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THE FINNISH REVOLUTION:

A SELF-CRITICISM.

By

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THE FINNISH REVOLUTION

A SELF-CRITICISM.

I.

FEARS AND HESITATIONS IN FACE OF THE REVOLUTION.

Proletarian revolutions, as Marx says, are always their own critics. We who have taken part in them ought consciously to facilitate this self-criticism, without, for that matter, seeking to avoid the historical responsibilities for our previous action.

The Finnish Revolution began in January of this year.* Its mistakes had already begun in the preceding year.

Just as the war took most of the Socialist parties in the great European countries by surprise, and showed how little they were conscious of their historic mission, so in the spring of 1917 the Russian Revolution surprised Finnish Social-Democracy. This spring-time liberty fell for us like a gift from the skies, and our party was overwhelmed by the intoxicating sap of March. The official watchword had been that of independent class-struggle, i.e., the same which German Social Democracy had put forward before the war. During the reactionary period it was easy enough to maintain this position; it was not exposed to any serious attack, and resistance on the part of the Socialists of the Right could not manage to make itself felt. In March the Party's proletarian virtue was exposed to temptation and to fall into sin; and in fact our Social-Democracy prostituted itself just as much with the bourgeoisie of Finland as with that of Russia (at

* 1918.

the beginning). The Russian Mensheviki also came forward as tempters. The Finnish Coalition Government was the offspring of this immoral union. At the time of its formation in March about half the Party representatives were opposed to it, and it was joined only by the Right Socialists. Nevertheless, the resistance of the others was of so passive a nature, that it did not hinder for a single moment our collaboration with those Socialists who were hobnobbing with Finnish and Russian landowners. And it was very characteristic that in our Party meeting, held in June—during which we, in passing, gave our adhesion to the Zimmerwald International—not a single voice was raised to demand separation from the Government Socialists.

What above all led us astray was the vague phantom of Parliamentary Democracy. If we had not had a Diet composed of a single Chamber, Proportional Representation and a relatively wide suffrage, and if the elections of the summer of 1916 our Party had not obtained a majority in the Diet, it might perhaps have been easier to be on our guard against the spring temptation. But at this moment the path of Parliamentary Democracy seemed cleared to an extraordinary extent, and wide vistas opened themselves out before our working-class movement. Our bourgeoisie had no army, nor even a police force they could count upon; and, moreover, could not form one by any lawful means, seeing that they would have needed the authorisation of the Social-Democrats of the Diet. Therefore there seemed every reason to keep to the beaten track of Parliamentary legality, in which, so it appeared, Social Democracy could wrest one victory after another from the middle class.

For Parliamentary Democracy to burst into full bloom it was now only necessary to get rid of the feeble authority of the Russian Provisional Government; to which the Finnish bourgeoisie clung like a drowning man to a straw. The Social-Democrats wished to brush aside, or at least to curtail, its legal right to interfere, so that it could not trouble the "internal affairs" of the country; in other words to protect the interests of the bourgeoisie. In this way our patriotism and our struggle for the independence of Finland seemed to spring from the very highest motives; it was a direct fight for democratic liberty, an organic part of the proletarian class-war.

The legislative results obtained in the Diet during the summer played their part in lulling us in the illusions of Parliamentarianism.

The normal working day of eight hours, which the mass of the workers had already caused to be adopted in most trades, became law; scarcely a Parliament had a more advanced law on this question than that of Finland. For the democratisation of the Communal Administration there was noted also a reform which meant that the power which had been entirely monopolised by the capitalists was transferred to the platform of Universal Suffrage—and this also was a bigger step in advance than had been known to any previous legislation. We saw clearly that the adoption of these laws was by no means due to the Parliament itself, but that a tempestuous wind from without had helped them to cross the shoals of Parliamentarianism with greater facility than in more normal times. This tempest made itself felt in the form of a mass demonstration which accompanied a full session of the Diet, in which one was conscious of a spirit more violent than usual, thanks above all to the presence of some Russian soldier comrades. There was nothing new in this for us, for we had always explained that Parliamentarianism gives its best results when the people exert pressure from without.

A worse sign of the powerlessness of Parliamentary Democracy to obtain results, was its inability to stop the wastage in food supplies. This naturally led to the belief that the Parliamentary results mentioned above were after all only results on paper, for the law necessary to stop speculation in food supplies was drawn up and voted, although that was as far as it got. The Coalition Government in reality did nothing. It was like a lazy bull which the Socialists were pulling by the horns, whilst the bourgeois pulled it by the tail, so that it went neither backward nor forward. And so speculation could go on in peace.

The hungry working masses soon lost all confidence in the Coalition Government, and, when all is said, in the leaders of the Social-Democratic Party as well. At Helsingfors the enraged workers sought, on their own account, to take stock of and distribute the stores of butter, and in the autumn a general strike broke out quite automatically in the capital,

and lasted two days until the organised proletariat ended it. The atmospheric pressure increased in a most disturbing fashion for our Parliamentarianism. It was the realisation of Democracy; the free aggravation of the Class Struggle. But we Social-Democratic representatives failed to comprehend true Democracy, and only its fleeting image was before our eyes.

This phantasmagoria was shaken for the first time by the Provisional Government of Kerensky. In spite of a violent resistance on the part of the bourgeois minority, the Diet had passed a fundamental law relating to the internal democratic liberty of Finland and to the Diet's right of wielding supreme power in the country. This law had been drawn up in accordance with the decisions of the Congress of Representatives of the All-Russian Workers' and Soldiers' Councils. A semi-official deputation of Mensheviks (Tcheidze, Lieber, and Dan) came from Petrograd to prevent the passing of the so-called law of the "supreme power," but they were too late. Thereupon, at the end of July, the Russian Provisional Government dissolved the Diet and ordered new elections. On two occasions our Social-Democratic group attempted to hold a plenary session of the dissolved Diet. The first time hussars, sent by Kerensky, were found posted at the gates of the building. The second time we found nothing but "Kerensky's seals." The President of the Diet, Comrade Manner, had the doors opened, and the plenary session took place, but it was only attended by members of the Social-Democratic group.

