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LENIN CENTENARY ISSUE

LENIN'S IMPACT ON THE UNITED STATES

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LENIN'S LETTER TO AMERICAN WORKERS

LENIN'S IMPACT ON THE UNITED STATES

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SPECIAL LENIN CENTENARY ISSUE

JESSICA SMITH, *Editor*
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JESSICA SMITH

Message to Readers
As the New Decade Opens

WE are privileged to present to our readers, as the new decade opens, this collection in honor of the Centenary of Lenin's birth on April 22, 1970.

While this issue is of course the work of our entire editorial staff, special credit must go to Associate Editor Daniel Mason, whose knowledge of Lenin and Leniniana particularly qualified him for his major share in the selection, research and editing of this material.

We wish to express our deep appreciation to the Novosti Press Agency in Moscow for making available to us some of the hitherto unpublished documentary material on Lenin's contact with Americans.

Tributes here presented by leading Americans who were eyewitnesses of the early years of the Revolution show the tremendous impact on them of the great leader and founder of the world's first Socialist state and his ideas and achievements. It is significant that all but a very few of these people remained faithful to these early impressions throughout their lives. We regret that space did not permit the inclusion of statements by many others who played an important role in bringing the truth about Lenin and Soviet Russia to the American people.

Special gratitude goes to the writers who are our own contemporaries and who carry on this tradition in articles in this issue illuminating Lenin's impact on the United States in the fields of labor, Black liberation, philosophy, ideology, culture and other aspects of the life of our country.

TO OUR readers, in this first issue of 1970, we express not just the hope, but the determination that all of us, young and old, will work with greater strength than ever in the months ahead to bring the atrocious and shameful war in Vietnam to an end, to advance the cause of Black liberation, to halt the murderous assaults on the Black Panthers and the Nixon Administration's repressions against all militant groups.

The material in this issue reviews the role of the Soviet Union under Lenin in initiating the policy of peaceful coexistence with the United States and other capitalist states, while never ceasing

to struggle against US imperialist aggression. This Soviet policy and its unremitting struggle for disarmament, have led in a direct line to the US-USSR talks on strategic arms limitation, to be resumed in April. While the United States has pursued a different course with its cold war and imperialist policies, there have always been important groups in our country who have continued to work for peaceful and cooperative relations and trade with the Soviet Union. There are fortunately such people today in Congress and in leading places in US political, cultural and scientific life.

Among the people's organizations, this noble tradition is carried on by the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, under the chairmanship of Rockwell Kent, noted artist, writer and Lenin Peace Prize laureate, and under the indefatigable leadership of National Executive Director Richard Morford, with important aid from associated groups in San Francisco, Los Angeles and Chicago.

AS THE slanders against Lenin and the Revolution are refuted by the testimony printed in this issue, so over the years history has vindicated many Soviet actions not understood at the time, one of the chief of which was the Soviet-German non-aggression pact.

British Cabinet papers are open for public scrutiny only after 30 years. The *Washington Post* of January 2 carried a London dispatch by Mark Arnold-Foster, which began:

> The British Cabinet papers for 1939 show that World War II would not have started in that year if:
>
> • Premier Neville Chamberlain's government had accepted or understood Russia's advice that an alliance between Britain, France and the Soviet Union would prevent war because Hitler could not then risk a conflict against major powers on two fronts.
>
> • Chamberlain and some of his ministers had not misunderstood the facts about Eastern Europe to the extent that they supposed that Poland would be a stronger ally than Russia.

Further details quoted from the British Cabinet papers completely confirm the Soviet position that the West's rejection of her proposals for a collective security alliance against Hitler left her no recourse but to conclude the non-aggression pact.

These revelations should give pause to those who jumped off the train of history at that point and headed for the past.

History will likewise reveal the error of those who today downgrade the role the Soviet Union is playing in the worldwide struggle for national liberation in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

And let us never forget that the time gained by the non-aggression pact helped the USSR build up the strength to beat back Hitler's attack and play the chief role in saving the world from fascism.

This too is part of our debt to Lenin.

FOREWORD

DANIEL MASON

He Changed the World!

IN THE nineteenth and twentieth centuries mankind thrust onto the stage of history two men who have dominated this decisive period. These two were Karl Marx and Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. Many have marched across the stage of history in this period—statesmen, politicians, generals, scientists, capitalists. Many among them have created misery in war and peace, enslaved peoples, destroyed nations. Among those who have played a positive role, none has had a permanent effect on society to equal that of Marx and Lenin.

Marx's writings and actions became the property of working people all over the world in the last half of the nineteenth century. They provided the weapons with which the oppressed majorities of mankind began to struggle against the miseries imposed by capitalism.

Lenin carried forward and multiplied the theoretical legacy of his great teachers, Marx and Engels, relating their work to the new historical conditions.

The special role of Lenin was summed up in the "Theses of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on the Centenary of Lenin's Birth," in these words:

> A whole revolutionary epoch in the life of mankind is associated with the name and activities of Lenin, who gave answers to the most burning questions imposed by history. He comprehensively developed the theory of the socialist revolution and the building of a communist society. He provided the Russian and the international revolutionary movement with scientifically grounded strategy and tactics, and led the struggle of the working class for translating the ideals of socialism into life. Socialism, transformed by Marx and Engels from a utopian idea into a scientific view of society, and enriched by Lenin with new conclusions and discoveries, has been embodied in social practice on a worldwide scale and has grown into the main revolutionary force of our days.
> (*Pravda*, December 23, 1969.)

Frightened by the tremendous influence of Marx and Lenin on the world's working people, capitalism has sought in every way to belittle and slander them. Its scholars and journalists have tried to picture Marx and Lenin as beasts; they have attempted to separate the two from their work by emphasizing their "frailties" as human beings; they have tried to divide Marx and Lenin into younger and older periods; they have aimed their biggest guns at the theories of Marx and Lenin.

But they have failed. Professor Clinton Rossiter, a leading US philosopher, had to complain:

> I do not mean to say that the American mind has been untouched by Marx. A pervasive Marxist influence has spread all through the American intellectual community in the twentieth century, and many who would deny flatly any debt to Marx have thought in Marxist categories and employed Marxist language. (*Marxism: The View from America.* Harcourt Brace, New York, 1960 pp. 25-26.)

Leonard Schapiro, that foremost "Kremlinologist," had to admit that "Lenin's personal impact on events both in his own country and in the world outside may well have been greater than that of any other individual in this century" (*Lenin: A Reappraisal.* Praeger, New York, 1967, p. 19).

"Lenin's personal impact" has indeed been very significant in the United States. It is therefore fitting, in this centennial year of Lenin's birth, that a record be made of this impact. That is the aim of this collection of reminiscences, essays, letters and other writings. While the collection of necessity only skims the surface, it is hoped that it will at least give an indication of Lenin's impact on the United States.

The interplay between Lenin and the United States was very extensive. Lenin had learned the English language early in his career and became an avid student of US economics, politics, education and social life. But he did not limit himself to study. He sought out contacts among the American people, and became a firm sympathizer with the struggles of the US working class and of the Black people to achieve liberation.

The first public record we have of Lenin's interest in the United States was the appearance in *Vperyod,* April 20, 1905, of his essay: "Marx on the American General Distribution." The last was a letter to the Secretary of International Workers Aid, dated December 2, 1922, a little more than a year before he died, in which he praised the technical assistance given to the Soviet Union by American or-

ganizations. In between, he wrote on every conceivable aspect of US life and to a number of Americans. An incomplete collection of these writings fills 674 pages of the book entitled *Lenin on the United States of America* (International Publishers, New York, 1970).

The earliest meeting of Lenin with an American of which we have any knowledge is the one in 1905 with Arthur Bullard, a journalist.

After that, Lenin had many contacts with Americans of every class—capitalists, diplomats, journalists, workers, representatives of the Black people. (A partial record of these appears in the collection which follows.) Most of these contacts took place after the October Revolution of 1917, which created the Soviet State. It is interesting to note that all those Americans who met Lenin at that time were immediately impressed with his great stature as a human being and as a leader of mankind.

But the greatest influence that Lenin exerted was upon the American working class. Most of this impact was felt after 1917, naturally, when Lenin's fame became worldwide. But there is evidence to indicate that he had contact in some form with American workers before that time.

In 1910, Tom Mooney, the labor leader, who later was to be victimized, attended the Copenhagen Congress of the Socialist International, in which Lenin participated. Mooney may have met Lenin at that time. Undoubtedly, other American Socialists and workers met Lenin at other pre-1917 congresses of the Socialist parties.

There is evidence in the Lenin archives in Moscow that would indicate that many other American workers had heard of Lenin and his activities before 1917. On December 1, 1913, the editorial board of *Appeal to Reason,* the biggest Socialist newspaper ever published in the United States, sent Lenin "16 two-page leaflets and eight 32-page pamphlets [which] comprise our list of publications to date." A working class club in New York City, on March 30, 1914, sent "the sum of 1437 kronen and 90 heller ($292.61), which is a contribution from the Workmen's Circle to the Russian Social-Democratic Party (Bolshevikov)" to Lenin then in exile in Cracow, Poland. Late in 1915, the Socialist Propaganda League, a left-wing group in Boston, sent Lenin a copy of its manifesto. Unfortunately, the records of other manifestations of this sort have been lost.

But it was after the October Revolution of 1917, and the successful birth of the Soviet Union, that Lenin's influence upon the American working class really began to grow. Even before that, during the earlier years of World War I, Lenin and his Russian

Bolshevik Party had become known in Socialist circles in the United States because of their persistent struggle to win the international socialist movement for the struggle against that imperialist war. Left-wing groups in the US Socialist Party fought for that position in their party. Recognizing that the most significant way to influence their fellow-workers was through the printed word, the Socialist Propaganda League of Boston late in 1916 started a paper called *The Internationalist.* In April, 1917, this was absorbed by the *New York International,* published in New York City. In mid-1917, *The Class Struggle,* a bi-monthly magazine was started in New York City. Both of these journals played an important role in bringing Lenin to the American working class. (*The Class Struggle,* in its December, 1917, issue, published a section of Lenin's *State and Revolution.*)

But both of these journals had only limited circulation. As soon as the more advanced American workers became acquainted with the writings of Lenin, they saw that these works provided guidance for them, too, and they felt the urgent need to disseminate them among the working class. Publication of Lenin's *State and Revolution* and other of his writings was undertaken in Detroit, Cleveland, Chicago, New York and other US cities. Most of this publishing was done by local workers' groups.

One of these publications that was not printed by local workers' groups was *The Soviets at Work,* a pamphlet that was issued by the Rand School in New York City, the central educational institution of the Socialist Party. This was a reprint of a report written by Lenin, entitled "The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government," which was first published in *Pravda,* April 28, 1918. The response to this Rand School pamphlet reveals how eagerly US workers were seeking a new way out of their misery and how quick they were to respond to Lenin.

One indication of the widespread impact of the pamphlet was what happened in Seattle in 1918-1919. A copy found its way to the Northwest metropolis, and was reprinted in the *Seattle Union Record,* the official organ of the local central body of the American Federation of Labor. Because of the demand of the workers on the West Coast for this Lenin work, the Seattle labor movement republished it as a pamphlet. Twenty thousand copies were printed and were soon in the hands of workers up and down the Pacific coast. As Harvey O'Connor writes in his book, *Revolution in Seattle,* "the extraordinary influence of this pamphlet was to be felt in subsequent events in Seattle as workers pondered the problems of 'management' in a workers' state."

Those early publications of Lenin's writings by local workers' groups were a dominant influence in changing the entire course of working class struggle and working class politics in the United States. They focused the attention of the labor unionists on the need for organization of the masses of workers in industry, which finally transformed the weak craft-unionist AFL into the powerful AFL-CIO. And they confronted the more advanced elements in the working class with the realization that they needed a new form of organization through which to conduct their political struggles. This resulted in the formation of the US Communist Party, which became the dominant force in left-wing political activity.

One of the most significant aspects of Lenin's impact on the United States is in relation to the movement of the Black people for liberation and struggles of the oppressed colonial and semi-colonial people of the world for freedom. In this connection, it is worth noting that Lenin as early as 1916 warned the oppressed peoples that political independence was meaningless unless economic independence was wrested from the imperialist powers. In *Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism,* he wrote:

> Finance capital is such a great, such a decisive, you might say, force in all economic and in all international relations, that it is capable of subjecting, and actually does subject, to itself even states enjoying the fullest political independence . . . (*Lenin. Collected Works,* Volume 22, p. 259.)

Lenin was a serious student of the problems of the Black people in the United States and the relation of their struggles for liberation to the emancipation of the American working class. His position on this question was epitomized in an essay, "Imperialism and the Split in Socialism," published in *Sbornik Sotsial-Demokrata,* December, 1916, in which he wrote:

> On the one hand, there is the tendency of the bourgeoisie and the opportunists to convert a handful of very rich and privileged nations into eternal parasites on the body of the rest of mankind, to "rest on the laurels" of the exploitation of Negroes, Indians, etc., keeping them in subjection with the aid of the excellent weapons of extermination provided by modern militarism. On the other hand, there is the tendency of the *masses,* who are more oppressed than before and who bear the whole brunt of imperialist wars, to cast off this yoke and to overthrow the bourgeoisie. It is in the struggle between these two tendencies that the history of the labor movement will now inevitably develop. (*Lenin. Collected Works,* Volume 23, p. 116.)

Lenin's influence upon the Black liberation movement was al-

most immediate as soon as the Blacks became aware of him, as is evidenced in such incidents as the call upon the US Socialist Party in 1918 by leading Black Socialists to follow the road of Lenin and fight for the freedom of the Black people to achieve socialism in the US; by the cable of the Garveyite movement, the biggest mass movement of the Black people in the early 1920s, on Lenin's death, expressing the "deep sorrow" of "four hundred million Negroes of the world" and declaring that "to us Lenin was one of the world's greatest benefactors"; by the eloquent recollection, published in *A Long Way from Home,* of Claude McKay, the noted Black poet:

> *And often now my nerves throb with the thrill*
> *When, in that gilded place, I felt and saw*
> *The simple voice and presence of Lenin.*

Lenin's impact has been felt by every segment of US society. One of these is the youth. Lenin recognized the important role that youth could play in changing the world. He wrote constantly on the subject. In an article entitled "The Student Movement and the Present Political Situation," dealing with a student strike in St. Petersburg University in 1908, he wrote:

> . . . everyone can see that the objective political conditions at the present moment are different; the academic movement signifies the *beginning* of the movement of a new "shift" of students who are already more or less accustomed to a narrow autonomy, and this movement, moreover, is beginning just now, at a time when other forms of mass struggle do not exist, at a time of a lull, during which the broad masses still continue silently, intently and slowly to *digest* the experience of three years of revolution. . . .
>
> . . . For the students who entered the universities during the past two years were almost entirely excluded from politics and were trained in a spirit of narrow academic autonomy, trained not only by official professors and the government press, but also by liberal professors and the Cadet Party. For young people like this a broad strike . . . is the beginning of political conflict, whether the combatants realize it or not. . . . *(Lenin. The Young Generation.* International Publishers, New York, 1940, pp. 17-18.)

Lenin's impact upon US youth is reflected today in the espousal of Leninism, however confusedly in some respects, by such advanced sections of the young people as the Black Panthers, the Young Lords and the Students for a Democratic Society.

Of special significance today as our country is engaged in an invasion of Vietnam, it should be noted that Lenin led the first victorious resistance to a war of intervention and blockade by the

United States and other imperialists in 1918-1922 in their attempt to destroy the new socialist state. In the resistance to that war of intervention, many sections of the American people, in Congress, among the churches, in the organized labor movement, among the Black people, played an important role in reversing the intervention policy of Washington.

Above all else, Lenin sought peaceful coexistence with the United States from the very birth of the USSR in 1917. He abhorred any imperialist war in which workers would have to die. In April, 1914, when World War I was in the making, he was interviewed by Alfred Maykosen, a Polish journalist, who asked him: "Would you welcome a conflict?" Lenin replied:

> Certainly not. Why should I want a conflict? I am doing—and will do—everything I can, everything within my power, to prevent mobilization and war. I do not want to see millions of workers killing each other to pay for capitalist madness. There can be no two opinions on that score.
>
> It is one thing objectively to predict a war and, should it break out, take maximum advantage of the situation. But to want war—that is quite another thing. *(Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. A Biography.* Progress Publishers 1965, Moscow, pp. 193-4.)

In all his approaches to Washington, in all his interviews with Americans, Lenin stressed over and over again the desire of the Soviet Union for peaceful coexistence with the United States, not only as of benefit to his own country but also to the American people.

That search for peaceful coexistence with the United States by Lenin has ever since been the constant aim of Soviet foreign policy.

The impact of Lenin on the United States can be measured above all in the statement by Eugene V. Debs, the great working-class leader, when he heard of Lenin's death in January, 1924:

> I regard Lenin as the greatest thinker. . . . He towered head and shoulders above every other statesman in Europe. . . . He has carried two bullets, fired into his body by an assassin, and at the same time has been forced to bear a burden of official responsibility and care greater than any other man's in the world. His place in history is certain. He will go down in history as one of the greatest statesmen, a towering personality, a heroic soul, and in the loftiest sense a champion of the rights and liberties of the common people.

IN 1845, MARX concluded his Theses on Feuerbach with this challenge: "The philosophers have *interpreted* the world in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it."

Lenin accepted that challenge. He changed the world!

IVAN KRASNOV

Lenin, the USA, and Peaceful Coexistence

THE problems of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems, and Soviet-American relations, are urgent problems of today. In our age of developed military technology even small-scale wars may take a toll of millions of human lives. If the peoples of the earth relax their vigilance, the world may be plunged into another big war, even a nuclear war, with all its catastrophic consequences.

In this connection I would like to remind the American reader of certain aspects of the history of Soviet foreign policy and Soviet-American relations, the foundations of which were laid in the early years of Soviet power's existence by Vladimir Ulianov (Lenin),* founder of the Soviet state.

Even before the victory of the socialist revolution in Russia Lenin elaborated on his ideas of peaceful coexistence and on the possibility of building socialism in one country in a number of his works: "On the Slogan of the United States of Europe," "The Foreign Policy of the Russian Revolution," "The Tasks of the Revolution," "The Imminent Danger and How to Fight It," and others. Right after the Republic of the Soviets was born on November 8, 1917, the Soviet Government, headed by Lenin, declared war on war. It addressed to the belligerent countries and peoples a decree on peace which was the first practical step along the road to peaceful coexistence.

The Decree on Peace, which called World War I the gravest crime against humanity, was taken by the governments of the belligerent countries as an "unfriendly act." In its Decree on Peace the Soviet Government suggested a general democratic peace, and not a "separate" peace. But the governments of the USA, Britain, France and

* Lenin's real name was Vladimir Ilyich Ulianov, but he became universally known as Lenin, his pseudonym before the Revolution. Since he signed many articles in those days "N. Lenin," it was simply assumed that his name was Nikolay.

IVAN KRASNOV is Senior Research Associate of the Institute of History of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

other countries did not want even to discuss this proposal. "It was the British, French and American bourgeoisie," Lenin wrote in his letter to the American workers, "who refused to accept our proposal and refused even to discuss universal peace with us. It was the bourgeoisie who betrayed the interests of all the peoples by prolonging the imperialist massacre!

"It was the British, French and American bourgeoisie who, speculating on drawing Russia into the imperialist war again, refused to hold peace negotiations and thus untied the hands of the German capitalists, every bit as brigand, who imposed the annexationist and extortionist Brest Peace on Russia!"

To end the war, to conclude a just and democratic peace without annexations and indemnities—this was the first principle of the Soviet state. And a week later a program of truly friendly, equal international relations was set forth in the Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia.

The Soviet Government, headed by Lenin, showed incredible patience and consistently did everything in its power to normalize the relations between Soviet Russia and all countries, the United States of America in particular. In an earlier period, the relations between Russia and the USA had been good. Agrarian Tsarist Russia and the industrially-developed USA found they could do mutually profitable business with each other.

On the American side, personal initiative in establishing contacts with the Soviet Government headed by Lenin was shown by Colonel Raymond Robins, who became head of the American Red Cross Mission in Russia in November 1917. He was very active in getting American-Soviet relations under way. Robins saw Lenin oftener than other Americans to discuss not only the problems pertaining to the Red Cross Mission but also other problems having to do with American-Soviet relations: problems of economics, of war and peace.

On February 26, 1918, Colonel Robins visited Lenin in Smolny on the problem of the American Embassy personnel moving from Petrograd to Vologda. Lenin wrote a letter to the Vologda Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies asking it to render every assistance to the representatives and members of the American Embassy "who wish to take up temporary residence in Vologda."

On February 28 Robins telegraphed Lenin that the train with the American Ambassador and the Embassy personnel had safely arrived in Vologda and that everything was all right. He extended his gratitude to the Council of People's Commissars for cooperation and asked Lenin, "What is the situation in Petrograd? What is the latest news

connected with the German offensive? Has a peace treaty been signed? Have the British and French embassies left? What are their routes?" In reply, Lenin telegraphed the following message on the same day: "To Colonel Robins. Peace treaty not signed. Situation unchanged. Lenin."

In March 1918, in connection with the worsening of American-Soviet relations, Washington instructed Robins, who came out for the recognition of the Soviet Government and for the establishment of practical cooperation between Soviet Russia and the USA, to leave the Soviet country.

Documents show that the Soviet Government not only pursued the policy of peaceful coexistence, but under certain conditions was also ready to cooperate in the military field, in the joint struggle against Germany and Japan. Thus, early in 1918, before the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty with Germany was signed, when the troops of the Kaiser's Germany launched a new offensive on the Russian front, the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, headed by Lenin, at its March 5, 1918 session accepted the French and British offer of aid in arms and food to the Soviet Government in the fight against the Germans.

This is evidenced by the Soviet Government's Note to the US Government of March 5, 1918, which said:

"The answers to the following questions are of great importance for the military and political plans of the Soviet power:

"1. Is the Soviet power assured of support on the part of the United States, Great Britain and France in the fight against Germany?

"2. What kind of support will there be in the near future, and on what terms (war supplies, means of transportation, consumer goods)?

"3. Specifically, what would be the aid on the part of the USA?

"Should Japan—as a result of an open or tacit agreement with Germany, or without such agreement—make an attempt to seize Vladivostok and the East-Siberian Railway and thus to cut Russia off from the Pacific and to greatly hamper the mobilization of Soviet troops to the East and to the Urals, what measures would other allies, particularly the USA, take to prevent the Japanese from landing in our Far East and to insure its continuous communication with Russia along the Siberian railway?

"To what extent, in the US Government's opinion, would Great Britain's aid be insured from the Murmansk-Arkhangelsk side? What steps could the Government of Great Britain take to render this aid and thus to disprove the rumors about the hostile plans of Great Britain as regards Russia in the immediate future?

"All these questions are asked on the self-evident premise that the Soviet power's domestic and foreign policy continues to be based on the principles of international socialism and preserves its full independence as regards all non-socialist governments."

That was an official statement of the Soviet Government on the possibility of not only political, but military cooperation as well with the governments of Russia's World War I allies.

The US Government, however, failed to give the Soviet Government any positive reply. As a result the young Soviet state was compelled to accept the humiliating Brest Peace Treaty, at the cost of very great sacrifices, in order to preserve peace.

In the West the signing of the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treay with Germany by the Soviet Government, has frequently been called an "act of betrayal." In his *Letter to American Workers* of August 20, 1918, Lenin noted that "it is hard to imagine hypocrisy more repulsive than that of the British, French and American bourgeoisie as it lays the 'blame' for the Brest Peace Treaty on us. The capitalists of those countries, who could have turned the Brest negotiations into general negotiations on universal peace, come out as our 'accusers.'"

In the years that followed the Soviet Government made scores of peace offers to the governments of the USA and other great powers. In 1919, for instance, when the official Bullitt mission visited Soviet Russia, Lenin's peace bids found their expression in the Amercan press and in the Congressional Record of those years.

On April 6, 1919, the *New York Times* carried an interview by a *Times* correspondent with William Bullitt and Lincoln Steffens concerning their Moscow negotiations with Lenin. Bullitt and Steffens reported that Lenin wished "to establish contacts with the rest of the world in keeping with the generally recognized principles of international relations, if Allied troops are withdrawn from all the parts of tsarist possessions, Siberia included," and that he wished "to enter into friendly relations with the great powers."

Having familiarized himself with Soviet Russia's political status at first hand, Bullitt reported that the Soviet form of government had gained a firm foothold and that the most striking fact in Russia was that the people fully supported the government despite the famine. The position of the Communist Party (formerly the party of the Bolsheviks) was also very strong, he wrote further, and explained that the Soviet Government realized full well the need of peace for Russia.

In 1919 the Soviets adopted the resolution written by Lenin which solemnly proclaimed that "the Russian Socialist Federative Republic wishes to live in peace with all peoples and to put all its

efforts into internal construction." In September 1919 Lenin wrote about the period when "socialist and capitalist states will exist side by side."

In connection with the foreign military intervention in Russia Lenin wrote a message entitled "A New Explanation of the Position of Soviet Russia" to an International News Bureau correspondent (Boston) on October 21, 1919. The message said that the Soviet state wanted no war against any country because "we know that in almost all cases the entire danger falls to the share of the working people and that we have to kill those whom we have nothing against and who would never have fought against us if they understood us. This message may shed light on factors which are hard to understand today, and better mutual understanding will lead to peace which all the world needs so badly today."

In February 1920, Karl von Wiegand, Berlin correspondent of the American news agency Universal Service, asked Lenin to explain the Soviet Government stand as regards the USA. Asked, "What is the basis of peace with America?" Lenin replied: "May the American capitalists leave us alone, and we shall leave them alone. We are even prepared to pay them in gold for machines, tools and other things useful for transport and production. And not only in gold, but in raw materials, too." Asked, "What are the obstacles in the way of such a peace?" Lenin replied: "No obstacles as far as we are concerned. Imperialism as far as the American—and any other—capitalists are concerned." This clearly discloses the essence of the peaceloving policy of the Soviet state.

When the US Government announced through its Secretary of State Colby that it "cannot recognize the current leaders of Russia as a government with which friendly relations can be maintained," Georgi V. Chicherin, People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, wrote the following on September 10, 1920: "Mr. Colby is gravely mistaken in thinking that normal relations between Russia and North America are possible only given the domination of the capitalist system in the former. On the contrary, we hold that it is necessary, in the interests of Russia and North America alike, to establish between them even now correct and loyal peaceful friendly relations necessary for the development of trade exchange between them and for the satisfaction of the economic requirements of both sides, despite the radical difference of their social and political systems."

On March 20, 1921, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, the country's supreme legislative organ, wrote the following in

its address to the Congress and to US President Warren G. Harding: "From the earliest days of its existence Soviet Russia hoped it was possible to establish friendly relations with the great North American Republic and firmly reckoned that close and firm ties would be established between the two Republics to their mutual advantage." The All-Russian Central Executive Committee called the attention of the Congress and President of the United States to the fact that Soviet Russia had already concluded agreements with many states and established normal relations with them, and that the absence of such relations with the USA appeared abnormal and harmful for both peoples. The All-Russian Central Executive Committee suggested that the problem of business relations and the renewal of trade between Soviet Russia and America be solved.

The idea of the Soviet state's peaceful coexistence with the countries of the capitalist world, elaborated by Lenin, was steadily upheld not only in the critical period of the Civil War, but in the subsequent years of peaceful development as well.

The Soviet Government exerted every effort to carry on trade and maintain economic relations with all countries—but "especially with America," as Lenin stressed.

Although the Entente countries and the USA brought strong pressure to bear on Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Finland in order to use them as a *cordon sanitaire* against Soviet Russia, the interests of the small countries prevailed, and on February 2, 1920, Russia and Estonia signed a peace treaty and established diplomatic relations. After the Brest Peace Treaty, that was the second act of tremendous political importance. Addressing the railwaymen, Lenin said on February 5: "This peace is a window into Europe. It makes it possible for us to start trade exchange with the countries of the West."

The signing of the peace treaty with Estonia clearly manifested the Soviet country's peace policy as regards the small neighboring countries. "We have won peace on the international scale, and we are winning it not by means of guns, but by sympathy which we have managed to instill not only in workers but even in the bourgeois governments of small nations," Lenin pointed out.

After that, Soviet Russia made peace offers to other countries. On February 24, 1920, the Soviet Government made an official proposal to the governments of the USA, Japan and Romania, on February 25, to Czechoslovakia, then to Finland and other countries. Not all the governments responded to these proposals. On July 12, 1920, Soviet Russia signed a peace treaty with Lithuania, and on August 11, with Latvia. Under the Yuriev Treaty of October 14, Finland got Pechenga

(Petsamo). Steps were taken towards the normalization of relations with Britain and bourgeois Poland. The latter's relations with the Ukraine and the Russian Federation had deteriorated sharply since early 1920. But the Soviet Government's peace offer to Poland was not then accepted.

The end of the Civil War in 1920, and the driving out of all the interventionists towards the end of the 1922, made it possible for Soviet Russia to get down to peaceful construction and establishing relations with foreign countries. By the end of 1920 the Soviet Union's international standing and internal situations were such that Lenin stated:

"We have arrived at a situation where without winning international victory, the only and decisive victory for us, we have secured the conditions under which we can exist side by side with capitalist powers which are now compelled to enter into trade relations with us.

". . . We have not only a respite—we have a new stage in which our basic existence among capitalist states is upheld."

The Soviet state was compelled to defend its line of peaceful development and coexistence with non-socialist countries and to overcome unheard-of difficulties through an intensive struggle.

The formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (the USSR) on December 30, 1922, was a new world-historic event which made it possible to wage a more resolute struggle for peace.

As early as the beginning of 1925, 22 capitalist states including Britain, France, Italy and Japan, had established diplomatic relations with the USSR. The United States was the only big capitalist power to continue the policy of not recognizing Soviet Russia.

It should be pointed out in this connection that with the growth of the USSR's international might and prestige, a progressive trend with regard to the USSR manifested itself ever more clearly in the United States. The problem of recognizing the USSR Government by the USA was discussed continuously in the press from November 7, 1917, to November 16, 1933, i.e., for more than 16 years.

The majority of US statesmen were hostile to Soviet power. But throughout these 16 years certain Senators and Representatives kept pointing out that the assertions of their colleagues on the problem of non-recognition of the USSR held no water. Senators William Borah, George W. Norris, Elbert Thomas, Joseph France, Burton K. Wheeler, Ernest Lundeen and others, came out for the recognition of the USSR and for the normalization of Soviet-American relations. Their arguments boiled down to the fact that recognition would facilitate

the development of trade relations with Soviet Russia, create more favorable conditions for giving jobs to the American unemployed, that cooperation would support world economic stability.

The most persistent senator was Borah who, in the period May 1922—March 1933, submitted to the Senate seven resolutions demanding the recognition of Soviet Russia.

Even those American historians who can hardly be suspected of entertaining any sympathies for the USSR, were compelled to admit in those years that the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, headed by George Chicherin and later by Maxim Litvinov, never abandoned its attempts to establish diplomatic relations with the United States. But the attempts were unsuccessful.

When in March 1921, Maxim Litvinov transmitted to President Harding a note from Mikhail Kalinin suggesting that talks on adjusting USSR-US relations be started, Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes replied that the US Government saw no appropriate basis for considering the trade relations problem as long as there were no "convincing proofs" of the restoration in the USSR of "full guarantees of private ownership, the sanctity of agreements and the right to free labor."

Because of its failure to recognize the Soviet regime, the US Government kept the door closed for the development of trade and economic relations with the Soviet Union over a long period. It was only under the pressure of the American and world public and a certain sector of American business, that the US Government opened this door a little during the period of 1921-1933, but persisted in the diplomatic non-recognition policy. US business circles carried on the bulk of their trade with USSR through intermediaries in other countries, bypassing their government.

When Franklin D. Roosevelt, a far-sighted statesman, became President in 1933, he changed his predecessors' political course as regards the USSR and established diplomatic relations.

Unfortunately, diplomatic recognition had no substantial effect on the broadening of trade and economic relations between the USA and the USSR. It should be pointed out here that the blame for that lay not with the Soviet Government but with influential reactionary circles of the United States. The political and economic policy of the Soviet Union remained unchanged after the establishment of diplomatic relations with the USA. Just as before, the Soviet Government came out for the development of all-round economic and cultural ties with the United States and all other countries interested in cooperation.

Politically, however, the establishment of diplomatic relations between the USSR and the United States was of tremendous importance not only for the two countries but for the whole world as well. This circumstance restrained the actions of aggressive forces in Europe and in the Far East. Recognition of the USSR made it easier to set up the Soviet-American alliance in the struggle against the aggressive forces of German fascism and Japanese militarism in World War II.

It should be stressed in this connection that from the earliest days of its existence the USSR has persistently advocated not only peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems but universal and complete disarmament. This policy goes all the way back to the Genoa Conference of Great Powers held in 1922, to the Fourth Session of the Preparatory Committee in Geneva held in November 1927 and other disarmament conferences.

Throughout the years preceding World War II, and particularly in the thirties, when the war danger became especially ominous, Soviet representatives in the League of Nations made numerous concrete positive proposals on the problem of universal disarmament and curbing the aggressors.

On January 17, 1935, Litvinov declared in the Council of the League of Nations on behalf of the Soviet Government that "peace is indivisible." That meant that the USSR would firmly uphold the cause of peace. But to bar the road to war it was necessary to take resolute collective action against the aggressors. Neither Britain, France, nor the United States were ready to take such action. They preferred to try to appease the aggressors instead of forming an alliance of struggle against them. The non-aggression treaties signed by the Soviet Union with France (May 2, 1935) and Czechoslovakia (May 6, 1935), the Soviet-Mongolian Mutual Aid Protocol (March 12, 1936), the Soviet-Chinese non-aggression treaty (August 21, 1937) restrained the aggressors to a certain extent and contributed to the cause of peace. But the aggressors, who united in a fascist alliance, could be curbed only by a united front of such non-aggressive powers as the USSR, Britain, France, the United States and others. There was no such front, however. As a result, Germany annexed Austria in March 1938.

In those days, when peace was in danger, People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs Litvinov declared to the Government of Great Britain on behalf of the Soviet Government: "The current international situation poses before all the peace-loving states, the great powers in particular, the problem of their responsibility for the further destinies of the peoples of Europe—and not Europe alone.

The Soviet Government is aware of its share of this responsibility and of its commitments under the League Charter, the Kellogg-Briand Pact and mutual aid treaties concluded with France and Czechoslovakia, and I can declare on its behalf that it is still prepared to take part in collective action which could be mutually decided upon and which would have the purpose of stopping the further development of aggression and removing the increased danger of a new world war. It is ready to get down immediately to discussion with other powers, inside or outside the League of Nations, of practical steps dictated by circumstances. Tomorrow it may be too late, but today it is not if all the states. especially the great powers, take a firm and unambiguous stand as regards the problem of saving peace together" (Note of March 17, 1938).

In its reply note of March 22 the Chamberlain government declared it could not wholly agree with the Soviet Government's proposals.

On September 30, 1938, Germany, Italy, Britain and France signed the disgraceful Munich agreement, giving a green light to Hitler to take over Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland.

The course of British-French-Soviet political and military negotiations during June-August 1939 showed that Britain and France did not wish to conclude an agreement of mutual assistance with the USSR. Moreover, they encouraged Hitler's Germany to unleash a war against the USSR. But Hitler realized it was risky to start a war against the USSR without strengthening his positions in West Europe first.

The refusal of the West to reach agreement with the USSR, left the latter no recourse but to conclude the non-aggression pact with Germany (not an alliance, as sometimes mistakenly called) thereby gaining time to prepare for the Hitlerite attack when it came in June 1941.

In the years of World War II, military cooperation with a number of countries, the United States and Britain included, turned into a military alliance in the struggle against the aggressive bloc. In those years, too, the Soviet Government guided itself by its general foreign policy line of coexistence and did everything it could for a just peace to prevail.

And if in the postwar years the victorious powers failed to achieve the close cooperation they had maintained during the war, the USSR is not to blame for this.

Only a few American historians admit the responsibility of the Western governments for present world tensions. In his book *America Faces Russia,* the American historian Thomas A. Bailey writes that

LENIN TALKS WITH LINCOLN EYRE OF THE NEW YORK WORLD

Q. AND YOUR PEACE terms? A. It is idle to talk further about them. All the world knows that we are prepared to make peace on terms the fairness of which even the most imperialistic capitalists could not dispute. We have reiterated and reiterated our desire for peace, our need for peace and our readiness to give foreign capital the most generous concessions and guarantees. But we do not propose to be strangled to death for the sake of peace. I know of no reason why a socialist state like ours cannot do business indefinitely with capitalist countries. We don't mind taking capitalist locomotives and farming machinery, so why should they mind taking our socialist wheat, flax and platinum? Socialist grain tastes the same as any other grain, does it not? *February 21, 1920*

"there are few if any subjects more important today than our dealings with the Soviet Union, and there are few if any comparable problems about which there exists as much popular misunderstanding." It is to be hoped, he writes, "that a clearer comprehension of our relationships with the Russians in the past will enable us to deal more intelligently with them in the future."

But despite this and similar pronouncements by American historians, the Truman Administration proclaimed its policy of holding back the forces of socialism. The Truman Doctrine was one of bolstering the reactionary regimes against the democratic aspirations of their people. The so-called "cold-war period" of the postwar years made no positive contribution to the relations between countries with different socio-political systems.

The statement in this connection by Dr. D. F. Fleming, Professor Emeritus of International Relations of Vanderbilt University, a former counselor of the State Department, is of interest. In his two-volume work, *The Cold War and Its Origins*, he insisted that the bankrupt "cold-war" policy be given up and wrote that the purpose of the cold war is to isolate enemies and to make new friends, but that in fact the very process of waging the cold war evokes revulsion among friends and breeds new enemies.

In the postwar period Soviet foreign policy leaned on the growing economic and military might of the Soviet state, on the friendship and alliance of socialist countries, on the support of the popular masses and the advanced public of all the countries coming out for peace, and continued to guide itself by the Leninist principle of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems.

In the last few years the Soviet Union has made many concrete proposals aimed at the relaxation of international tension.

The vigorous activities of the Soviet Government and the governments of other socialist powers concerning the problems of consolidating peace and strengthening international security are bearing tangible fruit, testifying to the advent of a new stage in international life when the balance of world forces is changing in favor of socialism to an ever greater extent.

The signing in Moscow on August 5, 1963 of the Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, outer space and under water and of other treaties, such as the treaty on the peaceful principles in the exploration and use of space, including the moon and other celestial bodies, contributed to the relaxation of international tension.

The recent ratification of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons by the Soviet Union, the United States and many other states greatly promotes the cause of peace. The agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is welcomed by all the people of goodwill, of course, but it should not lull them into complacency because the main task is to achieve the ban on the production and use of nuclear weapons.

The preliminary conferences of the delegations of the Soviet Union and the USA in Helsinki in connection with the Soviet-American talks on limitation of the strategic weapons race are directly connected with the nuclear disarmament problem. The very fact of the convening of such a conference speaks for itself. Some six or seven years ago such negotiations would have been unthinkable. The Helsinki meeting is a most welcome development in the common struggle for disarmament and peace, although many barriers have not yet been overcome. This meeting is fully in line with the unchanging policy of the Soviet Union aimed at promoting peaceful coexistence, at the relaxation of international tension and at insuring universal peace.

Together with other socialist countries the Soviet Union has initiated measures for the normalization of international relations within the regional framework of Europe. The Warsaw Treaty powers took the initiative and adopted on March 17 in Budapest an appeal to all European countries on the convocation of a general European conference on the problems of security and cooperation in Europe. In November 1969, the socialist countries took a new step in Prague along the road to such a conference. The Foreign Ministers of the Warsaw Treaty countries envisioned a real possibility for convening such a conference and made concrete proposals concerning its agenda.

