Allies refused to talk with Skobeliev. They will never accept the proposition of a peace conference from *you*. You will not be recognized either in London and Paris or in Berlin. . . .

"You cannot count on the effective help of the proletariat of the Allied countries because in most countries it is very far from the revolutionary struggle; remember, the Allied democracy was unable to convoke the Stockholm Conference. Concerning the German Social Democrats, I have just talked with Comrade Goldenberg, one of our delegates to Stockholm; he was told by the representatives of the Extreme Left that revolution in Germany was impossible during the war. . . ." Here interruptions began to come thick and fast, but Avilov kept on.

"The isolation of Russia will fatally result either in the defeat of the Russian Army by the Germans, and the patching up of a

peace between the Austro-German coalition and the Franco-British coalition *at the expense of Russia*—or in a separate peace with Germany.

“I have just learned that the Allied ambassadors are preparing to leave, and that Committees for Salvation of Country and Revolution are forming in all the cities of Russia. . . .

“No one party can conquer these enormous difficulties. The majority of the people, supporting a government of Socialist coalition, can alone accomplish the Revolution. . . .”

He then read the resolution of the two factions:

Recognizing that for the salvation of the conquests of the Revolution it is indispensable immediately to constitute a government based on the Soviet of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies, recognizing, moreover, that the task of this government is the quickest possible attainment of peace, the transfer of the land into the hands of the agrarian committees, the organization of control over industrial production, and the convocation of the Constituent Assembly on the date decided, the Congress appoints an executive committee to constitute such a government after an agreement with the groups of the democracy which are taking part in the Congress.

In spite of the revolutionary exaltation of the triumphant crowd, Avilov's cool, tolerant reasoning had shaken them. Towards the end the cries and hisses died away, and when he finished there was even some clapping.

Karelin followed him—also young, fearless, whose sincerity no one doubted—for the Left Socialist Revolutionaries, the party of Marie Spiridonova, the party which almost alone followed the Bolsheviki, and which represented the revolutionary peasants.

“Our party has refused to enter the Council of People's Commissars because we do not wish for ever to separate ourselves from the part of the revolutionary army which left the Congress, a separation which would make it impossible for us to serve as intermediaries between the Bolsheviki and the other groups of the democracy. . . . And that is our principal duty at this moment. We cannot sustain any government except a government of Socialist coalition. . . .

“We protest, moreover, against the tyrannical conduct of the Bolsheviki. Our Commissars have been driven from their posts. Our only organ, *Znamia Truda* (Banner of Labour), was forbidden to appear yesterday. . . .

“The Central Duma is forming a powerful Committee for

Salvation of Country and Revolution to fight you. Already you are isolated, and your Government is without the support of a single other democratic group. . . .”

And now Trotsky stood upon the raised tribune, confident and dominating, with that sarcastic expression about his mouth which was almost a sneer. He spoke in a ringing voice, and the great crowd rose to him.

“These considerations on the danger of isolation of our party are not new. On the eve of insurrection our fatal defeat was also predicted. Everybody was against us; only a faction of the Socialist Revolutionaries of the Left was with us in the Military Revolutionary Committee. How is it that we were able to overturn the Government almost without bloodshed? . . . That fact is the most striking proof that we *were not isolated*. In reality the Provisional Government was isolated; the democratic parties which march against us were isolated, are isolated, and for ever cut off from the proletariat!

“They speak of the necessity for a coalition. There is only one coalition possible—the coalition of the workers, soldiers, and poorest peasants; and it is our party's honour to have realized that coalition. . . . What sort of coalition did Avilov mean? A coalition with those who supported the Government of Treason to the People? Coalition doesn't always add to strength. For example, could we have organized the insurrection with Dan and Avksentiev in our ranks?” Roars of laughter.

“Avksentiev gave little bread. Will a coalition with the *oborontsi* furnish more? Between the peasants and Avksentiev, who ordered the arrest of the Land Committees, we choose the peasants! Our Revolution will remain the classic revolution of history. . . .