Our Party did not refuse to take part in the elections which were held at the beginning of October. By these elections, in spite of a marked increase in the number of Social-Democratic voters, we lost our majority in the Diet. The chief resource of the bourgeois parties in the elections was evidently sophistication. Immediately after the elections the Press gave out that in the constituencies where the bureau was made up solely of bourgeois, the bourgeois parties had obtained a number of votes greater than that of the sum-total of electors in the whole of the northern region. Later, during the revolution, there were discovered in the "cachettes" of presidents of electoral bureaux whole masses of Social-Democratic voting papers, regularly filled up. The bourgeois in addition gained several seats by means of

electoral cartels. But, apart altogether from these causes, I am convinced that the nascent disgust at Parliamentarianism amongst the mass of the proletariat contributed to the election results. The Diet's powerlessness, and the uncertainty of the results of its work, its delays and lack of energy, the slackening of the political activity of Social-Democracy at the instance of the Coalition Government—with the result that electoral enthusiasm amongst the proletariat was in no wise so great as one had a right to expect, in view of the strong political tension then reigning. It became evident that the fine illusions of our Parliamentary Democracy had received this second shock not merely by reason of external causes, but partly as a result of our own mistakes and intrinsic feebleness.

From now onwards the torrent of history rushed with a furious rapidity towards its first place of foaming eddies. As might have been expected, the bourgeoisie sought to make use of the advantage they had gained by seizing dictatorial power and degrading the Diet into a mere mask covering the dictatorship. The working class, on the other hand, had lost all hope of immediate help on the part of the Diet, and was tending consciously or unconsciously towards revolution. The Coalition Government had already been dissolved before the elections. The bitterness of the class-struggle could prevent nothing.

Moreover, even in Finland it was felt that Russia was steering towards a new and more complete revolution, the explosion of which might be heard at any moment. Kerensky's Provisional Government was trembling like an aspen in a storm. The power of the Bolsheviki was growing like a storm-cloud.

Our Social-Democracy, which ought in this crisis to have put forth the whole of its forces in preparing for revolution, sat and waited quite calmly for—the meeting of the Diet! At the beginning of November the union of the bourgeois groups voted a resolution entrusting the supreme power in internal affairs—formerly a prerogative of the monarch—to a triumvirate, but did not dare to put this decision into execution. At the same time they entered into negotiations with the Russian Provisional Government concerning the sharing of power. Nekrasoff, the Governor-General of

Kerensky's Government, left for Petrograd, taking with him a draft of an agreement for signature.

But he did not return to Helsingfors. The Russian proletariat had, at that very time, under the leadership of the Bolshevik party, overthrown the bourgeoisie and their lackeys and had itself taken the reins of power.

Amongst us, too, the genius of revolt passed over the country. We did not mount upon its wings, but bowed our heads and let it fly far above us. In this way, November was for us but a festival to commemorate our capitulation!

Would revolution at that time have given us the victory in Finland? That is not the same thing as asking if the revolution of the proletariat would have been able to get the victory directly as in Russia. At this distance the first seems probable. The second, on the other hand, improbable, just as it did at the time.

The chances of success were not on the whole bad. The enthusiasm and desire to fight on the part of the proletariat were, on the whole, great. The bourgeoisie was relatively badly armed, in spite of the fact that it had begun to get arms from Germany. It is true that the proletariat was also without arms. We borrowed several hundreds of rifles from groups of Russian soldiers at Helsingfors, and that was, practically speaking, all that we had in the way of arms at that time. There is no doubt, however, that more could have been obtained, at need, from Russian comrades, at least up to a certain point. What was far more important, the Russian soldiers could have given much more direct military aid to the Finnish revolution than later during the winter, when the "débâcle" of the Russian army and navy was at its height. There were doubtless also in our country certain Russian forces whom one could reckon on as being more liable to obey the orders of their reactionary officers than the behests of proletarian solidarity; but it is not at all likely that these elements would have made any really important active resistance to the revolutionary tempest.

In face of these signs, we Social-Democrats, "united on the basis of the class war," swung first to one side and then to the other, leaning first of all strongly towards revolution, only to draw back again. The true Socialists of the Right, who were about half the Party, were divided into two groups, one distinctly opposing the revolution and the other desiring

it. In the Social-Democratic group of the Diet, the majority was evidently so hostile to the revolutionary currents that it could be said to be with the bourgeoisie rather than with the proletariat. On the other hand the Right Socialist leaders in the territorial organisations wanted to have recourse to a sort of revolution, a kind of revolutionary general strike, to obtain the majority in the Government.

Acting in conjunction with them the Council of our Party (the Labour Commission) formed a Central Revolutionary Council which, especially after the S.-D. members of the Diet had given their adhesion—at first they were openly hostile to revolution—was good enough at making speeches on revolution, but impotent to carry out truly revolutionary policy. This Committee decided to begin by supporting the proclamation for a general strike. At a congress of representatives of the territorial organisation which had just met, it was decided to call a general strike embracing the whole country. Was this strike to mean revolution, or simply a demonstration in support of the demands put forward in the strike manifesto? No decision was taken, for we were not at one on this point.

The general strike spread throughout the country. Our "Central Revolutionary Council" discussed the question of going further. We, who without reason have been called "Marxists," did not wish to do so, and the "revolutionaries" of the territorial organisation did not wish to go forward without us.

In not desiring to go as far as revolution, we Social-Democrats of the Centre were, in a way, acting consistently with our point of view, imbued, as this had been for many years, with Socialist activity. We were in fact **Social-Democrats** and not Marxists. Our Social-Democratic point of view was: (1), Peaceful, continuous, but not revolutionary class-war, and at the same time (2), an independent class-war, seeking no alliance with the bourgeoisie. These two points of view decided our tactics.

(1). We did not believe in revolution; we did not trust it, nor did we call for it. This, when all is said, is characteristic of Social-Democracy.

Social-Democracy is in principle a working-class movement, which organises and moulds the workers for the class-struggle (legal, bourgeois and parliamentary). It is true that

Socialism finds a place in its programme as the goal to be aimed at, and that, in a certain measure, it is a factor in the general trend of the true or "immediate" programme of Social-Democracy. But on the whole it is only a Utopian ornament, seeing that it is impossible even to imagine Socialism as realisable within the bourgeois society, in the framework of which the practical action of Social-Democracy is nevertheless enclosed. The road historically unavoidable for passing from the bourgeois into the socialist society, the road of revolution and of the dictatorship of the armed proletariat is quite outside the conscious, practical field of operation of Social-Democracy; it begins only where the action of Social-Democracy ends.