L. I. Brezhnev, General Secretary of the CPSU, noted in his November 26, 1969, speech at the All-Union Congress of Collective Farmers, that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet Government have been consistently and steadily following the course bequeathed us by Lenin. This course is "to carry out, always and invariably, the policy of struggle for a lasting peace, for peaceful coexistence and mutually advantageous cooperation between all the states irrespective of their social systems."

KARL H. VON WIEGAND

Lenin Urges Peace and Trade with the USA

Lenin from the very beginning advocated a policy of peace and trade with the United States, a policy which the Soviet Union has consistently sought to follow. One of Lenin's major statements of this policy was made in a telegram answering questions put to him by Karl H. von Wiegand, foreign correspondent for the Hearst press, 49 years ago. This is von Wiegand's account of the "wireless interview" as it appeared in the New York Journal, *February 21, 1920.*

BERLIN, Feb. 21—Soviet Russia is planning no military offensive against Poland, Romania or any other country. Her main wish is to live in peace with all the world and to reestablish healthy, normal trade conditions with Europe and America.

She is ready to pay for the things she needs not only with gold, but with raw materials.

•

NIKOLAY LENIN, the Bolshevist premier, makes these statements in a long wireless communication to me, in answer to a series of direct questions I put to him in a radio message. The important lengthy message I have just received from him amounts, therefore, to a "wireless interview," unique in the annals of journalism.

Mr. Lenin makes the flat prediction that the future belongs to the Soviet system all over the world, but denied that the Soviet Government intends to bring this about by force of arms.

Touching upon the deportation of radicals by the United States, he says:

"We are not afraid of revolutionists. We are not afraid of any

state or country. We welcome any citizens whom America thinks dangerous, with the exception, of course, of criminals."

The Bolshevist chieftain's message to me follows, in full:

"Moscow, February 18. Wiegand, Universal Service, Berlin.

"Do we intend to attack Poland and Romania? No. We have declared most emphatically, in the name of the Council of the People's Commissars and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, our peaceful intentions.

"It is very much to be regretted that the French capitalistic government is instigating Poland (and presumably Romania, too) to attack us. This is even mentioned by a number of American radios from Lyons.

"You ask about our plans in Asia. They are the same as in Europe: peaceful, neighborly life with all peoples; with the workers and peasants of all nations awakening to a new life—a life without exploiters, without pan-handlers, without capitalists, without merchants.

"The imperialist war of 1914-1918, the war of Anglo-French and Russian capitalist groups against Germany's capitalist group for the partition of the world has awakened Asia and has strengthened there, as everywhere else, the tendencies toward freedom, towards peaceful labor and against possible wars in the future.

Relations with America

"YOU asked me, 'What would be the basis of peace between Russia and America?'

"My answer is: Let the American capitalists leave us alone. We shall not touch them. We are even ready to pay with gold for any machinery, tools, etc., useful to our transport and industries. We are ready to pay not only with gold, but with raw materials, too.

"'What are the obstacles to peace between Russia and America?' you ask.

"None on our part; imperialism on the part of the American as of the other nations' capitalists.

"As to our view of the deportation of Russian revolutionists from America, we have received them. We are not afraid of revolutionists here in this country. As a matter of fact, we are not afraid of anybody, and if America is afraid of a few more hundred or thousand of its citizens, we are ready to begin negotiations with a view of receiving any citizens whom America thinks dangerous, with the exception, of course, of criminals.

"The possibilities of an economic alliance between Russia and Germany, regarding which you ask me, are, unfortunately, not great,

because the Scheidemanns are bad allies. We stand for an alliance with all countries, excepting none.

"'What are your views upon the Allied demand for the extradition of the German alleged war culprits?' If we are to speak seriously on this matter of war guilt, the guilty ones are the capitalists of all countries.

"Hand us over all your landlords owning more than a hundred hectares of land and the capitalists having a capital of more than 100,000 francs (nominally $20,000), and we shall educate them to useful labor and make them break with the shameful, base and bloody role of exploiters and instigators of wars for the partition of colonies. Wars will then be absolutely impossible.

"'What would be the influence of peace between Russia and the rest of the world upon the economic conditions in Europe?' you ask.

"Exchange of machinery for corn, flax and other raw materials—I ask, can this be disadvantageous for Europe? Clearly, it cannot be anything but beneficial.

"As to our opinion regarding the future development of the Soviets as a world force, the future belongs to the Soviet system all the world over. The facts have proved it. One has only to count, say by quarterly periods, the growth in the number of pamphlets, books, leaflets and newspapers in any country standing for the Soviets.

"It cannot be otherwise. Once the workers in the cities, the landless peasants and the journeymen in the villages as well as the small peasants cease to constitute the medium of exploitation; once this enormous majority of toilers has understood that the Soviets give the whole power into their hands, releasing them from the yoke of landlords and capitalists—how could one prevent the victory of the Soviet system all over the world? I, for one, do not know of any means to prevent it.

"Has Russia yet to fear a counter-revolution from without? Unfortunately, it has, because the capitalists are stupid, greedy people. They made a series of such stupid, greedy attempts at intervention that one has to fear repetitions until the workers and peasants of each country thoroughly re-educate their capitalists.

"Is Russia ready to enter business relations with America? Of course it is ready to do so, not only with America, but with every other country.

"Peace with Estonia, to which we have made enormous concessions, has proved our readiness to give, for the sake of business relations, even industrial concessions. LENIN."

ALBERT RHYS WILLIAMS

Ten Months with Lenin

Albert Rhys Williams (1883-1962) was an eyewitness to and participant in the historic events of 1917, along with John Reed and a small band of other sympathetic Americans. His Through the Russian Revolution *stands with Reed's* Ten Days that Shook the World *as one of the twin American classics of the period. Williams' revolutionary ardor and hopes remained undimmed to the day of his death. The latest of his informed and illuminating books about the Soviet Union, published posthumously, is* Journey into Revolution, Petrograd, 1917-1918.*

We present herewith a condensation of Williams' book, Lenin; The Man and His Work, *published in 1919.*

Young Disciples of Lenin

I SAW Lenin first not in the flesh but in the minds and spirits of five young Russian workingmen. They were part of the great tide of exiles flowing back into Petrograd in the summer of 1917.

Americans were drawn to them by their energy, intelligence and their knowledge of English. They soon informed us that they were Bolsheviks. "They certainly don't look it," said an American. He had seen in the paper the picture of the Bolsheviks as long-bearded, ignorant, indolent ruffians. And these men were clean-shaven, polite, humorous, amiable and alert. They were not afraid of responsibility, not afraid to die, and most marvelous of all in Russia, not afraid to work. And they were Bolsheviks.

Woskov hailed from New York, where he had been the organizer of the Carpenters' and Joiners' Union, Number 1008. Yanishev, a mechanic, the son of a village priest, bore on his body the marks of labor in mines and mills all around the world. Niebut, an artisan, always carried a pack of books and was always enthusiastic over his latest find. Volodarsky, working day and night like a galley slave, said to me a few weeks before he was assassinated, "Oh, what of it! Supposing they do get me! I have had more joy working these last six months than any five men ought to have in all their lives." Peters, a foreman, who later appeared in the press reports as a bloody

* Reviewed in NEW WORLD REVIEW, Fourth Quarter, 1969.

tyrant signing death-warrants until his fingers could no longer hold the pen, was often sighing for his English rose-garden and the poems of Nekrassov.

These men quietly assured us that, in brains and character, Lenin led not only all the Bolsheviks, but everybody else in Russia, in Europe and in all the world.

For us who daily read in the papers of Lenin, the German agent, and daily heard the bourgeoisie outlaw him as a scoundrel, a traitor, and an imbecile, this was indeed strange doctrine. But these men were neither fools nor sentimentalists. The Bolshevik movement was elemental and passionate, but it was scientific, realistic, and uncongenial to hero-worship. Yet here was this quintet of Bolsheviks declaring that there was one Russian, great in integrity and in intelligence, and his name was Nikolay Lenin, at that time an outlaw hunted by the Provisional Government.

The more we saw of these young zealots the more we desired to see the man they acknowledged as their master. Would they take us to his hiding-place?

"Wait a little while," they would reply, laughing, "then you shall see him."

Impatiently we waited through the summer and into the fall of 1917, watching the Kerensky Government grow weaker and weaker. On November 7* the Bolsheviks pronounced it dead and at the same time proclaimed Russia to be a Republic of Soviets with Lenin as its Premier.

First Impression of Lenin

WHILE a tumultuous, singing throng of peasants and soldiers, flushed with the triumph of their revolution, jammed the great hall at Smolny, while the guns of the *Aurora* were heralding the death of the old order and the birth of the new, Lenin quietly stepped upon the tribunal and the Chairman announced, "Comrade Lenin will now address the Congress."

We strained to see whether he would meet our image of him, but from our seats at the reporters' table he was at first invisible. Amidst loud cries, cheers, whistles and stamping of feet he crossed the platform, the demonstration rising to a climax as he stepped upon the speaker's rostrum, not more than thirty feet away. Now we saw him clearly and our hearts fell. He was almost the opposite of

* According to the old-style calendar used in Russia, the Revolution occurred on October 25. Under the new Gregorian calendar adopted after the Revolution, it occurred November 7.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

ALBERT EINSTEIN, the man who revolutionized science, said of Lenin:

"I respect him as a man who has sacrificed himself completely, and devoted all his energy to establishing social justice. I do not consider his methods practical, but one thing is certain: Men of his caliber are the guardians and restorers of the human conscience."

From *Albert Einstein: The Man and His Theories,* by Hilaire Cuny. Eriksson, 1965, p. 105.

what we had pictured him. Instead of looming up large and impressive he appeared short and stocky. His beard and hair were rough and unkempt.

After stilling the tornado of applause he said, "Comrades, we shall now take up the formation of the Socialist State." Then he went into an unimpassioned, matter-of-fact discussion. In his voice there was a harsh, dry note rather than eloquence. Thrusting his thumbs in his vest at the armpits, he rocked back and forth on his heels. For an hour we listened, hoping to discern the hidden magnetic qualities which would account for his hold on these free, young, sturdy spirits. But in vain.

We were disappointed. The Bolsheviks by their sweep and daring had captured our imaginations; we expected their leader to do likewise. We wanted the head of this party to come before us, the embodiment of these qualities, an epitome of the whole movement, a sort of super-Bolshevik. Instead of that, there he was, looking like a Menshevik, and a very small one at that.

"If he were spruced up a bit you would take him for a bourgeois mayor or banker of a small French city," whispered Julius West, the English correspondent.

"Yes, a rather little man for a rather big job," drawled his companion.

We knew how heavy was the burden that the Bolsheviks had taken up. Would they be able to carry it? At the outset, their leader did not strike us as a strong man.

So much for a first impression. Yet, starting from that first adverse estimate, I found myself six months later in the camp of Woskov, Niebut, Peters, Volodarsky and Yanishev, to whom the first man and statesman of Europe was Nikolay Lenin.

Lenin's Iron Discipline in State and Personal Life

ON NOVEMBER 9th I desired a pass to accompany the Red Guards then streaming out along all roads to fight the Cossacks and the counterrevolutionists. I presented my credentials bearing the signature of Hillquit and Huysmans. I thought they were a very imposing set of credentials. But Lenin didn't. Quite as if they came from the Union League Club, he handed them back with a laconic, "No."

This was a trivial incident, but indicative of a new, rigorous attitude now appearing in the councils of the proletarians. Hitherto, to their own destruction, the masses had been indulging their excessive amiability and good nature. Lenin set out for discipline. He knew that only strong, stern action could save the Revolution, menaced by hunger, invasion and reaction. So the Bolsheviks drove their measures through without ruth or hesitation, while their enemies ransacked the arsenals of invective for epithets to assail them. To the bourgeoisie Lenin was the high-handed, iron-fisted one.

During these chaotic weeks only iron will and iron nerve would suffice. Rigid order and discipline were evident in all departments. One could note the stiffening of the morale of the workingman, a tightening up of the loose parts in the Soviet machinery. Now, when the Soviet moved out into action, as for example in the seizure of the banking system, it struck hard and effectively. Lenin knew where to be precipitate in action, but he knew also where to go slow. A delegation of workingmen came to Lenin asking him if he could decree the nationalization of their factory.

"Yes," said Lenin, picking up a blank form, "it is a very simple thing, my part of it. All I have to do is to take these blanks and fill in the name of your factory in this space here, and then sign my name in this space here, and the name of the commissar here." The workmen were highly gratified and pronounced it "very good."

"But before I sign this blank," resumed Lenin, "I must ask you a few questions. First, do you know where to get the raw materials for your factory?" Reluctantly they admitted they didn't.

"Do you understand the keeping of accounts," resumed Lenin, "and have you worked out a method for keeping up production?" The workmen said they were afraid they did not know very much about these minor matters.

"And finally, comrades," continued Lenin, "may I ask you whether you have found a market in which to sell your products?"

Again they answered, "No."

"Well, comrades," said the Premier, "don't you think you are not

ready to take over your factory now? Go back home and work over these matters. You will find it hard; you will make many blunders, but you will learn. Then come back in a few months and we can take up the nationalizing of your factory."

The same iron that Lenin was injecting into the social life he showed in his individual life. *Shchi* and *borshch,* slabs of black bread, tea and porridge made up the fare of the Smolny crowds. It was likewise the usual fare of Lenin, his wife and sister. For twelve and fifteen hours a day the revolutionists stuck to their posts. Eighteen and twenty hours was the regular stint for Lenin. In his own hand he wrote hundreds of letters. Immersed in his work, he was dead to everything, even his own sustenance. Grasping her opportunity when Lenin was engaged in conversation his wife would appear with a glass of tea, saying, "Here, *tovarishch,* you must not forget to drink this." Often the tea was sugarless, for Lenin went on the same ration as the rest of the population. The soldiers and messengers slept on iron cots in the big, bare, barrack-like rooms. So did Lenin and his wife. Wearied, they flung themselves down on their rough couches, oftentimes without undressing, ready to rise to any emergency. Lenin did not take upon himself these privations out of any ascetic impulses. He was simply putting into practice the first principle of Communism.

Later when Lenin was convalescing his wife and sister hit upon a scheme for increasing his nutriment. Finding that he kept his bread in a drawer, in his absence they slipped into his room and now and then added a piece to his store. Absorbed in his work, Lenin would reach into the drawer and take a bit, which he ate, quite unconscious that it was any addition to the regular ration.

Lenin Feels the Pulse of the People

LIVING so close to the people, the Communist leaders knew the ebb and flow of popular feeling. Lenin did not need to send out a commission to discover the sentiments and psychology of the people. A man going without food doesn't have to speculate upon the mood of a hungry man. He knows. Hungering with the people, freezing with the people, Lenin was feeling their feelings, thinking their thoughts, and voicing their desires.

But intellectuals like Lenin—how can they speak for the people? How can they understand the hearts and minds of the masses? The answer is that they never can. That is certain. But it is equally certain, as Tolstoy showed, that he who lives the life of the people gets closer than he who holds himself aloof from their struggles. So

Lenin had one great advantage over his opponents. He did not have to guess about the feelings of the Ural miner, the Volga peasant or the Soviet soldier.

Lenin in Public Address

DESPITE these rigors and the drain of this day-and-night ordeal, Lenin appeared constantly upon the platform, concise, alert, diagnosing the conditions, prescribing the remedies, and sending his listeners into action to administer them. Observers have wondered at the enthusiasm which Lenin's addresses roused in the uneducated class. While his speeches were swift and fluent and crowded with facts, they were generally as unpicturesque and unromantic as his platform appearance. They demanded sustained thought and were just the opposite of Kerensky's. Kerensky was a romantic figure, an eloquent orator, with all those arts and passions which should have swayed, one would think, "the ignorant and illiterate Russians." But they were not swayed by him. Here is another Russian anomaly. The masses listened to the flashing sentences and magnificent periods of this brilliant platform orator. Then they turned around and gave their allegiance to Lenin, the scholar, the man of logic, of measured thought and academic utterance.

Lenin aimed primarily at the intellect, not at the emotions. Yet in the response of his audience one could see the emotional power of sheer intellectuality.

Only once did I see him miss fire. That was at the Mikhailovsky Manège, in December, when the first detachment of the new Red Army was leaving for the front. Swarming through the great arena were the dark figures of the new recruits, poorly equipped in arms, but strong in revolutionary ardor. To keep warm they danced and stamped their feet and to keep good cheer they sang their revolutionary hymns and the folksongs of the villages.

A great shout announced the arrival of Lenin. He mounted one of the big cars and began speaking. In the half darkness the throngs looked up and listened attentively. But they did not kindle to his words. He finished amidst an applause that was far from the customary ovation. His speech that day was too casual to meet the mood of men going out to die. The ideas were commonplace and the expressions trite. There was reason enough for this deadness—overwork, preoccupation. But the fact remained. Lenin had met a significant occasion with an insignificant speech. And these workmen felt it. The Russian proletarians are not blind hero-worshippers.

When Lenin stepped down, Podvoisky announced, "An American

comrade to address you." The crowd pricked up its ears and I climbed upon the big car.

"Oh, good. You speak in English," said Lenin. "Allow me to be your interpreter."

"No, I shall speak in Russian," I answered, prompted by some reckless impulse.

Lenin watched me with eyes twinkling, as if anticipating entertainment. It was not long in coming. After using up the first run of predigested sentences that I always carried in stock, I hesitated, and stopped. I had difficulty in getting the language started up again. No matter what a foreigner does to their tongue, the Russians are polite and charitable. They appreciate the novice's effort, if not his technique. So my speech was punctured with long periods of applause which gave me each time a breathing spell in which to assemble more words for another short advance. I wanted to tell them that if a great crisis came I should myself be glad to enlist in the ranks of the Red Army. I paused, fumbling for a word. Lenin looked up and asked, "What word do you want?" "Enlist," I answered. "*Vstupit*," he prompted.

Thereafter, whenever I was stuck, he would fling the word up to me and I would catch it and hurl it out into the audience, modified by my American accent. This, and the fact that I stood there in the flesh, a tangible symbol of the internationalism they had heard so much about, raised storms of laughter and thundering applause. In this Lenin joined heartily.

"Well, that's a beginning in Russian, at any rate," he said. "But you must keep at it hard. And you," he said, turning to Bessie Beatty, "you must learn Russian, too. Put an advertisement in the paper asking for exchange lessons. Then just read, write and talk nothing but Russian. Don't talk with Americans—it won't do you any good, anyhow," he added humorously. "Next time I see you I'll give you an examination."

Lenin's Extraordinary Self-Composure

ON ALL occasions he maintained the most perfect self-control. Events that stirred others to a frenzy were an invitation to quiet and serenity in him.

The one historic session of the Constituent Assembly was a turbulent scene as the two factions came to death-grips with each other. The delegates, shouting battle-cries and beating on the desks, the orators, thundering out threats and challenges, and two thousand voices, passionately singing the *Internationale* and the Revolutionary

March, charged the atmosphere with electricity. In the galleries we gripped the rails, jaws set and nerves on edge. Lenin sat in a front tier box, looking bored.

At last he rose, and walking to the back of the tribunal he stretched himself upon the red-carpeted stairs. He glanced casually around the vast concourse. Then as if saying, "So many people wasting nervous force. Well, here's one who is going to store some up," he propped his head on his hands and went to sleep. The eloquence of the orators and the roar of the audience rolled above his head, but peacefully he slumbered on.

Finally, rising, he stretched himself and strolled leisurely down to his place in the front tier box. Seeing our opening, Reed and I slipped down to question him about the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly. He replied indifferently. He asked about the activities of the Propaganda Bureau. His face brightened up as we told him how the material was being printed by tons, that it was really getting across the trenches into the German army. But we found it hard to work in the German language.

"Ah!" he said with sudden animation, as he recalled my exploits on the armored car, "and how goes the Russian language?"

"There are so many words in Russian," I replied evasively. "That's it," he retorted. "You must go at it systematically. You must break the backbone of the language at the outset. I'll tell you my method of going at it."

In essence, Lenin's system was this: First, learn all the nouns, learn all the verbs, learn all the adverbs and adjectives, learn all the rest of the words; learn all the grammar and rules of syntax, then keep practicing everywhere and upon everybody. As may be seen, Lenin's system was more thorough-going than subtle. It was, in short, his system of the conquest of the bourgeoisie applied to the conquest of a language, a merciless application to the job.

He leaned over the box, with sparkling eyes, and drove his words home with gestures. Our fellow reporters looked on enviously. They thought that Lenin was violently excoriating the crimes of the opposition, or divulging the secret plans of the Soviet, or spurring us to greater zeal for the Revolution. But they were wrong. The Premier of Russia was merely giving an exposition on how to learn a foreign language and was enjoying the diversion of a little friendly conversation.

In the tension of great debates, when his opponents were lashing him unmercifully, Lenin would sit in serene composure, even extracting humor from the situation. After his address at the Fourth

Congress, he took his seat upon the tribunal to listen to the assaults of his five opponents. Whenever he thought that the point scored against him was good, Lenin would smile broadly, joining in the applause. Whenever he thought it was ridiculous, Lenin, smiling ironically, would give a mock applause, striking his thumb-nails together.

It was hard to get at Lenin, but once you did you had all there was of him. All his faculties were focused upon you in a manner so acute as to be embarrassing. After a polite, almost an effusive, greeting, he drew up closer until his face would be no more than a foot away. As the conversation went on he often came still closer, gazing into your eyes as if he were searching out the inmost recesses of your brain and peering into your very soul.

Lenin is sincere even with his avowed enemies. An Englishman, commenting on his extraordinary frankness, says his attitude was like this: "Personally, I have nothing against you. Politically, however, you are my enemy and I must use every weapon I can think of for you destruction. Your government does the same against me. Now let us see how far we can go along together."

This stamp of sincerity is on all his public utterances. Lenin is lacking in the usual outfit of the statesman-politician—bluff, glittering verbiage and success-psychology. One felt that he could not fool others even if he desired to. And for the same reasons that he could not fool himself; his scientific attitude of mind, his passion for the facts.

His lines of information ran out in every direction, bringing him multitudes of facts. These he weighed, sifted and assayed. Then he utilized them as a strategist, a master chemist working in social elements, a mathematician. He would approach a subject in this way:

"Now the facts that count for us are these: One, two, three, four—" He would briefly enumerate them. "And the factors that are against us are these."

In the same way he would count them up, "One, two, three, four—Are there any others?" he would ask. We would rack our brains for another, but generally in vain. Elaborating the points on each side, pro and con, he would proceed with his calculations as with a problem in mathematics.

Lenin at Work in a Crisis

WITH THE advance of the Germans came the flight of the foreigners. The Russians manifested a mild surprise that all those who had so wildly cried to them, "Kill the Huns!" now fled precipitately when the Hun came within killing range. It would have been

good to join the hegira, but there was my pledge made upon the armored car. So I went out to join the Red Army. Bukharin, the Left-Bolshevik, insisted that I should see Lenin.

"My congratulations! My felicitations!" said Lenin. "It looks very bad for us just now. The old army will not fight. The new one is largely upon paper. Pskov has just been surrendered without resistance. That is a crime. The President of the Soviet ought to be shot. Our workers have great self-sacrifice and heroism. But no military training, no discipline."

Thus in about twenty short sentences he summed up the situation, ending with, "All I can see is peace. Yet the Soviet may be for war. In any case, my congratulations for joining the Revolutionary Army. After your struggle with the Russian language you ought to be in good training to fight the Germans." He ruminated a moment and added:

"One foreigner can't do much fighting. Maybe you can find others." I told him that I might try to form a detachment.

Lenin was a direct actionist. A plan conceived, at once he proceeded to put it into execution. He turned to the telephone to ring up Krylenko, the Soviet commander. Failing, he picked up a pen and scribbled him a note.

By night we had formed the International Legion and issued our call summoning all men speaking foreign languages to enroll in the new company. But Lenin did not drop the matter there. He followed it up relentlessly and in detail. Twice he telephoned the *Pravda* office instructing them to print the call in Russian and in English. Then he telegraphed it through the country. Thus, while opposing the war, and particularly those who were intoxicating themselves with revolutionary phrases about it, Lenin was mobilizing every force to prepare for it.

He sent an automobile with Red Guards to the fortress of Peter and Paul to fetch part of the counterrevolutionary staff imprisoned there.

"Gentlemen," said Lenin, as the generals filed into his office, "I have brought you here for expert advice. Petrograd is in danger. Will you be good enough to work out the military tactics for its defense?" They assented.

"Here are our forces," resumed Lenin, indicating upon the map the location of the Red troops, munitions and reserves. "And here are our latest reports upon the number and disposition of the enemy troops. Anything else the generals desire they will call for."

They set to work and toward evening handed him the result of

their deliberations. "Now," said the generals ingratiatingly, "will the Premier be good enough to allow us more comfortable quarters?"

"My exceeding regrets," replied Lenin. "Some other time, but not just now. Your quarters, gentlemen, may not be comfortable, but they have the merit of being very safe." The staff was returned to the fortress of Peter and Paul.

Lenin as Prophet and Statesman

IT IS clear that Lenin's prowess as a statesman and seer arises not from any mystic intuition or power of divination, but from his ability to amass all the facts in the case and then to utilize them. He showed this ability in his work, *The Development of Capitalism.* There Lenin challenged the economic thought of his day by asserting that half the Russian peasants had been proletarianized, that, despite their possession of some land, these peasants were in effect "wage-earners with a piece of land." Bold and daring as the assertion was, it was corroborated by investigation in later years. Lenin had not merely guessed at it. It was his verdict after extensive marshaling of statistics in the Zemstvos and in other fields.

Prominent Bolshevik leaders like Kamenev and Zinoviev held that in the proposed November revolution it was impossible to succeed. Lenin said, "It is impossible to fail." Lenin was right. The Bolsheviks made a gesture, and the governmental power fell into their hands. None were more surprised than the Bolsheviks at the ease with which it was accomplished.

The other Bolshevik leaders said that though they might take the power they could not hold it. Lenin said, "Every day will bring us fresh strength." Lenin was right. After two years of fighting against enemies hemming them in from all sides, the Soviet advanced on every front.

Trotsky pursued his juggling tactics with the Germans, decoying them along but refusing to sign the treaty. Lenin said, "Don't play with them. Sign the first treaty offered, however bad, or we shall have to sign a worse one." Again Lenin was right. The Russians were forced to sign the "bandits' peace" of Brest-Litovsk.

In the Spring of 1918, while the whole world was ridiculing the idea of a German revolution, and the Kaiser's army was smashing the Allied line in France, Lenin in a conversation with me said, "The Kaiser's downfall will come within the year. It is absolutely certain." Nine months later the Kaiser was a fugitive from his own people.

"If you are going back to America," said Lenin to me in April, 1918, "you should start very soon, or the American army will meet

you in Siberia." That was an amazing statement, as at that time, in Moscow, we had come to believe that America was cherishing only the largest goodwill toward the new Russia. "That is impossible," I protested. "Why, Raymond Robins thinks there is even a possibility of recognition of the Soviets."

"Yes," said Lenin, "but Robins represents the liberal bourgeoisie of America. They do not decide the policy of America. Finance capital does. And finance capital wants control of Siberia. And it will send American soldiers to get it." This point of view was preposterous to me. Yet later, June 29, 1918, I saw with my own eyes the landing of American sailors in Vladivostok, while Tsarists, Czechs, British, Japanese and other Allies hauled down the flag of the Soviet Republic and ran up the flag of the old autocracy.

Lenin's Faith in the Proletariat

TO LENIN, of course, the driving force of the Revolution, its soul and its sinew, was the proletariat. The only hope of a new society lay in the masses. This was not the popular view. The conception of the Russian masses generally current makes them but shambling creatures of the soil, shiftless, lazy, illiterate, with dark minds set only upon vodka, devoid of idealism, incapable of sustained effort.

Over against this stands Lenin's estimate of the "ignorant" masses. Through the long years, in season and out of season, he insisted upon their resoluteness, their tenacity, their capacity for sacrificing and suffering, their ability to grasp large political ideas, and the great creative and constructive forces latent within them. This seems like an almost reckless trust in the character of the masses. How far have results justified Lenin's venture of faith in the Russian workingmen?

Their ability to grasp large political ideas has astounded all observers who have gone below the surface in Russia. It made a member of the Root Mission ask in wonder, "How came so much of the mass of the Russian people, viewed by all the truly learned as ignorant and stupid, to seize upon a social philosophy so new to the rest of the world and so far in advance of it?" The hundreds of young men sent over by the Y. M. C. A. and other agencies were a puzzle to the Russian workingman. These "educators" were the graduates of American universities and yet they did not know the difference between Socialism, Syndicalism and Anarchism, which was the ABC in the education of millions of Russian workingmen.

Time has also justified Lenin's faith in the tenacity and resoluteness of the Russian masses. Compare the dire prophecies of 1917 with the facts of today. "Three days and their power is gone," croaked the

enemies of the Soviets then. The three days passed into as many more, and the cry became, "Three weeks is the utmost that the Soviet can last." Again they had to change the cry. This time it became "Three months." Now, after eight times three months, the best the enemies of the Soviets can offer their backers is "Three years."

Achievements of Workers and Peasants Surpass His Expectations

THE STRENGTH and persistence of the Soviet Government does not lie, as some infer, in the violation of all law, the strange whimsy of an inscrutable Providence. It rests just where Lenin said it would—on the solid achievements of the workers and peasants.

More stupendous and significant are these achievements when one considers the handicaps under which the masses labored. When they took over the government they had as their heritage a people browbeaten, impoverished and oppressed for centuries. The Great War had killed two million of their able-bodied men, wounded and crippled another 3,000,000 and left them with hundreds of thousands of orphans and hundreds of thousands of blind, the deaf and the dumb. The railways were broken down, the mines flooded, the reserves of food and fuel nearly gone. The economic machinery, dislocated by the war and further shattered by the Revolution, had suddenly thrown upon it the task of demobilizing 12,000,000 soldiers. They raised a bumper grain crop, but the Czechs, supported by the Japanese, French, British and Americans, cut them off from the grainfields of Siberia, and the other counterrevolutionaries from the grainfields of the Ukraine. "Now," they said, "the bony hand of hunger will clutch the people by the throat and bring them to their senses." Because they separated the church from state they were excommunicated. They were sabotaged by the old officials, deserted by the intelligentsia and blockaded by the Allies. The Allies tried by all manner of threats, bribery and assassination to overthrow their government, British agents blowing up the railway bridges to prevent supplies reaching the big cities, and French agents, under safe-conduct from their consulates, putting emery in the bearings of the locomotives.

Facing these facts, Lenin said:

"Yes, we have mighty enemies, but against them we have the iron battalion of the proletarians. The vast majority are not as yet truly conscious and they are not active. And the reason is clear. They are war-weary, hungry and exhausted. The Revolution now is only skin deep, but with rest there will come a big psychological change. If it only comes in time the Soviet Republic is saved."

To Lenin's mind the episode of November 1917—the masses spec-

tacularly crashing into power—was not the Revolution. But these masses becoming conscious of their mission, passing into discipline and orderly work, and bringing into the field their great creative and constructive forces—that would be the Revolution.

In those early days Lenin was never certain that the Soviet Republic was saved. "Ten days more!" he exclaimed, "and we shall have lasted as long as the Paris Commune." In opening his address to the Third All-Russian Congress in Petrograd, he said, "Comrades, consider that the Commune of Paris held out for seventy days. We have already lasted for two days more than that."

More than ten times seventy days the great Russian Commune has held out against a world of enemies. Great was the faith of Lenin in the tenacity, the perseverance, the resoluteness, the heroism, and the economic, military and cultural potentialities of the proletarians. Their achievements are not merely the vindication of his zealous faith. They are a source of amazement to himself.

Certainly any interpretation of history that makes the Russian Revolution hinge upon a single person or group of persons is misleading. Lenin would be the first to scoff at the idea that the fortunes of the Russian Revolution lie in his hands or in the hands of his confrères.

The fate of the Russian Revolution lies in the source whence it has sprung—in the hearts and hands of the masses. It lies back in those economic forces, the pressure of which has set those masses into motion. For centuries these masses had been quiescent, patient, long-suffering. All across the vast reaches of Russia, over the Muscovite plains, the Ukrainian steppes, and along the great rivers of Siberia, they toiled under the lash of poverty, chained by superstition, their lot little better than that of the beast. But there is an end to all things—even the patience of the poor.

In March 1917, with a crash heard round the world, the city masses broke their fetters. Army after army of soldiers followed their example and revolted. Then the Revolution permeated the villages, going deeper and deeper, firing the most backward sections with the revolutionary spirit, until a nation of 180,000,000 has been stirred to its depths—seven times as many as in the French Revolution.

Caught by a great vision, a whole race strikes camp, and moves out to build a new order. It is the most tremendous movement of the human spirit in centuries. Based on the bedrock of the economic interest of the masses, it is the most resolute strike for justice in history. A great nation turns crusader and, loyal to the vision of a new world, marches on in the face of hunger, war, blockade and death. It drives

ahead, sweeping aside the leaders who fail them, following those who answer their needs and their aspirations.

In the masses themselves lies the fate of the Russian Revolution—in their discipline and devotion. Fortune, indeed, has been very kind to them. It gave them for guide and interpreter a man with a giant mind and an iron will, a man of vast learning and fearless action, a man of the loftiest idealism and the most stern, practical sagacity.

RAYMOND ROBINS

Impressions, as Told to William Hard

Col. Raymond Robins (1873-1954), coal miner, gold prospector, millionaire, Congregationalist minister, lifetime crusader for human betterment, headed the American Red Cross Mission in Russia, 1917-18, succeeding Col. William Boyce Thompson. While retaining his ideological differences, Colonel Robins was convinced by his talks with Lenin, and his personal observations of Soviet power in action, of the basic rightness of the Russian Revolution. He sought to bring the truth about Soviet Russia to this country, fought for recognition of the Soviet Government until it was won, and was an unwavering champion of US-Soviet cooperation for peace. He retained his fervent support for the Soviet Union until the end of his life.

The impressions published below, in slightly abridged form, were published as a supplement to Williams' book on Lenin. They appeared first in the Metropolitan *magazine, of which William Hard was co-editor.*

Lenin in the Kremlin, Citadel of the Tsars

WALKING through the Most Holy Gate, Colonel Robins, the head of the American Red Cross Mission in Russia, arrived in the inside of the Kremlin. He entered the famous building that had been the High Court of the Tsar and went up three flights of stairs to a little room, the walls of which were draped with velvet hangings. Here, at a great desk of beautiful wood, beautifully carved, the Tsar had been accustomed to sit and sign certain papers of state.

There now sits Lenin, short-built and staunch-built, gray-eyed and bald-headed and tranquil. He wears a woolen shirt and a suit of clothes bought, one would think, many years ago, and last pressed shortly afterwards. The room is quite still. As he deprecates "the intoxication of the revolutionary phrase," so he seems to reject the intoxication of revolutionary excitement. He busies himself with

reports of accounts and departments, and receives visitors for stated lengths of time—ten minutes, five minutes, one minute. He is likely to receive them standing, and he speaks to them in the low tones of a man who does not need to raise his voice.

Lenin as Prophet

ON A momentous occasion, the occasion of the Brest-Litovsk treaty, Trotsky, in his propaganda, appealed to the German soldiers to rise up and break their masters who made them march.

Would the German soldiers march? That was the immediate question.

"No," said Trotsky. He had shown the German workingmen the folly and wickedness of marching, and they would not march.

"But they will," said Lenin.

There was a certain private meeting of certain members of the All-Russian and Petrograd Soviets. The German Government had made its open and full announcement of its imperialistic and annexationistic policies toward Russia. In the Soviet there was consternation, indignation, fury. But would the Russian Army, in the field, fight?

"It will," said loud voices.

"But it will not," said Lenin. "It did not fight at Tarnopol. Kerensky was in power. He used all his influence and all his eloquence to make it fight. With the Allies he ordered the great advance. But the Russian army did not advance and did not fight. It ran, and it had to run. It is now no longer an army. It is only peasants wanting bread and land. It is going home. The Russian army will never fight again until it is reorganized into a new revolutionary army."

Lenin spoke very calmly. He had written out his ideas into "twenty-one theses," as though he had prepared a course of lectures for a college. Those "twenty-one theses" were his reasons for believing that Russia would have to sign the peace. They were crushing. But Lenin did not try to crush with them at that meeting.

He spoke for only about twenty minutes, and he spoke entirely without emphasis. He merely stated his position. The Germans would advance; the Russian army would not fight; and the Russian Socialist Republic, in order not to be trampled militarily out of existence, would have to sign the peace.

Then Trotsky swayed the meeting. The Revolution was afoot in Germany. Trotsky saw it striding on. Comrade Lenin was mistaken. The German comrades were not so base as to fight for the terms of Brest-Litovsk. Besides, there was Poland, and there was Lithuania,

and there was Latvia. They must not be surrendered to the Germans. We must hold them for the Revolution, said Trotsky.

"We must not be intoxicated by the revolutionary phrase," said Lenin.

But Trotsky swayed the meeting, and Lenin let him. When Robins afterwards asked Lenin why he had permitted it, he said:

"I am willing to let Trotsky see if he can put off the peace. I am willing to let him see if he can save us from it. I would rejoice if he could. But I wanted the comrades to know what I am thinking. I wanted them to know it, so that they can remember it a few days from now. I have to keep their confidence."

During those few days Lenin was very unpopular. Most of the leaders of the Soviet were on Trotsky's side. To many of them Lenin's position seemed to be monstrous. But everything turned out as Lenin said it would. Yet each new thing he said was spoken amid a storm of protest.

"We will call the Fourth All-Russian Congress of Soviets," he said. "What?" was the answer. "Call the Congress now? It can't be done. Russia can't send delegates now. And the delegates can't come, they won't travel, at this time. Impossible!"

"We will call it at Moscow," said Lenin. "What?" was the answer, "Moscow? The stronghold of the reaction? Go to Moscow and the Hall of the Nobles and the haunts of the old régime? Leave Petrograd, the revolutionary city? Never!"

But it happened. The Fourth All-Russian Congress of Soviets was called, as Lenin had said. The Germans had advanced, as Lenin had said. The Congress met at Moscow in the Hall of the Nobles, as Lenin had said. It ratified the peace, as Lenin had said.

Lenin Faces the Armed Mob

ONE DAY, back in Petrograd, when the Germans were advancing, Robins went out from his hotel to walk along the Nevsky Prospekt. A crowd of people was gathering at a corner. Robins saw that they were reading a placard, spread on a dead wall, and that they were greatly excited by it. The placard, in purport, said:

"Lenin has absconded to Finland with 30,000,000 rubles in gold from the State Bank. The Russian Revolution has been betrayed by false leaders. But there is hope now for Holy Russia. The Little Father is coming back. The Grand Duke Nikolay Nikolayevich is advancing from the Crimea with 200,000 brave, true Russian soldiers who will save Russia from the Bolshevik traitors."

Robins turned and hurried back to his hotel to get his sleigh.

He drove to Smolny, and waved his card at the doorkeepers, and ran upstairs. In the corridors were crowds of commissioners and clerks and guards, running, shouting, getting ready for something very imminent. Machine-guns were being unhooded. The crowds, with the guns, surged over to one side of the building. Robins looked out from that side across the yard of Smolny, toward the Viborg workmen's quarter.

Two streets stretched from there toward Smolny. They were black with two streams of armed workmen flowing toward Smolny. They would overwhelm Smolny and clean it out and then flow to the Front against the Germans. Such was the cry.

Robins drew back from his window and worked his way through a corridor of dense, panic-stricken people toward Lenin's private office.

Lenin was there, receiving telephone messages from the Front, personal reports from couriers. He was writing orders and sending them out. He was working without pause, as usual, and, as usual, without haste. He seemed quite unaware of any crisis.