“They accuse us of repelling an agreement with the other democratic parties. But is it we who are to blame? Or must we, as Karelin put it, blame it on a ‘misunderstanding’? No, comrades. When a party in full tide of revolution, still wreathed in powder-smoke, comes to say, ‘Here is the Power—take it!’—and when those to whom it is offered go over to the enemy, that is not a misunderstanding . . . that is a declaration of pitiless war. And it isn't we who have declared war. . . .

“Avilov menaces us with failure of our peace efforts—if we remain ‘isolated.’ I repeat, I don't see how a coalition with Skobeliev, or even Tereshchenko, can help us to get peace! Avilov tries to frighten us by the threat of a peace at our expense. And I answer that in any case, if Europe continues to

be ruled by the imperialist bourgeoisie, revolutionary Russia will inevitably be lost. . . .

"There are only two alternatives; either the Russian Revolution will create a revolutionary moment in Europe, or the European powers will destroy the Russian Revolution!"

They greeted him with an immense crusading acclaim, kindling to the daring of it, with the thought of championing mankind. And from that moment there was something conscious and decided about the insurrectionary masses in all their actions, which never left them.

But on the other side, too, battle was taking form. Kameniev recognized a delegate from the Union of Railway Workers, a hard-faced, stocky man with an attitude of implacable hostility. He threw a bombshell.

"In the name of the strongest organization in Russia I demand the right to speak, and I say to you: the Vikzhel charges me to make known the decision of the Union concerning the constitution of Power. The Central Committee refuses absolutely to support the Bolsheviks if they persist in isolating themselves from the whole democracy of Russia!" Immense tumult all over the hall.

"In 1905, and in the Kornilov days, the Railway Workers were the best defenders of the Revolution. But you did not invite us to your Congress—" Cries, "It was the old Tsay-ee-kah which did not invite you!" The orator paid no attention. "We do not recognize the legality of this Congress; since the departure of the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries there is not a legal quorum. . . . The Union supports the old Tsay-ee-kah, and declares that the Congress has no right to elect a new Committee. . . .

"The Power should be a Socialist and revolutionary Power, responsible before the authorized organs of the entire revolutionary democracy. Until the constitution of such a power, the Union of Railway Workers, which refuses to transport counter-revolutionary troops to Petrograd, at the same time forbids the execution of any order whatever without the consent of the Vikzhel. The Vikzhel also takes into its hands the entire administration of the railroads of Russia."

At the end he could hardly be heard for the furious storm of abuse which beat upon him. But it was a heavy blow—that could be seen in the concern on the faces of the presidium. Kameniev, however, merely answered that there could be no doubt of the legality of the Congress, as even the quorum established by the

old Tsay-ee-kah was exceeded—in spite of the secession of the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries. . . .

Then came the vote on the Constitution of Power, which carried the Council of People's Commissars into office by an enormous majority. . . .

The election of the new Tsay-ee-kah, the new parliament of the Russian Republic, took barely fifteen minutes. Trotsky announced its composition: 100 members, of which 70 Bolsheviks. . . . As for the peasants, and the seceding factions, places were to be reserved for them. "We welcome into the Government all parties and groups which will adopt our programme," ended Trotsky.

And thereupon the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets was dissolved, so that the members might hurry to their homes in the four corners of Russia and tell of the great happenings. . . .

It was almost seven when we woke the sleeping conductors and motor-men of the streetcars which the Street-Railway Workers' Union always kept waiting at Smolny to take the Soviet delegates to their homes. In the crowded car there was less happy hilarity than the night before, I thought. Many looked anxious; perhaps they were saying to themselves, "Now we are masters, how can we do our will?"

At our apartment-house we were held up in the dark by an armed patrol of citizens and carefully examined. The Duma's proclamation was doing its work. . . .

The landlady heard us come in, and stumbled out in a pink silk wrapper.

"The House Committee has again asked that you take your turn on guard duty with the rest of the men," she said.

"What's the reason for this guard duty?"

"To protect the house and the women and children."

"Who from?"

"Robbers and murderers."

"But suppose there came a Commissar from the Military Revolutionary Committee to search for arms?"

"Oh, that's what they'll say they are. . . . And besides, what's the difference?"

I solemnly affirmed that the Consul had forbidden all American citizens to carry arms—especially in the neighbourhood of the Russian *intelligentsia*. . . .