The relations of a consistent Social-Democracy with revolution are just as passive as those of a tolerant historian with respect to the revolutionaries of past times. "The Revolution is born, not made" is the favourite expression of Social-Democracy, for it considers that it is not its sphere to **work** in support of revolution. It has on the contrary a natural tendency to delay the revolutionary explosion. This is easy enough to understand from the view-point of the true practical object of Social-Democracy: the revolutionary movement distrusts its action and threatens to interrupt it. Now as one cannot, when it is a question of revolution, decide with absolute certainty whether it will lead at the first essay to victory or to defeat, it always, in the event of revolution, seems possible that a danger threatens the gains of Social-Democracy's work of organisation, of its political conquests, its organisations, houses, libraries, newspapers, reforming laws, democratic institutions, acquired rights, etc. The whole practical action of Social-Democracy is founded on these benefits. They have become in part the intrinsic aim of its life; they are for the most part necessary to its future evolution and to its existence on the field of bourgeois legalism. That is why Social-Democracy strives by all means in its power to protect and conserve its conquests, even if danger threatens them from the side of the proletarian revolution.

Doubtless the doctrines of Social-Democracy, leaning in so doing on Marx, regard the conquests of organisation, their growth and conservation, as necessary in the very first place for the proletarian revolution. And evidently they **are** finally

useful to this revolution. Yet the latter takes place not at all by reason of Social-Democracy but in spite of it. (In the same way the military organisation of the bourgeois State will assuredly prove useful to the proletarian revolution, although the latter is against the object—military organisation.) If Social-Democracy could always direct the will of the labouring masses, the working class with its organisations would hardly ever plunge into an enterprise so risky as a revolution, and would thus never reach the final goal of Socialism, unless of course the bourgeoisie were itself to provoke the workers to revolution. In this case alone, then, is Social-Democracy consistent with itself—a thing, however, when it enters into a revolutionary struggle to protect its future and its legal bourgeois conquests—as we did in January.

In November, however, we determined to avoid the revolutionary struggle, partly in order to protect our democratic conquests, partly because we hoped to be able to weather the storm by Parliamentary means, perhaps also with the fatalistic idea in our minds, that “if the revolution comes now or later, it will come in spite of our resistance, and will show its power to the full.”

What was the result of this historical error? Could we avoid an armed conflict? No! It was only postponed till a time when the bourgeoisie would be better prepared for it than they were in November. The bourgeoisie always bring about a conflict with the workers when they desire it. In the fight put up by the working class there was but one danger, namely, that the bourgeoisie might determine the moment for the outbreak of the revolution. When the workers begin the revolution, the bourgeois are not always ready at every point, and may thus be partially taken by surprise, especially if a reactionary Government has for a considerable time been arousing feelings of hatred amongst the masses. In that case, a revolution set in motion by the workers may carry with it the discontented middle classes, or at least it may disunite and discourage the partisans of the Government.

Seeing that a Government, even after some delay, has always at its disposal the means of disarming the masses, can arrest the protagonists of the revolution, can methodically place “safe” troops for attack and defence against “the internal enemy,” and can in general concentrate the whole of

its forces for an active or passive resistance to the revolution. Moreover it may be taken for granted that at the moment when the class-war breaks out, the Government will know how to arrange the external situation as favourably as possible according to its needs, will, if possible, have sought help from outside, or in any case will have made ready in the rear against any attack coming from inside the frontier. In November the bourgeois class of Finland would have had more trouble in obtaining help from the German Government than they subsequently had in winter, when the German troops had been withdrawn from the Russian front—but it was difficult for us to foresee this in November, or for that matter in January as well.

(2). We Centre Social-Democrats did not wish to form a "bloc" with the bourgeois "Liberals," although the Right S.-D.'s, those who were for, equally with those who were against the revolution, looked upon it as desirable. With some sort of "entente" it is desirable. With some sort of "entente" of this kind, it was scarcely to be hoped that the aim which was floating before the eyes of the "Centrist" S.-D.'s could be realised, i.e., the formation of a Liberal Government whose members should be in great part Socialists, and whose programme should be the alleviation of the food famine and the adoption of a hundred different reforms through Parliamentary methods. That several Agrarians might be included as a sort of reinforcement in a "Red" Senate constituted by "revolutionary means" was looked upon favourably by the Right S.-D.'s. With this in view, the S.-D. group of the Diet, during the week of the general strike, held several conferences with the Agrarian Party, and probably also with certain other Liberal groups, and "Comrade" Tokoi made inquiries as to whether the Senate officials would remain at their posts under a "Red Senate." Thus the object of the "revolutionary" S.-D.'s was in reality to reform the spring Coalition Senate in a more thorough way than before, i.e., with a S.-D. majority, and leaving eventually the worst reactionaries out of account altogether.

Viewing the matter in the most favourable light, this result might well have been obtained by the revolution in November. Nothing more. Finnish Social-Democracy could have gained nothing else. One section of the workers would

certainly have demanded more extreme measures, but the majority of our working class party, which was contented with so little, would then have been able to stifle the real revolutionary voice of the proletariat, for having obtained satisfaction on this point, it would have opposed the revolutionary demands for a dictatorship. It would then have attained its object, or very nearly so. At this distance it now seems even more probable than it did then. In any case the Finnish bourgeois class would probably have given way for the time being before the revolutionary movement, in order the better to protect its own chief interests, which were in no way threatened by the Right S.-D.'s. The Finnish revolution in November would then most probably have become a bourgeois revolution with liberal tendencies. There would then have been a split in the ranks of the organised workers: the Right Wing would have drawn nearer to the Conservative Front with the bourgeoisie, the Left would have been the standard-bearer of Revolutionary Socialism or Communism, and would have continued to attack the bourgeois State with its partisans and powers.

It was in some such way, although not so clearly, that we "Marxists" in the Party Council had figured to ourselves the results of a revolution already continued during the week of the November general strike. But for that very reason we had two very weighty reasons for opposing the revolution: (1) We did not want to help in uniting the Right Socialists with the bourgeoisie, and (2) we wished to avoid splitting the S.-D.'s into two opposite camps. So that from this standpoint also our thought was moving in channels characteristic, not of Marxism, but of Social-Democracy.

In fact we curbed the historic evolution of things by preventing a split in the working class movement, although the beginnings of such a division were already a necessary condition if the working class movement were to advance towards a consciously revolutionary goal.

And now artfully patched up and with sections in opposition to one another, the movement was absolutely incapable of action. A division, it is true, might have been damaging to Social-Democratic action, i.e., to the success of Parliamentary and Trade Union work. Hopes of a success at the polls might have been lessened by it. But for the real progress of the working class movement, and for the

strengthening of the class-war, this internal rupture could not but have been of service. It would have meant the withdrawal from the working class front of harmful and doubtful elements, which, ranged on the side of the bourgeoisie, would have done less damage to the revolutionary class struggle than in the ranks of the workers themselves.