Robins was thrust into the room by shouting men behind him who cried to Lenin, "The order to fire!"

Lenin jumped to his feet. For just one moment he, too, was excited. "No! No!" he said. Then again he said, "No! No!" this time angrily. "Shoot them? We will talk to them. Tell their leaders to come in."

Somebody went to call them, and Lenin sat down to his messages and his orders. The leaders of the mob began to come in and began to fill Lenin's office—workmen—in workmen's clothes—each with a bayoneted rifle in his hands and with a magazine pistol at his waist —workmen—soldiers—the men Lenin had to rely on—the armed revolutionary proletariat—the nucleus of the future Red Army of Lenin's Russia. They grounded their rifles. Somebody said to Lenin, "They are here." The outer door was closed.

Lenin rose and walked over toward his visitors.

"Comrades," he said, "you see I have not run away. Comrades, I was fighting for the Revolution before some of you were born. I shall be fighting for the Revolution when some of you are dead. I stand always in danger. You stand in more danger. Let us talk frankly."

He put his hands in his pockets and walked up and down, meditated, and spoke:

"Comrades, I do not blame you for not always trusting your leaders. There are so many voices in Russia today! I wonder that you have trusted us as much as you have.

"Among honest Revolutionists today there are two voices. One of them is right. One is wrong.

"Many comrades say:

" 'You must go to the Front and fight the Germans and die fighting—die fighting for the Revolution.'

"They do not pretend, these comrades, that you are willing to fight for anything except the Revolution. But they say, and they say truly, that the Germans are against the Revolution. And so they say, 'Go and fight the Germans.'

"I do not say so. I say:

" 'You are the new army. You are the only army of the Revolution. You are the beginning of it. What will happen if you fight the Germans? The old army is not fighting. It cannot fight. It is exhausted. Only you, with the Revolution in you, want to fight. You know what will happen. You will fight. You will die. And the soldiers of the Revolution will be dead, and the Tsar will come back.'

"Would that be dying for the Revolution? Comrades, when we die, let us die really for the Revolution. Let us die when by dying we can win victory for the Revolution.

"Comrades, my voice is right. They tell you I will make a shameful peace. Yes. I will make a shameful peace. They tell you I will surrender Petrograd, the Imperial City. Yes. I will surrender Petrograd, the Imperial City. They tell you I will surrender Moscow, the Holy City. I will. I will go back to the Volga, and I will go back behind the Volga to Yekaterinburg; but I will save the soldiers of the Revolution and I will save the Revolution.

"Comrades, what is your will?

"I will give you now a special train to the Front. I will not

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES, the noted clergyman, wrote of Lenin:

"I was in Moscow on this trip (1931) only a comparatively brief period of time and went nowhere outside the city gates. The impression I gained was indelible. It was that of a great people, shaken as by an earthquake, and struggling to regain and restore its life. The original revolution had destroyed the Russia of the Tsars, and this was a good thing. But there was now needed a force of public order to hold the chaotic Russia together. This fell to the lot of Lenin, who saved Russia from disintegration and ruin. Lenin's singlehanded achievement marks him as one of the great statesmen of all time . . ."

I Speak for Myself. The Autobiography of John Haynes Holmes. Harper, 1959.

stop you. You may go. But you will take my resignation with you. I have led the Revolution. I will not share in the murder of my own child.

"Comrades, what is your will?"

"Lenin! Lenin! Lenin!" The room held no other sound. "Comrade Lenin! Comrade Lenin!" It was a judgment delivered. Having delivered it, the judges picked up their rifles and marched out of the room and down the corridor, still delivering their judgment: "Comrade Lenin!"

Such was Lenin face to face with his followers. Such was Lenin the personal leader.

Lenin Explains the Advantages of the Soviet System

ON A certain day when Colonel Robins called on Lenin in that famous room with the velvet hangings, Lenin said to him:

"We may be overthrown in Russia by the backwardness of the Russian people, or by a foreign power, but the *idea* in the Russian Revolution will break and wreck every political social control in the world. Our method of social control must dominate the future. Political social control will die. The Russian Revolution will kill it—everywhere."

"But," said Robins, "my government is a democratic government. Do you really mean that the idea in the Russian Revolution will destroy the democratic idea in the government of the United States?"

"The American government," answered Lenin, "is corrupt."

"That is not so," answered Robins. "Our national government and local governments are elected by the people. Most of the elections are honest and fair, and the men elected are the true choice of the voters. You cannot call the American government a bought government."

"Ah, Colonel Robins," replied Lenin, "you do not understand. It is my fault. I should not have used the word corrupt. I do not mean that your government is corrupt through money. I mean that it is corrupt in that it is decayed in thought. It is living in the political thought of a bygone political age. It is living in the age of Thomas Jefferson. It is not living in the present economic age. It is, therefore, lacking in intellectual integrity. How shall I make it clear to you?

"Take your states of New York and Pennsylvania. New York is the center of your banking system. Pennsylvania is the center of your steel industry. Those are two of your most important things—banking and steel. They form the base of your life. They make you what you are. Now if you really believe in your banking system, and respect it, why don't you send Mr. Morgan to your United States Senate? And if you really believe in your steel industry, in its present organization, why don't you send Mr. Schwab to the Senate? Why do you send men who know little about banking and less about steel and who protect the bankers and the steel manufacturers and pretend to be independent of them? It is inefficient. It is insincere. You refuse to recognize the fact that the real control is no longer *political.* That is why I say that your system is lacking in integrity. That is why our system is superior to yours. That is why it will destroy yours."

"Frankly, Mr. Commissioner, I don't believe it will."

"It will," said Lenin. "Do you know what our system is?"

"Not very well as yet," said Robins. "You've just started."

"I'll tell you," said Lenin. "Our system will destroy yours because it will consist of a social control which recognizes the basic fact of modern life. It recognizes the fact that real power today is *economic,* and that the social control of today must therefore be *economic* also.

"This system is stronger than yours because it fits in with reality. It seeks out the sources of daily human work-value and, out of those sources, directly, it creates the social control of the State. Our Government will be an *economic* social control for an *economic* age. It will triumph because it speaks the spirit, and releases and uses the spirit, of the age that now is.

"Therefore, Colonel Robins, we look with confidence to the future. You may destroy us in Russia. You may destroy the Russian Revolution in Russia. You may overthrow me. It will make no difference. A hundred years ago the monarchies of Britain, Prussia, Austria, Russia overthrew the Government of Revolutionary France. They restored a monarch, who was called a legitimate monarch, to power in Paris. But they could not stop, and they did not stop, the middle-class *political* revolution, the revolution of middle-class *democracy,* which had been started in Paris by the men of the French Revolution of 1789. They could not save feudalism.

"Every system of *feudal aristocratic social* control in Europe was destined to be destroyed by the *political democratic* social control worked out by the French Revolution. Every system of *political democratic* social control in the world today is destined now to be destroyed by the *economic producers'* social control worked out by the Russian Revolution."

One day a man—an American—came to Robins in great trouble. "I'm going to be ruined," he said.

"How? Where?" said Robins. *(Continued on page 49)*

Moscow, April 25, 1918

Honorable Nikolay Lenin
Kremlin, Moscow

Dear Mr. President Commissar:

Having finished the distribution of all supplies and relief assigned by the American Red Cross for the help of the Russian people I am now preparing to leave Russia for the United States within the next days.

May I take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for your cooperation and courtesies in the prosecution of my work for the American Red Cross Mission in Russia, and an abiding hope that the Russian Republic of Soviets will develop into a permanent Democratic Power, and that your ultimate aim to make Russia a fundamental economic democracy will be realized.

Your prophetic insight and genius of leadership has enabled the Soviet Power to become consolidated throughout Russia and I am confident that this new creative organ of the democratic life of mankind will inspire and advance the cause of liberty throughout the world.

It has been my eager desire for over five months to be of some use in interpreting this new democracy to the people of America and I shall hope to continue efforts in this behalf upon my return to my own land.

With appreciation, best wishes and kindest regards,

Faithfully yours,
RAYMOND ROBINS
Lieut. Colonel Commanding American
Red Cross Mission in Russia

April 30, 1918

Dear Mr. Robins:

I thank you very much for your letter. I am sure that the new democracy, that is the proletarian democracy, is coming in all countries and will crush all obstacles and imperialist-capitalist systems in the New and the Old World.

With kindest respects and thanks,

Yours truly,
LENIN*

* The Robins letter is from the Raymond Robins Papers, US State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin. The Lenin reply is from the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, Moscow.

(Continued from page 47)

"My factory."

"Won't your men work?"

"Certainly they work. We're getting ten to twenty per cent more product per man under Lenin than we did under Kerensky."

"Well, what's your complaint?"

"Listen! This workers' control may be all right in the factory. But now they're going to put it into the buying and selling. They're going to put it into the office. It's all wrong in the office. It won't go. But they've sent us an ultimatum. I tell you it'll kill us."

"I agree with you," said Robins. "What do you want me to do?"

"Well, they say you can see Lenin. See him."

Lenin listened while Robins told him that this American company certainly has a lot of manufacturing knowledge, and that it is willing to go on using that knowledge in Russia and giving Russia the benefit of it if only the Bolshevik Government will compromise and not insist on putting workers' control into the office.

The compromise was made. Lenin wrote out an order stopping the putting of workers' control into the office.

Robins met the manager of that factory some time later, and asked him how he was getting on.

"All right," said he. "First-rate."

"Going to keep on?"

"Sure."

"Tell me. If you get out of Russia, who will take your place making harvesters for Russia?"

"Why, some German."

"Of course," said Robins. Robins' advice was: "Stay in Russia. Stick. Russia has a Revolution. Lenin did not make it. He has led it, but he did not make it. Yet he does lead it. And he leads it, all the time, as much as he can, toward work—toward the task of actually earning a living in a living world. He is calling for engineering advisers now, for factory managers. To get them he is willing to negotiate, and he has tried to negotiate with foreign 'bourgeois' governments, and especially with the United States. To get them he is willing to compromise, just as he has compromised with my American business man. If we break with him altogether he will find it more and more difficult to make his Government compromise with American business men. If we go away altogether, and leave Russia, he will make his compromises and get his factory managers where he can—and the quickest and easiest place is Germany. To fight Lenin is to play the German game."

Soviet Idea the Source of Lenin's Power—Not Physical Force

IN ADDRESSING a meeting of American businessmen Robins stated:

"Gentlemen, the people who tell you that the Soviet system is nothing but riots and robberies and mobs and massacres are leading you to your own destruction. They are giving you your enemy's wrong address and starting you off an an expedition which can never reach him and never hurt him. To hurt Bolshevism you need at least to get its number. Bolshevism is a system which in practice, on its record, can put human beings, in millions, into an ordered social group, and can get loyalty from them and obedience and organized consent, sometimes by free will, sometimes by compulsion, but always in furtherance of an organized idea—an idea thought out and worked out and living in human thought and human purpose as the plan of a city not yet made with hands but already blue-printed, street by street, to be the millennial city of assembled mankind.

"Gentlemen, it is a real fight. We have to fight it with the weapons with which it can be fought. Against idea there must be idea. Against millennial plan there must be millennial plan. Against self-sacrifice to a dream there must be self-sacrifice to a higher and nobler dream. Do you say that Lenin is nothing but Red Guards? Gentlemen, let me tell you something. I have seen a little piece of paper with some words on it by Nikolay Lenin read and re-read, and then instantly and scrupulously obeyed in Russian cities thousands of miles beyond the last Red Guard in Lenin's army."

Robins was alluding to his experience on his way out from Russia back to the United States. He left Moscow on May 14, 1918, with a Bolshevik pass, but also with five rifles and one hundred and fifty rounds of ammunition in his special car. The rifles and the ammunition were the property of the Soviet Government. To get them Robins had to get a most special permit. He went to the Soviet Government and got the permit, and went around to say good-by to his friends and acquaintances. He told them all he was going out by way of Vladivostok.

"What?" said the experts in boulevard upper-world underground information. "What? Going out by Vladivostok? Not by Archangel? Not by Murmansk? Not by Finland? Do you mean it? By Siberia? My dear man, don't you know that Lenin stops having any say-so about anything at all when you get to a point 500 miles east of here? Don't you know that all Siberia is overrun with Soviets who pay no attention to Lenin, and with brigands who pay no attention to the

Soviets? Don't you know that the Soviets and the brigands between them will take all your money and probably all your clothes?"

"No, I do not," said Robins. He was weary of answering such questions in any other way. "No, I do not," he said, and boarded his train.

He got to Vladivostok. He got there in a running time only a few hours greater than would have been consumed by the running time of the Siberian Railway under the old régime. He himself had seen the Siberian Railway under the Kerensky régime. The Bolsheviks were doing better by it. There was less clutter. There was more energy. Incidentally there was food at every station. And, above all, the local governments were not raising their hands against Lenin as they had raised them against Kerensky.

JOHN REED

"The War Is Ended! The War Is Ended!"

John Reed was born into an upper-middle-class family in Portland, Ore., in 1887. He was graduated from Harvard University and became a reporter. As a reporter, he became involved with the struggles of the working class and committed himself to the achievement of its goals. He was in Petrograd (Leningrad) when the October Revolution began, and wrote an eyewitness account under the title, Ten Days that Shook the World, *which Lenin characterized as "a truthful and most vivid exposition of the events so significant to the comprehension of what really is the Proletarian Revolution and Dictatorship of the Proletariat." Reed was one of the founders of the US Communist Party, and in 1920, participated in the work of the Second Congress of the Communist International. He died of typhus in Moscow in 1920 and is buried in the Kremlin Wall.*

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 in 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; colorless, humorless, uncompromising and detached, without picturesque idiosyncrasies—but with the power of explaining profound ideas in simple terms, of analyzing a concrete situation. And combined with shrewdness, the greatest intellectual audacity. . .

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 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 forever. . . . 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 November 6th and 7th and based on the Soviets 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 immense majority of the workers and the laboring 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 the 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. . .

To continue this 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 landowners and capitalists, from March until November 7th, 1917. All the clauses of the secret treaties which, as occur in a majority of cases, have for their object to procure advantages and privileges for Russian capitalists, to maintain or augment the annexations of the 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 representatives of the different countries, or at a conference of these representatives. To facilitate these pourparlers, the Government appoints its authorized representatives in the neutral countries. . .

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. . .

"The revolution of November 6th and 7th," he ended, "has opened the era of the Social Revolution. . . . The labor movement, in the name of peace and socialism, shall win, and fulfill 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. . .

It was exactly 10:35 when Kamenev asked all in favor of the proclamation to hold up their cards. One delegate dared to raise his hand against, but the sudden, sharp 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 Kollontay rapidly winked the tears back. The immense sound rolled through the hall, burst windows and doors and seared 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 honor of the people . . .
You gave up your lives and everything dear to you,
You suffered in horrible prisons,
You went to exile in chains. . .
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*. . .

MAX LERNER

MAX LERNER, who at one time was a professor of economics at leading US colleges, and who now writes a syndicated column, which appears in the *New York Post* and other newspapers, had the following estimate of Lenin, which appeared in the *New Republic* of August 30, 1939. Lerner, who is not known for his sympathy toward the Soviet Union, wrote:

"There is probably nothing in the history of political thought that equals the dramatic power of Lenin's achievement in linking in his own life the analysis and enactment of revolution. He was one of those rare persons in whom life drives no paralyzing wedges and in whom therefore there is no gap between the idea and the act. Our psychologists call this the 'integrated personality' and our educators pant for it; and in the next breath they would both dismiss whomever they found possessing it as a 'fanatic.' This singlemindedness of purpose is an essential condition of revolutionary success; and the interplay between action and analysis has been generalized by the Marxian tradition as 'the unbroken web of theory and practice.' But it was Lenin's summit achievement, topping that of every revolutionary leader we have known, to make out of his life the enduring symbol not only of the tenacity of striving but of the clear unity of thought and deed. Nor are we dealing here with a reckless extremism. The extremism belongs rather with the world's Hamlets and Genghis Khans, with the paralyzed intellectual as a symbol at one pole and the extroverted world conqueror at the other. Lenin's greatness lies exactly in his resolution of these polar extremes. . .

"To the Marxist tradition he has given its most effective figure, and in the movement of western political theory he is one of the two or three towering figures since Machiavelli. . ."

ISAAC McBRIDE

In the Name of Emanicipating Mankind

Isaac McBride was a correspondent in Moscow for the Christian Science Monitor. *Following, in part, is his interview with Lenin in September 1919.*

MR. LENIN is a man of middle height, close to 50 years of age. He is well proportioned and very active physically, in spite of the fact that he carries in his body two bullets fired at him one year ago last August.* His head is rather large, massive in outline, and is set

* Lenin was wounded by Fania Kaplan, Socialist-Revolutionary terrorist, on August 30, 1918.

close to his shoulders. The forehead is broad and high . . . the eyes wide apart, and there appears in them at times a very infectious twinkle. His hair, pointed beard, and mustache, have a brown tinge.

In conversation his eyes never leave those of the person to whom he is speaking. In replying to questions he does not hesitate, but goes straight to the point. He pushed a chair over near his desk for me, and turned his own chair in my direction. After we had been talking for some time about conditions throughout the world he said that he would be glad to answer any questions.

On being informed that newspapers, periodicals, and magazines in the various countries had been stating for the past 22 months that Soviet Russia was a dictatorship of a small minority Mr. Lenin replied: "That, of course, is not true. Let those who believe that silly tale come here and mingle with the rank and file and learn the truth.

". . .You say you have been along the Western front. You admit you have been allowed to mingle with the soldiers of Soviet Russia; that you have been unhampered, as a journalist, in making your investigation. You have also visited factories and workshops. You have had a very good opportunity to understand the temper of the rank and file. You have seen thousands of men living from day to day on black bread and tea. You have probably seen more suffering in Soviet Russia than you had ever deemed possible, and all this because of the unjust war being made upon us, including the economic blockade, in all of which your own country is playing a large part. Now I ask what is your opinion about this being a dictatorship of the minority?"

In answer to the question: "What have you to say at this time about peace and foreign concessions?" Mr. Lenin said, "I am often asked whether those American opponents of the war against Russia — as in the first place bourgeois — are right, who expect from us, after peace is concluded, not only resumption of trade relations but also the possibility of securing concessions in Russia. I repeat once more that they are right. A durable peace would be such a relief to the toiling masses of Russia that these masses would undoubtedly agree to certain concessions being granted. The granting of concessions under reasonable terms is also desirable for us, as one of the means of attracting into Russia the technical help of the countries which are more advanced in this respect, during the coexistence side by side of socialist and capitalist states."

Continuing, he said: "As for Soviet power, it has become familiar to the minds and hearts of the laboring masses of the whole world

which clearly grasped its meaning. Everywhere the laboring masses —in spite of the influence of the old leaders with their chauvinism and opportunism, which permeates them through and through— became aware of the rottenness of the bourgeois parliaments and of the necessity of Soviet power, the power of the toiling masses, the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the sake of the emancipation of humanity from the yoke of capital.

" . . . The bourgeoisie inundates Russia with war, and by inciting against us the counter-revolutionaries, those who wish the yoke of capital to be restored. The bourgeoisie inflicts upon the working masses of Russia unprecedented sufferings, through the blockade, and through their help given to the counter-revolutionaries, but we have already defeated Kolchak and we are carrying on the war against Denikin with the firm assurance of our coming victory."

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

The First Time I Saw Lenin

William Z. Foster was born in Taunton, Mass. in 1881, of working-class parents. From a very early age, he participated in the economic and political struggles of the American working class and the international revolutionary movement. He was the leader of the historic 1919 Steel Strike. From 1921 until his death in 1961 he was one of the leaders of the Communist Party of the United States and of the worldwide Communist movement.

IT HAS been my good fortune to be present at several world congresses and enlarged executive meetings of the Comintern. . . . These congresses and plenums were made up of the best Marxians in the world, militant revolutionary fighters who, for the past generation, have been in the heart of every great strike movement and revolutionary struggle from London to Shanghai and from Toronto to Buenos Aires. These international meetings constituted the most interesting and instructive experiences of my political life.

The first time I saw Lenin was at the Third World Congress of the Communist International, in Moscow, during 1921. As I caught sight of him, he was standing modestly near an entrance to the speakers' platform . . . listening closely to a delegate's speech. It was one of the most inspiring moments of my life. There, indeed, was

the great leader of the world's oppressed millions, the man who was a veritable nightmare to exploiters in every corner of the earth. . . . My interest in Lenin was all the more acute because at that time he was exercising a most profound effect upon my ideology and my life's work. . . . I was, during the period of the Third Congress, engaged in reading deeply of his writings.

Over many years, I had read far and wide among socialist, anarchist and syndicalist writers, and had also much practical experience in their respective mass movements, but Lenin's masterly theoretical presentation was startingly new and overwhelmingly convincing. I could not but agree with his brilliant analysis of imperialist capitalism, his devastating criticisms of revisionist socialism, syndicalism and anarchism, his conception of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and accept the general program of communism—backed up as they were by the living reality of the Russian Revolution. . . . After more then twenty years of intellectual groping about, I was at last, thanks to Lenin, getting my feet on firm revolutionary ground.

Lenin spoke at the congress. . . . I did not consider him an orator in the usual sense. Nevertheless he held the congress in breathless interest for the whole period of his speech. He was such a deep thinker and plain speaker that every time he wrote or spoke he bared the very heart of the question in hand.

William Z. Foster, Pages from a Worker's Life, *International Publishers,* 1939.

EUGENE VICTOR DEBS

Russia's Embattled Liberators

Eugene V. Debs (1855-1926), one of the greatest Socialist and working-class leaders our country has known, jailed for his opposition to World War I, here describes Lenin, incarnation of the Russian Revolution, as the one great thing that came out of the world massacre.

THERE is nothing in all the struggle of the oppressed peoples of the earth for freedom that begins to compare in historic importance to the significance of the sublime spectacle that the Soviet Republic of Russia, on the fifth anniversary of the stupendous revolution that gave it birth, presents to the world.

The Russian Revolution, whatever may be its ultimate fate, its final outcome and results, will stand forth in perspective and be

chronicled in history as the greatest and most luminous and far-reaching achievement in all the annals of mankind.

That the revolution and the republic which sprang from it have survived, not only to be commemorated on their Fifth Anniversary, but are today more puissant and promising, and pulse with keener life and activity than ever before, in the face of every conceivable attempt to crush and destroy them on the part of the combined capitalist powers of the earth, is a miracle no less marvelous and seemingly impossible than the revolution and the republic themselves.

The invincible revolutionary spirit, the noble heroism, the sublime faith and fortitude, the flaming idealism and the stoical self-denial of the Russian revolutionary warriors are infinitely beyond human speech and will be recorded only in the triumphant liberation of the race.

For five years they have stood with more than Spartan courage against the foul assaults of the whole criminal capitalist world.

They have waded through hell in their own blood to banish hell from the earth and bring peace to the world.

They have fought in rags to clothe the naked, they have starved themselves to feed the race, and they have died in fetters to free the world.

The Russian Republic stands triumphant, gloriously triumphant on its fifth anniversary, a beacon light of hope and promise to all mankind!

If there has been retreat it has been only to secure a firmer foothold; if there have been concessions it has been to lay a stronger and deeper foundation for the first and only working-class Republic, whose blood-red banner of Socialism and freedom waves in defiance of all the black flags of capitalism and piracy that surround and threaten it.

If there have been days of doubt, misgiving and sore trial, it has not been due to the weakness or wavering of the red Russian warriors, but because of the cowardly nonsupport of the working classes of other nations, for whom Russia was pouring out her noblest blood in the red rivers of the revolution—the supremest sacrifice known to history.

Long ago I said that Lenin, as the incarnation of the Russian revolution, is the one great thing that came out of the world-massacre, and could the blind and petrified imperialist monsters have foreseen it, they would never have precipitated that barbarous and bloody catastrophe upon the world.

The Soviet Republic, though but an infant of five, stands before us a towering menace to all the empires, dynasties, thrones, rulers,

crowns and scepters of capitalist imperialism that crush humanity, banish liberty, devour the substance of labor, and cumber the earth.

The Red Russian Republic, the monumental achievement of the ages and the crowning glory of our century, under the superb and inspiring leadership of Lenin, Trotsky, and their equally high-souled and lion-hearted compatriots, is battling bravely, immortally, against the autocracy of all the empires of imperialism for the emancipation of all the people of the world.

All hail, the Russian Revolution and the Soviet Republic on their fifth anniversary! These colossal events blaze and flash in vivid red letters on the pages of history and make the twentieth century eternally glorious and immortal!

From The Liberator, *December 1922*

HELEN KELLER

The Spirit of Lenin

Helen Keller (1880-1968), the courageous deaf, mute and blind girl who became one of America's greatest women, was a crusading socialist during a major period of her life. She was a strong defender of the newborn Soviet Union and its leader Lenin who, in her words, sowed "the unshatterable seeds of a new life for mankind." This excerpt is from her Midstream: My Later Life, *published in 1929.*

I THINK that every honest belief should be treated with fairness, yet I cry out against people who uphold the empire of gold. I am aware of moods when the perfect state of peace, brotherhood and universal love seems so far off that I turn to division, pugnacity and the pageant of war. I am just like St. Paul when he says, "I delight in the Law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind." I am perfectly sure that love will bring everything right in the end, but I cannot help sympathizing with the oppressed who feel driven to use force to gain the rights that belong to them.

That is one reason why I have turned with such interest toward the great experiment now being tried in Russia. No revolution was ever a sudden outbreak of lawlessness and wreckage incited by an unholy brood of cranks, anarchists and pedagogues. People turn to a revolution only when every other dream has faded into the dimness of sorrow. When we look upon these mighty disturbances

which seem to leap so suddenly out of the troubled depths we find that they were fed by little streams of discontent and oppression. These little streams which have their source deep down in the miseries of the common people all flow together at last in a retributive flood.

The Russian Revolution did not originate with Lenin. It had hovered for centuries in the dreams of Russian mystics and patriots, but when the body of Lenin was laid in simple state in the Kremlin, all Russia trembled and wept. The mouths of hungry enemies fed on new hopes, but the spirit of Lenin descended upon the weeping multitude as with cloven tongues of fire, and they spoke one to another and were not afraid. "Let us not follow him with cowering hearts," they said, "let us rather gird ourselves for the task he has left us. Where our dull eyes see only ruin, his clearer sight discovers the road by which we shall gain our liberty. Revolution he sees, yea, and even disintegration which symbolizes disorder is in truth the working of God's undeviating order! and the manner of our government shall be no less wonderful than the manner of our deliverance. If we are steadfast, the world will be quickened to courage by our deeds."

Men vanish from earth leaving behind them the furrows they have ploughed. I see the furrow Lenin left sown with the unshatterable seed of a new life for mankind, and cast deep below the rolling tides of storm and lightning, mighty crops for the ages to reap.

DR. GEORGE KLEMPERER

A Physician's View of Lenin

The following description of Lenin was written by Dr. George Klemperer, then a Berlin physician, called to Moscow for consultation when Lenin became seriously ill in 1922. Doctor Klemperer, who was not particularly sympathetic to the Soviet Union, later became a refugee in the United States from Nazi persecution. These are excerpts from a letter to the New York Times, *published February 2, 1939.*

I LOOKED forward to my first meeting with him [Lenin] with some apprehension. After all that I had heard from many Russian refugees in Berlin, I expected to find a rude, bloodthirsty man, but to my great surprise I found a quiet, reserved and polite man with the air of a philosopher.

I saw him first in his bedroom, a large plain apartment which contained only an old iron servant's bed, a plain desk, many wooden chairs and a table covered with books. There were no decorations or pictures on the walls, no rugs. One saw that this man lived according to the principle that no one is allowed privileges. When I saw him again in June of the same year, 1922, he was established in the magnificent country estate of the former Mayor of Moscow, where he hoped to find rest and relaxation. But he did not live in the fine house itself; instead he lay in a poor room of a small house near by which had been used by servants.

I was forced to argue with him that his health would suffer in this room before he would permit himself to be taken to the larger house. There he lay in a spacious, airy room which was elegantly furnished. When I allowed him to leave his bed for the first time, he slipped on the parquet floor and fell. "This is what happens," he said, laughing, "when a proletarian lives in a palace."

When I think back on my days in Moscow I am particularly impressed with Lenin's freedom from racial prejudice. He made no distinction between the various races and nationalities which were present in Russia. Among the most outstanding officials, I found also men of German descent, Jews, Letts, Armenians and many others. The Social-Revolutionary who attempted to assassinate him was a young Jew. Neither Lenin nor any other official made the point that others of her race might be responsible or punishable for her crime.

From my personal contacts I gained the impression that he was a highly inspired idealist who sought the best for his people.

GEORGE KLEMPERER

Former Professor of Medicine, University of Berlin;
Newtonville, Mass., Jan. 31, 1939.

ELLA REEVE BLOOR

"Lenin Is Here, Lenin Is Here!"

Ella Reeve Bloor (1862-1951), beloved working-class and Communist Party leader, was known to many generations of Americans as Mother Bloor. She first saw Lenin on her earliest visit to Soviet Russia, in 1921, as a delegate to the Red International of Labor Unions. The RILU delegates were invited to attend sessions of the Third World Congress of

the Comintern, taking place in Moscow at that time. This excerpt is from Mother Bloor's autobiography, We Are Many, *published in 1940 by International Publishers.*

IN THE big dining room just outside the meeting hall were long tables set with tea, cake and sandwiches, served by girls with white dresses and red caps. The photographs and revolutionary mementos that then lined the walls have since been taken into Moscow's Museum of the Revolution, whose collection, I am proud to record, includes two pictures of me.

The second day of the Congress, I saw Lenin for the first time. A small man entered very quietly from a side door near the platform and sat down at a table behind a large group of palms, and immediately began making notes. "Lenin is here! Lenin is here!" the whisper began spreading; finally the delegates could restrain themselves no longer and rose and sang the "Internationale" in every language at once. Lenin, bent over his papers, paid no attention. When he got up to speak, they began it again and sang as loud as they could. He waited until they got through, looking thoughtfully out over the audience, then back at his notes, a little impatient to begin, and then started speaking directly and simply, without oratorical tricks or flourishes. There flowed from him a sense of compelling power, and of the most complete sincerity and selflessness I have ever seen.

After the meeting, Lenin walked down the big hall to shake hands with all of us. He was especially glad to see the Americans, and asked us many questions about things in America, and particularly, I remember, about American farmers.

A few days later Lenin defended the theses proposed by the Russian delegation against amendments offered by some of the delegations. The particular point at issue was the necessity first of creating a truly revolutionary party in each country, and then of winning over large masses. Some of the delegates were urging that the demand for large masses be dropped, arguing that victory was achieved in Russia even though the Party was very small. Lenin said that anyone who failed to understand the necessity of winning over the majority of the working class was lost to the Communist movement. It was true that the Party itself in Russia was small at the time of the Revolution, he said, but the important thing to remember was that in addition to that, they had won over the majority of the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies all over the country.

"We achieved victory in Russia," said Lenin, "not only because

"LENIN was the most remarkable of the personalities brought by the world war into prominence from obscurity. By many he has been regarded as the mere paid agent of Germany. Of this no proof has ever been forthcoming. An American, more or less in sympathy with his doctrines, who had rare opportunities of studying Lenin at close range, described him as 'the greatest living statesman in Europe.' It was a striking tribute to the personality of the man.

" . . . He endeavored to put into practice theories which he had been preaching for many years before the Russian Revolution came to pass. In those years he conceived and worked out in his mind a principle of social revolution which distinguished him from other Socialist thinkers by his uncompromising appeal to the spirit of class revolt.

"This spirit as an indispensable weapon in the construction of an ideal Socialist state he preached with increasing fervor as years went by, supplementing it . . . with something that was essentially lacking in the Marxian doctrine, namely, a political design under which the economic aims of a thoroughgoing Socialism might be put in effect. This political design found its expression, so far as it has gone, in the present Soviet government."

The *New York Times*, upon the Report of Lenin's Death, Sept. 2, 1918.

we had the majority of the working class on our side (during the elections in 1917 the overwhelming majority of the workers were for us and against the Mensheviks), but also half the army—immediately after we seized power—and nine-tenths of the masses of the peasantry—within the course of a few weeks—came over to our side."

Lenin proceeded to point out that the meaning of the term "masses" changes as the character of the struggle changes. There were times, he said, when the enlistment of several thousand really revolutionary workers by the side of Party members for some particular struggle meant the beginning of the process of winning the masses. But in a period when the revolution has been sufficiently prepared, a few thousand workers can no longer be called masses. "The term 'masses' then means the majority: not merely the majority of workers, but the majority of all the exploited."

Over and over again he reiterated that in order to achieve victory it was necessary to have the sympathy of the masses, of the majority of the exploited and the toiling rural population. Failure to understand and prepare for this, he explained, was the key to the weakness of the Party in many countries.

A deep impression was made on me by Lenin's insistence that we should always be ready to recognize our mistakes and learn

from them how best to organize the struggle. He concluded with the words:

"We must not conceal our mistakes from the enemy. Whoever is afraid of talking openly about mistakes is not a revolutionary. If, however, we openly say to the workers: 'Yes, we have made mistakes,' it will prevent us from repeating those mistakes in the future, and we shall be better able to choose the proper time. If, during the struggle itself we shall have the masses—not only the majority of the workers, but the majority of all the exploited and oppressed—on our side, then victory will certainly be ours."

Lincoln Steffens

Lincoln Steffens (1866-1936), journalist and political philosopher, was one of the great "muckrakers" of his time. He exposed the corruption of US cities in the early years of this century in a series of articles in McClure's magazine, later collected as The Shame of the Cities. *He visited Soviet Russia in 1917, 1919, 1923, and spoke and wrote widely in this country about his impressions. Ella Winter, his widow, in an article in* Soviet Russia Today, *November 1936, wrote: "He saw the Soviet Union go to the root of what he considered the universal social ills; he saw the Russians clearing them up."*

The excerpts published below are from the Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens *(1931).*

The first describes the April days of 1917 when Kerensky ignored the people's demands for land, bread and peace, and tried to make them go on with the war. Steffens saw the people striving for action through their Soviets, and heard Lenin speaking to them:

A MAN NAMED LENIN

WATCHING that mass meeting of delegates was like seeing the historical development of human government out of chaos. One could see that there was good will in men, plenty of it, and that, left to itself, its ideals and purposes were noble. Contempt for man, pessimism, melted away. Primitive, untaught men are good. The laws that they could agree upon were noble, and the delegates instinctively wished to make their acts representative. When they were approaching a decision on something in doubt, the leaders of the debate would send out an orator or a leader to explain it to the mob in waiting and ask, or almost pray, for its approval.

But they had another recourse. A mob in doubt would turn away, and leaving one crowd to stay and watch, the committee of hundreds would march off across the city, picking up other crowds to go and stand in front of the palace of the Tsar's mistress, where "a man named Lenin," seeing them, would come out and speak. He spoke briefly, in a quiet tone of voice, so low that few could hear him. But when he finished, those who had heard moved away; the mass closed up; the orator repeated his speech, and so for an hour or two the man named Lenin would deliver to the ever-changing masses his firm, short, quiet message. The day I got close enough to hear him, the crowd evidently had been troubled by the inactivity of Kerensky and some advice to them to go home and work, not to give all their time to their self-government. My interpreter repeated Lenin's manifold speech afterward, as follows:

"Comrades, the revolution is on. The workers' revolution is on, and you are not working. The workers' and peasants' revolution means work, comrades; it does not mean idleness and leisure. That is a bourgeois ideal. The workers' revolution, a workers' government, means work, that all shall work; and here you are not working. You are only talking.

"Oh, I can understand how you, the people of Russia, having been suppressed so long, should want, now that you have won to power, to talk and to listen to orators. But some day, soon, you—we all—must go to work and do things, act, produce results—food and socialism. And I can understand how you like and trust and put your hope in Kerensky. You want to give him time, a chance, to act. He means well, you say. He means socialism. But I warn you he will not make socialism. He may think socialism, he may mean socialism. But comrades"—and here he began to burn—"I tell you Kerensky is an intellectual! He *cannot* act; he can talk; he cannot *act*. But," quietly again, "you will not believe this yet. You will take time to give him time, and meanwhile, like Kerensky, you will not work. Very well,

"THE PERSONAL picture of Lenin, with which I have found no disagreement in speaking with a number of people who are well informed, is that he is a man of most extraordinary ability, and with some truly fine characteristics. He was a Russian idealistic noble and came to be a man of only one idea. He believed that the régime of capitalism meant slavery and that the world would find freedom in a communistic state of society. In his mind every motive was fine, every act moved by patriotic love and sympathy for people."

FRANK VANDERLIP, Wall Street Banker

take your time. But"—he flamed—"when the hour strikes, when you are ready to go back yourselves to work and you want a government that will go to work and not only think socialism and talk socialism and mean socialism—when you want a government that will do socialism, then—come to the Bolsheviki."

I SAW THE FUTURE

The second excerpt concerns Steffens' 1919 trip, as part of the Bullitt Mission to Soviet Russia (*see page 69*).

BULLITT . . . arranged for me an interview with Lenin, so that I could ask my undiplomatic questions and get a sense of the man. I had my questions at my finger tips when I was sent in to the great room where Lenin sat behind his desk at one end.

A quiet figure in old clothes, he rose, came around in front of his desk to greet me with a nod and a handshake. An open, inquiring face, with a slight droop in one eye that suggested irony or humor, looked into mine. I asked whether, in addition to the agreement with Bullitt, I could not take back some assurances: that, for example, if the borders were opened, Russian propagandists would be restrained from flocking over into Europe.

"No," he said sharply, but he leaned back against the desk and smiled. "A propagandist, you know, is a propagandist. He must propagand. When our propagandists for revolution won, when they saw the revolution happen, they did not stop propaganding. They went right on propaganding. We had to give them propaganda work to do among the peasants and workers. If our borders are opened our propagandists will go to Europe and propagand, just as yours will come here and propagand. We can agree not to send them to you, and we can agree that if they do go, they shall be subject to your laws, but we—nobody can make a propagandist stop propaganding."

"What assurance can you give that the red terror will not go on killing—"

"Who wants to ask us about our killings?" he demanded, coming erect on his feet in anger.

"Paris," I said.

"Do you mean to tell me that those men who have just generaled the slaughter of seventeen millions of men in a purposeless war are concerned over the few thousands who have been killed in a revolution with a conscious aim—to get out of the necessity of war and—

and armed peace?" He stood a second, facing me with hot eyes; then quieting, he said: "But never mind, don't deny the terror. Don't minimize any of the evils of a revolution. They occur. They must be counted upon. If we have to have a revolution, we have to pay the price of revolution."

Lenin was impatient with my liberalism, but he had shown himself a liberal by instinct. He had defended liberty of speech, assembly, and the Russian press for some five to seven months after the October revolution which put him in power. The people had stopped talking; they were for action on the program. But the plottings of the whites, the distracting debates and criticisms of the various shades of reds, the wild conspiracies and the violence of the anarchists against Bolshevik socialism, developed an extreme left in Lenin's party which proposed to proceed directly to the terror which the people were ready for. Lenin held out against them till he was shot, and even then, when he was in hospital, he pleaded for the life of the woman who shot him.

He foresaw trouble with the fixed minds of the peasants, their hard conservatism, and his remark reminded me of the land problem. They were giving the peasants land? "Not by law," he said. "But they think they own the land; so they do."

He took a piece of paper and a pencil. "We are all wrong on the land," he said, and the thought of Wilson flashed to my mind. Could the American say he was all wrong like that? "Look," said Lenin, and he drew a straight line. "That's our course, but"—he struck off a crooked line to a point—"that's where we are. That's where we have had to go, but we'll get back here on our course some day." He paralleled the straight line.

That is the advantage of a plan. You can go wrong, you can tack, as you must, but if you know you are wrong, you can steer back on your course. Wilson, the American liberal, having justified his tackings, forgot his course. To keep himself right, he had changed his mind to follow his actions till he could call the peace of Versailles right. Lenin was a navigator, the other a mere sailor.

There was more of this rapid interview, but not words. When I came out of it, I found that I had fertile ideas in my head and an attitude which grew upon me. Events, both in Russia and out, seemed to have a key that was useful, for example, in Fascist Italy, in Paris, and at home in the United States. Our return from Moscow was less playful than the coming. Bullitt was serious. Captain Pettit was interesting on the hunger and the other sufferings of Petrograd, but not depressed as he would have been in New York or London. "London's is an old race misery," he said. "Petrograd is a temporary condition of evil, which is made tolerable by hope and a plan." Arthur Ransome, the English correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, came out with us. He had been years in Russia, spoke Russian, and had spent the last winter in Moscow with the government leaders and among the people. He had the new point of view. He said and he showed that Shakespeare looked different after Russia, and, unlike some other authors, still true. Our journey home was a course of intellectual digestion; we were all enjoying a mental revolution which corresponded somewhat with the Russian Revolution and gave us the sense of looking ahead.

"So you've been over into Russia?" said Bernard Baruch, and I answered very literally, "I have been over into the future, and it works."

WILLIAM C. BULLITT

Lenin, a Living Legend

William Christian Bullitt, employed in the US State Department during World War I, was sent by Woodrow Wilson on a special mission to the Soviet Union in 1919, and testified most favorably about what he had found before the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations in September 1919. Below is his appraisal of Lenin as it appeared in the appendix to his report. He was the first US Ambassador to the Soviet Union, in 1933-36, and during that period and as Ambassador to France, 1936-41, played a reactionary, pro-Fascist and anti-Soviet role. After World War II, he was an active supporter of the cold-war policy.

THE hold which Lenin has gained on the imagination of the Russian people makes his position almost that of a dictator. There is already a Lenin legend. He is regarded as almost a prophet. His picture, usually accompanied by that of Karl Marx, hangs everywhere. In Russia one never hears Lenin and Trotsky spoken of in the same breath as is usual in the western world. Trotsky is but one of the lower order of mortals.

When I called on Lenin at the Kremlin I had to wait a few minutes until a delegation of peasants left his room. They had heard in their village that Comrade Lenin was hungry. And they had come hundreds of miles carrying 800 poods of bread as the gift of the village to Lenin. Just before them was another delegation of peasants to whom the report had come that Comrade Lenin was working

in an unheated room. They came bearing a stove and enough firewood to heat it for three months. Lenin is the only leader who receives such gifts. And he turns them into the common fund.

Face to face Lenin is a very striking man—straightforward and direct, but also genial and with a large humor and serenity.

ARMAND J. HAMMER

The Bronze Monkey

Armand J. Hammer, a multimillionaire corporation head, was one of the first US capitalists to carry on negotiations with Lenin for trade between the US and USSR. He first came to the Soviet Union in 1920 as representative of the American Amalgamated Drug and Chemical Corporation. Between 1925 and 1930, he headed the corporation's concession in the USSR, which manufactured stationery. The occasion for the following story was a visit to Moscow in November 1964, with a group of US businessmen, to explore the possibility of increasing trade between the United States and the Soviet Union.

ONE day during the conference the US businessmen visited Lenin's museum flat in the Kremlin. In Lenin's study the guide described all the objects, which have been preserved exactly as when Lenin was alive, and while enumerating the articles on Lenin's desk displayed a sculpture of a bronze monkey. "This sculpture," the guide said, "was a gift to Lenin from an American called Hammer in the early twenties." There was a movement among the Americans and somebody exclaimed: "Could it be our Armand Hammer?" At that moment Mr. Armand Hammer elbowed his way through the crowd, and said:

"Yes, I sat there with Lenin in 1921, and I gave him this monkey."

Next day Mr. Armand Hammer, President of Occidental Petroleum, told the story of the bronze monkey. "I first visited Russia in 1920," he said, "it was then that I had the luck to meet Lenin. Next year on my way to Russia I was passing through London and in a shop window I saw this monkey sitting on several volumes of Darwin. I knew that Lenin was fond of sculpture, and I thought that this would intrigue him. When I presented him with the sculpture he was delighted and his eyes sparkled. Then I asked him about the symbolism of the sculpture, emphasizing, as it did, the correctness of Darwin's theory. Lenin thought for a second and then said: 'Yes, but there is

another sense too. If they don't stop arming themselves, the time may come when only monkeys remain in the world.'

"Even then," Mr. Hammer continued, "Lenin was thinking of peaceful coexistence."

Turning to the question of the round-table conference Mr. Hammer commented that the visit had opened the eyes of some of the most influential American businessmen. "Note," Mr. Hammer said, "the type of men who came to Moscow are those who are running the business world of the United States. When they are impressed they can influence others too."

Moscow News, *November 28, 1964*

Louise Bryant

Louise Bryant shared the experiences of her husband, John Reed, in the early days of the Revolution. She wrote about them in Mirrors of Moscow, *published in the United States in 1923, from which the excerpt immediately following is taken. Louise Bryant's interview with Lenin's wife Nadezhda Krupskaya, the only interview Madame Lenin ever gave to a reporter, appeared in* The Liberator, *November 1921.*

MY ACQUAINTANCE WITH LENIN

LEGENDS spring up around every famous man. . . . The life of the leader of a great world movement must harmonize with his doctrines; his conduct must be as austere or as lax as his doctrines dictate. . . . So it is worthy of note that even the narrowest moralist could not pick a flaw in Lenin's personal conduct. . .

Whatever inward storms arose he was impressive because of his outward serenity, because of his calm. . . . Without any fuss he took power, faced world opposition, civil war, disease, defeat and even success. Without fuss he retired for a space, and without fuss he has returned again. His quiet authoritativeness inspired more confidence than could any amount of pomp. I know of no character in history capable, as he was through such distressing days, of such complete, aristocratic composure. . . .

I will never forget the day during the blackest time of the blockade when I went to Lenin and asked permission to go to Central Asia after the Foreign Office had flatly refused me this permission. He simply looked up from his work and smiled.

"I am glad to see there is someone in Russia," he said, "with enough energy to go exploring. You might get killed down there, but you will have the most remarkable experience of your life; it is worth taking chances for."

In two days I was on my way, with every necessary permit to ride on any train or stop in any government hotel. I carried a personal letter from Lenin and had two soldiers for escort! Any other official in Russia would have considered me an infernal nuisance even to suggest such an adventure in the middle of a revolution. . .

In private conversation, no subject is too small for his attention. I remember one time some foreign delegates were talking about the Russian theater and particularly about the lack of costumes and stage property.

Someone said that Geltser, the great ballerina, complained that she had no silk stockings. The delegates were of the opinion that this was a slight matter. Not so Lenin. He frowned and said he would see to it that Geltser had everything she needed immediately. Calling his stenographer, he dictated a letter to Lunacharsky* about it. Yet Lenin had never seen Geltser dance and took no further interest in the affair. . .

When you go to Lenin's office he always jumps up and comes forward smiling, shakes hands warmly and pushes forward a comfortable chair. When you are seated he draws up another chair, leans forward and begins to talk as if there was nothing else to do in the world but visit.

He likes harmless gossip and will laugh mightily over some story about how Mr. Vanderlip fought with a Hungarian over a few sticks of wood on a cold day, or an incident which occurred on a train, or in the street. He himself loves to tell stories, and tells them very well. But no conversation runs on lightly for long with Lenin. He will stop suddenly in his laughter and say:

"What sort of a man is President Harding, and what is his background?"

It does not matter how determined one is to ply him with questions, one always goes away astonished because one has talked so much and answered so many questions instead of asking them. He has an extraordinary way of drawing one out and of putting one in an expansive mood.

* A. V. Lunacharsky (1875-1933)—prominent Soviet statesman, publicist, playwright and author of a number of books on questions of education, art and literature. In the revolutionary movement from early 1890s. Member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from 1917. First People's Commissar of Education (October 1917-29). Academician (1930).

This capacity for personal contact must be a big influence with the men with whom he comes constantly in touch.

THE FIRST WOMAN OF RUSSIA: NADEZHDA KRUPSKAYA

COMMISSARS' wives, contrary to the popular legend, lead a hard life. There is, for example, Nadezhda Constantinovna Krupskaya, wife of Lenin. In spite of ill health she remains an active party worker, and has given to the socialist state its remarkable plan for adult education. How well her plan works is shown in some striking statistics given me by Minister of Education Lunacharsky. In Moscow alone 80,000 people have learned to read and write—that is a fair sample. The Tsar's army was 85 per cent illiterate. Communists fight illiteracy like the plague, and make class consciousness an inseparable part of all education.

I was very glad when Krupskaya invited me to visit her in her apartment. The kind of books people read, the pictures they have on their walls, the colors they like—all these things spell character, and I was curious. It was just at sunset when I walked through the Kremlin gates towards the Hall of Justice where Lenin has his office and where, in another wing, he lives. The dying sun cast gold and purple splashes over the turreted buildings, giving a fantastic, unreal appearance to the old fortress. I had no difficulty in getting by various guards. I had not only the regular pass, but a letter written by Lenin in his own hand and stamped with the official seal.

Before Krupskaya's door I encountered a single guard standing with a fixed bayonet. He was a simple peasant with a round, good-natured face. When he read my passes he smiled and said: "The Comrade is waiting." Then he knocked gently and Krupskaya herself came out and took both my hands in warm welcome. As soon as we were in the little hallway she locked the door and put the key on a shelf near by. Then she led me into a very small but very clean bedroom. I looked about and realized that there were but two tiny rooms—this bedroom and another small room which was used for a dining and living room. The Lenins were living up to the strictest regulations for over-crowded Moscow!

The room we were in contained a bed, four or five chairs, a desk, a well-filled bookcase and a couch. Every piece of furniture was arranged precisely, there were no papers or clothes scattered about in the usual Russian manner. Before we were seated a pretty girl of

about eighteen came in and Krupskaya said: "This is my niece. She is usually with me. I love her and want you to know her."

Krupskaya spoke English, but with the hesitancy of one who has lost practice. Feeling that I noticed her groping for words, she began to apologize. "How shall we speak?" she asked. "John Reed always preferred to speak French, but perhaps it is difficult for you."

I said that her English was excellent. At that she smiled. "Very well. We will speak English. And if I speak slowly it will not matter. I have saved the whole evening for you. But you must not compare my vocabulary with that of Kollontay or Balabanova."

With the easy air of intimacy characteristic of most Slavs she began to tell me a story of an experience she had in the summer. An English delegate came to see her and brought along an interpreter. "I must say his English was infinitely worse than mine. In fact, he made little effort to understand me at all. I heard him misquoting me as long as I could bear it, and then I excused myself in English, and began to straighten out my interview."

Soon after we were seated, a sleek, friendly cat walked across the floor and jumped up into Krupskaya's lap. I told her that I had read a story in America about Lenin's fondness for cats. He was reported as keeping seven.

The story made Krupskaya laugh. "It's a splendid example," she said, "of the way everything about Russia is exaggerated. Now the truth of the matter is this. Both my husband and I are fond of animals, but no one in Russia feels like keeping pets—it is a matter of food. A cat is a more or less independent beast. We have one cat between us. But an American reporter would not think the story worth writing unless we had seven!"

It was very cool and restful in the little room with the quietness of twilight everywhere. The windows were open and I noticed plants in little pots on the window ledge—red geraniums and lavender and yellow primroses. There was not a single picture on the soft gray walls. I particularly like the effect of no pictures in small rooms. Krupskaya with her low voice and black dress, her pale face and white, ringless hands fitted harmoniously into the room.

She asked me why I was going to leave Russia, and I explained that I wanted to write another book and collect Jack's manuscripts for a memorial edition. A look of pain came into her face. "It was a miracle almost," she said, "that a foreigner could have written the one book which caught as by magic the real spirit of the revolution."

She leaned over and touched my hand. "How difficult it must be!" she said. "Are you quite alone?"

I nodded, and there was a pause, then she got up abruptly and exclaimed: "Come, let us have tea!" How truly Russian was that remark! How many times during hard moments have I heard them make this same homely remark.

Her young niece now called us into the next room—a room as simple as the first. There was a little mahogany clock ticking cosily away in a china closet, there were plants on the window ledge, more books, half a dozen chairs and a round table covered with a black oil-cloth. There were no servants. Krupskaya herself made the tea.

She told me that she had just finished reading Upton Sinclair's *Jimmie Higgins*. "It is a good book," she said; "it gives me a very definite idea of what an ordinary American Socialist is like. It is sad also and disillusioning and therefore instructive. I would like to know about Sinclair. Is he a Communist? And has he written other books?"

I told her briefly what I know of Sinclair. She was interested and said she would like to read *The Jungle* and the *Brass Check*. I said: "I'm sure he would send you autographed copies of them all if he knew you were interested."

Krupskaya was pleased but unconvinced. "Really," she said; "why should he? He has probably never heard of me." There was something very charming about her naivete.

We talked a long time about her work, and she asked me about the people I met on a long trip through the South. A number of the people we talked about were members of her educational committees. At last I asked the question I most dreaded to ask. I wanted to know if the retreat back to modified capitalism which the new decrees were putting into effect discouraged her. She spoke to me then very much as if I were a child.

"No. I am not discouraged. I have always known the great change will come. In Russia years ago change seemed impossible, just as to you, who are an American and come from the country least touched by war and thoughts of revolution, the idea that America will change appears incredible. But this change we dream of is inevitable. By that I do not imply that it is near. We will save all the fruits of the revolution we can. That is why we meet the situation face to face. The compromise is hard, but it is necessary. But no matter how hard it is, always be sure that we are not discouraged and that our hopes do not die."

When I rose to go Krupskaya took my hands and looked into my eyes. "You will come back to us?" she asked. "Ah, yes, now you must always come back. . ."

How well I understood that remark! I who am bound through eternity to Russia by an honored grave on Red Square.

At the door we shook hands again, and I heard the key turn in the lock as I walked away. When I reached the street, night had descended over the city and the air was cool and sweet. Soldiers were singing on their way to the Kremlin garrison. . .

INTERVIEW WITH LENIN

On October 13, 1920, Lenin was interviewed in Moscow by Louise Bryant, the wife of John Reed. Portions of the interview were published the next day in the Washington Times. *But the full text appeared only in a Yugoslav workers' newspaper in Chicago,* Znanije, *on October 23, 1920, in the Croatian language. It has not been published in the English language in the United States until now.*

Moscow, October 13, 1920, by telegraph.

Nikolay Lenin gave an exhaustive interview to the International Bureau of Journalists today.

He received the correspondent in a spacious room, the former building of the court, where the People's Commissars (Ministers) now gather in session. There was no guard and no ceremony.

Lenin was dressed simply and modestly. He was very courteous, and the talk was lively. He showed great interest and asked questions testifying to his profound knowledge of American policy.

An American paper with the description of a convention of the Farmer-Labor Party lay on Lenin's desk.

"This is a most important and a most interesting event," he said, having scanned the paper. "I am sure that the reactionaries call these people Bolsheviks!"

Lenin laughed and added:

"What is this Committee of 48 group? Are they American Fabianists?"

After that Lenin turned to American policy as regards Russia.

"I told Americans, Colonel Robins (Raymond Robins from Chicago) included, in 1918, that it is in the interest of the United States to have friendly ties with Russia. At that time I expressed our desire to enter into trade relations with America, both in our own and in American interests. We offered American capital a concession. The American traders who are now coming to Moscow agree with us.

"Political problems excluded, the very simple fact remains that America needs our raw materials and we need American manufactured goods.

"The American capitalists know only too well what they want. They foresee a clash with the Japanese over domination of the Pacific. They

understand that America will soon clash with Britain over domination of the Soviet market.

"After three years of the blockade and innumerable rebellions, after the military intervention and the Polish war, Soviet Russia is today stronger than ever.

"America will gain nothing from the fact that President Wilson refused to enter into negotiations with us on the grounds that our government is not to his taste.

"It seems that the leaders of the Republican Party realize that the period of America's isolation from European affairs is now a thing of the past. America will obviously not play such a role if it abstains from using the tremendous abundance offered it by Soviet Russia.

"On its part, Soviet Russia can buy an unlimited quantity of manufactured goods.

"After the great war, Soviet Russia remains the only solvent country in Europe, capable of fulfilling its commitments.

"And what about William C. Bullitt? Hasn't he set forth the commitments of the American government? Haven't John Maynard Keynes —a specialist in the problems connected with the economic consequences of the war—and other non-Bolsheviks assessed the commitments of Mr. Wilson?"

From Voprosy Istorii KPSS, *No 7, 1967*

ROBERT MINOR

We Have Met Lenin

Robert Minor, born in 1884 in San Antonio, Texas, early in life chose to become a worker. At the age of 19, he became a member of the A.F.L. Carpenters Union. When he was 20, he went to work for the San Antonio Gazette *as a handy man, at the same time producing drawings for the newspaper. At the age of 27 he became chief editorial cartoonist for the St. Louis* Post Dispatch, *highest-paid in the nation. When he found his work for the capitalist newspapers in conflict with his socialist political beliefs, he quit and devoted the rest of his life to the revolutionary movement, first as a leading cartoonist of the Left, later as a political leader. He became a member of the Communist Party in 1920, and held many official posts therein until his death in 1952.*

I DO NOT remember where I first met Lenin. It might have been in the ballroom of the Metropole Hotel where the All-Russia Central Executive Committee was meeting. In any case, Comrade Sverdlov

was there, the Chairman of the All-Russia Central Executive Committee, one of the first Russian Bolshevik leaders I met.

I remember standing apart and looking at the group of leaders gathered around the platform—the leaders of the Bolshevik Revolution! I remember how thrilled I was and how keen I was to know their names. At first I could only judge by appearances.

A Russian comrade who had been in America was kind enough to point out Lenin to me. My whole sense of proportion, so to speak, was upset. Lenin turned out to be a short, modest-looking man. He was standing in a corner resting his foot on something. He was dressed very simply: he wore an ordinary cap and he was even without the glistening topboots which were worn very much at that time. In short, he was nothing like my idea of a great man. I looked at him hard, thinking I might be mistaken.

But no, this was the Lenin I had seen in photographs.

I was struck by the animation of his features, the way they changed when he was engaged in conversation. Little by little my attention became centered on him. Everything else receded, melted away, fitted into its place: the proportions were restored. Without understanding a single word of what had been said at the meeting I left the hall engrossed in my impressions of the one man, Lenin. . .

I do not know how Lenin managed to find time for me in the difficult months of spring and summer 1918. But I think it should be ascribed to the deep interest he displayed throughout the Russian Revolution in the revolutionary movement of the "outside world," and the attitude of the socialists of other countries. On this occasion (I think it was the end of April) I was in his place for about 15 minutes.

Lenin himself said little, he knew how to make the other fellow talk, while he did the listening.

He was interested in the slightest detail of how the working class of the USA was reacting to the revolution. He asked me what was the attitude of the trade unions to the Bolshevik revolution. I told him how appreciative the militant workers in the A.F.L. were of the action of the workers and sailors of Petrograd in helping to save Tom Mooney's life by making President Wilson intervene and have the death sentence commuted.

Then, on behalf of the trade unions affiliated to the Mooney Defense Committee I expressed my thanks to Lenin as the head of the Bolshevik Party for this fine act of international solidarity. Lenin said nothing, but his eyes sparkled. . .

We discussed the prospects of the revolution in Europe. Lenin

mentioned the lack of reliable information and touched upon the technical methods of getting information from abroad. I must say I was astonished when I heard the leader of the world revolution expatiating on little things like paper, pasteboard, ink and other "trivialities" and technicalities.

At this first meeting of ours, Lenin started off in Russian. I had to tell him that I did not speak Russian, but I knew French. At first Lenin said that he did not know enough English so we spoke French for a time, then Lenin dropped into German, after which, to my surprise, he continued in faultless English without making a single mistake and only stopping now and then to search for a word (all our subsequent conversations were in English and I do not remember Lenin making a single grammatical mistake). . .

Lenin seemed to be quite unaffected by his high position, and this feeling of surprise at his unassuming manner grew upon me the more I got to know of his role as the greatest leader of mankind at this greatest moment in history.

To my mind Lenin's most amazing trait was his habit of drawing into the background in conversation.

I went to see Lenin again after the Third Congress of the Comintern. I had a bad cold. Lenin was also indisposed, but displayed great concern for my health.

Soon afterwards he fell seriously ill and I did not see him for several weeks. I learned about his health from comrades and newspapers. I visited him when he had returned to work. As I entered he asked me:

"Have you recovered from your cold?"

When I was taking leave I recalled with a feeling of vexation that we had not talked about his health, but only about mine.

One day in autumn 1921 I had to send a letter to him urgently. I gave it to a youngster about 12 years of age, the son of a Red Army man killed at the front, and told him to take it to the Kremlin. I explained that the letter was addressed to Comrade Lenin which he must deliver at once, wait for a reply and come back right away.

This made a great impression on the lad and he was off like a shot. I waited and waited, hour after hour, but there was still no sign of my messenger. At last, when it was quite dark, the youngster came back with an air of great importance. I went for him:

"Where have you been all this time??"

"Oh," said the youngster, "I have been talking to Comrade Lenin!"

Later I was told in the Kremlin that this actually had been the case. The youngster had refused to give the letter to anyone but Lenin: he

waited till the end of the meeting after which Comrade Lenin kept him for quite a time asking how the children of fallen Red Army men were being looked after.

About this letter. It was a long missive covering about three pages. When I saw Lenin again the first thing he said was:

"First of all, Comrade Minor, you should know that when you send such a long letter to a busy man like me you should write the subject of the letter very concisely, telegraph style, in the top left-hand corner. Then you must point out what your own suggestions are. Don't you think that's the proper way?"

What always surprised me was that whenever I needed an appointment with Comrade Lenin (I went to see him a dozen times or so if not more), I always managed to see him (excepting one occasion when Lenin was at a meeting of the Political Bureau). Lenin made a point of getting in touch with people coming from abroad, even if they had not played an important part in things. Comrade Lenin had a way of organizing his time to make the most of it.

Once I made quite a faux pas: In my surprise at Lenin finding time to see me and settle in a few minutes a question which I could not get other people to settle in as many days, I exclaimed:

"Comrade Lenin, you have more time than anyone in all Moscow!"

Of course, I did not mean this literally. But Lenin raised his eyebrows.

"No, Comrade Minor," he said, "I have no more time than other people."

And I read on his face what a gigantic burden this great leader had on his shoulders, a burden which undoubtedly was responsible for the death of this great world figure at the age of fifty-four . . .

The last time I saw Comrade Lenin was at the end of 1921. I had to return to America, and I asked him if I might introduce the comrade who was to take my place. Comrade Lenin took a great interest in people coming from the USA. He was particularly interested in every symptom of the turn of the American-born workers to the revolutionary policy, at a time when the Communist Party of the USA depended largely for support on the revolutionary emigrant sections of the working class. Lenin's first question to the comrade I brought was:

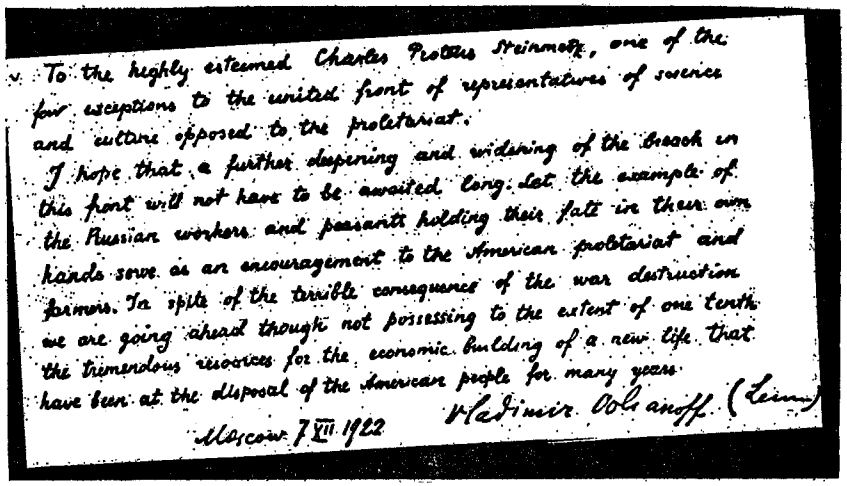
"Are you an American?"

"Yes," the comrade replied.

"An *American American*?" said Comrade Lenin.

"Yes," was the reply.

"Where were you born, in America?"


To the highly esteemed Charles Proteus Steinmetz, one of the four exceptions to the united front of representatives of science and culture opposed to the proletariat.
I hope that a further deepening and widening of the breach in this front will not have to be awaited long. Let the example of the Russian workers and peasants holding their fate in their own hands serve as an encouragement to the American proletariat and farmers. In spite of the terrible consequence of the war destruction we are going ahead though not possessing to the extent of one tenth the tremendous resources for the economic building of a new life that have been at the disposal of the American people for many years.
Moscow 7 XII 1922 Wladimir Ollianoff (Lenin)

Facsimile of a message inscribed by Lenin on a photograph of himself which he sent to the famous engineer, Charles P. Steinmetz. *See page 102 for story.*

"Yes."

"And your father?"

When he heard that this comrade's father was the son of a European farmer who had emigrated to America, Comrade Lenin said: "Ahha . . .", then added with a twinkle in his eye:

"But Minor here is an *American American*. Comrade Minor, your father was born in America and your mother too? Isn't that so?" and went on: "And your grandfathers? On both sides?"

"Born in America."

"Very good. Tell me, how many generations of your people were born in America?"

I replied that my forebears lived in America long before the Revolutionary War of Independence. Then Comrade Lenin asked:

"*And what did they do* during the American Revolution?"

I replied that as far as I knew, they had all taken part in it.

"Ahha," he said. "That might help you some time if you ever get put on trial."

"We had a long discussion on the factional struggle in the Communist Party of the USA, Comrade Lenin asking most of the questions. I do not remember if it was then or another time he asked me what this struggle was all about and I replied very clumsily that

this was a struggle between the "dreamers" of the revolution and the "realists." At the word "realists" Lenin's face darkened.

"I hope you mean realists in the best sense of the term," said Comrade Lenin.

From They Knew Lenin, Reminiscences of Foreign Contemporaries, *Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1968.*

WALTER DURANTY

Duranty Reports Lenin

Walter Duranty (1884-1957), famous newsman and author, was foreign correspondent of the New York Times *from 1913 to 1941, stationed in Moscow for two decades. He wrote hostile dispatches on the Russian Revolution from Riga, Latvia, but his whole tone changed to one of greater understanding from the time he started reporting directly from Moscow in 1921. He won a Pulitzer Prize in 1932 for a series of articles on the Soviet Union. The following excerpts are taken from* Duranty Reports Russia, *compiled by Gustavus Tuckerman from his articles and dispatches, published in 1934 by Viking Press.*

MOSCOW, *October 15, 1922.*—"Lenin is not only right back on the job, but is as fit as a fiddle. I watched him for the best part of an hour today, and if he is a sick man, I never saw a well one," said Oscar Cesare, the American artist, who managed to gain admittance to Lenin's office in the Kremlin, a privilege rigidly denied to "interviewers."

Cesare was admitted to make sketches of the Soviet leader for the magazine of the *New York Times* on condition that he would not interrupt Lenin's work.

Telling of his interesting experience, Cesare said:

"And you never saw anyone working with such gusto. It made me think of the way a man who has been denied his favorite dish by a doctor for a long time, and then when at last he is allowed to eat it goes right ahead as if he hadn't tasted food for a year." . . .

Lenin rose and greeted his visitor with a strong handshake. His figure looked stocky and strong and, though his hair is more gray than the red in his bristly mustache and small chin beard, his eyes were clear and bright, his face full of healthy color. The room was lined with a restful blue paper, harmonizing with a thick blue carpet. A felt door closed softly on well-oiled hinges, shutting Cesare into a quiet

chamber in which there were no ornaments or pictures on the walls save two prints or photographs, apparently of some meeting. . . .

"Lenin stepped close up to me, smiling in a wonderfully attractive way," said Cesare.

" 'Sit where you please and make yourself comfortable,' he said. 'You'll excuse me if I go on working—will it matter if I don't pose for you?'

" 'Not in the least,' I answered, 'just go ahead as if I wasn't here—they said I could stay for ten minutes.'

" 'Ten, twenty, just as you like,' said Lenin. (In point of fact I stayed forty-five and then went of my own accord.)

"For a time he sat hunched up in a chair reading a Russian newspaper intently as if he would burn a hole in it. From start to finish he seemed utterly unconscious of my presence and absorbed in his work. Of course that is not literally true. After a short while he dropped his newspaper and pressed a buzzer for his secretary. He asked her to bring some documents. While waiting he smiled at me and asked how I found Moscow. I replied I had been much struck by the order of the city, the cheerful faces of the people, and the busy work of painting and repairing everywhere.

" 'Been here long?' he asked.

" 'Two months,' I replied.

" 'Two months, eh? That's good. And you got a good impression? That's fine.'

"I took advantage of the opportunity to say how interested in him people in America were, adding: 'You are as well known there as President Harding. Even those who don't agree with you admit you are a big man.'

"Lenin again smiled the genuine attractive smile. 'I am not a big man,' he said, tapping himself on the breast. 'I'm only a little man,' and again he stepped toward me with an indescribably friendly air.

"At that moment he reminded me immensely of Theodore Roosevelt—the same magnetism, the same almost childish frankness and friendliness. He seemed much simpler than Lloyd George. When I sketched the latter at Genoa he spoke cleverly and epigramatically, as if wishing to make an impression. There is none of that with Lenin. On the other hand, he is not cold like Poincaré. Poincaré struck me as being a man who thought everything out at night carefully and logically. Lenin seemed intensely human and alive. Though his English isn't absolutely perfect, he was so on the qui vive for what I said that he appeared to catch the sense of the words before they were hardly out of my mouth.

"His secretary brought in some papers and at once I ceased to exist for Lenin. He studied the typewritten pages profoundly, then murmured the names of some of his principal subordinates. Still muttering, he seized a telephone book and ran through its pages, repeating the number as if I were a thousand miles away. He pressed the figures on the automatic dial and got the connection. In all his actions there was nothing nervous, but swift conservation of movement and energy that reminded me of films I had seen to teach avoidance of waste motion at machines.

"While telephoning, Lenin gave the effect of entire absorption—he was actually speaking face to face with the subordinate, and gestured naturally and instinctively with his free hand.

"Finally I told him I had got enough sketches and added I would make lithographs for reproduction to be sold in America for the benefit of starving Russian children. For an instant Lenin didn't catch the words and I explained. 'Good,' he said, 'good, I understand.' I murmured something about political opinion in America. 'Yes,' he replied, 'I've just been reading this,' and he held up a red-bound copy of Pettigrew's *Plutocrat Democracy*. 'It's a very fine book,' and his eyes sparkled as he looked down at it. I got the impression that Lenin didn't admire the American political system as much as he admired the book."

MOSCOW, *January 22, 1924.*—Premier Lenin died last night at 6:50 o'clock. The immediate cause of death was paralysis of the respiratory centers due to a cerebral hemorrhage. . .

At 11:20 o'clock this morning President Kalinin briefly opened the session of the All-Russian Soviet Congress and requested everyone to stand. He had not slept all night and tears were streaming down his haggard face. A sudden wave of emotion—not a sound, but a strange stir—passed over the audience, none of whom knew what had happened. The music started to play the Soviet funeral march, but was instantly hushed as Kalinin murmured brokenly:

"I bring you terrible news about our dear comrade, Vladimir Ilyich." (N. Lenin was his pen name.)

High up in the gallery a woman uttered a low, wailing cry that was followed by a burst of sobs.

"Yesterday," faltered Kalinin, "yesterday, he suffered a further stroke of paralysis and—" There was a long pause as if the speaker were unable to nerve himself to pronounce the fatal word; then, with an effort which shook his whole body, it came—"died."

The emotional Slav temperament reacted immediately. From

all over the huge opera house came sobs and wailing, not loud or shrill, but pitifully mournful, spreading and increasing. Kalinin could not speak. He tried vainly to motion for silence with his hands and for one appalling moment a dreadful outbreak of mass hysteria seemed certain. A tenth of a second later it could not have been averted, but Yenukidze, Secretary of the Russian Federal Union, thrust forward his powerful frame and with hand and voice demanded calm. Then Kalinin, stumbling, read out the official bulletin.

" 'January 21 the condition of Vladimir Ilyich suddenly underwent sharp aggravation. At 5:30 p.m. his breathing was interrupted and he lost consciousness. At 6:50 Vladimir Ilyich died from paralysis of the respiratory centers.

" 'Dated 3:25 a.m., January 22. Signed: Drs. Obukh (Lenin's personal physician and chief of the Moscow Health Department), Semashko (a close personal friend of Lenin, and Minister of the Health Department), Osipov, Abrikosov, Deshin, Bunak, Getye, Elistratov, Rozakov, Veisbrod.'

"We propose," continued Kalinin, "that the twenty-first day of January henceforth be set aside as a day of national mourning." By a tragic coincidence today—January 9, old style—is a similar Bolshevik holiday in memory of Father Gapon's petitioners, massacred by the Tsar's troops in the courtyard of the Winter Palace on "Bloody Sunday," 1905.

"Do you agree?" questioned Kalinin.

A confused sound, half sob, half sigh, was the only assent.

Kalinin tried to tell the funeral arrangements, but broke down completely.

Kamenev and Zinoviev, equally unnerved, and other members of the presiding committee had laid their heads on the table and cried like children. Even the daredevil Cossack leader Budyenny was weeping unrestrainedly, while the delegates in the body of the theater stood motionless, sobbing, with tears coursing down their cheeks.

Finally Lashevich, a member of the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party and president of the Siberian Revolutionary Committee, stepped to the speakers' rostrum. His strong, square body, in khaki uniform with dull red facings, radiated calm as in a firm voice he announced that the members of the presiding committee and a group of senior delegates to the congress would go tomorrow at 6 a.m. by special train to the village of Gorky, twenty-eight versts from Moscow, where Lenin died, to bring back the body by train, reaching Moscow at one o'clock, and the delega-

tion would escort it to the "House of Columns"—the former Nobles' Club in the center of the city—where it would lie in state until the funeral on Saturday in order that the population might "freely and without restriction" be permitted to pay their respects to the dead leader.

So great was the continued emotion that no one on the presiding committee thought to give the order finally to play the Soviet funeral march until reminded from the audience.

Owing to a partial breakdown of wires, the result of a recent abnormal snowfall, it appears that the news of Lenin's fatal seizure did not reach Moscow until shortly after eight o'clock last night. Lenin's wife, Nadezhda Konstantinova Krupskaya, was with him at the end. Kalinin and other leaders left for Gorky about nine 'oclock, but the news was not known even in the government offices until late at night.

As the news became known it produced literal stupefaction. . . . A spell of silent dismay that overspread one group after another was perhaps the most remarkable tribute to the dead leader, for these were not communists or workers, but people of all sorts, poor and prosperous alike. The correspondent heard a well-dressed man say dazedly to a tattered beggar:

"Lenin is dead."

"Didn't you know that?" was the reply with an extraordinary mingling of scorn and pride. "All the city knows it—I knew it this morning." . . .

Lenin will be buried in the Kremlin wall in the Red Square where lie John Reed, Sverdlov, first President of the Soviet Republic, and other well-known figures of the Bolshevik revolution.

HARRY F. WARD

The Lenin Spirit

Dr. Harry F. Ward (1873-1966) was one of the leading figures of our times in the struggle for peace and socialism. A British-born US citizen, he served as a minister of the Methodist Church for 12 years, eight of them in the Chicago stockyards district. His whole life was dedicated to the practical application of the ethical concepts of religion to the solution of the main problems of our day.

As teacher, speaker, organizer, and through numerous books, pamphlets and articles—many of them in NEW WORLD REVIEW*—he helped shape the thinking of many thousands of people and influenced succeeding generations of youth.*

For over 20 years, Dr. Ward headed the Department of Christian Ethics at Union Theological Seminary. He was general secretary of the Methodist Federation for Social Action for over 30 years, chairman of the American Civil Liberties Union for 20 years, chairman of the eight million member American League Against War and Fascism. He was closely identified with such organizations as the American Committee for the Protection of the Foreign Born, The National Council of American-Soviet Friendship and the Religious Freedom Committee.

Deeply influenced by the ideas of Marx and Lenin, he was an early visitor to the Soviet Union, returning later for a sabbatical year of travel and study. He became a foremost interpreter in this country of the nature of Soviet socialist society and its moral incentives, and of its efforts for peace and disarmament. His views were shared by many of his contemporaries among the most socially conscious clergy.

The article we reprint below was written by Dr. Ward on the basis of notes for his speech at a Lenin Memorial meeting held in New York's Madison Square Garden, January 15, 1945. It was reprinted in the Daily Worker, *February 4, 1945.*

IN EACH of the periods that I spent in the land of the Soviets I found myself asking another question besides those whose answer I went there to find out. It is a question that was asked long ago in another land. As I realized the marvels that had been accomplished in so short a space of time, as I sensed the breadth and depth of the foundations of the new socialist society that had been laid under Lenin's leadership, time and again I asked myself, "what manner of man was this who wrought these things?"

When we arrived in Soviet Russia in the summer of '24 Lenin had been dead a few months. So I could not get my answer at first hand. I had to get it from others who had known him. In that number were two of my friends, Col. Raymond Robins of our Red Cross, and Jerome Davis, then in charge of relief work for the International Student YMCA. Both of them had to see Lenin occasionally on official business and several times they talked of other matters. Robins told me that once they were discussing and comparing democracy in Soviet Russia and in the United States. "But," said Lenin, "you must admit, Mr. Robins, that the two Senators from Pennsylvania," and he named them, "represent the United States Steel Company more than they do the people of Pennsylvania."

One afternoon Count Chertkov came to talk with us. He was the closest friend, and the literary executor of Tolstoy; also the leader of the Tolstoyans, a small religious cult who sought to perpetuate his teachings and also ran a vegetarian restaurant and a farm some

miles out of Moscow. I asked him how he got along with the new regime. He said, "We had a little trouble last year, after Lenin was shot and unable to keep a close watch on things. One of the anti-religious extremists got an order issued that we could not live in Moscow or any other large city. At once I asked a friend of mine who was close to Lenin to inform him. In a few days the order was canceled. My friend told me that Lenin called in the man responsible and said: "This won't do. What will they think of us if we can't get along with such people as these Tolstoyans?"

Then there was the old Bolshevik who had to get an emergency decision from Lenin in the small hours of the morning during the difficult first days of the new Soviet government. Expecting to have to get Lenin out of bed, he found him writing at his desk. Looking up, Lenin said: "I know your matter is urgent but you must excuse me a moment. This comrade has a lonely post and he's getting discouraged. I must cheer him up."

I was particularly impressed with Lenin's habit of talking to workers and peasants whenever he could get contact with them and with the way he did it. Putting them completely at their ease, with simple, direct questions, he would find out all they knew about conditions, and the attitudes of their fellow workers. More than any statesmen of the capitalist era, except "honest old Abe," Lenin had the feel of the workers and their needs. And Lenin saw more clearly and concretely than Lincoln that "government of the people, by the people and for the people" means people's control of the economic foundations of life.

LENIN'S attitude to rank-and-file workers takes us back to a turning point in his life. In his late youth he stood by the scaffold on which his elder brother was being executed for taking part in a revolutionary movement against the Tsar. In that bitter experience he saw what Marx had worked out with the labor of his intellect, that in the industrial era no revolutionary movement can succeed that is not built upon and led by the organized workers. Upon that historic fact Lenin built. Time and again the workers justified and repaid him by saving the revolution—in the first Red Army and in the Partisan movement which then as now was an important section of the fighting forces; later by winning the battle of production against tremendous odds in the mines, factories, mills and on the farms.