Doubtless, in spite of the most intense effort, we should in all probability have been unable to dictate the revolution's immediate conquests. History itself would have done that. But we ought to have made the attempt, we ought to have fought and attacked, so as to help in the progress of events as much as possible. History itself cannot work with empty gloves—it needs fighting hands. And even if the great break up of the ice had not come in the history of the class-struggle in Finland, but had confined itself to disintegrating the bourgeois "bloc," this break-up would have been one step in advance. The force of resistance of the ice-block would have been weakened; the pressure of the torrent would not have been broken against a compact roof, and would have been able to bring all its strength and weight to bear against the opposing obstacle until it smashed it. This is, indeed, the most rapid and natural method to use in ice-breaking. It is just what came about in Russia. By this method a good beginning may most easily be made. The resistant power of the bourgeois State is thus largely put out of working order at the decisive moment. On the other hand the break-up may hang out for weeks beyond the prescribed time, if the ice crust is of equal thickness right up to the last moment; if there are not formed here and there cracks and eddies before the final rupture.

We prevented the formation of these eddies by countermanding the general strike at the end of a week and by referring back a decision as to revolution to the Party Congress. This caused discontent and even exasperation amongst the working masses. The discontent did not reach the stage of revolt against the Party leaders, but it acted in a manner which was if anything still more dangerous for the future class struggles of the workers: confidence in the party leaders was to a great extent lost.

The leaders who had need, as one would have thought, of well-stoked fires in order to get up full speed against the enemy, now gaining strength, wasted their time in blowing

upon and rekindling the ashes of distrust. The awakened mistrust and hostility made themselves felt in the sequel as a nightmare during the whole course of the Revolution. In this way there was sown in November the seed of the April débâcle. The Party Congress, which met a few weeks after the general strike, felt that already the crest of the revolutionary wave was beginning to fall under the influence of various cross winds. The delegates present at the conference had been elected during the spring, when conditions were quite different. About half of these delegates seemed to be more or less favourable to Revolution; the other half was opposed to it. We Centrists wanted, above everything, to keep the party together, and we "succeeded." In the joint resolution there was no statement either for or against Revolution, but in its place the spirit of the old class struggle manifested itself; also a whole crowd of unmeaning reforms were demanded by the bourgeoisie, and an appeal to arms was made to the workers, not, however, for a revolutionary offensive, but for the defence that had become necessary.

For the moment the necessity for defence had become the most important question, as the bourgeoisie, seeing that for the time being it had escaped the danger of revolution, was now consciously preparing for the attack. The bourgeois newspapers openly conducted a fierce campaign against Social-Democracy, and with more secrecy the bourgeoisie got ready for war, procured arms, drilled and put the bourgeois army on a footing, and despatched agents abroad on urgent missions. The workers' guard also drilled, and the party council even co-operated in this work. But the work went on lazily, without the necessary intensity and energy. Little revolutions were threatening here and there with their anarchic influences: at Abo a revolution of this kind broke out.

The work of Parliament was not, and could not be, anything than harmful to the working-class movement. All that it did was to bind together in a useless way all our forces which were necessary for the revolutionary struggle. It only served to deceive the masses and helped to mask what was coming, to close their eyes to bourgeois preparations, such preparations as the workers themselves ought to have made. When the Revolution had threatened to break out in

November, we had been successful in getting a decision from the Democratic majority of the Diet, according to which the Diet itself, and not merely a Government "bloc," would have wielded the supreme power in the country. This seemed a real step, small enough it is true, towards pure democracy. In the Constituent Commission we were already tracing the fundamental lines of this régime, so fine in perspective, and decided to institute a competition for the best design for a flag for the Finnish Democratic State.

It was then that we heard from the lips of M. Svinhufoud the constitution of the Capitalist State. It contained but one paragraph:—"A strong police force."

It was an ignoble and sanguinary constitution. But it was bound to the historic reality of the class-war, and the repression of the masses at a time when more than one Social-Democrat was still dreaming of a Democratic Constitution springing from victories gained at the polls.

II.

FOR DEMOCRACY.

During the revolution which swept over Finland last winter, the Finnish Social-Democracy did not follow its tendency beyond the régime of general popular representation. On the contrary it sought as much as possible to create a régime which should be democratic in the highest degree. In the same order of ideas was the plan for setting up a "popular commissariat," a plan which seemed from time to time on the point of being adopted by referendum during the spring. By this project, the Diet elected on a democratic basis was to exercise the supreme power; the Government was only to be its executive committee; the president was not to have the right of independent action, and was to be subject to regular and direct control from the Diet; the people's power of initiative was to be very wide; officials were to be nominated for a certain length of time, and high officials were to be nominated by the Diet.

Of course this form of Government was not the final aim of the people's commissariat, but simply an instrument whose object was to realise social and economic aspirations. By this means it was hoped to create conditions favourable to evolu-

tion in the direction of Socialism, and to institute reforms from which the Socialist society should finally emerge.

This idea appeared perfectly natural in the conditions then existing in Finland. A democratic régime in Finland would apparently have guaranteed a majority to the popular representation, a great part of which would openly have put forward claims to a Socialist régime, and probably the remainder would not have displayed much opposition to reforms, going cautiously and step by step in this direction. The adversaries of Socialism would certainly have formed a minority in the Diet, and would have been powerless in such a situation. Such at least was our opinion.

Taking into consideration the economic life of Finland, an idea of this kind did not seem impossible of realisation. Apart from the fact that capitalist evolution was not in an advanced stage in Finland, it ought to have been easy, by reason of the simple nature of the conditions of production, to allow the State to take over most establishments—easier at anyrate than in many countries having a more complex economic life. The timber and paper industries are those which are of the greatest importance in Finland, as regards the value of what is produced. Already two-thirds of the forests belong to the State. The paper industry is relatively centralised, and the taking over of about ten of the chief firms would evidently be tantamount to administering the whole industry. The same thing applies to the wood-sawing industry. Production is practically in the hands of a very small number of big companies, who, by the way, are not looked upon favourably by the peasant proprietors. It was rightly maintained that the sequestration of a couple of hundred firms would have placed entire control in the hands of the State, and consequently would have given a decisive influence on the other branches of capitalism. In this way the State would have become the preponderating capitalist, not as a State ruled by the bourgeoisie and private capital to serve as an instrument of class, but as a "Populist State," in which the bourgeoisie, being in the minority, would no longer have held supreme power. Power would have fallen completely into the hands of the working-class majority, who would have used it to their own advantage so as to change the economic activity of the State in such wise as to make

it watch ever more and more over the interests of the workers, and so to transform the State into a Socialist Society.