There were the immortal fifty thousand, the volunteers from the factories who went out in the beginning of the collectivization move-

ment to teach the peasants what they had learned in the factories about how to organize for effective work. Many of them never came back. They fell on the battlefield of labor, victims of the inexorable hate of the kulaks and the fanatical mullahs of the Moslem population in the far east of the Soviet territory. Never shall I forget reading the diary of one of them – its record of the long, difficult toil, the loneliness, the affection for the family left behind, the rise of the opposition, the unfinished last entry with its recognition of the fact that the enemy had become strong enough to strike.

Objective chroniclers now recognize that Lenin was the most creative statesman of our time, the one whose work will most affect the course of history. Soviet strength is the proof of this. The sources of his power were simply described by Krupskaya, his wife and fellow worker—I had the privilege of a long talk with her. At the memorial meeting immediately after his death she said that two things made him what he was and explained what he did: "his love for the people and his confidence in the method he was using." By "love for the people" she did not mean sentiment, but affectionate desire for their well-being, confidence in their capacities and trust in their future. How he rejoiced when the first subbotniki occurred—the spontaneous, yet organized, giving of the rest day in labor to meet some urgent community or national need. It is this procedure that has done so much to make possible the maintenance of supplies for the rapidly advancing Soviet armies, the quick restoration of communications and rehabilitation in liberated Soviet territory.

Here was the first proof that the people were going to manage their own affairs.

"Confidence in the method he was using"—the Marxist method of analysis. It was this that enabled Lenin, as the people used to say, "to swim like a duck on the stormy waves of the revolution." It was this that gave sureness and certainty to his statesmanship, accuracy to his scientific prophecy. When I got to the bottom of every matter I investigated in the Soviet Union, I always found there the mind and the hand of Lenin. I went first in the days of the New Economic Policy. For professional reasons I had to find out whether this meant, as the loudest voices in the capitalist world were gleefully proclaiming, a return to capitalism. I soon found out that the wise men of the West were as wrong then on this question as they have been recently. I saw that the Soviet leaders had no intention of returning to capitalism. Next I realized that the people would never let them do this even if they wanted to. Lenin had planned the move as a strategic retreat, the sternest test of an army and its commanding general.

Lenin said: "We must now take one step backward in order to take two steps forward." Those steps were taken—with seven league boots. They were the first five-year plan, and the collectivization of farming. I happened to be there, seven years after my first visit, during the critical time for both of them. If the first five-year plan had failed, if collective farming had not won through, this war could not have been won. Pushing the matter a step further we can say that if Lenin had not seen the necessity for the strategic maneuver, and the Party with the aid of the more advanced sections of the people had not been able successfully to execute it, we could not today be talking about "unconditional surrender" of our common enemy.

I shall always remember one cold evening in November '31 driving across the Russian steppe, our prairie, in the black soil belt a few miles this side of the Volga. The ruts were hard, and when a rise in the ground compelled the horse to walk I was glad to walk beside him to keep warm. When dark fell, suddenly far off to our right electric lights flashed on. "An airport?" I asked the collective farmer who was driving us. "No," he said, "a village." And I remembered that before it grew dark I had noticed in the distance, in what in Dakota they call a draw, the thatched roofs of cottages like giant toadstools springing out of the ground. Electricity in a village! Hundreds of miles from any source of power. That was Lenin with his plan to electrify the broad land, the beginning of all the planning that has made the mighty Soviet power.

SO IT was with socialist cost accounting without which the increasing productivity of Soviet labor and farming could not be achieved. I found that it was Lenin who had first said that accounting is the way to socialist success. "If we are to beat capitalist productivity of labor all the workers must learn accounting." So it was with differential income, concerning which there has been so much discussion recently and so many mistaken and misleading conclusions. I was there when the battle royal was waged between equal pay and pay according to work done and product turned out. Again I found that it was Lenin, expanding and concretizing Marx on the matter, who had pointed out specifically why in the socialist period payment must be according to effort and not according to need.

In cases like that the foreign colony in Moscow—officials, correspondents, businessmen, technicians, visitors—for the most part liked to say, "You Communists are like the Christians. They can find something in the Bible to support anything they want to do. You do the same with Lenin."

Such people are completely mistaken, of course. Lenin was the opposite of the Pope. He pointed out where the road into the future began and what would be met in the beginning by those who traveled it. He left it to them to make their analysis of new situations as they arise and plan their strategy and tactics accordingly. That is what the Marxist method calls for.

To my mind the most brilliant use of it by Lenin was on the peasant question, one of the two big issues on which Trotsky was utterly wrong, fatally so if his policy had prevailed. Lenin used the tactic of splitting the interpenetrating opposites and bringing to the dominant position the one that best served the people's need. He said we have here not just peasants; there are three classes of them, the rich, the middle and the poor. We must organize collective farms to meet the needs of the poor peasants. We must do it in a way that will attract the greater part of the middle peasants. The more well-to-do will go with the kulaks anyway and will fight us. But we will lick them both by uniting most of the middle with the poor.

I am writing this because Lenin belongs not only to the Communists and not alone to the Soviet Union. His spirit which today is multiplied millions and millions of times in the war production, the fighting strength, the rehabilitation of the Soviet Union, now moves across all the seas into every land. It stands beside, inspires, fights and works with all those men and women everywhere who seek more comradeship and a nobler way of living for all mankind.

HARRY FREEMAN

Rockwell Kent on Lenin

"THE awakening of today's American youth is the most hopeful thing that has happened in the United States in my long lifetime," says Rockwell Kent, noted artist and Lenin Peace Laureate.

I had traveled to Ausable Forks, in northern New York State near the Canadian border, to interview Kent, not about American youth, but about the Centenary of Lenin's birth. Kent is no youth. He is now aged eighty-seven. However, he is still vigorously active, continuing to serve as chairman of the National Council of American-

HARRY FREEMAN, writer and commentator, is a correspondent in the New York office of TASS, the Soviet News agency.

Soviet Friendship as well as continuing to produce fresh and creative works of art.

And so in our long conversation, his thoughts about the Lenin Centenary touched not only the past but the present and the future and led him to the observation about the awakening of American youth.

"I know," he said, "that relatively few of the hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of young Americans now challenging the politics and the mores of the capitalist establishment have read the works of Lenin. But I cannot help thinking that Lenin's life and teachings have, even if indirectly, influenced American youth, despite the massive dosages of anti-Leninist propaganda. It is significant, I think, that quite a few of the rebellious young now describe themselves as Marxist-Leninist even if you and I may not believe that they have fully understood Lenin's teachings. The important thing is that they are on the move and moving in generally correct directions."

I asked the artist how Lenin had influenced his own life.

"Well," he said, "I had come to recognize the validity of socialist ideas long before the October Revolution. When I voted for the first time early in the century, I cast my ballot for Eugene V. Debs, Socialist candidate for President and a truly great working-class leader. But I must confess that I did not grasp the full meaning of socialism, its significance as a gigantic force for the transformation of man and society, until the October Revolution under the leadership of the immortal Lenin. All countries have their great leaders and patriots, of course—in the United States men like Lincoln, Washington and Jefferson. But Lenin provided guidance, held forth a beacon light, for men in all countries and for all time. He not only inspired and led the transformation of Russia from a backward, rotting, semi-feudal society to a flourishing socialist one, but provided peoples throughout the world with a guide to action for progressive change."

Kent recalled with some emotion a visit to Lenin's quarters in Smolny during a recent trip to the Soviet Union. "I was deeply moved by the simplicity with which this great man lived," he said. "One could grasp instantly Lenin's complete selflessness, his utter devotion to the cause of socialism."

Then, directing himself to the question I had raised, Kent said:

"Certainly, my own life has been deeply affected by Lenin and his teachings. I have not, as you know, believed that an artist should isolate himself from the social and political problems of his time

and imprison himself in some sort of ivory tower. An artist has perhaps a special obligation to contribute what he can to the betterment of man. That is why I have given much time and energy to the promotion of American-Soviet friendship. Without American-Soviet understanding the prospects for a durable peace on our troubled planet are dim indeed. I consider it a privilege and an honor to have served for many years as chairman of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship. And I wish that I had more time to give to the Council's work. I consider it an even greater honor to hold a peace award bearing Lenin's name. I shall try in the years that are left to me to be worthy of that award. For it is by action, action in Lenin's spirit, that the Centenary of the birth of this great leader can best be observed."

JEROME DAVIS

The Lessons to Be Learned from Lenin

Dr. Jerome Davis is one of the few Americans now living who was in Russia at the time of the Revolution and knew Lenin. He has taught at Dartmouth College, Yale Divinity School and elsewhere and is a past president of the American Federation of Teachers. He started the Religion and Labor Foundation and Promoting Enduring Peace. He takes regular International Goodwill Seminars to the socialist countries and other countries of Europe and Asia. His autobiography, A Life Adventure for Peace, *was recently printed by Citadel Press. The most recent of his volumes is the symposium,* Peace or World War III.

I WAS sent to Russia under the Tsar's Regime in 1916 by the American Y.M.C.A. to work for the prisoners of war in Turkestan. The conditions under the Tsar were terrible. Ninety-two per cent of the people were illiterate. I had the Tsar's secret service on my trail twenty-four hours a day. They even slept in the same house where I stayed. No letters ever reached me through the mail. I had to pick them up already opened at the Tsar's censor. I was not allowed to mail any letters but had to deliver them to the Tsar's censor. There were no doctors in the rural areas and there the people were virtual slaves as serfs.

In the first prison camp in which I worked 75 were dying every

day. The water given them was taken straight out of the roadside ditch. I had to provide wood so that all their water could be boiled.

Nothing was being done for the Russian soldiers and after my efforts to do something for them were repeatedly refused, General Kuropatkin finally gave me permission to start one club for the soldiers. I had to station a man there to write letters all day for the soldiers, since they were completely illiterate. This work for the soldiers became so popular that when the Revolution broke out I went back to St. Petersburg to start more clubs.

I was eager to see Lenin and was at the Finland Station to see him when he arrived, April 17, 1917. Thousands and thousands of people were at the railroad station to greet him. He spoke from the top of an armored car. He made a great speech. He congratulated the workers on having freed Russia from the autocracy and made clear he wanted to do everything to improve the conditions of the people.

One month after Lenin's return, the first national meeting of the Bolshevik Party took place and Lenin's proposals were adopted in their entirety. In October the Bolsheviks won power. On October 25 (November 7) the Second Congress of Soviets opened in Smolny. All power was now in the hands of the Soviets. They passed a decree on peace introduced by Lenin, which declared, "War is the greatest crime against humanity."

Because of the innovating work I had done for the Russian soldiers I was invited to attend this great conference of the Soviets and heard Lenin speak.

Lenin lived very simply, wore inexpensive clothes and did not smoke. He impressed me as a man who was a champion of the toiling masses. He believed that there must be a just and equitable distribution of all the wealth in the world. He was completely unselfish and willing to give his life for the benefit of the people. On one of the occasions when I saw Lenin, he gave me an autographed picture of himself which I value very much.

How then shall we appraise a leader like Lenin? This is a most difficult task, but today, at the time of the centenary of his birth, we can at least try to evaluate his character. By the time he was 23, Lenin had accepted the faith of Marxism and gave everything he had to its realization. He had a penetrating mind and a dedicated devotion to what he believed to be true. He desired nothing for himself, but he was resolute and unshakable in the pursuit of what he believed to be in the interests of all the people.

History has shown that Lenin was probably right in the long run in believing that it was the industrial workers the revolutionary

forces would have to rely on. Lenin, too, believed in bringing about the closest relations of the workers and the peasants, and in doing everything possible to bring the level of the countryside up to that of the city.

I knew Col. William Boyce Thompson, an American banker who was head of the American Red Cross while I was there. He described what Lenin had done in the Revolution in these words:

"The Russian Revolution must be looked upon as a great transition. Consider the wrongs that had been endured from time immemorial, the complete negation of liberty and human rights. A workingman in Russia was considered no better than a dog. In many respects he was treated worse. Then suddenly these 180,000,000 downtrodden human beings found themselves in possession of absolute liberty."

Today, because of Lenin and his work, Russia has free education, free medicine and a crime rate that is a fraction of ours in the United States. The Soviets are not spending the colossal amount that we are on armaments and they have not sent their armies 10,000 miles away to support a dictatorship as the United States has done in Vietnam.

Each one of us should ask himself, "What are the lessons that I can learn for my own life from that of Lenin? Do I have his dedication? Do I give everything I have to causes in which I believe as he did? Is my life devoted to helping the masses of the world secure justice and happiness?"

JESSICA SMITH

Some Memoirs of Russia in Lenin's Time

Fragments of a Work in Progress

I WAS among those who heard the golden words of John Reed and Albert Rhys Williams when they returned to this country from Russia, telling the story of Lenin and the Revolution and the dawn of socialism.

The news of the Revolution, and the blatant anti-Soviet actions of our government, brought numerous working-class and middle-class people to the defense of the young workers' state. Meetings, demonstrations and parades were held calling for Hands Off Russia, and the end of the US armed intervention and blockade. Many workers' and other organizations were formed for technical aid, medical aid

and famine aid, for trade and recognition, all encouraged by Lenin himself.

I took part in some of these activities through my work in the Intercollegiate Socialist Society (later the League for Industrial Democracy) and association with the movements for peace and socialism. This, and the reports of Reed and Williams and others, aroused in me a consuming desire to go to Soviet Russia and see for myself. The opportunity came in the early winter of 1922 when, having reached the ripe age of 26 a few months earlier, I was eligible for acceptance as a member of the American Friends Service Committee doing famine relief in the Soviet Union. (Not a Quaker myself, I had become acquainted with their work as a graduate of Swarthmore College, a Quaker institution.) A terrible drought had swept the fertile Volga region the summer before, wiping out crops and livestock and taking a heavy toll of the famished people, who died on the spot of hunger or typhus, or fled to other regions. The disastrous consequences of this famine and the heavy death-toll were mainly due to the years of foreign military intervention, civil war and blockade, which sapped the resources with which Russia, as a whole, might have been able to cope with the disaster.

Herbert Hoover, then Secretary of Commerce, was head of the American Relief Administration which used food as a weapon. He had helped to overthrow the Hungarian Revolution. He had sent supplies to counter-revolutionary White generals in Russia. He saw a wonderful opportunity in the great famine of 1921-22 to help win over the Russian population against the Bolsheviks, hoping to control local governments by means of food supplies.

Lenin understood Hoover's motives completely. He also knew how much the food offered by Hoover was needed by the people. Therefore he wisely accepted the aid but made sure that it would have no strings attached, and that its actual distribution would be in the hands of the Russians themselves.

I arrived in Moscow late in January 1922, when the country lay almost prostrate under the blows of the capitalist destroyers. Moscow, even under its flattering blanket of snow, was incredibly battered and shabby. Not a single shop or restaurant open, windows broken and boarded up, black chimneys protruding from them. Hardly a car to be seen, ancient and battered droshkies lurched through the gutted streets where only a few bundled pedestrians were visible. The stations were crowded with the sick and hungry from the famine areas who had nowhere to go. Only Red Square and the Kremlin with its impregnable strength and beauty, its towers and golden domes stand-

ing guard over the city, were untouched by the desolation and disrepair.

Even then, in those grim days, the glory of Russian opera and ballet were to be enjoyed nightly in the Bolshoy Opera House. Lenin understood the need of the people for spiritual nourishment as well as food, and gave strict instructions that the necessary funds and food be provided to keep the Bolshoy and other theaters open. So there was the rich art of Moussorgsky and of Borodin and Rimsky Korsakoff, and the ever-popular Swan Lake and other ballets, as well as more modern works. The prima ballerina of those days was the aging and fattening Geltser, whose loyal fans still loved and applauded her wildly.

Among the Lenin documents is one instructing Lunacharsky, Commissar of Education and Culture, to make sure that Geltser was provided with silk tights since it had come to his attention that she could not get proper ones for dancing.

COMING up from work in the villages for a Moscow vacation in November 1922, the Moscow I had seen nine months before was already transformed with new paint and new building. During that visit I had an opportunity to hear Lenin speak. The Fourth Congress of the Comintern was in session, and Robert Dunn, also of the Quaker mission, and I were able to get passes to hear Lenin speak in the great palace inside the Kremlin, on November 13. A storm of applause greeted Lenin when he entered the great hall, the singing of the Internationale, then rising acclaim as he came to the podium. Lenin seemed extraordinarily aloof from the applause, not in any sense of separateness from the people there, but as though he were standing aside from a tribute that had no personal connection with him. Thus the first overriding impression was Lenin's utter lack of any consciousness of self. He arranged some papers and notes, beginning to talk, simply and rapidly and extemporaneously, as soon the applause began to subside. It was not an oration, an address, a speech. Lenin had some important things to tell the audience and he got down to the essence of what he had to say at once, without any oratorical embellishments or superfluous words, but speaking with an intensity that compelled complete attention.

I cannot of course pretend to remember what he said, or that its meaning was clear to me at the time, whispered in my ear by a translator not always sure himself of the meaning of the German in which Lenin was speaking for the benefit of the many foreigners in the audience.

What does remain impressed on my memory forever, is the uplifting and awesome sense of being in the presence of the greatest man of our time, the leader of the world's first Socialist Revolution and the Socialist State it had brought into being.

This was Lenin's first public appearance after a long serious illness. He explained that he could not make the long report evidently expected of him in the title "Five Years of the Russian Revolution and the Prospects of the World Revolution," but would speak only on the New Economic Policy. The only sign at all of his illness was that he turned a few times in the course of his speech to a comrade beside him, seeking the exact word for what he wanted to say.

The main burden of his speech, as I have read it since, was that the New Economic Policy had helped the Soviet people to weather the most difficult period, that there were many successess, but grave difficulties lay ahead. Describing the NEP as a temporary retreat, Lenin explained that it had been made necessary by the appearance of some discontent among a section of the workers and farmers. In its economic offensive, the Soviet Government had run too far ahead. Direct transition to purely socialist forms and distribution was beyond the country's available strength. Now, eighteen months later, when the granting of freedom of trade to the peasants, and temporarily turning some small factories back to their owners, had brought a degree of revival, Lenin said "we have passed the test." He drew laughter by the wry remark that Russian rubles had become famous "if only for the reason that their number now in circulation exceeds a quadrillion." But the government was already grappling with the problem of stabilizing the ruble, the most important factor in expanding trade among the people, and this had been accomplished without any foreign loans. The peasantry were reviving from the famine and no serious dissatisfaction remained. Light industry was on the upgrade; the conditions and mood of the workers had improved. While heavy industry was still a grave problem they had begun to accumulate the funds needed to put it on its feet. He spoke frankly of "foolish errors" that had been and still would be committed.

Lenin ended with the advice he never ceased to give. Stressing that only a few weeks before the last interventionists had been driven from Soviet soil and Vladivostok liberated from the Japanese invaders, he said:

"I do not know how long the capitalist powers will permit us to enjoy the opportunity to study in peace, but we must take advantage of every minute of respite from fighting, from war, to study, to start learning from the beginning . . . to study and to study hard."

IN JANUARY 1924, I was one of several young Americans living in Moscow, acting as correspondents for the Federated Press, which served labor newspapers. One Sunday morning in late January I returned from a walk to the Quaker headquarters, where several correspondents were living, to be told that a half hour earlier we had all been summoned to a special meeting at the Bolshoy Opera House. Rushing to the center, I arrived just as the doors of the Bolshoy opened and people came streaming out. Their tears, their stricken faces told the dreadful news.

In the days of mourning that followed the people poured in to Moscow from all corners of the land, thousands of them, to say farewell to their beloved leader. I do not believe there has been such an outpouring of love for a fallen leader in all history. I went to the station with some other Americans, part of the vast crowd meeting the funeral train chugging slowly in from Gorky, then followed the coffin as it was carried on the shoulders of the Bolshevik leaders through the streets to the Dom Soyuzov—then still known by its old name, House of Columns.

Endless lines of people stretching through the main streets and side streets of Moscow flowed toward the House of Columns, where Lenin's body lay banked in flowers. The people, from all of Moscow, from all of the country, waited day and night for their turn to bid farewell to their beloved leader, lighting bonfires to warm themselves in the bitterest cold Moscow had ever known. Inside the Hall the people walked quietly, solemnly, the men removing their hats, peasants from the village crossing themselves as they looked at the still face on the bier. Hidden behind the palms an orchestra played softly, the Beethoven and Chopin funeral marches, the revolutionary anthem to their fallen heroes, sometimes the *Internationale*. When I was there, the old peasant woman by my side whispered to me, "How many friends our Lenin has, how many friends have come to visit him today!"

DURING that earlier visit to Moscow, in 1922, when I had heard Lenin speak, one of the Americans I met who was doing especially interesting work was Harold Ware, an agricultural engineer. (Later we were married. He died in 1935.) When Lenin had appealed for help from the world proletariat at the height of the famine period, American trade unions responded and raised a fund of $75,000 through the Friends of Soviet Russia. Hal Ware's suggestion that the money be put into tractors and seed and helping the Soviet Government's program of teaching the peasants modern agriculture was accepted both

by the US organization and the Russians. Hal recruited nine husky "sod busters" from the North Dakota farmlands and took them to Russia, along with twenty carloads of tractors and other machinery and equipment, to the area near Perm which had been assigned them. There were many problems. The district had been fought over by Kolchak's armies and devastated by famine. Roads had to be built and bridges repaired before the tractors and machinery could reach their destination. The new agriculture had not yet come to Russia. While the landlords were gone and the land was the possession of the peasants as long as they produced on it, there were as yet no cooperatives, and the peasants still had the small strips of land they were accustomed to cultivating in the past.

Hearing of the tractors come to plow their land they came from many miles around asking for their help, but often fled in terror as they saw the strange monsters they had never seen before chugging along the road. When each peasant wanted his own land plowed first, Hal saw his chance for an object lesson. He would get on the tractor and plow to the end of the narrow strip and then get off and say the plot was so small that he could neither go further nor turn around. So it was that the peasants came to understand they could only use the new-fangled machinery on larger plots and decided themselves to pool their land; and so the first primitive steps toward collective farming were taken.

Hal talked enthusiastically about his work at that first meeting, and told me how Lenin had followed its progress personally and made sure the fullest cooperation was given the group. Hal was especially proud of a letter of appreciation Lenin had written to him, which had been published in *Pravda* a few weeks before. The letter said in part: ". . . You have accomplished successes which must be recognized as quite exceptional . . . I hasten to express my deep appreciation, with the request to publish it in the organ of your society and if possible in the general press of the United States. . . . I again express to you deep thanks in the name of our republic, and request you to keep in mind that not a single kind of help has been for us so timely and important as the help shown by you." (See V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXVII, page 308, revised edition.)

Later on I heard from Hal of his participation in an interchange between Lenin and Charles P. Steinmetz (1865-1923), a leading American electrical engineer, who was a professor at Union College in Schenectady and chief consulting engineer of General Electric. Steinmetz had hailed the Russian Revolution as "the greatest thing that had happened in history."

The extraordinary scope of Lenin's genius meant not only leading Russia through the utter chaos left by the old regime and carrying out a tremendous reconstruction program, but also launching the brilliantly conceived GOELRO—plan for the electrification of Russia. All this made a tremendous impression on Steinmetz, himself a socialist and an outstanding genius in electrical engineering. While leading Soviet engineers such as Gleb Krzhizhanovsky were in charge of planning, and of the elaboration and execution of GOELRO, it was in fact Lenin's brainchild. For Lenin's mind leaped forward to the farthest reach of the technology of those days, realizing that only through the highest degree of electrification and mechanization could the necessary material base of the socialist order be swiftly established.

Following these developments closely, Steinmetz had sent a letter to Lenin dated February 16, 1922, through an engineer returning from exile to his native Russia. The letter reads:

> My dear Mr. Lenin:
>
> Mr. B. W. Losev's return to Russia gives me an opportunity to express to you my admiration of the wonderful work of social and industrial regeneration which Russia is accomplishing under such terrible difficulties.
>
> I wish you the fullest success and have every confidence that you will succeed. Indeed, you must succeed, for the great work which Russia has started must not be allowed to fail.
>
> If in technical and more particularly in electrical engineering matters I can assist Russia in any manner with advice, suggestion or consultation, I shall always be very pleased to do so as far as I am able.
>
> Fraternally yours,
>
> CHARLES P. STEINMETZ.

Mr. Losev, secretary of the New York Branch of the Russian Technical Aid Society, who delivered the letter, reported that Steinmetz had told him: "It is a pity I cannot go with you, a very great pity . . . Let them know in Russia that I and many others sympathize with their aims, that we are with them with all our hearts and minds."

Lenin received the letter March 31, and answered on April 10:

> Dear Mr. Steinmetz:
>
> Many thanks for your kind letter of February 16, 1922. I am ashamed to confess that I first heard your name only a few months ago from Comrade Krzhizhanovsky who was chairman of our State Commission for the Electrification of Russia and is now chairman of the State Planning Commission. He told me of the leading position which you hold among the world's electrical engineering experts.
>
> I have since learned more about you from Comrade Martens. I gather from what he said that your friendly interest in Russia springs from your social and political convictions on the one hand. On the other

hand, as an electrical engineering expert in one of the most technically developed countries, you believe it is essential and inevitable that capitalism should be replaced by a new social order which would institute a planned economy and insure the wellbeing of the masses by the electrification of whole countries. All over the world there is an increase—slower than one would wish, but firm and steady nevertheless—in the number of specialists in science, technology and the arts, who believe in the inevitability of capitalism being replaced by a different socio-economic order, and whom the "terrible difficulties" of Soviet Russia's struggle against the whole capitalist world do not put off or frighten, but rather convince them of the inevitability of the struggle and the need to take an active part of it in order to help replace the old by the new.

I should particularly like to thank you for your offer to assist Russia with advice, suggestions, etc. Since the absence of official, legally sanctioned relations between Soviet Russia and the United States makes it extremely difficult for both of us to take practical advantage of your offer, I propose to take the liberty of publishing your letter and my reply in the hope that many people in America or in countries that are parties to trade agreements both with the United States and with Russia will assist you (by providing information, translations from Russian into English, etc.) in carrying out your intention to help the Soviet Republic.

With best wishes,
Yours fraternally,
LENIN

Both letters were published in the Soviet press on April 19, 1922. (The present English texts are from *Lenin Through the Eyes of the World*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1968.)

Evidently this letter did not reach Steinmetz. But reports of the GOELRO Commission which Lenin had sent did reach him, and the September 30 issue of *Electrical World* published an article by Steinmetz entitled "The Soviet Plan to Electrify Russia," which was the first comprehensive presentation of Lenin's GOELRO plan to the American people. Steinmetz concluded with an appeal for American aid in carrying out this program.

In December of that year, when Harold Ware was about to return home, Lenin asked him to take along a copy of the April letter to Steinmetz, and an autographed photo (a rare gesture) from himself. The inscription on the photograph read:*

To the highly esteemed Charles Proteus Steinmetz, one of the few exceptions to the united front of representatives of science and culture opposed to the proletariat.

I hope that a further deepening and widening of the breach in this front will not have to be awaited long. Let the example of the Russian workers and peasants holding their fate in their own hands serve as an encouragement to the American proletariat and farmers. In spite of the terrible consequences of the war destruction we are going ahead though not possessing to the extent of one-tenth the tremendous resources for the economic building of a new life that have been at the disposal of the American people for many years.

Yours fraternally,
Moscow 7 XII 1922 VLADIMIR OOLIANOFF (LENIN)

* From a facsimile of the message in the July 1923 issue of *Soviet Russia Pictorial*. See page 81.

Hal made a special trip to Schenectady to deliver the letter and photograph. He never tired of telling the story of his reception at the main office of the General Electric Company and the story has been printed more than once. A secretary told him that it would be impossible for him to see Steinmetz because he was attending a Board meeting, and would he please come back some other time. Hal tore a page from his notebook and wrote: "I have just come from Moscow, with a personal message for you from Lenin. I will wait until you are free." He gave it to the secretary, telling her, "If you value your job, I advise you to deliver this to Dr. Steinmetz at once!"

Almost immediately Steinmetz rushed out of the door through which the secretary had disappeared. The huge shaggy head on the small hunchbacked frame bobbed in welcome. He stretched out his arms and hustled Hal into his private office, telling his startled secretary over his shoulder, "Don't let anyone in!"

Accepting the letter and the photograph with delight, he made Hal sit down while he read the letter through. Then he propped up the photograph of Lenin on his desk and said, "Now we three will have a talk!"

He bombarded Hal with questions about Lenin, about Soviet education, about science and industry and agriculture and most of all the electrification program, listening eagerly to Hal's answers. As time went on and one by one the vice presidents and board members opened the door and peered in with anxious faces, he growled at them to get out, and went on with his questions. He said:

"Young man, do you realize what Russia has been doing? In this short time they have developed a standardized, planned electrification scheme for the whole country. There's nothing like it anywhere. It's wonderful what they have done. I would give anything to go over there myself and work with them."

He wrote a letter to Lenin for Hal to take back personally on his next trip. Steinmetz had hoped to be able to accept Lenin's invitation to visit Russia as a consultant. But obstacles due to the US Government's refusal to establish normal relations stood in the way, and

within a year Steinmetz died. Lenin's photo hung on his office wall as long as he lived. He sent Lenin a number of thick volumes on electrical engineering, which are retained among the memorabilia of the family of Losev, who had worked on translating them for Lenin.

LATER, on a 15,000 acre tract of land in the North Caucasus provided by the Soviet Government, Harold Ware organized a larger project than the one at Perm, a model farm and training school, such as Lenin himself had envisioned as demonstration centers for the modern large-scale cooperative agriculture he knew was the only way of overcoming Russia's former backward, primitive methods and the "idiocy" of the countryside. In the years 1925-28 an American group of farm experts, equipped with tractors, combines and other modern machinery, worked on this project at Maslov Kut, growing good crops of wheat and other products on this large area, and passing on their know-how to the Russians.

The collective farm movement was just starting and groups of young farmers came to learn the methods of large-scale agriculture later developed to such a high level through the state farms and collectives. The Americans and Russians worked well together and soon there were trained Russian experts for every department, and the Americans were able to leave a fully functioning organization behind them. Thus, through Lenin's understanding of what could be learned from American technique, until such time as the USSR could make its own machinery, and Harold Ware's vision and organizing skill, grew this project through which this group of Americans was able to make a contribution to the building of the new socialist system. It was a two-way exchange of great mutual value, as all such exchanges should be. The greatest gainers were the Americans, in the lessons they learned while living and working in a socialist society.

LINCOLN STEFFENS

LENIN has imagination. He is an idealist, but he is a scholar, too, and a very grim realist. Lenin was a statistician by profession. He had long been trying to foresee the future of society under socialism, and he had marked down definitely the resources, the machinery, and the institutions existing under the old order, which could be used in the new.

From a report by Lincoln Steffens published as an appendix to the report of the Bullitt mission to Russia.

V. I. LENIN

A Letter to American Workers

On August 20, 1918, Lenin addressed "A Letter to American Workers." At that time the US Government was actively engaged in a war of intervention against the Soviet Union, along with its British and Japanese partners. At the same time Washington was giving complete support to the armies of the most vicious internal enemies of the peoples of the USSR in their terrorist attempts to overthrow the socialist regime.

Lenin's letter is in essence a report to the American people on what the Bolsheviks and the Soviet peoples were doing, their objectives, the enemies, both internal and external, who were trying to block the future. It was an appeal to the American workers to circumvent—in their own self-interest—the efforts of their government to overthrow the first socialist republic.

In this letter, Lenin reveals his great knowledge of US history and social and economic conditions.

"A Letter to American Workers" first appeared in the December 1918 issue of Class Struggle, *a magazine published by US Socialists. Shortly thereafter, it was reprinted as a pamphlet. But that was an emasculated, garbled translation of the original. The first complete, correct translation of the letter was published in the United States by International Publishers in 1934.*

COMRADES: A Russian Bolshevik who participated in the Revolution of 1905 and for many years afterwards lived in your country has offered to transmit my letter to you. I accepted his proposal all the more joyfully, because the American revolutionary proletarians are destined precisely now to play an especially important role as irreconcilable foes of American imperialism, which is the newest, strongest and latest to participate in the worldwide slaughter of nations for the division of capitalist profits. Precisely now the American billionaires, these contemporary slaveowners, have opened a particularly tragic page in the bloody history of bloody imperialism by giving their approval—it makes no difference whether direct or indirect, whether open or hypocritically covered up—to an armed expedition of the Anglo-Japanese beasts for the purpose of strangling the first Socialist republic.

The history of modern civilized America opens with one of those great, really liberating, really revolutionary wars of which there have been so few among the large number of wars of conquest that were caused, like the present imperialist war, by squabbles among kings, landowners and capitalists over the division of seized lands and stolen profits. It was a war of the American people against English robbers who subjected America and held it in colonial slavery as these "civilized" bloodsuckers are even now subjecting and holding in colonial slavery hundreds of millions of people in India, Egypt and in all corners of the world.

Since that time about 150 years have passed. Bourgeois civilization has borne all its luxuriant fruits. By the high level of development of the productive forces of organized human labor, by utilizing machines and all the wonders of modern technique, America has taken the first place among free and cultured nations. But at the same time America has become one of the foremost countries as regards the depth of the abyss which divides a handful of brazen billionaires who are wallowing in dirt and in luxury on the one hand, and millions of toilers who are always on the verge of starvation. The American people, who gave the world an example of a revolutionary war against feudal subjection, now appears as a new, capitalist wage slave of a handful of billionaires; finds itself playing the role of a hired assassin for the wealthy gang, having strangled the Philippines in 1898 under the pretext of "liberating" them, and strangling the Russian Socialist Republic in 1918 under the pretext of "protecting" it from the Germans.

But four years of the imperialist slaughter of peoples have not passed in vain. Obvious and irrefutable facts have exposed to the end the duping of peoples by the scoundrels of both the English and the German group of brigands. The four years of war have shown in their results the general law of capitalism as applied to war between murderers for the division of spoils: that he who was richest and mightiest profited and robbed the most; that he who was weakest was robbed, decimated, crushed and strangled to the utmost.

In number of "colonial slaves" the English imperialist cutthroats have always been most powerful. English capitalists did not lose a foot of their "own" territory (acquired through centuries of robbery) but have managed to appropriate all the German colonies in Africa, have grabbed Mesopotamia and Palestine, have stifled Greece and have begun to plunder Russia.

German imperialist cutthroats were stronger in regard to the organization and discipline of "their" armies, but weaker in colonies. They have lost all their colonies, but have robbed half of Europe and

throttled most of the small countries and weaker peoples. What a great war of "liberation" on both sides! How well they have "defended the fatherland"—these bandits of both groups, the Anglo-French and the German capitalists together with their lackeys, the social-chauvinists, *i.e.*, Socialists who went over to the side of *"their own"* bourgeoisie!

The American billionaires were richest of all and geographically the most secure. They have profited most of all. They have made all, even the richest countries, their vassals. They have plundered hundreds of billions of dollars. And every dollar is stained with filth: filthy secret pacts betwen England and her "allies," between Germany and her vassals, pacts on the division of spoils, pacts on mutual "aid" in oppressing the workers and persecuting the Socialists-internationalists. Every dollar is stained with the filth of "profitable" military deliveries enriching the rich and despoiling the poor in every country. And every dollar is stained with blood—of that sea of blood which was shed by the ten millions killed and twenty millions maimed in the great, noble, liberating and holy war, which was to decide whether the English, or the German cutthroats will get more of the spoils, whether the English or the German executioners will be the *first* to smother the weak peoples the world over.

While the German bandits established a record of military brutalities, the English established a record not only in the number of looted colonies, but also in the subtlety of their disgusting hypocrisy. Precisely now the Anglo-French and American bourgeois press is spreading in millions upon millions of copies their lies and calumnies about Russia, hypocritically justifying their predatory expedition against her by the alleged desire to "protect" Russia from the Germans!

It is not necessary to waste many words to disprove this despicable and hideous lie; it is sufficient to point out one well-known fact. When, in October 1917, the Russian workers overthrew their imperialist government, the Soviet power, the power of revolutionary workers and peasants openly proposed a just peace, a peace without annexations and indemnities, a peace fully guaranteeing equal rights to all nations —and proposed such a peace to *all* the countries at war.

And it was the Anglo-French and the American bourgeoisie who refused to accept our proposals; they were the very ones who even refused to talk to us of a universal peace! Precisely *they* were the ones who acted treacherously towards the interests of all peoples by prolonging the imperialist slaughter.

Precisely they were the ones who, speculating upon a renewed participation of Russia in the imperialist war, have shunned peace

negotiations and thereby given a free hand to the no less marauding German capitalists in foisting upon Russia the annexationist and violent Brest Peace![1]

It is difficult to imagine a more disgusting piece of hypocrisy than the one with which the Anglo-French and American bourgeoisie now put upon us the "blame" *for* the Brest Peace. The very capitalists of those countries upon which it depended to turn Brest into general negotiations for world peace are now our "accusers." The scoundrels of Anglo-French imperialism who profited from the loot of colonies and from the slaughter of peoples, and who prolonged the war almost a year after Brest—they "accuse" *us*, the Bolsheviks, who proposed a just peace to all countries; *us*, who tore up, exposed and put to shame the secret criminal treaties of the former Tsar with the Anglo-French capitalists.

The workers of the whole world, in whatever country they may live, rejoice with us and sympathize with us, applaud us for having burst the iron ring of imperialist ties, dirty imperialist treaties, imperialist chains, for having dreaded no sacrifice, however great, to free ourselves, for having established ourselves as a socialist republic, even though rent asunder and plundered by the imperialists, for having gotten *out* of the imperialist war and having raised the banner of peace, the banner of socialism over the world.

No wonder that for this we are hated by the band of international imperialists; no wonder that they all "accuse" us and that the lackeys of imperialism including our Right Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, also "accuse" us. From the hatred of these watchdogs of imperialism for the Bolsheviks, as well as from the sympathy of class-conscious workers of all countries, we draw new assurance in the justice of our cause.

He is no socialist who does not understand that one cannot and *must* not hesitate to make even such a sacrifice as the sacrifice of a piece of territory, the sacrifice of a heavy defeat at the hands of capitalists of other countries, the sacrifice of indemnities to capitalists, in the interest of victory over the bourgeoisie, in the interest of transfer of power to the working class, in the interest of the *beginning* of the international proletarian revolution. He is no socialist who has not shown by *deeds* his readiness for the greatest sacrifices on the part of *his* fatherland so that the cause of the socialist revolution may be pushed forward.

[1] The treaty signed in Brest-Litovsk, March 1918, between the Soviet Government and the Central Powers. [This and all subsequent footnotes are by the late Alexander Trachtenberg, editor of the 1934 printing of Lenin's letter.]

For the sake of "their" cause, that is, the conquest of world hegemony, the imperialists of England and Germany have not hesitated to ruin and to strangle a whole series of countries from Belgium and Serbia to Palestine and Mesopotamia. And what about the socialists? Shall they, for the sake of "their" cause—the liberation of the workers of the whole world from the yoke of capital, the conquest of a universal lasting peace—wait until they can find a way that entails no sacrifice? Shall they be afraid to commence the battle until an easy victory is "guaranteed"? Shall they place the integrity and safety of "their" fatherland, created by the bourgeoisie, above the interests of the world socialist revolution? Thrice they deserve utmost contempt, this scum of international socialism, these lackeys of bourgeois morality who think along these lines.

The beasts of prey of Anglo-French and American imperialism "accuse" us of coming to an "agreement" with German imperialism.

O hypocrites! O scoundrels, who slander the workers' government and shiver from fear of that sympathy which is being shown us by the workers of "their own" countries! But their hypocrisy will be exposed. They pretend not to understand the difference between an agreement made by "socialists" *with* the bourgeoisie (native or foreign) *against the workers*, against the toilers, and an agreement for the safety of the workers who have defeated their bourgeoisie, with a bourgeoisie of one national color *against* the bourgeoisie of another color for the sake of the utilization by the proletariat of the contradictions between the different groups of the bourgeoisie.

In reality every European knows the difference very well, and the American people particularly, as I shall presently show, have "experienced" it in their own history. There are agreements and agreements, there are *fagots et fagots* as the French say.

When the German imperialist robbers, in February 1918, threw their armies against defenseless, demobilized Russia, which staked its hopes upon the international solidarity of the proletariat before the international revolution had completely ripened, I did not hesitate for a moment to come to a certain "agreement" with the French monarchists. The French captain Sadoul, who sympathized in words with the Bolsheviks while in deeds a faithful servant of French imperialism, brought the French officer de Lubersac to me. "I am a monarchist. My only purpose is the defeat of Germany," de Lubersac declared to me. "That goes without saying (*cela va sans dire*)," I replied. But this by no means prevented me from coming to an "agreement" with de Lubersac concerning certain services that French officers, experts in explosives, were ready to render by blowing up

railroad tracks in order to prevent the advance of German troops against us. This was an example of an "agreement" of which every class-conscious worker will approve, an agreement in the interests of socialism. We shook hands with the French monarchist although we knew that each of us would readily hang his "partner." But for a time our interests coincided. To throw back the rapacious advancing Germans *we* made use of the equally rapacious counter-interests of the other imperialists, thereby serving the interests of the Russian and the international socialist revolution. In this way we served the interests of the working class of Russia and other countries, we strengthened the proletariat and weakened the bourgeoisie of the whole world, we used the justified practice of maneuvering, necessary in *every* war, of shifting and waiting for the moment when the rapidly growing proletarian revolution in a number of advanced countries had *ripened.*

And despite all the wrathful howling of the sharks of Anglo-French and American imperialism, despite all the calumnies they have showered upon us, despite all the millions spent for bribing the right Socialist-Revolutionary, Menshevik and other social-patriotic newspapers, *I would not hesitate a single second* to come to the *same kind* of an "agreement" with the German imperialist robbers, should an attack upon Russia by Anglo-French troops demand it. And I know perfectly well that my tactics will meet with the approval of the class-conscious proletariat of Russia, Germany, France, England, America—in a word, of the whole civilized world. Such tactics will lighten the task of the socialist revolution, will hasten its advance, will weaken the international bourgeoisie, will strengthen the position of the working class which is conquering it.

The American people used these tactics long ago to the advantage of its revolution. When America waged its great war of liberation against the English oppressors, it was confronted with the French and the Spanish oppressors, who owned a portion of what is now the United States of North America. In its difficult war for freedom the American people, too, made "agreements" with one group of oppressors against the other for the purpose of weakening oppressors and strengthening those who were struggling in a revolutionary manner against oppression—in the interest of the oppressed *masses.* The American people utilized the difference that existed between the French, the Spanish and the English, at times even fighting side by side with the armies of the French and Spanish oppressors against the English oppressors. First it vanquished the English and then freed itself (partly by purchase) from the French and the Spanish.

The great Russian revolutionist Chernyshevsky once said: "Historical action is not the pavement of *Nevsky Prospect.*"[2] He is no revolutionist who would "permit" the proletarian revolution only under the "condition" that it proceed easily, smoothly, with the coordinated and simultaneous action of the proletarians of different countries and with a guarantee beforehand against defeat; that the revolution go forward along the broad, free, direct path to victory, without the necessity sometimes of making the greatest sacrifices, of "lying in wait in besieged fortresses," or of climbing along the narrowest, most impassable, winding, dangerous mountain roads—he has not freed himself from the pedantry of bourgeois intellectualism, he will fall back again and again into the camp of the counterrevolutionary bourgeoisie, like our Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and even (although more seldom) the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries.

Along with the bourgeoisie these gentlemen like to blame us for the "chaos" of revolution, the "destruction" of industry, the unemployment, the lack of food. What hypocrisy these accusations are from people who greeted and supported the imperialist war or came to an "agreement" with Kerensky, who continued this war! It is that very imperialist war which is the cause of all these misfortunes. The revolution that was born of the war must necessarily go through the terrible difficulties and sufferings left as the heritage of the prolonged, destructive, reactionary slaughter of the peoples. To accuse us of "destruction" of industries, or of "terror," is either hypocrisy or

[2] Reference is here made to the smoothness of the pavement of the famed main street of St. Petersburg, now Leningrad.

FROM CPSU THESES ON LENIN CENTENARY

V. I. LENIN teaches that only highly-developed industrial production in all branches of the national economy based on the latest achievements in science and technology can be the material basis of socialism. . . . The main direction in creating new productive forces on the basis of electric power, the complex employment of the natural wealth, the introduction of advanced techniques, technology and organization of production was envisaged in the State Plan for the Electrification of Russia (GOELRO) drawn up under Lenin's guidance. In conformity with Lenin's teaching the working people of the land of Soviets have carried out the country's industrialization. . . in a very short historical period. . . and advanced the USSR into the ranks of the more industrially developed powers in the world. . . . The real income of the workers. . . increased on the average for each employed seven times as against 1913; the real income of the peasants, increased during this period by almost eleven times.

Pravda, December 23, 1969

clumsy pedantry; it is an inability to understand the basic conditions of the raging class struggle, intensified to the utmost, which is called revolution.

Generally speaking, such "accusers" limit themselves to a verbal recognition even when they do "recognize" the class struggle, but in deeds they revert again and again to the philistine Utopia of "conciliation" and "collaboration" of classes. For the class struggle in revolutionary times has always inevitably and in every country taken on the form of a *civil war*, and civil war is unthinkable without the worst kind of destruction, without terror and limitations of formal democracy in the interests of the war. Only suave priests, be they Christian or "secular" parliamentary or parlor socialists, are unable to see, understand and feel this necessity. Only a lifeless "man in the case"[3] can shun the revolution for this reason instead of throwing himself into the fight with the utmost passion and decisiveness at a moment when history demands that the greatest problems of humanity be solved by struggle and war.

The American people has a revolutionary tradition adopted by the best representatives of the American proletariat, who gave repeated expression to their full solidarity with us, the Bolsheviks. This tradition is the war of liberation against the English in the 18th and the Civil War in the 19th century. If we are to take only into consideration the "destruction" of some branches of industry and national economy, America in 1870 was in some respects *behind* 1860. But what a pedant, what an idiot is he who denies on such grounds the greatest, world-historic, progressive and revolutionary significance of the American Civil War of 1861-1865!

Representatives of the bourgeoisie understand that it was worth letting the country go through long years of civil war, the abysmal ruin, destruction and terror which are connected with every war for the sake of the overthrow of Negro slavery and the overthrow of the rule of the slaveowners. But now, when we are confronted with the vastly greater task of the overthrow of capitalist *wage* slavery, the overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie—now the representatives and defenders of the bourgeoisie, as well as the socialist-reformists, frightened by the bourgeoisie and shunning the revolution, cannot understand and do not want to understand the necessity and the legality of civil war.

The American workers will not follow the bourgeoisie. They will be with us for civil war against the bourgeoisie. The whole history of

[3] The title of a story by Anton Chekhov. The hero is hemmed in by routine like a clam in its shell.

the world and the American labor movement strengthens my conviction. I also recall the words of one of the most beloved leaders of the American proletariat, Eugene Debs, who wrote in *The Appeal to Reason*, I believe towards the end of 1915, in the article "In Whose War I Will Fight"[4] (I quoted that article at the beginning of 1916 at a public meeting of workers in Berne, Switzerland) that he, Debs, would rather be shot than vote for loans for the present criminal and reactionary imperialist war; that he, Debs, knows of only one holy and, from the standpoint of the proletariat, legal war, namely: the war against the capitalists, the war for the liberation of mankind from wage slavery!

I am not at all surprised that Wilson, the head of the American billionaires and servant of the capitalist sharks, has thrown Debs into prison. Let the bourgeoisie be brutal to the true internationalists, the true representatives of the revolutionary proletariat! The more obduracy and bestiality it displays, the nearer comes the day of the victorious proletarian revolution.

We are blamed for the destruction caused by our revolution. . . . Who are the accusers? The hangers-on of the bourgeoisie, that very bourgeoisie, which has destroyed almost the whole of European culture during the four years of the imperialist war, and has brought Europe to a state of barbarism, savagery and starvation. That bourgeoisie now demands of us that we do not carry on our revolution on the basis of this destruction, amidst the remnants of culture, ruins created by the war, nor with men whom the war turned into savages. O how humane and righteous is that bourgeoisie!

Its servants accuse us of terror. . . . The English bourgeois has forgotten his 1649, the French his 1793.[5] Terror was just and legal when used by the bourgeoisie to its own advantage against feudalism. Terror became monstrous and criminal when workers and the poorest peasants dared to use it against the bourgeoisie! Terror was legal and just when used in the interests of a substitution of one exploiting minority for another. Terror became monstrous and criminal when it began to be used in the interests of an overthrow of *every* exploiting minority, in the interests of a really vast majority, in the interests of the proletariat and semi-proletariat, the working class and the poorest peasantry!

[4] *Appeal to Reason*, September 11, 1915. Reprinted in *Voices of Revolt*, Vol. IX, "Speeches of Eugene V. Debs" (International Publishers), p. 63.

[5] The execution of King Charles I and the suppression of opposition during the régime of Cromwell in England, and the terror during the Great French Revolution.

LENIN ON SOCIALISM

WE SHALL now proceed to build, on the space cleared of historical rubbish, the airy, towering edifice of the socialist society. A new type of state power is being created for the first time in history, a power that the will of the revolution has called upon to wipe out all exploitation, oppression and slavery the world over.

(At the third all-Russian Congress of Soviets, January 1918)

SOCIALISM cannot be decreed from above. Its spirit rejects the mechanical, bureaucratic approach; living, creative socialism is the product of the masses themselves.

(At meeting of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, November 17, 1917)

The international imperialist bourgeoisie has killed off ten million men and maimed twenty million in *"its"* war, the war to decide whether the English or the German robbers are to rule the world.

If *our* war, the war of oppressed and exploited against oppressors and exploiters, results in half a million or a million victims in all countries, the bourgeoisie will say that the sacrifice of the former is justified, while the latter is criminal.

The proletariat will say something altogether different.

Now, amid the ravages of the imperialist war, the proletariat is thoroughly mastering that great truth taught by all revolutions and left as a heritage to the workers by their best teachers, the founders of modern socialism. That truth is, that there can be no successful revolution without *crushing the resistance of the exploiters.* It was our duty to crush the resistance of exploiters when we, the workers and toiling peasants, seized state power. We are proud that we have been doing it and are continuing to do it. We only regret that we are not doing it in a sufficiently firm and determined manner.

We know that the fierce resistance of the bourgeoisie to the Socialist revolution is inevitable in all countries and that it will *grow* with the growth of this revolution. The proletariat will crush this resistance; it will definitely mature to victory and power in the course of struggle against the resisting bourgeoisie.

Let the kept bourgeois press howl to the whole world about each mistake made by our revolution. We are not afraid of our mistakes. Men have not become saints because the revolution has begun. The toiling classes, oppressed and downtrodden for centuries and forced

into the clutches of poverty, savagery and ignorance, cannot be expected to bring about a revolution flawlessly. And the cadaver of bourgeois society, as I had occasion to point out once before,[6] cannot be nailed in a casket and buried. Defeated capitalism is dying and rotting around us, polluting the air with germs and poisoning our lives, grasping the new, the fresh, the young and the live with thousands of threads and bonds of the old, the rotten, the dead.

For every hundred mistakes of ours heralded to the world by the bourgeoisie and its lackeys (including our own Mensheviks and Right Social-Revolutionaries) there are 10,000 great and heroic deeds, the greater and the more heroic for their simplicity, for their being unseen and hidden in the everyday life of an industrial quarter or provincial village, performed by men who are not used to (and who do not have the opportunity to) herald their achievements to the world.

But even if the contrary were true—although I know this supposition to be incorrect—even if there were 10,000 mistakes for every 100 correct actions of ours, even in that case our revolution would be great and invincible, and *so it will be in the eyes of world history,* because, *for the first time* not the minority, not only the rich, not only the educated, but the real masses, the vast majority of toilers are *themselves* building a new life, are deciding *by their own experience* the most difficult problems of socialist organization.

Each mistake in such a work, in this most honest and sincere work of tens of millions of simple workers and peasants for the reorganization of their whole life, each such mistake is worth thousands and millions of "faultless" successes of the exploiting minority —successes in swindling and duping the toilers. For only *through* such mistakes will the workers and peasants *learn* to build a new life, learn to do *without* capitalists; only thus will they blaze a new trail—through thousands of obstacles—to a victorious socialism.

In carrying on their revolutionary work mistakes were made by our peasants who abolished all private landed property at one blow in one night, October 25-26 (Nov. 7), 1917. Now, month after month, overcoming tremendous hardships and correcting themselves, they are solving in a practical way the most difficulty tasks of organizing new conditions of economic life—struggling with kulaks, securing the land for the *toilers* (and not for the rich people) and bringing about the transition to a *communist* large-scale agriculture.

In carrying on their revolutionary work mistakes were made by

[6] In a speech before the Joint Session of the Central Executive Committee, the Moscow Soviet and the Trade Unions on June 4, 1918.

our workers, who have now nationalized, after a few months, almost all the major factories and plants and who are learning from hard, day-to-day work the new task of managing whole branches of industry; who are perfecting the nationalized economy; who are overcoming the powerful resistance of inertia, petty-bourgeois tendencies and selfishness; who are laying stone after stone the foundation of a *new* social bond, of a *new* labor discipline, of a *new* power of trade unions of workers over their members.

In carrying on their revolutionary work mistakes are made by our soviets, which were created back in 1905 by a mighty upsurge of the masses. The soviets of workers and peasants are a new *type* of state, a new and higher *type* of democracy, the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat, a means of ruling the state *without* the bourgeoisie and *against* the bourgeoisie. For the first time democracy serves the masses, the toilers, having ceased to be a democracy for the rich, as it still remains in all the bourgeois republics, even the most democratic ones. For the first time the popular masses are deciding, on a scale affecting hundreds of millions of people, the task of realizing the dictatorship of proletarians and semi-proletarians—a task without the solution of which one *cannot* speak about socialism.

Let the pedants, or people hopelessly stuffed with bourgeois-democratic or parliamentary prejudices, shake their heads perplexedly about our soviets, for instance, about the lack of direct elections. These people forgot nothing and learned nothing during the period of the great upheavals of 1914-1918. A union of the dictatorship of the proletariat with a new democracy for the toilers—civil war with the broadest involving of the masses in politics—such union is neither to be achieved at once nor is it to be fitted into the dreary forms of routine parliamentary democracy. A new world, the world of socialism, is what rises before us in its contours as the Soviet Republic. And it is no wonder that this world is not being born ready-made and does not spring forth all at once, like Minerva from the head of Jupiter.

While old bourgeois-democratic constitutions spoke about formal equality and right of assembly, our proletarian and peasant Soviet constitution casts aside the hypocrisy of formal equality. When bourgeois republicans overthrew thrones they did not care about formal equality of monarchists with republicans. When we speak of the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, only traitors or idiots will seek to concede to the bourgeoisie formal equality of rights. The "freedom of assembly" for workers and peasants is not worth a cent

when the best buildings are in the hands of the bourgeoisie. Our soviets *took away* all the good buildings from the rich both in town and country, and *turned over* all these buildings to the workers and peasants for *their* unions and meetings. That is *our* freedom of assembly—for the toilers. That is the idea and content of our Soviet, Socialist Constitution!

And this is why we are so firmly convinced that our Republic of Soviets is *invincible* no matter what misfortunes befall her.

It is invincible, because each blow of frenzied imperialism, each defeat which we suffer from the international bourgeoisie, calls to struggle new strata of workers and peasants, teaches them at the price of the greatest sacrifices, hardens them and gives birth to new mass heroism.

We know that help from you, comrades American workers, will probably not come soon, for the development of the revolution proceeds with a different tempo and in different forms in different countries (and it cannot be otherwise). We know that the European proletarian revolution also may not blaze forth during the next few weeks,[7] no matter how rapidly it has been ripening lately. We stake our chances on the inevitability of the international revolution, but this in no way means that we are so foolish as to stake our chances on the inevitability of the revolution within a *stated* short period. We have seen in our country two great revolutions, in 1905 and in 1917, and we know that revolutions are made neither to order nor by agreement. We know that circumstances brought to the fore *our* Russian detachment of the socialist proletariat, not by virtues of our merits, but due to the particular backwardness of Russia, and that *before* the outbursts of the international revolution there may be several defeats of separate revolutions.

Despite this, we are firmly convinced that we are invincible, because mankind will not break down under the imperialist slaughter, but will overcome it. And the first country which *demolished* the galley chains of imperialist war, was *our* country. We made the greatest of sacrifices in the struggle for the demolition of this chain, but we *broke* it. We are beyond imperialist dependence, we raised before the whole world the banner of struggle for the complete overthrow of imperialism.

We are now as if in a beleaguered fortress until other detachments of the international socialist revolution come to our rescue. But these detachments *exist,* they are *more numerous* than ours,

[7] The German Revolution broke out about ten weeks after these lines were written.

they mature, they grow, they become stronger as the bestialities of imperialism continue. The workers sever connections with their social-traitors — the Gomperses, Hendersons, Renaudels, Scheidemanns, Renners.[8] The workers are going slowly, but unswervingly, towards Communist, Bolshevik tactics, towards the proletarian revolution, which is the only one capable of saving perishing culture and perishing mankind.

In a word, we are invincible, because the world proletarian revolution is invincible.

AUGUST 20, 1918. N. LENIN.

First published in Pravda, *No. 178, August 22, 1918.*

PYOTR TRAVIN

How Lenin's Letter Was Delivered

Lenin begins his "Letter to American Workers": "Comrades: A Russian Bolshevik who participated in the Revolution of 1905 and for many years afterward lived in your country has offered to transmit my letter to you." In the following pages, that "Russian Bolshevik" tells how he brought the letter to the United States. His recollections of this event were originally published in Soviet Woman, *No. 4, 1964.*

IT HAPPENED forty-five years ago, but I remember everything in minute detail. After twelve years of political exile in the United States I was going home to Russia. It was the autumn of 1918 and the voyage was not easy to arrange. I had to change my name and grow a beard to look a little older, because Russia's Provisional Government had invited the United States to railroad Russian political émigrés under forty into its armed forces.

I had a hard time surmounting all the obstacles. Finally, I reached Stockholm, where there was a Soviet plenipotentiary representation. In charge of it was the well-known Soviet diplomat, Vatslav Vorovsky, who asked me a lot of questions and then, looking at me fixedly, said:

"You'll have to go back to the United States, you know."

I was stupefied. No, no, a thousand times no!

Vorovsky sensed how I felt and told me that Lenin had written

[8] Right-wing leaders of American, English, French, German and Austrian socialist and trade union movements.

a letter to the American workers already on August 20. It was in his safe, he said, and he could not think of anyone better fitted than I to carry it to its destination.

I was mollified at once, and lost no time making plans.

A few minutes later, I was already intently reading the closely typed sheets of Lenin's message, three copies of which, typed on tissue-thin paper, Vorovsky had handed to me.

Years earlier, in 1905, while still in Riga, I had read Lenin's articles in the newspaper *Vperyod.* In America I had studied *What Is to Be Done?, One Step Forward, Two Steps Back,* and others of Lenin's works. Always I admired his practice of stating the truth, no matter how bitter, in simple fitting words.

As I read the "Letter to American Workers," this admiration gripped me again. Lenin did not mince words in telling them the whole truth. He outlined the difficult situation of the young Soviet Republic, but his every line breathed optimism and faith in victory. How right he was to address the Americans! It was important to inform the American people of the truth about the Soviet Republic.

Vorovsky also gave me some Soviet newspapers containing some of the Soviet Government's decrees, the Note to President Wilson, and the text of the Constitution of the R.S.F.S.R.

I traveled to Copenhagen, from where I hoped to ship as a sailor to an American port. My plan struck many snags, but at last I was taken on as the assistant carpenter aboard the liner "St. Olaf," which was on the Copenhagen-New York run. But in New York the police said my papers weren't valid and would not let me come ashore. Finally, I was allowed to go to a bar around the corner against a deposit of five dollars. Naturally, I did not return to the ship.

When I arrived downtown, I telephoned John Reed. We had met in Chicago at a mass meeting the previous summer, where Reed spoke after his return from Russia, and I trusted him implicitly.

We met and when Reed learned what I had brought he was tremendously pleased and said that the material brought should be made known to the public.

A few of us got down to translating the material. Reed edited our translations, and we sent them to the newspapers and magazines. Interest in Russian affairs was running high and many papers, even the reactionary ones, printed our contributions.

Complications arose over the Note to Wilson. It was an official document and Washington had kept it from the American people. None of the papers, we knew, would print it. But Reed had a brainwave. It was very likely that Republican Senator Johnson, who was

sharply opposed to the Democrats, then the majority party, would throw discretion to the winds if given a chance to make a thrust against the Administration.

Senator Johnson did not fail us. "Now I'll show those Democrats!" he exclaimed as he ran his eyes over the document. A few days later he read the Note to the Senate, accompanied with a few remarks of his own.

The "Hands Off Russia" movement spread swiftly. Congressmen received hundreds of letters from fathers, mothers, and wives, demanding that their sons and husbands in the interventionist US expeditionary force in Russia be shipped home. Acts of sabotage occurred when reinforcements and armaments were being loaded for the US troops in Russia.

In Autumn 1919, again as a ship's carpenter, I sailed back to Europe. It was a difficult journey and I won't go into details. I reached Russia in October.

A few days later I was received by Lenin. That is a memory I cherish more than any other.

I wanted to be punctual, but could not help myself and arrived in the Kremlin before the appointed time. I cannot remember now how long I waited in the reception room, my heart beating wildly, until Lydia Fotieva, Lenin's secretary, invited me to his study.

Lenin was waiting at his desk, seated in an armchair with a wicker-work back. When he heard me enter, he rose lightly to his feet and offered me his hand.

"I'm glad to see you, Comrade Travin. How are you? Are you comfortably settled? Thank you for coping so well with your task."

He motioned me to a leather armchair, took a seat himself, and said:

"Now tell me all about it. I want to know everything, down to the smallest detail."

As I proceeded with my account, his expression kept changing. He smiled at some of my adventures, frowned at others, and when he heard how Reed had incited Senator Johnson, he burst out laughing.

He questioned me at length about the Russian political émigrés in the United States, about the League for the Recognition of Soviet Russia, and about John Reed, of whom he spoke very warmly.

As we parted, Lenin asked me about my plans.

"I'm a railway engineer," I said. "There's more than enough work for me here in that field."

Lenin wished me success.

PHILIP S. FONER

Lenin and the American Working-Class Movement

The United States is one of the most advanced countries of present-day capitalism. The United States has no rival either in the rapidity of the development of capitalism at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century nor in the high stage of development it has already achieved. America is also unrivaled in its tremendous area and in its advanced technique, the last word in science—a technique that takes into account the remarkable variety of natural-historical conditions. America is also unrivaled in its political freedom and in the cultural level of the masses of the population. The ideal of our bourgeois civilization is in many respects indebted to this country.

THUS V. I. Lenin described the United States in his important study, *New Data on the Laws of Capitalist Development in Agriculture: Capitalism and Agriculture in the United States of America,* written in October 1913. But Lenin made it clear in this and other writings dealing with the United States before the October Revolution that in this highly developed capitalist country, a class conflict was emerging sharply. "No democracy in the world," he wrote in 1913, "puts aside the class struggle and the ubiquitous power of money." And nowhere was this "power" as blatant as in the United States.[1] In early 1914, Lenin observed:

> There is no nobility in the United States of America, and the bourgeoisie and proletariat have equal political rights. But they are not equal according to their class position: one, the class of capitalists, owns the means of pro-

[1] Quoted in Charles H. Holbrow, "Lenin's Views of the United States," unpublished M.A. thesis, Columbia University, 1957, p. 30.

PHILIP S. FONER is the author of a multi-volume *History of the Labor Movement in the United States,* a four-volume *Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass, A History of Cuba, The Bolshevik Revolution: Its Impact on American Radicals, The Autobiographies of the Haymarket Martyrs,* and numerous other works, with several books on Black Americans in progress. He has lectured in Soviet, GDR and Cuban universities and scientific institutes. He is a member of the Board of Editors of the *Journal of Negro History.* Dr. Foner is now teaching Black History and Organized Labor and the Black Workers at Lincoln University.

duction and lives on the unearned product of the labor of the workers; the other, the class of wage earners, the proletariat, does not possess the means of production and lives by the sale to the market of its own labor forces.[2]

That same year, a year of economic crisis and rising unemployment in the United States, Lenin noted that while the "insolent billionaires" were "choking in filth and luxury," the condition of the American worker was going from bad to worse:

> America, along with other countries, is suffering from widespread unemployment and a constantly rising cost of living. Destitution among workers is becoming more intense and intolerable. American statistics show that approximately half of all workers are not fully employed. . . .
>
> The country is already immeasurably rich. It can treble its wealth in no time; it can treble the productivity of its social labor and thereby insure for all its workers and their families a decent earning level worthy of a sensible human being, along with a reasonable working day period of six hours.
>
> However, owing to the nature of the capitalist system, frightful unemployment and poverty in large American cities, and in the countryside as well, and the wasteful dispersion of human labor, live side by side with the unheard-of luxury of the fabulously rich, whose fortunes run into billions.

Lenin pointed out that as the class conflict sharpened in the United States, the American workers were becoming more conscious of their duties, as witnessed by the fact that they were advancing as an immediate demand: "four thousand rubles ($2,000) for each working family and a six-hour working day."[3] To Lenin, the most important development on the American scene was the fact that "the American working class is rapidly becoming enlightened and is welding itself into a mighty proletarian party." What concerned him, however, was the failure of many radical labor and socialist forces to work effectively among the American masses and radicalize them in a socialist direction.[4]

Lenin first discussed this very issue in 1907 in his preface to the Russian translation of the book, *Letters of J. F. Becker, J. Dietzgen, F. Engels, K. Marx, and Others to F. A. Sorge and Others,* which he considered "a needed addition to our foremost Marxist literature." He commented approvingly on the criticism Marx and Engels di-

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 31.

[3] Early in the winter of 1913-14, the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) called for reduction of the length of the working day to six hours. (Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States,* Vol. IV; *The Industrial Workers of the World, 1905-1917,* New York, 1965, p. 436.) Lenin regarded the I.W.W. as "profoundly a proletarian movement."

[4] V. I. Lenin, "4000 Rubles per year and Six-Hour Working Day," Russian edition of Lenin's Collected Works, Vol. VII, p. 177. I am indebted to Mr. Yuri Perfilyev of the Institute of History, Academy of Sciences, Moscow, for furnishing me with an English translation of the article.

rected against the Socialists in the United States and England because of their isolation from the labor movement and their reduction of Marxism "to a dogma, to a rigid orthodoxy," a symbol of belief, whereas it really was "a *guide* to action," and that the Socialists were "incapable of adapting themselves to the theoretically helpless, but living, powerful mass labor movement marching past them." Lenin found "very interesting" Engels' observation in his letter of January 27, 1887 which asked: "Where would we be today, if in the period of 1864-1873, we had always insisted on going hand in hand with those only who openly recognized our program?" Lenin was impressed by the fact that in response to the request of Mrs. Florence Kelley Wishnewetsky that he thoroughly criticize Henry George, candidate for Mayor of New York in 1886 on the United Labor Party ticket, Engels had written "that the time was not yet ripe for that, for it is better to let the workers' party begin to consolidate itself, even if on a not altogether immaculate program. Later on the workers will themselves come to understand what is at stake, will 'learn from their own mistakes,' but 'anything that might delay or prevent that national consolidation of the workingmen's party—on no matter what platform—I should consider a great mistake.'" Lenin quotes approvingly from Engels' letter: "A million or two of workingmen's votes next November for a workingmen's party is worth infinitely more at present than a hundred thousand votes for a doctrinally perfect platform." And again: " . . . to hinder the national consolidation of the workers' party on no matter what basis or program I would consider a great mistake."

Lenin notes that Engels saw clearly the "absurdity and reactionary character" of George's single-tax and other social ideas, and understood that George was the ideologist of the radical bourgeoisie. But he adds: "Yet Engels was not afraid to join with this veritable *social reactionary* in the elections, provided there were people who could warn the masses of the 'consequences of their own mistakes.'" Lenin placed special emphasis on this policy:

> In countries where there are *no* Social-Democratic workers' parties, no Social-Democratic members of parliament, *no* systematic and consistent Social-Democratic policy either at elections or in the press, etc., Marx and Engels taught the Socialists *at all costs* to rid themselves of narrow sectarianism and *join* the labor movement so as to rouse the proletariat *politically.*

In short, Lenin noted:[5] "What Marx and Engels most of all

[5] Translated in *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Letters to Americans, 1848-1895,* New York, 1953, pp. 273-84. *See also* J. Fendel, "Lenin and the American Labor Movement," *Workers Monthly,* May, 1926, pp. 319-20.

criticize in British and American socialism is its isolation from the labor movement."

In these comments, Lenin pointed to a major weakness of the Socialist forces in the United States—their isolation from the labor movement—a weakness which he was to help eradicate. In the 1890's, the Socialist Labor Party was dominated by the followers of Daniel De Leon who regarded any labor organization which was not fully committed to Socialism as reactionary and worthy only of being destroyed. De Leon persuaded Socialist-minded unions to secede from the A.F. of L. and the Knights of Labor and join him in organizing a dual union, the Socialist Trades and Labor Alliance. This unfortunate mistaken step had two results: it removed from the A.F. of L. the forces who were challenging the conservative policies of the Gompers leadership, and by its unwillingness to fight for immediate demands it drove many workers into the camp of the conservative labor leaders.

This tendency was continued by the Industrial Workers of the World. The I.W.W. indeed conducted tremendous organizing campaigns among the unskilled workers in the great lumber camps and mills of the West and South, the wheat, fruit and vegetable ranches, the textile mills, and conducted spectacular strikes and free speech fights. Yet by abandoning the A.F. of L. and drawing out of the Federation the most militant, class-conscious and Socialist-minded forces, the I.W.W. left the organization to the control of the reactionary forces led by Gompers and his machine. A group of militants in the I.W.W., led by William Z. Foster, urged the I.W.W. to follow the lead of the French and British syndicalists, abandon "dual unionism," and "bore-from-within" the A.F. of L., making it an organization which would serve the needs of all workers and not solely the skilled craftsmen. But the I.W.W. completely rejected Foster's advice. The A.F. of L., in the eyes of most Wobblies, was not a labor organization, but "a job trust and nothing else," and it would be a waste of time and a violation of revolutionary principles to try to convert it to militant unionism.[6]

It was clear that nothing that could be said by the advocates of "boring-from-within" would have any influence in I.W.W. circles. However, a group of former Wobblies, led by Foster, began to work inside the unions of the A.F. of L., seeking to convert them to militant policies. They operated first through the Syndicalist League of North America, formed in 1912, and the International Trade Union Educational League, established in 1915. As a result of skillful and persistent activity, Foster and his followers were able in 1917 to persuade the A.F. of L. to start an organizing campaign among the packing-house workers in Chicago. With Foster as secretary of the organizing committee, and John Fitzpatrick, president of the Chicago Federation of Labor, as chairman, over 200,000 workers were organized. In 1918, Foster launched a real drive to organize the open-shop, mass production industries, beginning with steel. Foster gained the reluctant support of the A.F. of L. leadership for the plan, and became secretary of the National Steel Committee, with Fitzpatrick as chairman. In the fall of 1919, 365,000 steel workers went on strike for an eight-hour day, wage increases and other demands as well as union recognition, under Foster's leadership. The strike was lost after three and a half months because of brutal terror and sabotage by the A.F. of L. leadership. But it had proved that the great mass of the unorganized workers in the mass production industries were becoming radicalized.[7]

The radicalization in the thinking of the workers was to no small extent a product of the momentous events of 1917 and 1918—the collapse of the Romanov despotism in Russia and the establishment of the first Socialist state in history, the downfall of the Hapsburg and Hohenzollern regimes in Central Europe and their replacement by democratic and socialist regimes, the establishment of communist regimes in Hungary and Bavaria. These events created new hope and optimism in progressive, radical and labor circles in all parts of the United States. Practically every labor and progressive organization in the United States joined forces to support the October Revolution in Russia. Socialists, members of the I.W.W. and A.F. of L., Negro workers (who were especially impressed by Lenin's theses concerning national self-determination and reports of the success of his national policy), not only enthusiastically hailed the Bolshevik Revolution but felt that the attack on the working people of Soviet Russia was also an attack on American workers and progressive trends in American life.[8]

When the October Revolution was less than a year old, August 20, 1918, Lenin wrote "A Letter to American Workers." After explaining the imperialist nature of the war which was still raging and the attempts of the imperialist, capitalist governments, including that of the United States, to destroy the young Soviet Republic,

[6] *See* Philip S. Foner, History of the *Labor Movement*, Vol. II, New York, 1955; Vol. IV, New York, 1965.

[7] William Z. Foster, *From Bryan to Stalin*, New York, 1937, pp. 58-132.

[8] Philip S. Foner, *The Bolshevik Revolution: Its Impact on American Radicals, Liberals, and Labor*, New York, 1967, *passim*.

Lenin expressed confidence that the American workers would not stand by idly and allow this to occur:

> The American working-class will not follow the lead of the bourgeoisie. The whole history of the American people gives me this confidence, this conviction.[9]

Lenin's confidence was to be justified. All over the country, labor and progressive Americans defended the Russian Revolution. No labor body, however, was a more consistent defender than the Seattle Central Labor Council. Its official journal, the Seattle *Union Record,* published and distributed 20,000 copies of Lenin's speech, delivered in April 1918 to the Congress of Soviets, on the next tasks of organizing power. It was "avidly read by radicals up and down the Pacific Coast as well as in Seattle's shipyards." Since little or no authentic news about Russia was printed in the Seattle commercial press, the *Union Record* opened a Bureau of Russian Information which published from time to time reports of constructive work under the Bolsheviks.

The educational work conducted by the *Union Record* helps explain the fact that the longshoremen of Seattle halted an attempt to load arms for Kolchak. In September 1919, the longshoremen noticed a mysterious shipment by rail, a trainload of 50 freight cars, destined for Vladivostok, and labeled "sewing machines." When a longshore crew, suspicious of the cargo, allowed a crate to crash on the dock, out came stacks of rifles, bound for the Kolchak counter-revolutionary government. The longshoremen's union announced that its members would not touch the cargo, and that any dock that attempted to move it would be put under permanent ban. The union notified other ports of their action, and the example of the Seattle longshoremen was followed by many other American warterfront workers.

Unions helped form the Russian Soviet Recognition League, the Friends of Soviet Russia League, and other organizations to defend the socialist state, and members of the newly-founded Communist Party joined with Socialists, Wobblies and A.F. of L. members to demand an end to the intervention in Soviet Russia. "Hands-off-Russia" campaigns were launched in unions all over the United

[9] This is the text of the translation as it appeared in *The Class Struggle.* In a later, more accurate translation, this passage reads as follows: "The American workers will not follow the bourgeoisie. They will be with us for civil war against the bourgeoisie. The whole history of the world and the American labor movement strengthens my conviction." (*A Letter to American Workers,* New York, 1934, p. 17.)

States. Despite the fact that Gompers was bitterly opposed to the Soviet state, the struggle against intervention was waged at all A.F. of L. conventions. At the 1919 convention, the labor councils of Portland, Cleveland, Seattle, and the State of Pennsylvania introduced resolutions calling for the lifting of the blockade and the withdrawal of American troops from Russia. The committee on resolutions rejected them, but, bowing to the sentiment of the delegates, recommended the withdrawal of American troops "at the earliest possible moment."[10]

At the same 1919 A.F. of L. convention, radicalization in the thinking of the Federation's membership was also reflected in proposals calling for endorsement of a labor party, the election of officers of the Federation by referendum, and supporting the Plumb Plan which had been sponsored by the four railroad brotherhoods for the government operation of the railroad network. A majority of the delegates approved the resolution dealing with the Plumb Plan, and called for continuation of government ownership and operation of all the railroads, a process which had begun during the war.[11]

These developments in the American Federation of Labor encouraged William Z. Foster in the belief that at least the militants among the left-wing Socialists, the I.W.W., and the newly-organized Communist Party would see the necessity for working inside the Federation and join the developing opposition to Gompers' policies, which was becoming open and widespread among the affiliated unions. But to his dismay, the dominant view among these radical forces was still the old concept that the A.F. of L. had to be smashed. "The Left-Wing Manifesto," issued in June, 1919 by the National Council of the Left-Wing Socialists and published in *The Revolutionary Age* of July 5, 1919, reflected this old tendency by calling for the destruction of the A.F. of L. which it called "a bulwark of reaction."[12] The "Manifesto" completely ignored the radicalization occurring in the affiliated unions and among large groups of A.F. of L. members. In vain Foster argued for a reversal of the policy of "dual unionism." Among left-wing Socialists, Communists, and Wobblies of 1918-19, his arguments that revolutionists should and must work

[10] Foner, *The Bolshevik Revolution,* pp. 33ff., 141ff. In January 1920, the Supreme Allied War Council was forced to call off the blockade of Russia, and at the end of that year the American troops were evacuated from Archangel and Vladivostok.

[11] Philip S. Foner, The Trend of American Labor Toward Socialism," in *Toward a Socialist America,* edited by Helen Alfred, New York, 1958, pp. 212-13.

[12] *The Revolutionary Age,* July 5, 1919, p. 8.

in the existing trade unions were dismissed as treason to the working class.

Then on June 20, 1920, Lenin's classic work, *"Left-Wing" Communism: An Infantile Disorder,* was published in Russia, was simultaneously issued in English, and soon appeared in the United States. Chapter VI was entitled, "Should Revolutionaries Work in Reactionary Trade Unions?" Lenin's answer to this question was a devastating blow to the advocates of "dual unionism." He wrote:

> To refuse to work in the reactionary trade unions means leaving the masses under the influence of reactionary leaders, agents of the bourgeosie, labor aristocrats, or "bourgeoisified workers."
>
> It is just this absurd "theory" that Communists must not belong to reactionary trade unions that demonstrates most clearly how frivolously these "Left" Communists regard the question of influence over "the masses," how they misuse their outcries about "the masses." In order to be able to help "the masses," it is necessary to brave all difficulties and to be unafraid of the pinpricks, obstacles, insults and persecution of the "leaders" (who, being opportunists and social-chauvinists, are, in most cases, directly or indirectly connected with the bourgeoisie and the police), and it is imperatively necessary to *work wherever the masses are to be found.* Every sacrifice must be made, the greatest obstacles must be overcome, in order to carry on agitation and propaganda systematically, stubbornly, insistently, and patiently, precisely in all those institutions, societies, and associations to which proletarian or semi-proletarian masses belong, however ultra-reactionary they may be. And the trade unions and workers' co-operatives (the latter, at least sometimes), are precisely the organizations in which the masses are to be found. . . .
>
> If, in Russia today, after two and a half years of unprecedented victories over the bourgeoisie of Russia and the Entente, we were to make the "recognition of the dictatorship" a condition of membership in the trade unions, we should be doing a stupid thing, we should damage our influence over the masses, we should be helping the Mensheviks. For the whole task of the Communists is to be able to *convince* the backward elements, to be able to work *among* them, and not to *fence themselves off* from them by artificial and childishly "Left-wing" slogans.
>
> There can be no doubt that Messieurs the Gomperses, Hendersons, Jouhaux, Legiens, and the like, are very grateful to such "Left" revolutionaries, who, like the German opposition "on principle" (heaven preserve us from such "principles!") or like some revolutionaries in the American Industrial Workers of the World, advocate leaving the reactionary trade unions and refusing to work in them.[18]

Lenin's attack on "dual unionism" and the isolationist, sectarian policies of most of the radical forces in the American labor movement marked a turning point in the history of that movement. Speaking with the authority of the greatest living revolutionary

[18] V. I. Lenin, *"Left-Wing" Communism: An Infantile Disorder,* New York, 1934, pp. 36-38. Emphasis in original.

thinker and the architect of the Russian Revolution, Lenin's pamphlet clarified the thinking of the left-wing militants who had long insisted that to work inside the A.F. of L. was treason to the working class. In November 1920, Foster organized the Trade Union Educational League (T.U.E.L.) to achieve industrial unionism, the mass organization of the unskilled and semi-skilled workers who were outside the ranks of the A.F. of L., and the formation of a national American farmer-labor party. With the aid of many former advocates of "dual unionism," the League now began a policy of penetrating unions in the A.F. of L. with its progressive ideas and doctrines.