A social policy on these lines was in the minds of the Finnish People's Commissariat. At anyrate a certain number of its members expected that the majority of the Democratic Diet would adopt the measure of taking over the big timber and paper factories on the scale mentioned above, and of putting external commerce under State control, which would, of course, have resulted in a change in the situation of the State Bank. It is difficult and useless now to speculate as to what would have happened if German Imperialism had not come to the rescue of the capitalists of Finland: if the workers had obtained the victory. But without yielding to such vague speculations, it can now be seen that the idea of the Democratic State, with which the People's Commissariat deluded itself, was **historically false**.

It wished to build a bridge, to construct a passage from Capitalism to Socialism. But Democracy is unable to bear the burden of such a mission. Its historic character has made itself felt in the course of the Revolution. It satisfied neither the bourgeois nor the workers, although no one openly declared against it. The bourgeoisie did not think it prudent to declare against democracy, and the workers, these same workers who in 1904-5 had fought with such glowing enthusiasm for democracy, remained indifferent enough. For one party as for the other, the dictatorship was now alone to be desired—for the bourgeoisie the White Dictatorship, for the workers the Red Dictatorship. Both felt in their secret hearts that the democratic plan was neither a compromise nor a reconciliation. To one and to the other, their own power seemed to be preferred to any popular power or Democracy.

Democracy was the governing system of the previous year in Finland. The Russian bourgeois revolution of March had made a present of it to our country. On paper it did not exist any more than it did as a generally recognised and fundamental law, but it existed "de facto" for all that. It was by no means a complete form of Democracy, comparable with the scheme put forward later on by the People's Commissariat; but it was as good as it was possible for it to be in a Bourgeois State. To go farther along the democratic road, in other words to make use of the class-war without

having recourse to violent methods, was an historical impossibility.

It is easy enough at this distance to discover this important truth, but it was more difficult to do so in Finland last year. The relative feebleness of the Finnish bourgeoisie, its inability to carry on a Parliamentary struggle, and the fact that it had no armed forces, were so many factors through which we Social-Democrats were predestined to suffer from the democratic illusion, inasmuch as we wished to reach Socialism by means of a struggle in the Diet and by democratic representation of the people. This was equivalent to entering on a course which could not agree with the true postulates of history—to seek to avoid a Socialist Revolution, to shun the real bridge between Capitalism and Socialism, i.e., the dictatorship of the proletariat, which is an historical necessity.

In our eyes the Democracy of the past year appeared as the programme of the future, not as a thing of the past. It showed itself, however, to be too much stained with error, too feeble, to be capable of serving as a foundation for the erection of the Socialist edifice. That is why it was so necessary to complete and strengthen it. It was weak, extremely weak. We did not perceive that it was so weak that it was impossible to buttress it. Weakness was, in fact, its main characteristic, a weakness to which Democracy is perforce condemned in every bourgeois society. It was weak even as a stay for the bourgeoisie, and still more so as an arm in the working-class struggle. Its sole historic advantage—an advantage for both parties at one and the same time—was that which had always characterised Democracy, namely, that it allowed the class-war to be carried on in relative freedom. It allowed it to develop up to that point when a decision by force of arms became necessary. Thus the historic mission of this democracy was to crumble as useless, after having fulfilled its task and served as an old worm-eaten bulwark between the two conflicting fronts.

A FIRST COMMUNIST PROGRAMME IN THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE.

When at the end of January the Finnish bourgeoisie gave the word of command to its butchers to begin the attack, Social Democracy was indignant because of democracy. "The bourgeoisie is violating and destroying democracy"—so ran the cry from the Social-Democrat side—"To arms! Democracy is in danger." And so indeed it was. The bourgeois wished once and for all to emerge from their torpor, to throw off their democratic chains, which were for them an obstacle if not a danger. They desired to set up a naked class tyranny, an unchecked pillaging authority, a "strong police," a butchers' republic, or, as we shall see, a butchers' monarchy.

That is what the bourgeoisie wanted. Social-Democracy replied by revolution. But what was its watchword? The power of the workers? No, it was democracy, a democracy which should not be violated.

Our position from a Socialist standpoint was not clear, and viewed historically was Utopian. Such a democracy could at best be created only on paper. Such a thing has never existed in a society formed of classes, and can never develop there. In Democracy a robber class has always stolen power from the people.

If in future the capitalist system were to continue to exist on the economic field, such a Democracy would be an impossibility; a Democracy in which the proletariat would have become the ruling class in the State, and by means of the State would have striven to reach the primitive sources of the exploiting power of capitalism. If, on the other hand, the economic system of capitalism were already ripe for its fall, then for this work democracy was both useless and impossible. In the first case the form of the Democratic State, if it had been realised on paper, would have become a screen masking the absolute power of the bourgeois class, and up to a certain point it would have proved an inconvenience and an obstacle. In the second case it would have proved a mask and an obstacle to the absolute power of the working class. In any event a true democracy could not spring from it. In a class

society only two kinds of relations between classes can exist. The one a state of oppression, maintained by violence (arms, laws, tribunals, etc.), in which the struggle for the liberation of the oppressed classes is confined to the use of relatively pacific means (whether they be underground or open, anarchic, parliamentary or professional); whilst the other is a state of open struggle between the classes, **the Revolution**, in which a violent conflict decides which of the two classes will in future be the oppressor and which the oppressed.

When the Finnish bourgeoisie provoked the workers to an open struggle for class supremacy, the workers' party ought to have chosen some clear and definite position; one of these two: either to take up the challenge and engage in a revolutionary struggle for **working-class power**, or to submit with a struggle to the bourgeoisie, recognising its own weakness and betraying the cause of its class. The Finnish working class party did not decide for one or for the other course. It did its duty by going into battle, it drew up its forces for the struggle, but it was for a **defensive** struggle, not for a definite revolutionary fight. It is true that we talked much of revolution, and we actually took part in a struggle which was by nature revolutionary, but it was with closed eyes that we did so, without being conscious of the meaning of this social revolution. We talked at the same time of democracy and a democratic State, which meant, if anything, that revolution was perforce the very thing to be avoided. **Thus the standard of revolution was in reality raised—so that revolution might be avoided.**

In our situation that was an enormous mistake. Now that we have understood this, we ought also to recognise it openly, even if we did not do so at the opportune moment. We did not grasp the fact that when the revolution broke out, the workers threw democracy violently aside, blotted it out as a hindrance and a point of no value in their programme. If the workers of Finland had not accepted the challenge thrown down by the bourgeoisie, but had meekly allowed themselves to be beaten, imprisoned and slaughtered, certainly a protecting democratic programme would have been in its place. But on that day in January when the worker raised his hand against his mortal enemy, that hand tore away the democratic rags and tatters which separated them. After that day, to keep up the pretence of

a democratic programme was equivalent to a retreat; as was also the case with a democracy "favourable to the workers," like that included in the plan for a constitution drawn up by the People's Commissariat.