In spite of bitter opposition from the Federation's leadership, the League managed to carry on a ceaseless agitation against the conservative policies of the A.F. of L. Executive Council, and worked for amalgamation into larger unions, for industrial unionism to organize the unskilled, especially black and women workers, and for independent political action. In the mid-1920's, Foster, who, under the influence of Leninist writings, had abandoned his Syndicalist opposition to working class political action and had made the transition from Syndicalism to membership in the Communist Party, wrote:

> Under Lenin's withering assault [in *"Left-Wing" Communism*] the dual unionists of the left wing movement of the world retreated in disorder. In the United States their forces practically broke up altogether. And the United States was the real stronghold of dual unionism. Almost like a flash, the truth of Lenin's penetrating analysis came home to American revolutionists. The sophistries of dual unionism, whose great spokesman was De Leon, crumbled away. At the present time probably in no other country are the revolutionaries so awake to the fallacies of dual unionism and so alive to the correctness of Leninistic tactics in the trade unions as in the United States, formerly the very home of dual unionism and all the sectarian conceptions which went with it.
>
> For about four years now the left wing has been following the tactics and principles of Leninism in the trade unions. The great growth in power and influence of the Workers' Party [formerly the Communist Party] and the Trade Union Educational League in the struggle of the workers is ample proof of their correctness. To organize revolutionary groups within the mass trade unions, to work untiringly for a policy of class struggle as against one of class collaboration, to take the lead of the rank and file masses in all their struggles against their employers and the union bureaucracy—these are Leninistic policies which are building the left wing movement in the United States.
>
> Our experiences have taught us conclusively that the old time arguments of the impossibility of working within the ultra-reactionary A. F. of L. unions are fallacious. . . . Every revolutionist who hopes to become a factor in

the trade union movement and the whole struggle of the working class for emancipation must become acquainted with Lenin's great work in the field of trade unionism.[14]

The Leninist doctrine on the Negro question in the United States played an important role in the work of the T.U.E.L. among black workers. The Socialist Party had never recognized any need for a special program on the Negro question. It was considered purely and simply an economic problem, part of the struggle between the workers and capitalists; nothing could be done about the special problems of discrimination and inequality under capitalism and they would be automatically solved under socialism. The Negro worker was just like the white worker, a worker, and the Socialist Party had no special message for him. Even Eugene V. Debs, the best of the Socialist leaders, declared: "We have nothing special to offer the Negro, and we cannot make separate appeals to all the races. The Socialist Party is the party of the whole working-class, regardless of color—the whole working class of the whole world."

Even before the Russian Revolution, Lenin had shown concern for the problems of oppressed nations and national minorities, and had announced support of their struggles for freedom, independence and the right of self-determination. After November 1917, Lenin urged American Communists and others in the left-wing movements to pay attention to the special problems and grievances of the American Negroes, to concern themselves with their immediate demands and not repeat the past errors of the Socialists by ignoring them. This influenced the break with the traditional position of American radicalism on the Negro question which was important in the influence of the T.U.E.L. and the Communist Party among the Negro people, especially the black workers.[15]

Eventually the T.U.E.L. found it impossible, because of the wholesale expulsion of progressive A.F. of L. members, non-Communist as well as Communist, to work any longer inside the Federation.[16] But as the great economic depression grew worse in 1930

[14] William Z. Foster in Foreword to *Lenin and the Trade Union Movement* by A. Losovsky, Chicago, n.d., pp. 5-6. Published by the Trade Union Educational League.

[15] James S. Allen, "Lenin and the American Negro," *The Communist,* Vol. XIII, 1934, pp. 53-61.

[16] Following expulsion from the A. F. of L. unions, the left-wing forces advanced their program outside the Federation through the Trade Union Unity League, organized in 1928. But the T.U.U.L. was not viewed by its founders as a "dual union," but simply a means of advancing the program of organizing the unorganized and battling for those already organized until the progressive forces once again gained influence in the A. F. of L.

and 1931, the influence of the left-wingers, many of them Communists, again began to be felt inside the A.F. of L. One after another, the A.F. of L. unions were won around to the idea of compulsory federal unemployment insurance as a means of combating the depression, and by 1932 this pressure had become so strong that the Executive Council announced publicly that it had instructed President William Green to draw up plans for a federal unemployment insurance bill which was to be presented to Congress. With the coming of the New Deal, the feeling of dissatisfaction with the policies of the A.F. of L. leadership reached new heights. In 1935 a great new labor federation sprang into existence—the Committee for Industrial Organization (C.I.O.). The great strides in organization and membership strength which the American labor movement made after 1935 through the organization of the mass production industries by means of industrial unionism vindicated the program outlined by the T.U.E.L. in the 1920's. What had then been the position of the minority forces in the American Labor movement had become the program of the majority. And with the adoption of industrial unionism, organization of the unskilled and semi-skilled, especially Negroes, women, foreign-born and young workers—again a program advanced by the T.U.E.L.—there came a corresponding increase in labor's general political power.

It is true, of course, that the leaders of the C.I.O., like those of the A.F. of L., favored retention of the capitalist system, and that many of the newly-organized workers would in due time forget the radicalism which had made possible the growth of the industrial union movement. But it is essential not to overlook the all-important fact that for the first time in American labor history, a considerable portion of the industrial working class had been organized. For it is this class that will yet lead the transition from day-to-day struggle to socialism. As Lenin put it:

> Only a definite class, namely the urban and industrial workers in general, is able to lead the whole mass of the toilers and exploited in the struggle for the overthrow of the yoke of capital, in the process of this overthrowing, in the struggle to maintain and consolidate the victory, in the work of creating a new, socialist social system, in the struggle for the complete abolition of classes.[17]

Today many young American radicals are reading Lenin's *"Left-Wing" Communism* and learning the need to work more effectively among mass organizations for peace and freedom. Today, too, black

[17] V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works,* Russian Edition, Vol. XXIX, p. 387. I am indebted to Mr. Yuri Perfilyev for an English translation.

radicals are studying Lenin's works on the national question and using his principles in building the Black Liberation movement. And new trade union organizing drives to bring black workers into the labor movement, and, in the process, build a powerful alliance of labor and the black community is evidence of the validity of Lenin's thesis that the American working class will yet lead the way towards a new and better social order.

NIKOLAY KRYUKOV

The Soviet Ship *Shilka* In Seattle

In 1918, a letter from the dockers of Seattle, Washington was delivered to Soviet Russia. Addressed to "Nikolay Lenin and representatives of the Bolshevik government and through them to the workers of Russia," the letter said: "This message will reach you only by courtesy of the seamen of the transport Shilka—we have secretly handed them the letter to be transferred to you."

Mikhail Maguta, APN correspondent, had a meeting, in Leningrad, with Nikolay Kryukov, ex-commissar of the Shilka, who spoke to the workers of Seattle 52 years ago.

The following are his reminiscences about the trip to America.

I WAS born in St. Petersburg, in 1891, into the family of a roofer. For participating in revolutionary meetings my father and our whole family were exiled to Arkhangelsk Gubernia, North Russia. We had a big family, six kids, and that is why I had to get a job at the sawmills at the age of 13.

During the first Russian revolution I distributed leaflets and political literature, and took part in illegal meetings. In 1910, I was arrested for speaking at a workers' meeting against high taxes, and sentenced to a year in jail. On being released, in 1912, I was called up to serve in the Baltic Fleet. And for some time I was a machinist on the cruiser *Aurora*. Then I was transferred, as a security risk, to the Siberian Fleet in Vladivostok. In 1915, I was sentenced to eight years of solitary confinement for participating in an illegal meeting of dockers and naval sailors in Vladivostok. I was released soon after, thanks to a demand of the sailors.

When the Tsar was overthrown in February 1917, I was elected member of the Central Committee of the Siberian Military Fleet and

member of the Vladivostok City Soviet of Workers and Soldiers Deputies. And on the flagship *Pechenga*, following a decision of the crew, I was made the leader of the ship's revolutionary committee. At that time we were in Hong Kong.

Having learned of the overthrow of the Tsar, the seamen of the *Pechenga* and other ships refused to sail to Europe and to recognize Russia's Provisional Government. In June we returned to Vladivostok, and a Bolshevik Party organization was formed on the flagship. It was then that I joined the Communist Party and started taking an active part in forming Red Guard detachments. I volunteered for service in the Workers' and Peasants' Red Navy.

On November 25, 1917, I was appointed commissar of the military transport *Shilka*, which was to go to America on a special assignment from the Vladivostok Bolshevik organization.

TEN days after the October events in Petrograd, Soviet power was established in Vladivostok, too. The Soviets took some energetic steps to make revolutionary changes. Meanwhile world reaction, in close alliance with Russia's internal enemies, was preparing to strangle the Russian Revolution; they were conducting a fierce anti-Soviet campaign and slandering the world's first workers' republic. In the USA, for instance, the capitalists tried to eliminate the IWW (Industrial Workers of the World), which sympathized with the Bolsheviks. It was then that the dockers of Seattle wrote a letter to the Vladivostok Soviet asking it to send them some reliable and tested people who could tell the local workers the truth about Soviet power.

Why Did We Go?

THERE were many such letters coming to Vladivostok. The international contacts of the working people of Russia and the USA, especially between the Far Eastern Soviets and the workers' organizations of America's Pacific coast, were growing stronger. That is why the Vladivostok Soviet decided to send a ship with a special assignment to America. The question was discussed at a sitting of the Vladivostok Bolshevik Party Committee and the Vladivostok Soviets. I was invited to the sitting among others. Eventually, a decision was adopted to send the transport *Shilka* to America, with some experienced revolutionaries. A reply letter to Seattle dockers was discussed, and I was appointed engineer's mate and endorsed as political commissar. It was decided to keep secret the purpose of the first trip of a Soviet ship to the United States, until she arrived at her destination.

There was a good reason for choosing the *Shilka*. She had a reli-

able crew, and fine ocean-going properties. She carried 320 tons of coal and 300 tons of fresh water, and had a crew of 116 men. The ship was immediately put in drydock and readied in a week. Boris Bedel, ex-captain of the Russian Navy, was appointed skipper of our transport. He made no objections to accepting the decision of the Vladivostok Bolshevik Party Committee, and this was a good thing in itself, because at that time the Revolution did not have experienced personnel. Yet, we could not trust him completely, and subsequently we learned that we had good reason for not doing so.

On the Ocean

ON December 3, 1917, the *Shilka* left Vladivostok. We took on a stock of water and fuel in the Japanese port Hakodate and set out to sea.

While the transport was in drydock, I took aboard a suitcase with some Lenin brochures, newspapers and the first decrees of Soviet power. All the Communists of the *Shilka* went down to the engine room and decided on how the political literature was to be hidden, should the ship be searched in foreign ports.

There was a big storm when the *Shilka* got under way in the Pacific. The typhoon battered the vessel mercilessly, knocking her off her route, tearing away gear and lifeboats, Half of the crew could not stand the terrible rolling and had to take to the sack—the rest had to stand double watch. After two weeks of difficult sailing our coal was almost finished. We started breaking up wooden partitions and burning everything in order to keep going. The typhoon calmed down near the American coast. We were a tired and emaciated lot of sailors climbing to the *Shilka's* deck. The coal holds were empty, and the ballast tanks were full of sea-water. It was in this state that we reached Seattle.

We saw a big port looking very much like Vladivostok. Its beautiful and roomy harbors were full of ships from different countries, and there were dozens of cranes towering over the berths. We dropped anchor at the roads, with the red flag of the Soviet republic fluttering on our flagpole.

This was just before Christmas holidays, on December 21, 1917.

Salute to the Russian Revolution

THE unusual ship flying the red flag attracted attention all over the port. The dockers apparently learned where the ship had come from; the news about her flashed through the city, and thousands of local people headed for the port.

However, the city authorities were very much on guard concerning the "red ship": they felt she had certainly come to give moral support to the IWW, whose leaders were in jail at the time.

The chief of the port police came aboard with a group of officers and asked the skipper:

"Why did you come here?"

"We are making a friendly visit to America," replied Boris Bedel.

"But we recognize only Russia's Provisional Government," said the chief of Police.

"We have replaced the Provisional Government by a permanent government headed by Lenin. This is the only lawful power in Russia, and we are its representatives," I said.

There was a moment of confusion. And then something happened which even the police did not foresee. Suddenly the silence of the port was broken by a long and powerful ship siren blaring. Then came another siren and still another, and in half a minute the whole of Seattle roared with bass ship voices. All the ships in the port were saluting the Russian seamen and the people's revolution in Russia.

The police officers left the ship, but before leaving their chief said:

"The entire crew is absolutely forbidden to go ashore."

This meant that the ship was under arrest.

Under Arrest

TWO days the Shilka was at the roads. Meanwhile the bourgeois papers launched a lying campaign around the ship. They reported that the *Shilka* carried 100,000 dollars (supposedly to set free the 166 arrested IWW members), as well as various arms and ammunition, to start a rebellion, etc. The labor press retorted that this was a dirty slander; they demanded that the Russian ship be set free.

The Seattle authorities, getting an OK from the US Government, sent 50 policemen to board the *Shilka*, and, in spite of an official protest by the ship committee, they thoroughly searched the vessel. The search was in vain—there were no dollars or weapons on the ship. Also, the police failed to find a single page of communist literature.

On the third day after the *Shilka's* arrival the port authorities were compelled to provide her with a berth. But only two crew members were allowed to go ashore.

Dockers' Meeting

THE ship committee decided to send ashore myself, as the political commissar, and senior navigator Vladimir Alabushev as interpreter.

As soon as we set foot on American soil, we found ourselves in a crowd of seamen and dockers. There were friendly hands stretched out to us from all directions. Dozens of questions were asked. One of the American comrades said that they were supposed to have a big meeting of dockers in their club, and that we, the Russian seamen, would attend as guests of the IWW.

On the way to the meeting hall the crowd snowballed, with men, women and children joining it. About 5,000 people gathered in the huge workers' club. The meeting was chaired by Roy Brandt, an experienced revolutionary who had just been set free from jail. He helped us to ascend the platform, and in a minute I began talking.

First of all, I read out the letter from Vladivostok sent by the city committee of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party (Bolsheviks) and addressed to the American dockers. It was signed by Arnold Neibut, the chairman of the committee, who before the 1917 Revolution had been in emigration in the USA. Then I spoke in detail about Russia, about the Workers' and Peasants' State and about Lenin. My command of English was not so good and Alabushev sometimes helped me out. Yet, our talk was unconstrained, and the atmosphere was full of good will and a comradely attitude.

There were many questions asked, and the meeting went on several hours. The rally unanimously decided to send a reply letter to Vladivostok and adopted the following resolution: "In hailing with admiration the Russian proletariat which was the first to win victory over capitalism . . . to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat and control over industry, we assure the Russian freedom fighters that we are full of ardent sympathy for them and are ready to help them and are asking them to believe us that the time is not far off when we shall be able to prove in deeds our proletarian solidarity." We were carried shoulder high from the IWW club. The police tried to arrest us, but they could not do anything.

The meeting got such great public response that the authorities in Seattle were compelled to lift the arrest from the *Shilka* and allow her seamen to go ashore. But, the port administration resorted to a ruse: car trips were organized for the Russian sailors, so that they would have less contacts with men in the street; none of them were allowed to leave the port on foot.

I recall one of the bourgeois newspapers carrying a picture of Soviet seamen. They were shown going in cars. Each one of them had a vicious mustache and the caption below said: "Russian sailors wear mustaches à la Kaiser Wilhelm." This, naturally, was a canard of the lowest kind.

Our contacts with American workers kept growing. And the literature brought from Vladivostok gradually left the caches in the ship to be handed over to reliable people.

Seattle Workers' Letter to Lenin

WE TALKED a good deal with the IWW leaders and especially with Roy Brandt. At one point Roy told me: "We are preparing a letter which we hope you will deliver to Russia." I nodded, thinking that he was talking of a reply letter to Vladivostok. However, Roy added that this was an important letter addressed to the Soviet Government, to Lenin.

We had our New Year celebration together with the Seattle dockers. We festively saw out the year of 1917, which had brought us new life, great changes in Russia, and a turning point for the people of the whole world.

In January a sheaf of typewritten pages was brought secretly to the *Shilka.* I looked at the first page and saw it began with the words: "Nikolay Lenin and representatives of the Bolshevik government and through them to the workers of Russia."

The dockers of Seattle used extensive factual material to tell Lenin about the difficult conditions of American workers, about the terrorist actions of the reaction that, in fear of a revolutionary explosion in the country, was strangling every manifestation of freedom.

The IWW had to bear the brunt of the attacks of the bourgeoisie. Members of the organization were jailed without any reason. They were taken out to the desert to die of starvation; many were murdered by hired bandits, killers never found subsequently. In the letter the dockers expressed their admiration for the proletarian revolution and said that the road of the Russians was near and dear to them and that they were ready to march side by side with the new Russia. The letter ended with assurances of the deepest kind of friendship, "solidarity and desire to have real democracy and lasting peace triumph the world over as soon as possible."

The *Shilka's* international mission to America was over. We were ready to set out to sea, but the port authorities used every kind of excuse to stop us. We had the suspicion that Captain Bedel had started negotiations with the police, and was engaged in some double-dealing.

The ship committee, together with the dockers, demanded that port authorities immediately clear all departure papers. Soon the *Shilka* was at sea.

Under Arrest Again

IN ORDER to have enough fuel, we loaded coal on a part of the upper deck. This coal was washed away by the very first storm, which meant that we were compelled to drop anchor at some foreign harbor. I was increasingly alarmed about the letter, because we had assured the US workers that it would be delivered to Lenin under any condition.

There were only four people aware of the letter on the *Shilka*—purser Grigory Yermolayev, machinists' chief Nikitin, machine maintenance man Myasin and myself. We had worked out a detailed plan for preserving the letter, mindful of possible emergencies in the ocean. At first we had wrapped the letter in asbestos and put it in a cylinder of the refrigerating machine. Then we put it in a tin can which we soldered and then sutured in a ring-buoy, and the latter we hung on the upper deck.

We had to drop in at the Japanese port of Kobe, to get some coal. Captain Bedel went ashore for negotiations with the Japanese authorities and . . . never came back. Port police started summoning members of the *Shilka* ship committee. I immediately sent a telegram to Vladivostok saying: "*Shilka* detained in port of Kobe. Threatened to be interned. Please take measures." When I was summoned for interrogation, I demanded that a protocol be made of an official protest on the detention of the ship. I said that Soviet authorities would take retaliatory measures with regard to the Japanese ships in Vladivostok.

During the interrogation the Japanese searched the *Shilka,* but did not find anything.

Soon a special delegation arrived from Vladivostok and managed to have the *Shilka* released.

The Letter Is Delivered

WE ARRIVED in Vladivostok late in the evening. Meeting the *Shilka* were several people, among them Arnold Neibut. They all knew about the letter. The city was full of spies from different secret services and all kinds of counterrevolutionaries, and for this reason the return of the *Shilka* was very much a secret. The Vladivostok Bolshevik Party Committee, fearing that the letter would be destroyed, adopted a decision saying that the message from the Seattle dockers should be immediately published. Next day *Krasnoye Znamya* (Red Banner), a Vladivostok newspaper, featured the first part of the letter in the issue of March 20, 1918, with the banner

headline, "Letter from American Workers to Soviet Government." And a little bit lower "To Nikolay Lenin and representatives of the Bolshevik government and through them to the workers of Russia." The second part of the letter was featured on March 21. The paper said in bold type: "The Industrial Workers of the World would like once again to assure revolutionary socialists that even the mass, the so-far unthinking worker of the United States, highly appreciates the Bolsheviks in their noble struggle for emancipation from the yoke of capitalists and landlords . . ."

Five months later, in August 1918, V. I. Lenin wrote his famous letter to American workers which was delivered to the USA by P. Travin, a Communist and former IWW members. [See pages 105 and 118.] The letter evoked extensive response in America and Western Europe, and rendered support to the world proletariat, in its revolutionary struggle.

In November 1920, I was elected delegate (from Tomsk Gubernia) to the Fifth All-Russian Trade Union Conference. The conference was attended by Lenin. During an interval Grigory Yermolayev and I came up to a group of delegates with whom Lenin was talking and asked him whether he was familiar with the letter from American workers which was brought from Seattle in the beginning of 1918. He replied that he had read the letter, and sent an answer to the US workers.

"And why are you interested?" he asked.

We gave a brief account of the *Shilka's* cruise. Lenin thanked us for delivering the letter.

The Shilka's Fate

IN 1919, just before Vladivostok was occupied by Japanese-American and Anglo-French troops, it was decided to transfer the *Shilka* to the Black Sea. However in Sevastopol she was seized by White Guard troops and compelled to go to Turkey.

On reaching Istanbul, all the crew, headed by Captain Georgi Alexandrov, abandoned ship, and returned to Russia in devious ways. The *Shilka* was sunk by Wrangel's soldiers in the Tunisian port of Bizerta.

Back to Work

IN 1966, the people of Vladivostok gave a gala welcome to the *Shilka.* Yet this time it was a dry cargo freighter of about 7,000 tons. She was built in the German Democratic Republic on orders placed by the Soviet Far Eastern Shipping Line, to perpetuate the

name of the legendary transport ship which had made the first run to America. The vessel is fitted with the latest equipment. Provided with comfortable cabins, she is designed for long runs in the ocean, and has a crew of 35.

She has been delivering foodstuffs and building materials to ports in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. And now she is making a run to port Nagayevo, in the North.

In April 1970, the seamen of the new *Shilka* want to make a cruise to America and maybe to Seattle, to convey feelings of gratitude to the new generation of dockers, for the letter from their fathers and grandfathers to Vladimir Lenin, the leader of the Russian Revolution.

I still remember the port of Seattle, its berths and docks. I'll never forget the meetings with local dockers, their response and warm attitude. I would like to convey my best wishes, my most sincere Christmas greetings to the port workers, to the children and grandchildren of the dockers, with whom the seamen from the *Shilka* had met, to all the people of the wonderful city of Seattle. I would like to wish good luck and lasting peace to all its citizens—children and old people, men and women. I would have visited the port city with pleasure, again. But at my age this is hardly possible.

Letter from American Workers To the Soviet Government

The letter delivered by Nikolay Kryukov and the crew of the Shilka is an example of the great interest of American workers in Lenin and the Russian Revolution. The text of the letter, written sometime at the end of December 1917 or the beginning of January 1918, follows in part.

TO Nikolay Lenin and the representatives of the Bolshevik government, and through them to the workers of Russia.

Greetings.

As colleagues in the struggle for social revolution we, the Industrial Workers of the World, send you greetings in the conviction that we feel and think the same as the socialists . . . as all the revolutionaries and as the broad mass of workers of the United States of America, whose awakening and understanding of the capi-

talist policy of enslavement and destruction is growing with remarkable rapidity.

You, the Russian workers, who have taken control into your own hands and are creating a new social structure, are molding much more than your own future: you are inspiring and accelerating a revolutionary movement, the like of which has never been seen before.

Workers who had up till then been deaf to all our propaganda now listen to us joyfully since they have seen the dawn of a new day in the Far East. It is no longer ignorance which prevents us moving forward, but the iron heel of violence against which the forces of revolution are rising as surely as they rose against the old regime in Russia.

This communication bears the stamp of the Central Executive Committee of the Seattle branch of the Industrial Workers of the World in the firm conviction on our part that the feelings and hopes expressed in it are those of the whole organization all over the country. We could not obtain the stamp from our center in Chicago due to the fact that it is all in the hands of the United States Government officials and the wily internal censorship, and also because (William) D. Haywood, the chief secretary-treasurer, and many other officials from our organization have been imprisoned on charges under federal laws, as a result of the direct instigation of our employers.

We should add that this communication will reach you thanks to the kindness of the sailors on the transport *Shilka* to whom we are giving it secretly for delivery to you.

We should like to acquaint you with the state of affairs existing at the present time in "free America." For this reason we have not limited ourselves to sending you a letter, but are also attaching several publications of the radical press containing a detailed account of the various atrocities, committed in the name of democracy.*

The incident on the ship *Verona* in Everett, Washington, on November 5, 1916 during which five workers were foully murdered by agents of the wood trust, many more swept off to sea and dozens wounded, gave an enormous impetus to the Industrial Workers of the World movement, and by the time that war was declared the membership of our organization had advanced well past the hundred thousand mark.

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* The appendix to the letter has not come to light.

Our program which aims at the working class taking over all the branches of industry has begun to terrify employers.

Membership of our organizations increased to such an extent that it threatened owner control in the saw-mill industry of the Pacific Northwest, in the copper mines of Arizona and Montana and in many agricultural regions in the West.

As soon as the United States officially entered the war on April 6, 1917 a terrorist policy was put into operation against all the well-known radicals and radical organizations, that is, the Industrial Workers of the World, the Socialist Party, the anarchists and various foreign federations of the socialist revolutionary movement.

Later the impact of this policy was extended to pacifist, Christian and other organizations.

At first terrorist activities were carried out by villainous gangs of employers with the assistance of the local authorities and under their control. Later the local authorities took the matter into their own hands and it finally passed into the hands of direct representatives of the United States acting through the agency of various district marshals and suchlike officials.

The Industrial Workers of the World organization has had to bear the main brunt of the attacks. Its members have been imprisoned by their thousands without any legal warrant, thousands of them have been seized, thrown out of their apartments and left to starve in the desert, dozens have been whipped to death by hired assassins, tarred and feathered, and in many cases their murderers have disappeared into thin air. One member of our organization, a sick man and a cripple, was dragged from his bed in the middle of the night and hung from the railway bridge. The offices of the Industrial Workers of the World have been searched, papers confiscated, premises and equipment either confiscated or destroyed, and members' homes have also been ransacked at the order of officials ranging from local to federal ones, with or without legal cause. . .

On December 20, the day before the *Shilka* docked in Seattle, the local police with assistance from the federal authorities raided the editorial offices of the *Industrial Worker* and the local committee for the legal defense of those imprisoned in the Chicago jail and also searched the district office of the union of transport seamen. Everything in these buildings was confiscated with the exception of one small office belonging to the *Industrial Worker* which was smashed to pieces. Six people were arrested, including Catherine B. MacDonald, the wife of John A. MacDonald, imprisoned in Chicago

jail. These people were arrested without warrants and were held in jail for almost a week without any charge being brought against them. Catherine MacDonald was put in a section for prostitutes, many of whom had syphilis and, contrary to all the regulations, was not allowed bail until almost a whole week later.

When the transport ship *Shilka* arrived in Seattle it was arranged that some members of the crew would give a talk at the I.W.W. offices on the evening of Sunday, December 23. Thousands of leaflets were distributed and everything appeared to be going well. On Sunday morning the reactionary capitalist organ *Post Intelligencer* announced that the *Shilka* had about 100,000 dollars on board for the defense of 166 American revolutionaries standing trial. Local employers immediately joined forces with the federal authorities and this resulted in the *Shilka* being surrounded by a cordon of 50 sailors. A search was subsequently carried out on board.

When the crew attempted to go ashore they were prevented from doing so by the local authorities. One sailor from the *Shilka* who had remained on shore went to the I.W.W. offices and gave a talk there to an audience of about 5,000. He was arrested on leaving the building.

A whole torrent of abuse poured down on the team of the *Shilka*. The bourgeois newspapers were crammed with all sorts of fantastic stories about the ship being laden with arms and ammunition to start a revolution in the United States with the help of the I.W.W. . . .

Evidently, however, news was soon received from Washington that the rumors were unfounded, for the whole capitalist press changed its tone considerably and the local capitalists, who hate the Bolsheviks like poison, started inviting the whole crew to banquets and motor trips in an attempt to make up for their earlier behavior.

Naturally no one was taken in by the capitalist tactics.

Their friendship, just like their democracy, was empty pretense. All the bourgeois press of the United States without exception cannot stand the Bolsheviks. This press calls the Bolsheviks the Industrial Workers of the World of Russia, and the Industrial Workers of the World it calls the American Bolsheviks. This compliment fills us with pride and we hope that the Russian workers share it with us. . .

In conclusion, the Industrial Workers of the World once more assure the revolutionary socialists of Russia that even the rank and file (the hitherto politically unaware workers in the United States) have great admiration for the Bolsheviks' noble struggle for freedom from the yoke of the capitalists and landowners.

Your struggle is essentially our struggle and your victory—our victory and any defeat which you may suffer will be a blow in the face for us. Rest assured, fellow-workers, that your victory which is paving the way for the foundation of the first true republic of the producers of riches, will not have the whole world against it. The proletariat of the other countries will make a supreme effort to throw off the parasites and set up a similar social order in its land. In this hour the organization of the Industrial Workers of the World would be deeply indebted to the Bolshevik government if it were to send an official note to the capitalist government of the United States to force our authorities to give us at least something in the nature of a fair trial in the serious case which is coming up before the courts in Chicago in a few weeks' time.

If such a note from you were to have even the slightest restraining influence on their plans to crush us, this would give us a vital breathing-space which would enable us to gather strength for the final struggle in which, we know, victory will be ours. A single word from you, Russian revolutionaries, means a great deal to us. You will not leave this word unsaid and will not refuse us the help that you are able to give.

Once again we assure you of our firm friendship, solidarity and our desire that in the very near future true democracy and lasting peace will triumph the whole world over.

We remain your comrades in the struggle for social revolution.

The Industrial Workers of the World

English original not available. Translated from the Russian as published in Vladivostok's Krasnoye Znamya *for March 20-21, 1918. From* Lenin Through the Eyes of the World, *Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1969.*

RESOLUTION OF A MASS MEETING IN SEATTLE

(Copy sent to V. I. Lenin)
August 10, 1918

WE, the assembled at the mass meeting August 10th 1918, at the Moore Theater, for the purpose of making an effort to create a better understanding between the people of Russia and the people of America, have adopted the following resolution:

Whereas, Russia has always been a friendly nation towards America, and is yet today; and

Whereas, on the cementing of this friendship depends the future of civilization. . .

Whereas, Russia geographically and ethnologically should maintain this friendship; and

Whereas, Russia is a country of vast natural resources, scarcely touched by the hands of men and would economically become a valuable and profitable neighbor; and

Whereas, a military intervention in Russia will be used by Germany as a means of propaganda against the allies and America particularly; therefore be it

Resolved. That we the Russian Workers' Council of Seattle, in cooperation with the citizens of this city, most solemnly ask the President of these United States to use his good offices for the recognition of the Soviet Government, which is the only choice and hope of the Russian people, and withdraw the forcible intervention that has now taken place in some parts of Siberia and replace it with an economic intervention for the establishment of closer trade relations and a better understanding between the people of Russia and those of the United States that will arrest the unfriendly sentiments of the Russian people towards America and clear the field

OUTLAWS

by Witter Bynner

The young, the new, rebelled. A torch of earth
Shook at the stars and caught their potency.
Washington's ragged outlaws held their own
Against a world, till half of it was free.

Now Lenin's outlaws toward the stars uplift
The kindling torch of earth. It flames again.
For so the new grows old and the old grows new
And men must always free themselves from men.

The Liberator, April 1923

again for that friendship which is so important not only for America but even to the entire world; and be it further

Resolved. That copies of this resolution be sent to the President of the United States, to the Secretary of State, to both houses of Congress and the press.

From Lenin Through the Eyes of the World,
Progress Publishers, 1969

Lenin's Letter to the Socialist Propaganda League

The leaflet to which Lenin refers in this letter is a four-page communication (excerpted below), which the Socialist Propaganda League, with headquarters in Boston, sent to the members of the Socialist Party of the United States, urging them to repudiate nationalism, World War I and reformism, to support internationalism, oppose the war, urge the re-establishment of democratic control within the SP and seek "working-class supremacy and a new industrial order." As the signatures appended to the communication make clear, the members of the Socialist Propaganda League comprise a wide spectrum of ethnic groups in the United States. The fact that a copy of this letter was sent to Lenin would appear to indicate that a number of Socialists in the United States had known something about Lenin years before the October Revolution.

DEAR COMRADES!*

We are extremely glad to get your leaflet. Your appeal to the members of the Socialist Party to struggle for a new International, for clear-cut revolutionary socialism as taught by Marx and Engels, and against the opportunism, especially against those who are in favor of working class participation in a war of defense, corresponds fully with the position our party (Social-Democratic Labor Party of Russia, *Central Committee*) has taken from the beginning of this war and has always taken during more than ten years.

We send you our sincerest greetings and best wishes of success in our fight for true internationalism.

In our press and in our propaganda we differ from your program in several points and we think it is quite necessary that we

* This letter is printed as it was written by Lenin in English, in November 1915.

expose you briefly on these points in order to make immediate and serious steps for the coordination of the international strife of the uncompromisingly revolutionary Socialists, especially Marxists, in all countries.

We criticize in the most severe manner the old, Second (1889-1914) International, we declare it dead and not worth to be restored on old basis. But we never say in our press that too great emphasis has been heretofore placed upon so-called "Immediate Demands," and that thereby the socialism can be diluted: we say and we prove that all bourgeois parties, all parties except the working class revolutionary Party, are liars and hypocrites when they speak about reforms. We try to help the working class to get the smallest possible but real improvement (economic and political) in their situation and we add always that *no* reform can be durable, sincere, serious if not seconded by revolutionary methods of struggle of the masses. We preach always that a socialist party not uniting this struggle for reforms with the revolutionary methods of working-class movement can become a sect, can be severed from the masses, and that that is the most pernicious menace to the success of the clear-cut revolutionary socialism.

We always defend in our press the democracy in the Party. But we never speak against the centralization of the party. We are for the democratic centralism. We say that the centralization of the German Labor movement is not a feeble but a strong and good feature of it. The vice of the present Social-Democratic Party of Germany consists not in its centralization but in the preponderance of the opportunists, which should be excluded from the party especially now after their treacherous conduct in the war. If in any given crisis a small group (for instance our Central Committee is a small group) can act for directing the mighty mass *in a revolutionary direction*, it would be very good. And in *all* crises the masses can not act immediately, the masses want to be helped by the small groups of the central institutions of the parties. Our Central Committee quite at the beginning of this war, in Sepember 1914, has directed the masses not to accept the lie about "the war of defense" and to break off with the opportunists and the "would-be-socialists-jingoes" (we call so the "Socialists" who are *now* in favor of the war of defense). We think that this centralistic measure of our Central Committee was useful and necessary.

We agree with you that we must be against craft Unionism and in favor of industrial Unionism, i.e., of big, centralized Trade Unions and in favor of the most active participation of *all* members

of the Party in *all* economic struggles and *all* trade union and co-operative organizations of the working class. But we consider that such people as Mr. Legien in Germany and Mr. Gompers in the US are bourgeois and that their policy is not a socialist but a nationalistic, middle class policy. Mr. Legien, Mr. Gompers and similar persons are not the representatives of working class, they represent the aristocracy and bureaucracy of the working class.

We entirely sympathize with you when in political action you claim the "mass action" of the workers. The German revolutionary and internationalist Socialists claim it also. In our press we try to define with more details what must be understood by political mass action, as for instance political strikes (very usual in Russia), street demonstrations and civil war prepared by the present imperialist war between nations.

We do not preach unity in the *present* (prevailing in the Second International) socialist parties. On the contrary we preach *secession* with the opportunists. The war is the best object-lesson. In *all* countries the opportunists, their leaders, their most influential dailies and reviews are *for* the war, in other words, they have in reality *united* with "their" national bourgeoisie (middle class, capitalists) against the proletarian masses. You say, that in America there are also Socialists who have expressed themselves in favor of the participation in a war of defense. We are convinced, that unity with such men is an evil. *Such* unity is unity with the national middle class and capitalists, and a *division* with the international revolutionary working class. And we are for secession with nationalistic opportunists and unity with international revolutionary Marxists and working-class parties.

We never object in our press to the unity of S.P. and S.L.P. in America. We always quote letters from Marx and Engels (especially to Sorge, active member of American socialist movement), where both condemn the sectarian character of the S.L.P.

We fully agree with you in your criticism of the old International. We have participated in the conference of Zimmerwald (Switzerland) Sept. 5-8, 1915. We have formed there a *left wing*, and have proposed *our resolution* and our draught of a manifesto. We have just published these documents in German and I send them to you (with the German translation of our small book about "Socialism and War"), hoping that in your League there are probably comrades, that know German. If you could help us to publish these things in English (it is possible only in America and later on we should send it to England), we would gladly accept your help.

In our struggle for true internationalism and against "jingo-socialism" we always quote in our press the example of the opportunist leaders of the S.P. in America, who are in favor of restrictions of the immigration of Chinese and Japanese workers (especially after the Congress of Stuttgart, 1907, and *against* the decisions of Stuttgart). We think that one can not be internationalist and be at the same time in favor of such restrictions. And we assert that Socialists in America, especially English Socialists, belonging to the ruling, and *oppressing* nation, who are not against any restrictions of immigration, against the possession of colonies (Hawaii) and for the entire freedom of colonies, that such Socialists are in reality jingoes.

For conclusion I repeat once more best greetings and wishes for your League. We should be very glad to have a further information from you and to *unite* our struggle against opportunism and for the true internationalism.

Yours, N. LENIN

N.B. There are *two* Soc.-Dem. parties in Russia. Our party (*"Central* Committee") is against opportunism. The other party (*"Organising* Committee") is opportunist. We are *against* the unity with them.

You can write to our official address (Bibliothèque russe. For the C. K. 7 rue Hugo de Senger. 7. Genève. Switzerland). But better write to my personal address: Wl. Ulianow. Seidenweg 4a, III *Berne*. Switzerland.

Written in English
between October 31 and
November 9 (November 13 and
22), 1915. First published in 1924
in *Lenin Miscellany II*,
Vol. 21, pp. 423-28.

SOCIALIST PROPAGANDA LEAGUE LEAFLET

TO THE Members of the Socialist Party

Comrades:

The Socialist Party, under present management, shows too great a tendency to drift away from democratic, revolutionary tactics and toward those of bureaucracy and reform.

The organization and methods of the party should conform more closely to the principles of Socialism as taught by Marx and Engels, and there is every reason to believe that the policy outlined below would achieve this result.

The war now raging has had the effect of rending the International into shreds, and it should never be reconstructed upon its former foundations. The

war has revealed to us how extremely nationalistic were its various component parts, and has taught us that in the future true Internationalism must be preached with tremendously greater emphasis. The war has also exposed the weakness of bureaucracy in the movement.

An ever-increasing number of members are dissatisfied with this deplorable state of affairs, but it can only be rectified through their own action, combined with that of other out-and-out revolutionists. The unceasing effort should be to *re*-establish complete democratic control, – local, national and international, – within the party, and then to work solidly and exclusively for working-class supremacy and a new industrial order. . .