The fact that the representatives of a class in revolution, or engaged in any other phase of the class struggle, are not conscious of the struggle's true aim and import does not necessarily mean that one must give up the struggle or that all is bound to end in shipwreck. It ought not to be interpreted as a struggle against one's own class, or as conscious or unconscious deception. The struggle in itself is a historic fact, it is the principal fact which decided and conduces to a true result, and each man who, according to the measure of his strength and ability takes part in the revolutionary struggle of the aroused class, upholds that class in so doing, even if on his lips and his thoughts he nourishes the most unhistoric, unscientific facts one could wish for. The Finnish Social Democracy, by carrying out its duty of putting up a fight, did not betray its class, and by its struggle upheld the programme of the revolution, even though inscribed on its banners were the watchwords of the old democracy.

It was not the first time in the history of the world that such a thing had taken place as the foremost champions of a struggling class adopting a watchword which was not consonant with the historical idea of their struggle. Revolutionary watchwords have generally arisen fortuitously, and have been made up of high-sounding, superficial and not very far-seeing political phrases, to which are joined as by chance the strange expressions of an inverted symbolism. For example, the Hussite movement in Bohemia was at bottom a struggle for the most real class advantages, although in the first place the point at issue was a theological dispute concerning the Host, communion, and the drinking of wine. During the Finnish revolution the democratic programme was for the S.-D.'s of Finland their communion wine. It did not hinder Social-Democracy from taking part in the revolutionary struggle, but as a programme it was no longer of service in the struggle itself. If an unskilled navigator is steering a wrong course which will lead him to destruction or carry him away from his destination, and a violent storm throws him back into the right course without his knowing

it, the result is evidently due not to the sailor, but to the storm. He may have done his duty during the voyage with zeal and courage, but he did not know how to use his maps and his compass, given to him expressly that he might steer in the right direction.

The modern S.-D. Party, whose activity should be based on a Marxian and consequently scientific policy, has less than any other, any reason or point of honour for carrying this symbolism to the barricade. For, worst of all, it was for us a weakness and a hindrance in the struggle. The knowledge that the fight is for a definite object is sufficient in itself to raise the morale and endurance of the fighters, but the lack of a clear aim induces uncertainty, hesitation and weakness. Such was the case with the February revolution in Finland. We did not keep order with enough energy. For example, at Helsingfors we gave too free a rein to the bourgeoisie, which allowed them to carry on a campaign of plotting against us. Domiciliary visits and imprisonment of offenders were not carried out with sufficient energy. Counter-revolutionaries, who had been proved guilty, were punished with too much leniency. We did not put these gentlemen of leisure early enough under the obligation of working, and we should certainly have acted with more insight if we had put forward the dictatorship of the proletariat as the evident aim of the revolution. From the very moment that this was not done, our action held to a middle, dangerous way, which fact was in itself sufficient to make the bourgeoisie bolder in their plots, and at the same time to encourage certain anarchic elements which had found their way into the Red Guards to commit "motu propue" murders, robberies, and other misdeeds—a lack of discipline which tended to produce disorder in the ranks even of the revolutionaries.

The result of the Finnish revolution did not, however, depend upon these circumstances. It was impossible to avoid defeat when the German Government had joined the other hangmen. But suppose the German Government had not interfered, what would have happened? We cannot say with certainty, but it is possible that the result of the struggle might have depended on whether revolutionary order was to be severely maintained for a considerable time as an intentional dictatorship, or whether it was to be merely a humanitarian stage on the road leading to the haven of peaceful

democracy. Indirectly, in that case, all would then have depended on what standard or symbol was put forward by the S.-D. leaders.

One thing, which in a certain measure contributed to giving a certain character to the programme of the People's Commissariat and the Finnish Social Democracy, was the line of action we felt bound to pursue with respect to the "petit bourgeois" and peasant, endeavouring not to repel or frighten them with the terms Socialism and Dictatorship of the Proletariat, but striving to quieten them by talking democracy and otherwise treating them gently. This was well enough as an election dodge, but it was not revolutionary tactics. During the revolution this prudence on our part was seen to be a mistake. The tranquillity of the "petite bourgeoisie" and their vague sympathies, did not, and could not have any noteworthy influence on the development of the struggle. The fighting spirit depended entirely upon the workers, upon their enthusiasm, boldness and confidence in the revolutionary leaders. Democratic formulæ were calculated rather to depress than to stimulate the workers' enthusiasm, for without any doubt they looked upon them as something out of place rather than as the final aim for which the worker was, if need arose, joyfully to sacrifice his life. The clear signals of class Socialism would have aroused their ardour in an altogether different way. They would then have felt that the struggle was indeed carrying them onward straight to the realisation of the greatest historical ideal. And if they had seen that the leaders of the revolution treated the bourgeoisie with the severity which must be used in a bloody class war towards the enemies and oppressors who but deserved to be oppressed in their turn, then the workers would have felt in their hearts a boundless confidence in their comrades at the head of things.

For every working-class party leading a revolution, the most precious thing to possess is the enthusiastic confidence of the workers. No mite of this should be lost, if we want to see the revolution triumphant.

THE LOGIC OF THE STORM.

The proletarian revolution is above all else a great work of organisation. The power of the Government should be organised as the mechanism of the power of the working class; the proletarian army should be organised as a sure support of this power, and the class-war should be organised on a Socialist basis.

Many observations made in the course of this work of organisation demand a special treatment which we have no intention of giving them here. Here we intend to indicate merely the main directing lines which experience has shown us to be necessary to follow in organising revolution.

In the practical work of Government organisation we were at the outset led into the right path through a general strike of officials. In spite of all our wanderings in the paths of Liberalism, the entire management of State and communal affairs fell into the hands of the organised workers from the moment the officials had decided unanimously to strike. In places a certain number kept at work, but generally speaking their aim was either sabotage or to help the butchers to make war. This happened on the railways and in the post and telegraph offices. As far as the latter are concerned, we should perhaps have played our game better by dismissing all employees known for their bourgeois opinions, even if this had dislocated and diminished, or for that matter almost entirely suspended the telegraphic service for a time: for as long as the war was in progress front to front, it was dangerous to permit adversaries and deserters to continue at their work in the railway and telegraph services. A free telephone service could be used for the purposes of military espionage by members of the bourgeois class remaining on our side of the front. Moreover, its use during the time of open struggle ought to have been reduced to a minimum, since a really effective control cannot be exercised in any case.

As a result of the general strike of managers and technical experts, the organisation of production went partly in the direction desired by the workers, i.e., that of socialisation, much more rapidly and completely than our Social-Democracy had wished it to go. First of all came, naturally,

the state and communal commercial establishment, which fell into the hands of the organised workers, but they were soon followed by several big capitalist concerns, notably by the biggest enterprise of its kind in the country—the paper factories. Generally speaking the re-working of the factories stopped by the capitalists did not present any insurmountable difficulties to the workers. Doubtless the want of technical experts would later on have made itself felt more strongly than at first, but however imperfect the resources at the workers' command, experience proved in most cheering fashion that the workers of Finland were capable of organising production. In the majority of industries much greater success was obtained than had ever been counted on.

On the other hand in the class-war itself, and in the organisation of the Red Army, mistakes, irregularities and omissions were made, due largely, it is true, to lack of experience and technical knowledge, but also to the fact that sufficient attention was not paid to organising for the combat itself. Preparations for taking up the struggle were not sufficiently detailed or methodical and lacked energy. Not even the arrest of the bourgeois agitators had been prepared for beforehand. The Red Army was at first formed solely of volunteers from the ranks of the organised workers; later unorganised workers were admitted; in some places they were forced to join the army; in others universal compulsory military service was set up, and even the bourgeoisie were sent to the front armed with rifles. Evidently the most practical measure would have been to adopt general compulsory service in the working class by calling up all men able to bear arms, or those of certain classes. Army pay, which was about the same as that received by a well-paid worker, need not have been so high. The provisioning of the army was organised in a satisfactory manner, but the need of footwear and clothing was great, especially the former. The transport and storage of munitions, so that they could be at hand when wanted, was at first badly organised, and never was really satisfactory. Worst of all was the organisation of the intelligence system. The organisation of corps of scouts at the back of the army was also a mistake, and the action of this corps was harmful and a danger to military operations. The fact that in the army on the front not even the simplest measures relating to the scout corps were put into practice,

which the Red Army suffered, namely, the lack of trained, capable and punctual officers who could inspire confidence. We had previously had no trained forces, since the country had been without an army for a sufficiently long period; only a few old non-commissioned officers were requisitioned by the workers. The most elementary military instruction for officers would certainly have been extremely useful, but it was not to be had, and we were without it throughout the whole course of the revolution.

To a most alarming extent it was sheer hazard which decided to whom such or such a post of command should be given. Sometimes these men were equal to the task before them, and made model troops of their men. But there were also in officers' corps and in the staffs a great number of unskilful, incompetent men, who, while not ne'er-do-wells, were nevertheless mere talkers who had never yet succeeded in any organising work or post of command, and who did not know how to set about things, although they had risen in the general confusion. If the well-tried organisers of the working-class movement had volunteered in greater numbers to lead the operations (as often was the case), the leadership of the class-war would certainly have improved on our side. The agitation undertaken in our ranks by the paid agents of the bourgeoisie against our military command would then have borne less fruit. An underground agitation of this kind is in a class-war the most dangerous and insidious weapon of the bourgeoisie, and the greater the number of elements with obscure antecedents who rise to the surface during a revolution, the more easily when reverses come do doubts arise about the honesty and incorruptibility of leaders.

The general leadership of the class struggle on our side also leaves much room for criticism. Lack of arms was the chief reason why a more energetic and continuous offensive was not undertaken at the outset. However, even when we had obtained arms, there was still the lack of drilled men. The weeks which had gone by had not been employed in energetically forming and drilling new troops, for no one had then expected a long class-war extending over several months. There was no regular specialist organisation. Our troops fought practically the whole time without reserves, a most fatiguing and dangerous thing. True, our front resisted the enemy's attacks, but, wanting as we were in reserves and

in special attacking battalions, we were not in a position to make any really serious attacks. As our advance on the northern front continued for some time, there resulted from it to the north of Tammerfors a dangerous bulge, the flanks of which were almost entirely uncovered. This bulge required five or six times more men to hold it than a straight front immediately to the north of Tammerfors would have needed. We were soon to pay for this tactical error. The Whites' flank attack produced such unsteadiness amongst the tired troops holding the inside of the arc, and forced them to retreat in such disorder, that the enemy had every opportunity for surrounding Tammerfors and pushing his front to the south of the town.

Without doubt our troops were already depressed by the announcement that the German Government had promised to come to the aid of the bourgeoisie, by sending first of all an expedition to the Aaland Islands to facilitate the transport of arms and troops in Finland. It was in Aaland, too, that the descent on our rear of the Germans and of the butchers' troops was prepared. The Russian officers had taken good care that the enemy should encounter no more resistance from the fortifications outside Hangö than they did at Aaland. The Russian defenders had been withdrawn, but the forts had not been handed over to the Finns. The landing at Hangö, which we could not prevent for want of troops, directly threatened the capital, and made the defence of the whole of south-west Finland a forlorn hope. The evacuation of the whole of this territory began at once with the object of retiring into eastern Finland, up to the line of the river Kymene, for example. But it then appeared that it was difficult to withdraw troops from localities which had not been attacked by the enemy. Whilst our evacuation and retreat were being delayed, the enemy got imposing forces together in eastern Finland to prevent our retreating into Russia. Towards the end of April it became impossible for us to resist these attacks made by the troops of the international butchers. And when our Karelian front was broken the greatest part of our army was surrounded. Probably only four or five thousand of our revolutionary forces managed to pass into Russia.

The Government of Finland had at first asked for help from the Swedish Government. Arms and munitions were

constantly coming in from Sweden, but the negotiations came to nothing as far as direct military intervention was concerned. On their side the Swedes tried during the revolution to put an embargo on Aaland, which belonged to Finland. When the defeat of the revolutionary army was certain, and there was left only the hangman's work to do, Sweden sent her "black brigade" to Tammerfors to drink the blood of the revolutionary workers, a thing which the faithful Socialist lackeys of the Swedish Government and bourgeoisie made no attempt to prevent. Before the arrival of the black brigade a semi-official delegation of Right Swedish Socialists came to Helsingfors, and Möller, the secretary of the party, declared in their name that the victory of the Finnish Revolution would be a disaster for international democracy. The international Socialist swindlers were thus already afraid of our revolution. They feared lest it should spread the flames which threatened to set fire to the feathers of the couch which the bourgeoisie had prepared for them. For us, on the other hand, it seems terrible that our revolution with its democratic programme might have been triumphant. It would have troubled the understanding of the workers of neighbouring countries in relation to the great task of the proletarian revolution.

Once more did victory rest with capitalist violence. German imperialism gave ear to the lamentations of our bourgeois, and gave itself out as ready to swallow up the newly-acquired independence, which, at the request of the Finnish Social Democrats, had been granted to Finland by the Soviet Republic of Russia. The national sentiment of the bourgeoisie did not suffer in the least on this account, and the yoke of a foreign imperialism had no terrors for them when it seemed that their "fatherland" was on the point of becoming the fatherland of the workers. They were willing to sacrifice the entire people to the great German bandit provided that they could keep for themselves the dishonourable position of slave drivers.

They were now indeed in this position, and they took the whip in hand. And never had the whip been wielded in more bestial, brutal fashion than it was under Svinhufoud's rule in Finland every day uninterruptedly for seven months. The savage lust for revenge on the part of the Finnish bourgeoisie was responsible for more victims amongst defenceless prisoners than the war of the classes had cost the workers

during three months. By a systematic mass massacre of our comrades, the butchers' Government seemed as if it were desirous of proving by moving evidence to the workers of all lands what relentless vengeance they, the workers, bring upon themselves if they do not from the moment they arrive in power subject the bourgeoisie of their country to an iron dictatorship, instead of remaining animated, as was the revolutionary Government in Finland, by such delicate feelings of humanity towards their class enemies. Not content with mass shootings, the bourgeoisie immediately set about starving their prisoners to death. Evidently this is the favourite form of vengeance for the clerical-monarchic-capitalist joint stock society! When the workers, feeling themselves proudly to be the true proprietors and creators of all wealth, are writhing in the pangs of hunger and dying one after the other, then it is that the fine shareholder enjoys such a sight all the more, whets his appetite with it, and feels what superhuman power is his! Like all scoundrels he relishes it so much as to forget that the labour-power of the worker is necessary to him, until some private capitalist, like Baron Linder in this case, aroused from his intoxicating joy by the view of depopulated fields and factories, gives utterance to the truth that "this is shameful," and exhorts his boon companions in Svinhufoud's camp to exercise more moderation in their revenge.

The capitalists' paradise was now well nigh complete. The golden crown alone was lacking. But it was soon ordered—vulgar work from the Hohenzollern branch in Hesse, and modelled on Master William's designs. On the eve of the day when the bourgeois Diet was to elect its king, the Nemesis of History raised a warning finger, and in Bulgaria and on the French front there sounded the fateful funeral knell of German imperialism.

The mad masters of Finland did not yet understand the importance of retreating. They wished to run full tilt with their horns against the wall. Soon we shall see them cringing and fawning before English imperialism—until such time as the workers shall make short shrift of the English brigand too.

The workers' movement in Finland was broken last spring, and will not be reborn in its primitive form. The axe without an edge was cast into the furnace of history—to be re-smelted, and soon we shall see it emerge pure communist

steel! The rust and scum float on the surface in Finland. The Socialist renegades under the leadership of Tanner, a former senator, came upon the scene to barter openly their worn-out ideals for the greater joy of the bourgeois "Progressives." "Comrade" Tokoi, accompanied by the comedian Orjatsalo and others, shifted their stall to the Archangel market, there to play a tragic-comic farce to keep up the Finnish Legion, lured into the ranks of British imperialism. At the end of August we finally settled our accounts with the officials of the old organisation at the Moscow Congress, when the Communist Party of Finland was founded on the following fundamental principles:—

(1). The working class must energetically prepare for an armed revolution, and not hang back with the old system with its Parliaments and professional and co-operative societies.

(2). Only a working-class party working for the propagation of Communism and for the success of the future social revolution can be recognised or supported. All other action must be resolutely condemned, unmasked and combatted.

(3). By the revolution the working class must take all power into its hands, and set up an iron dictatorship. Therefore our efforts must lead to the suppression of the bourgeois state and not to the setting up of a democracy, neither before nor after the revolution.

(4). Through the dictatorship of the workers must be created a Communist society, by means of the expropriation of all land and capitalist property, and by the workers taking production and distribution into their own hands. Thus neither before nor by the revolution must anything be undertaken which aims merely at rendering more supportable the system of the expropriation of capital.

(5). The proletarian revolution must be propagated as energetically as possible, and the Russian People's Soviet Socialist Republic supported by every means in our power.

These are the lessons we have drawn from our struggle and from the great example of the Russian people. We now understand that the principal rule of Marxian tactics is as follows:—First of all a just appreciation of the historical

situation, and then an energetic movement going as far as possible within the limits set by evolution.

When the historical conditions are absent, to make a revolution is contrary to the Marxian idea. After a revolution has failed, fugitives have often succumbed to the temptation of arranging for revolutionary plots with their eyes closed, and at moments when the course of events has brought about the disappearance of favourable conditions. These improvisers of revolution and this revolutionary stupidity have been censured in the severest way by Marx. On the other hand, when history has entered upon a revolutionary period, when conditions favourable to revolution seem to exist, when it appears to be "coming," as is the case in Europe to-day, then inactivity or the curbing of the march of revolution must be strongly condemned from a Marxian point of view. The working-class movement should take the direction of revolution, should prepare itself seriously for the event, and not seek to avoid it by other action.

It is in this spirit that we now want to take action, in Finland as in Russia, and everywhere where our young forces may be necessary to the success of the international proletarian revolution. In Russia our first duty must be to organise and exercise in the best possible way contingents for the Red Guards. Our young men are already displaying great activity in this respect.

In an open letter addressed to Comrade Lenin our party congress asked him to give the following message to the Russian friends of our Party:—

"The Finnish Communists go with joy into the battle. We would fain be there when the final assault is given to the fortresses of capitalism, and raze them level with the ground. The Finnish Communists will not lag behind when the Proletarians of all lands are conquering the world."

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