To summarize briefly: Every possible effort should be exerted to have the Socialist Party declare emphatically and work uncompromisingly for Revolution, Democracy, Industrial Unionism, Political Action in the full acceptance of the term, Unity of Socialist Parties, True Internationalism and Active Anti-Militarism.

An organization has been formed for the propagation of these principles within the party. Said organization will be known as the Socialist Propaganda League. Membership is confined to party members who believe in the above program. Further information, and working program, can be obtained by applying to our Secretary, C. W. Fitzgerald, 20 Baker St., Beverly, Mass.

If you believe in this idea let us hear from you.

Boston, Mass., Oct. 9, 1915.

Signed: C. C. Felz, 86 Elliott St., Beverly, Mass.; C. W. Fitzgerald, 20 Baker St., Beverly, Mass.; B F. Degrasse, 82 Harvard St., Brockton, Mass.; J. Jurgis, 5 Highland Park Ave., Roxbury, Mass.; A. Neibut, 4 Romar Terr., Roxbury, Mass.; Gerard Bernhard, 107–a Cedar St., Roxbury, Mass.; Edward Maurin, 5 Highland Park Ave., Roxbury, Mass.; John D. Williams, 3 Elsie St., Malden, Mass.; Holden Kenneally, 824 Main St., Malden, Mass.; A. Koivisto, 88 Lambert Ave., Roxbury, Mass.; Alfred S. Edwards, 59 Belvedere St., Boston, Mass.; Ambrose Miles, 10 Terrace Lodge, Lynn, Mass.; Harry H. Bennett, 15 Cambridge St., Salem, Mass.; Geo. F. Wenrich, 72 Batavia St., Boston, Mass.; John H. Balcolm, 413 Lebanon St., Malden, Mass.; J. Edward Moran, 169 Union St., Lynn, Mass.; Harriet D'Orsay, 171 No. Common St., Lynn, Mass.

LENIN'S "FREE TOM MOONEY" DEMONSTRATION

ON APRIL 25, 1917, less than two weeks after the United States officially became involved in World War I, the *New York Times* published the following dispatch:

ANTI-AMERICAN OUTBURST

Extremists Attempt to Demonstrate at Petrograd Embassy

PETROGRAD, April 23 (via London, April 24).–An effort by a small group of ultra-Radicals to make an unfriendly demonstration before the

American Embassy today was frustrated by militiamen as the radicals marched down the Nevsky Prospect on their way to the Embassy . . .

The demonstration was headed by Nikolay Lenin, the radical Socialist leader, who recently arrived here through Germany from Switzerland with a safe-conduct from the German authorities. The demonstration is said to have been due to the alleged killing in America of an anarchist named Mooney, who was under sentence in San Francisco.

A guard was sent by the authorities to protect the embassy.

The Mooney referred to in the above dispatch probably is Thomas J. Mooney, who is under sentence of death for connection with the bomb explosion in San Francisco in July, 1916, in which several persons were killed.

The Socialist Party's *New York Call*, controlled by prowar elements, also reported the Petrograd demonstration, asserting it had been led by "Nikolai Lenine, a Russian radical, who recently returned from exile in Switzerland through Germany," who had fomented mob anger among the demonstrators by charging that the United States had murdered the Socialist leader Thomas J. Mooney because of its hatred of socialism.

This was the first opportunity that most Americans outside of California had to learn about the frameup of Tom Mooney, who had been convicted February 9, 1917 by perjured testimony of participating in the bombing of a Preparedness Day parade in San Francisco, July 22, 1916, and sentenced to die by hanging May 17, 1917.

As the *New Republic* commented editorially at the time: "Is it not a remarkable commentary upon the attitude of the American press toward labor that one of the most significant and dramatic events in the history of organized labor in America should have to come to the attention of American newspaper readers through a mass meeting in Nevsky Prospect?"

Mooney was a labor leader in California, who had been set up for victimization by the open-shop employers of that state because of his militancy and because of his opposition to the imperialist war in Europe.

That Petrograd demonstration in late April, 1917, in which tens of thousands participated–not just a "small group of ultra-Radicals" –was the spark that ignited the world-wide protests that frightened the US Government into forcing California's governor to stop the execution of Tom Mooney and finally after many years to achieve a pardon for him.

On May 11, 1917, only six days before Mooney was to die, President Woodrow Wilson wired Governor William D. Stephens:

"I hope that in view of certain international aspects which the case

has assumed you will not deem me impertinent or beyond my rights if I very warmly and earnestly urge upon you the wisdom and desirability of commuting the sentence of Mooney or at least suspending its execution until the charges of perjury lodged against the witnesses in the case are judicially probed to the bottom. Such an action on your part would I can assure you have the widest and most beneficial results and greatly relieve some critical situations outside the United States."

Doubt has been raised as to Lenin's participation in the April 1917 Petrograd demonstration by George Kennan, who at a later period was US Ambassador to the Soviet Union.

But it is known that Mooney was at the 1910 International Socialist Congress in Copenhagen where he came in contact with Lenin. And Mooney himself was convinced that Lenin was involved as is evidenced by a letter by him to Joseph Stalin which his mother brought to the Soviet Union in October 1932.

In that letter, Mooney hailed "the magnificent spirit of international working-class solidarity by the militant workers of Russia in defense of my fight for freedom, and for the freedom of all class-war and political prisoners. Were it not for the revolutionary workers of Petrograd, led by our beloved Comrade Lenin, in militant demonstrations before the American Embassy on April 25, 1917, I would not be addressing these greetings to you. Thus my life was saved and my usefulness to the revolutionary working class prolonged."

THE MACHINISTS' RESOLUTION

The deep emotional response of many American workers to the death of Lenin can be seen in this resolution adopted by the Seattle local of the AFL Machinists Union, which was sent to Lenin's wife (Nadezhda Krupskaya) and the Soviet Government.

Hope Lodge, No. 79
Seattle, Washington, U.S.A.
February 2, 1924

WE, the members of Hope Lodge No. 79, International Association of Machinists at Seattle, Washington, United States of America, in meeting assembled January 28, 1924 do hereby go on record tendering the widow of Nikolay Lenin and the Soviet Government of Russia our appreciation of the noble work and self-sacrifice for the toiling masses throughout the World by her husband, Nikolay Lenin. We as workers in the Labor Movement do hereby tender

her our utmost sympathy and condolence in her hour of trial and sad bereavement.

Oppressed Labor throughout the World has lost one of its most valiant warriors in the hour of his great triumph against the combined onslaughts of the capitalistic nations of the world. Future historians will record him as one of the greatest strategists and geniuses the 19th century has produced and the foremost leader of the first Workers Republic established in the world; his memory will ever be fresh in the hearts and minds of the millions of people throughout the world, who are struggling and fighting for the cause. for which he nobly gave his life and energy—the Battle for Economic Freedom.

On behalf of Hope Lodge No. 79, International Association of Machinists:

R. Leuwe, *Secretary*

Lenin Through the Eyes of the World,
Progress Publishers, 1969

ROBERT W. DUNN

Labor Helped Russian Reconstruction

AMONG the several organizations that came to the aid of the Soviet Union in its infancy none involved a wider and more practical participation of the people than the Russian-American Industrial Corporation.

The proposal for its organization was presented on May 11, 1922, to the fifth biennial convention of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. At that time it was an independent union not af-

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ROBERT W. DUNN has been Executive Secretary of the Labor Research Association since 1928, and editor of its valuable *Economic Notes*. After organizing and research work in the trade union movement, he became publicity director of the American Friends Service Committee (Quakers) in the USSR, 1922-23. He was with the first US Trade Union Delegation to the Soviet Union in 1927 as advisor. Among his books are *American Foreign Investments, Company Unions, The Americanization of Labor, Soviet Trade Unions, Soviet Russia in the Second Decade* (with Stuart Chase and Rexford G. Tugwell). Included in his numerous pamphlets is one on "Pen Pictures of Russian Village Life During the Famine" (with Jessica Smith).

filiated with the American Federation of Labor. It represented the mass of workers in the men's clothing industry of the United States.

The proposal came in a speech by President Sidney Hillman, who had returned from a visit to the Soviet Union. He had gone there at the direction of the General Executive Board of the union to see what help could be rendered to the economy of the USSR, devastated by World War I, civil war, foreign intervention, and one of the worst famines in history.

While in Russia Hillman had met with the heads of the Soviet Government including Lenin, Krassin and members of the Supreme Council of National Economy, discussing with them matters relating to the economic reconstruction of the USSR.

In his stirring address to the convention Hillman said: "I wanted to find out what Lenin had to say. I had three conferences with Lenin. I spent hours with Lenin."

And Hillman's conclusion was that "Russia is desirous of one thing, and that is a sound policy for the reconstruction of Russian life."

After meeting the heads of the government Hillman concluded that he had "never met a group of people so realistic, so practical, so courageous, and so able to handle this greatest of jobs as the group of people who have charge of the Russian nation today."

A letter from Lenin, as President of the Council of People's Commissars, dated October 13, 1921, had thanked Hillman and the union first for the emergency aid already given to help the Russian people during the famine. (The $167,000 sent by the Amalgamated alone, it was stated by the Russian Red Cross, had saved 36,000 from death by starvation.)

Lenin wrote: " . . . Am heartily thankful to you for the aid you have given us. Due to you the agreement with regard to the aid to Soviet Russia on the part of the American workers has been so speedily consummated. . . . Throughout the world and particularly in the countries of advanced capitalist development, at present, millions of workers do not share communistic views, but they are ready to help Soviet Russia, to aid and feed those starving . . . and to assist in the reconstruction of the economic life of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic. Those workers are convinced of the truth . . . that every victory of the international capitalist class over Soviet Russia would be the greatest victory of world reaction over the working class all over.

"Soviet Russia is straining all its energies to overpower the famine, ruin and industrial dislocation. . . . Most naturally, America stands

at the head of the countries where the workers are in a position to help us, are, in fact, helping us, and will in the future, I am deeply convinced, assist on still larger a scale.

"Devoted and energetic, the advanced workers of America will lead the workers of many industrial lands who carry to Soviet Russia their technical knowledge and determination to stand privations in order to aid the Workers' and Peasants' Republic in the rehabilitation of its economic life. Helping in the recovery of the national economic strength of Soviet Russia is the one of all bloodless means in the struggle against international financial capitalism and international reaction that promises a speedy and certain victory."

"With the best greetings to all the workers who help Soviet Russia one way or another."

While in the USSR Hillman had visited clothing factories in Moscow and Leningrad and found that the work was carried on in good order and with efficient management. The industry, however, was lagging behind its possibilities because of lack of machinery and raw materials. So he had conceived a very practical plan to aid the Russian clothing industries. This plan was the basis for a definite agreement concluded between Hillman for the union and the Supreme Council of National Economy for the Soviet Government.

In his report to the Amalgamated convention proposing the new corporation, Hillman said:

"I believe that any capital invested in Russia has as many of the elements of safety as that invested in most of the other countries of Europe. I have discussed investment with the heads of the Soviet Government [including Lenin]. I have gone through the factories. I confined myself to clothing and textile factories. . . . They have clothing factories employing over a thousand people each. . . . They are turning out clothing that could be worn right here in America. They are running textile factories with the latest equipment. What they need is capital to develop their industries. After the long conferences we had, they offered concessions to us, not to the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America as such, but to a corporation which we will organize and to which all workers of all organizations and people who believe it is their duty to help will subscribe if they so wish."

Less than a month later on June 2, 1922, the Russian-American Industrial Corp. was organized under the laws of Delaware and empowered "to manufacture and sell clothing in foreign countries either directly or by agreement with others."

Lenin not only followed with great interest the progress of the

RAIC. He actually subscribed for two shares of its stock at $10 a share. (See p. 158). So far as we know this was the only stock of any corporation, foreign or domestic, which Lenin ever owned. The rest of the stock was bought by thousands of American workers, especially in the clothing shops of New York, Chicago, Cincinnati, Rochester and the other cities where the Amalgamated was strongly organized. Enthusiastic mass meetings were held endorsing the RAIC and its efforts to help Russian reconstruction. At one overflow gathering in Carnegie Hall in New York City, Hillman told the audience:

"The whole world has been taking Russia's wealth. It's time for the people here who want to help Russia to say to the bankers: 'If you are boycotting Russia, we will find other channels besides you through which to give our money for investment in Russia. I have discussed it with the heads of the Soviet Government. . . . I want to assure you that, as far as I know, you will get the complete, absolute cooperation of everyone in Soviet Russia. . . . More than that, you will have the kind of cooperation from the Soviet government that no government outside of Russia, I believe, will give. . . ."

By early spring, 1923, the RAIC had already turned over $200,000 for the reconstruction of the Russian clothing industry. *Pravda* on March 10, 1923, reported that "the American workers have scrupulously fulfilled their obligation to Russia; they have sent $200,000 to Moscow for reconstruction of the clothing industry."

A year later, when I was involved myself in the RAIC as a publicity worker in its New York office I wrote in the *American Labor Monthly* (July 1924) that "the shareholders of RAIC feel it is an opportunity and a duty to lend the Russian workers the sinews of war—the war against chaos, inefficiency, petty production methods, lack of skill, industrial darkness generally." I recalled that while in the USSR the year before (in connection with the famine relief work of the American Friends Service Committee), I had visited the Moscow Experimental Factory and found the RAIC-purchased machinery already in operation. This factory at that time had about 700 workers and was the central experimental and model-designing factory for the entire clothing industry in Russia which already embraced four "trusts" and 38 factories with some 20,000 workers. Approximately 10 per cent of the workers in this particular factory had previously been employed in clothing factories in the United States.

Similarly the late Alexander Trachtenberg, soon to become founder of International Publishers, also had the opportunity of visiting the same Moscow plant and was able to report personally on the con-

ditions in the factories of the All-Russian Clothing Syndicate in which the RAIC investment had been made. When he returned to the United States early in 1924, in an interview in *Soviet Russia Pictorial* (April 1924), he reported, "The Russian clothing workers are true internationalists at heart, and they really want the workers of other lands to keep in close touch with them helping them in every way possible, the Russians doing all in their way to return the favor. And during their period of reconstruction the Russian worker-managers prefer to borrow money from *workers*, and their friends in other countries rather than from capitalists. This is the reason for the existence of the only American workers' undertaking through which moderate amounts of capital can be safely and effectively loaned to the Russian workers—the RAIC."

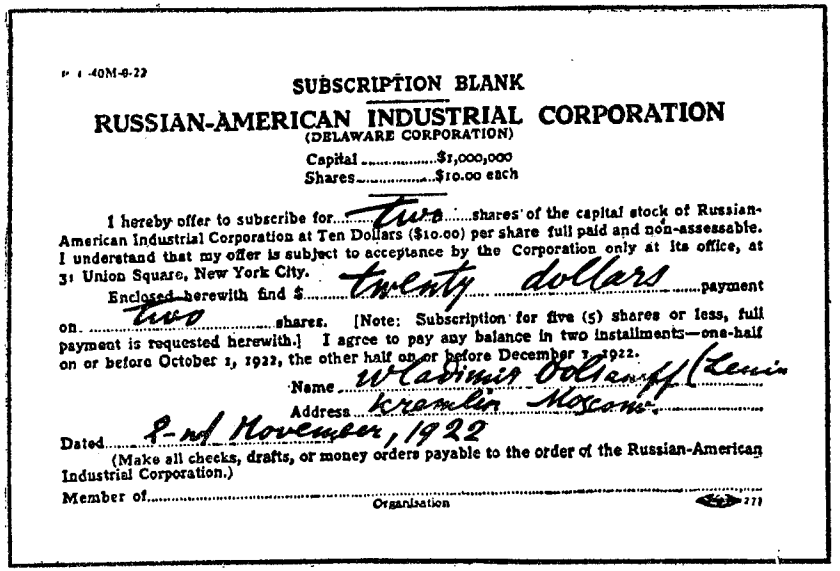
Two years later, in the report of the General Executive Board of the Amalgamated to the 1926 convention of the organization, a section on the operations of RAIC summarized its achievement, stating that it had invested nearly $300,000 in the Russian clothing industry.

"While not an enormous investment in these days of foreign loans in terms of billions of dollars, the investment of the RAIC served its purpose. The publicity given the enterprise drew favorable attention to the new order of industry in Russia. The clothing syndicate, in which the investment was made and the officials of the Russian government with whom we came into contact discharged their obligations fairly and satisfactorily. The RAIC shared in the earnings of the clothing syndicate; it received dividends and in turn distributed them to its stockholders."

Before the corporation was liquidated it had paid back to its stockholders every penny of their investment and 8 per cent interest. It was generally agreed that it had been one of the most successful foreign investments ever made by a group of Americans interested in helping a foreign government—in this case a socialist government—develop a particular industry.

The union had been able to render not only technical assistance to the Russian worker-managers. It was able through RAIC to raise funds at this stage of the Soviet New Economic Policy under the slogan "Not Charity but Reconstruction."

And many American citizens not connected with labor or the clothing industry bought shares in RAIC. For example, I remember selling some to Col. Raymond Robins, former chief of the American Red Cross Mission to Russia and a friend of Lenin. He was a strong foe of foreign intervention and worked hard to get diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union years before it was achieved.



SUBSCRIPTION BLANK

RUSSIAN-AMERICAN INDUSTRIAL CORPORATION
(DELAWARE CORPORATION)

Capital $1,000,000
Shares .....$10.00 each

I hereby offer to subscribe for Two shares of the capital stock of Russian-American Industrial Corporation at Ten Dollars ($10.00) per share full paid and non-assessable. I understand that my offer is subject to acceptance by the Corporation only at its office, at 31 Union Square, New York City. Enclosed herewith find $ twenty dollars payment on two shares. [Note: Subscription for five (5) shares or less, full payment is requested herewith.] I agree to pay any balance in two installments—one-half on or before October 1, 1922, the other half on or before December 1, 1922.

Name Wladimir Ollianoff (Lenin)
Address Kremlin Moscow.

Dated 8-nd November, 1922

(Make all checks, drafts, or money orders payable to the order of the Russian-American Industrial Corporation.)

Member of .....
Organization

Facsimile of Lenin's subscription for RAIC stock.

The effect of RAIC had lived up to the expectations for it originally expressed by the *New Republic,* May 31, 1922, when it said that "Mr. Hillman brings to the Amalgamated the suggestion of a practical way by which Americans may give the Russian people the help they need without waiting for the bankers to do it for them—on the bankers' own terms."

Hillman himself had the bankers in the back of his mind when he gave a statement to *Soviet Russia,* official organ of the Friends of Soviet Russia (December 1922):

"I want to say quite frankly that I do not propose to compete with J. P. Morgan & Co. If it were my business I would be abusing the trust placed in me by the clothing workers when I spend my time and energy in this work. Our purpose in going into Russia is to help reconstruct Russian industry. And the people of Russia, too, do not look upon our undertaking as merely a business proposition. They are looking for an opportunity to demonstrate to America and to American labor the possibility of cooperation with Russia.

"We do not want to exploit Russia for dividends. We want to work as partners with the Russian people in a mutual task of rehabilitation." That task was effectively performed.

HERBERT APTHEKER

Lenin, National Liberation, and the United States

FUNDAMENTAL to Leninism—and to the Party which Lenin, above all, forged and the State which he in the first place created—is the analysis of and the struggle against imperialism.

Applying Marxism to the modern epoch, Lenin taught that imperialism structurally was monopoly capitalism; that this structure drove those in power inexorably towards more and more reactionary policies; and that its consequent intensification of the basic antagonisms of capitalism made of this imperialism the last—the highest—stage of that rapacious order.

Marxism, being the opposite of any form of fatalism, emphasizes the decisive consequence of mass activity and mass consciousness; hence, it teaches the supreme importance of a revolutionary party to embody, mobilize and guide that consciousness. Marxism, seeking human emancipation and recognizing in the working class that class whose own liberation requires general emancipation, therefore is partisan towards that class and sees such partisanship as the essence of its scientific outlook.

Lenin emphasized the working-class heart of Marxism; simultaneously he emphasized its fundamental commitment to human release. Hence his constant attention to the position of women, to the wishes and ideas of youth; hence, and in a sense embodying all his concerns and visions, his tremendous and constant concern with the "most wretched," those who endured not only fierce poverty but

DR. HERBERT APTHEKER is a well-known Marxist historian and political analyst. A specialist in the field of Negro history, he is the author of *American Negro Slave Revolts, A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States,* and other books in this field. Other works include *The Era of McCarthyism, American Foreign Policy and the Cold War,* and *The Nature of Democracy, Freedom and Revolution,* as well as scores of pamphlets and articles. Dr. Aptheker is the literary editor of the late Dr. W. E. Du Bois. He is currently visiting professor at Bryn Mawr College, and Director of the American Institute for Marxist Studies.

PAUL ROBESON

I have heard some honest and sincere people say to me, "Yes, Paul, we agree with you on everything you say about Jim Crow and persecution. We're with you one hundred per cent on these things. But what has Russia ever done for us Negroes?" And in answering this question I feel that I go beyond my own personal feelings and put my finger on the very crux of what the Soviet Union means to me—a Negro and an American. For the answer is very simple and very clear: "Russia," I say, "the Soviet Union's very existence, its example before the world of abolishing all discrimination based on color or nationality, its fight in every arena of world conflict for genuine democracy and for peace, this has given us Negroes the chance of achieving our complete liberation within our own time, within this generation."

For where, indeed, would the Negro people's struggle for freedom be today, if world imperialism had not been critically wounded and its forces weakened throughout the world? Where would the fight to vote in the South be today if this new balance of power in the world did not exist?

Paul Robeson, *The Negro People and the Soviet Union*, New Century, 1950.

also the constant and exquisite torment of national and racial oppression.

As a revolutionist Lenin saw, in the multi-millions so tormented, natural allies in the movement to destroy capitalism. And as a revolutionist, he was appalled by their suffering and consumed with the passion to help terminate it. He insisted—and was among the earliest of European revolutionists to do so—that while the fundamental contradiction in the world in the present epoch was that between the bourgeoisie and the working class and that therefore the basic revolutionary struggle was that which sought socialism, simultaneously fundamental to the power of the bourgeoisie were their imperial possessions and positions and that, therefore, to fight for the termination of such possessions and positions was integral to the fight against the bourgeoisie.

Lenin is the first to consistently and clearly demonstrate the organic connection between the struggle for national liberation and against racist oppression and the struggle for socialism. In this Lenin rejected ultra-Leftism and sectarianism as he did in all phases of the struggle; at the same time, the heart of Leninism was its rejection of opportunism and this also required principled struggle against

both colonialism and racism, since each was a hallmark of opportunism and both together were among its main causes. Lenin emphasized the positive and indeed liberating potential of national consciousness and pride as these appeared among oppressed peoples; but he never tired of excoriating nationalistic distortions and, in particular, racist and chauvinist poisons.

Lenin on Black Liberation

OF SPECIAL interest to citizens of the United States are Lenin's observations and estimates of the position and struggles of Afro-Americans. These recur in his published works, his correspondence and in his notebooks.

Thus, in an essay written early in 1913—but not published until 1925—entitled "Russians and Negroes," Lenin pointed to certain similarities in the especially oppressed conditions of the peasantry in Tsarist Russia and of the Black masses in the United States. He noted, however, that in some indices the latter had been able to make greater advances than the former; he thought that important in this was the fact that "the emancipation of the American slaves took place in a less 'reformative' manner than that of the Russian slaves."[1]

He continued, however, to observe that the 1900 Census gave over 44 per cent of the Afro-American population (above the age of nine) as altogether illiterate and denounced this as "a disgrace" in a nation with a relatively high standard of living. This reflected, he added, that "the position of Negroes in America *in general* is one unworthy of a civilized country," i.e., that their position represented the intense subjugation of an entire people.

From this he drew the extremely significant generalization that "capitalism *cannot* give either *complete* emancipation or even complete equality;" i.e., even where its economy was highly developed and its bourgeois-democratic forms quite advanced, so blatant and scandalous a situation as that of the crucifixion of an entire people, rationalized through racism, persisted. Lenin also in this same essay did not fail to observe that while the figures for illiteracy clearly revealed the special oppression of the Black people, those same figures showed that the illiteracy rate for white people in the former slave-holding states was double that for whites outside that area. Hence, as Lenin concluded, "it is not only Negroes that show traces of

[1] Quotations from Lenin are taken from the volume compiled by C. Leiteizen and entitled *Lenin, On the United States of America* (Moscow, 1967, Progress Publishers). Throughout italics are as in the original.

slavery!"—i.e., he was noting the devastating effect that racism visited upon society as a whole.

Again, in his *New Data on the Laws Governing the Development of Capitalism in Agriculture,* part one of which was devoted to "Capitalism and Agriculture in the United States" (1917), Lenin corrected the writings of N. N. Himmer—a leading Menshevik—who had insisted that the history and development of the United States showed a total absence of any feudal or quasi-feudal impact. Lenin pointed out that Mr. Himmer was "forgetting" slavery and racist oppression; he added that "in the former slaveowning South of the USA these survivals *are still very powerful.*" Mr. Himmer's mistake is repeated to this day, with such historians as Daniel Boorstin and Louis Hartz emphasizing the allegedly non-feudal past of the United States in their efforts to construct a placid and consensus-filled past for this country.

Lenin, as one would expect, did not rest content with this correction in history but went on to emphasize the consequences:

> Having "freed" the Negroes, it [the ruling class] took good care, under "free" republican-democratic capitalism, to restore everything possible, and do everything possible and impossible for the most shameless and despicable oppression of the Negroes.

Hence, Lenin went on, the reality in the United States was that the masses of Black people found themselves in "a kind of prison where they are hemmed in, isolated and deprived of fresh air."

In his *Letter to American Workers* (1918), Lenin made another penetrating reference to United States history and the relationship thereto of the Afro-American people; this, too, has not yet been fully absorbed by much of the historical profession. Commenting upon the Civil War, he called attention to what he called its "world-historic, progressive and revolutionary significance," especially since it had made possible "overthrowing Negro slavery . . . overthrowing the rule of the slaveowners." He went on to hammer home the immediate lesson—namely, if to accomplish these things a Civil War was necessary and just, then surely the Civil War then being waged by the Russian masses to confirm their having overthrown capitalism also was necessary and just.

W.E.B. Du Bois and Lenin

IT IS worth noting—especially since this has not hitherto been done, so far as this writer knows—that there is good evidence that Lenin's studies of the United States made him the debtor of the labors of W.E.B. Du Bois, though neither man knew this at the

time. Thus, Lenin stated—in a letter to Isaac A. Hourwich[2]—that in preparing his work on US agriculture (to which reference was made earlier) he had "found a great deal of interesting matter" in the fifth volume, on agriculture, in the 1900 Census. The fact is that Dr. Du Bois was then (and later, too) employed by the Census Bureau and did much of the work on the South and especially on the Black farmers, sharecroppers and tenants. It is doubtless because this work[3] was the direct responsibility of Dr. Du Bois that Lenin found it especially "interesting."

Lenin in his notebooks upon which was based his *Imperialism* paid attention to data concerning, as he put it, "American workers and their *chauvinism.*" In this connection, he observed closely the general failure of the Socialist Party to comprehend the particular nature of the oppression of Black people and its tendency to compromise on the whole reality of racism. He noted, with astonishment, that jim-crow practices characterized people who thought of themselves as socialists and that officially there was nothing positive to show except a resolution denouncing discrimination that had been adopted in 1901 and promptly left on paper.

All this appears in the writings of Du Bois at the time Lenin was making his notes and they appear in a Left magazine known to Lenin, namely *The New Review,* which commenced publication (as a weekly) in New York City on January 4, 1913 and ceased (as a monthly) in April 1915. Du Bois, indeed, was among the contributing editors of this socialist publication and contributed both articles and reviews to it. Thus, in its second number, dated January 11, 1913, Du Bois in an essay entitled "A Field for Socialists" pleaded —and warned—that "there is a group of ten million persons in the United States toward whom Socialists would better turn serious attention;" while in the issue dated February 1, 1913, under the title "Socialism and the Negro Problem," he warned that the 1901 reso-

[2] Dated Cracow, Feb. 27, 1914. Dr. Hourwich, an economist and Socialist, lived then in Washington. His book, *Immigration and Labor* (N.Y., 1912, Putnam), was favorably commented upon by Lenin—cited work, p. 93. Hourwich was a correspondent of Dr. Du Bois at this time.

[3] In addition to the Census volume, Du Bois published under his own name certain studies resulting from this work. Note especially: "The Negroes of Farmville, Virginia: A Social Study," in *Bulletin of the Department of Labor* (1898), III, 1-38; and "The Negro in the Black Belt: Some Social Sketches," *ibid.,* (1899), IV, 401-417; and his article, "The Twelfth Census and the Negro Problems," in *Southern Workman,* May, 1900, XXIX, 305-309. It is worth adding that the first volume of *The Collected Works of Ho Chi Minh* contains numerous references to the oppression of Black people in the United States and to *The Crisis,* with quotations from editorials written by Du Bois; this, too, was in the period prior to World War I.

lution would not do; that chauvinism was rampant in the Socialist Party; that Black people formed not only one out of ten in the population as a whole, but one out of every five workers in the United States; and that without a decisive shift on the part of Socialists on this question nothing but failure would mark the Party's efforts.

In the Du Bois papers it is evident that he came to read Lenin rather late—only in the 1930's; but in the work of Lenin, though Du Bois' name is not mentioned, it seems clear that his words and his ideas were being read and pondered, at the time, in far-off Russia or in places of exile.

Lenin's emphasis upon the significance of Black peoples for the development of socialist consciousness in the United States was part, of course, of his emphasis, also prior to World War I, on the organic connection between the revolutionary struggles of European workers and the liberation and anti-colonial struggles of masses outside Europe.

The founding of the Third International, in March 1919, was due not only to the betrayal, in terms of the war, by the Second but also its related betrayal and neglect of the struggles of the colored peoples of the world. One must note again, that it is in 1919 that Du Bois, in France, launched the modern Pan-African Movement, so fundamental in terms of the liberation efforts of all African and African-derived peoples. (And, to note the triad again, in 1919 Ho Chi Minh was in France appealing for the fullest possible attention to the colonially-oppressed peoples, first because the oppression was monstrous and also because the battle against it was a battle against imperialism and therefore was fundamentally connected with the working-class struggle against capitalism.) It is Lenin who insists—against opposition from Right and "Left"—within that Third International that in recognizing the overriding antagonism of the epoch as being imperialism-versus-socialism, one must also see the decisive significance of the struggles in the colonial and dependent countries —including bourgeois-democratic struggles there. Such a position made inevitable the whole Marxist-Leninist position on the special nature of Black oppression in the United States, its class, race, and national components, the necessity of the broadest possible approach to overcoming that oppression and the decisive character of the question in terms of the path towards Socialism.

Quite remarkable is the position paper G. V. Chicherin prepared and offered for Lenin's inspection, approval and comment as he—in the position of Commissar for Foreign Affairs of Soviet Russia—left

for the Genoa International Conference early in 1922. That position paper of the Revolutionary Government of Russia, read this way—and the underlining was done by Lenin to emphasize those thoughts held by him to be most important:

> The African Conference of 1885 [held in Berlin] resulted in the horrors of the Belgian Congo, because the European powers at that Conference indulged in philanthropy towards the Negroes and that philanthropy turned out to be a fig-leaf covering the most barbaric exploitation. The novelty in our international scheme must be that the Negro *and all other colonial peoples participate on an equal footing* with the European peoples in conferences and commissions and have the right *to prevent interference* in their internal affairs. [At the margin of the document at this point, Lenin added "true!"] Another novelty is the *obligatory participation of working-class organizations.*

Here the combination of the racially and colonially oppressed peoples and the working classes of the world is made explicit; so, too, is the responsibility of the Soviet Government to forward their mutual interests consciously affirmed and accepted. Viewed in this way, that 1922 position paper of the still very young Soviet Russia, under the leadership of Lenin, summarizes the positive features of world history for the past half century.

There were two other features of Lenin's writings relative to the United States that require direct attention.

He was always warmly responsive to all evidences of support for the October Revolution and the State it created; he knew and emphasized that without such support the Revolution could not have survived. At the same time, he made clear that the dependence was not one way, and that the relationship was one of solidarity and not charity. That is, he underlined the fact that the survival of the October Revolution and the stability of the State it had created were matters of decisive importance to the achievement of the movement from capitalism to socialism, considered in its overall historic context.

Thus, for example, in October 1921, Lenin thanked Sidney Hillman, then a leader of the Garment Workers Union, which had created the Russian-American Industrial Corporation to raise funds from workers here that would support the rehabilitation of Soviet Russia. Writing as he was to a non-Communist, and noting the expressions of support for the efforts of the Russian workers that had come recently from the Amsterdam Trade Union International—"unquestionably hostile to communism," Lenin remarked—he went on to say that such support was not really a narrow partisan matter

but rather a matter of the most profound working-class concern. For, wrote Lenin, "any victory of the international bourgeoisie over Soviet Russia would mean the greatest possible victory of world reaction over the working class in general."

Lenin called attention to the particular historical role of anti-imperialist and revolutionary partisans inside the United States. Thus, in his *Letter to American Workers* of 1918, he declared that they "have to play an exceptionally important role as uncompromising enemies of American imperialism—the freshest, strongest and latest. . ." Because of the domination of the United States by the monopolists, he went on, the US population found "themselves playing the role of hired thugs who, for the benefit of the wealthy scoundrels, throttled the Philippines in 1898 on the pretext of 'liberating' them, and are throttling the Russian Socialist Republic in 1918 on the pretext of 'protecting' it from the Germans." The precise applicability of all this to the present-day United States, and world, is crystal clear in the light of the Vietnam war and the US role in throttling all national liberation movements.

The Lenin Heritage

LENIN insisted, "definitely and unambiguously," as he himself wrote,[4] that "whoever does not . . . fight against all national oppression or inequality, is not a Marxist, he is not even a democrat." No one fought against both more effectively than did Lenin; and the secret of his effectiveness—quite aside from personal and particular reasons—was that he based that struggle upon the Marxist-Leninist comprehension of the nature of capitalism, of imperialism, of the basic role of the working class. From that comprehension he drew the conclusion that the movements to destroy colonialism and racism were organic to the struggle against imperialism and therefore a basic duty of and necessity for the world working class.

A party based on these concepts *is* a Marxist-Leninist one and it was just such a party that Lenin molded. With that at the helm, the peoples of Tsarist Russia stormed the heavens and overthrew this ruling class; they forced an end to the Great Imperialist War; they preserved their Bolshevik state; they built a modern, advanced economy; they universalized cultural and educational knowledge; they eliminated the enslavement and subordination of women; they changed what had been the prison-house of nations into a land of equality; they contributed decisively to the smashing of fascism;

[4] In his *Critical Remarks on the National Question*, written late in 1913.

they have supported to an indispensable degree the numerous peoples of the earth who, following them, have taken the path of socialism; they have made possible a new stage in the struggles for national liberation; and their weight has been fundamental in averting World War Three. And they move now towards Communism.

Such is Lenin's heritage, for the peoples of the world—and not least the peoples of the United States of America.

Black Americans on Lenin

One of the most important aspects of Lenin's impact on the United States has been the influence of his thinking and accomplishments upon the black people from the first time they heard of him during World War I until the present day. Practically all sections of the black community have been affected, as the writings reprinted below indicate.

W. E. B. DU BOIS

First to be represented is Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, one of the towering figures in US scholarship, whose great contributions in the fields of history, economics and sociology are only now beginning to be fully appreciated. But Dr. Du Bois was more than a great scholar. He was a leader in the struggle of the black people in the United States, for the liberation of the African peoples, for world peace. Below are two quotations from his writings, one from an editorial in Crisis, *the monthly magazine of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the other from an article he wrote while in the Soviet Union in 1926, which he recalled in an article he wrote upon his return from a third visit to the USSR in 1949.*

AND, FINALLY, the one new idea of the World War—the idea which may well stand in future years as the one thing that made the slaughter worth while—is an idea which we are likely to fail to know because it is today hidden under the maledictions hurled at Bolshevism.

It is not the murder, the anarchy, the hate which for years under Tsar and Revolution, have drenched this weary land, but it is the vision of great dreamers that only those who work shall eat.

Crisis magazine, September 1919

DU BOIS ON HIS VISIT TO SOVIET RUSSIA

I HAVE just returned from my third visit to Russia in a generation. This is what I wrote while I was there in 1926:

"I am sitting in Revolution Square opposite the second house of the Moscow Soviets and in a hotel run by the Soviet Government. Yonder the sun pours into my window over the domes and eagles and pointed towers of the Kremlin. Here is the old Chinese Wall of the inner city; there is the gilded glory of the Cathedral of Christ, The Savior. Through yonder gate, on the vast Red Square, Lenin sleeps his last sleep, with long lines peering each day into his dead and speaking face. Around me roars a city of two millions.

"I have been in Russia something less than two months. I did not see the Russia of war and blood rapine. I know nothing of political prisoners, secret police and underground propaganda. My knowledge of the Russian language is sketchy and of this vast land, the largest single country on earth, I have traveled over only a small, a very small part. But I have seen something. I have traveled over two thousand miles and visited four of its largest cities, many of its towns, the Neva, Dnieper, Moscow and Volga Rivers, and stretches of land and village. I have looked into the faces of its races—Jews, Tatars, Gypsies, Caucasians, Armenians and Chinese. I have not done my sight-seeing and investigation in groups and crowds, but have in nearly all cases gone alone with one Russian-speaking friend. In this way I have seen schools, universities, factories, stores, printing establishments, government offices, palaces, museums, summer colonies of children, libraries, churches, monasteries, Boyar houses, theaters, moving-picture houses, day nurseries and cooperatives. I have seen some celebrations—self-governing children in a school house of an evening; and 200,000 children and youth marching on Youth Day. I have talked with peasants and laborers, Commissars of the Republic, teachers and children.

"I have walked miles of streets in Leningrad, Moscow, Nizhni Novgorod and Kiev at morning, noon and night; I have trafficked on the curb and in the stores; I have watched crowds and audiences. I have gathered some documents and figures, plied officials and teachers with questions and sat still and gazed at this Russia, that the spirit of its life and people might enter my veins.

"I stand in astonishment and wonder at the revelation of Russia that has come to me. I may be partially deceived and half-informed. But if what I have seen with my eyes and heard with my ears in Russia is Bolshevism, I am a Bolshevik."

Appraising the task faced by Lenin and his followers, Du Bois concluded: "It was a task more than Herculean; that it even began accomplishment in our day is a miracle; that it succeeded so far as it has gives one renewed faith in mankind."

From an article in Soviet Russia Today, *November 1949*

GARVEY MOVEMENT

The Universal Negro Improvement Association was one of the biggest mass movements of the black people to spring up after World War I. It was popularly known as the Garvey movement, after its chief organizer, Marcus Garvey. UNIA's program called for "Africa for Africans at home and abroad." It sought mass migration to Africa and black capitalism in the United States. The movement expressed the frustration and mass resentment of the black people in this country.

*To the All-Union Congress, Moscow**

PLEASE accept the deep sorrow and condolences of the four hundred million Negroes of the world over the death of Nikolay Lenin and the irreparable loss of the Russian people. To us Lenin was one of the world's greatest benefactors.

Long live the Soviet Government of Russia.

THE MESSENGER

The advanced sections of the black working class were greatly impressed by Lenin and the October Revolution of 1917. This was reflected in the columns of the periodicals published by black members of the US Socialist Party. The Messenger, *a monthly magazine edited by Chandler Owen and A. Philip Randolph, declared in its May-June 1919 issue:*

THE MARCH OF SOVIET GOVERNMENT

"STILL it continues! The cosmic tread of Soviet government with ceaseless step claims another nation. Russia and Germany have yielded to its human touch, and now Hungary joins the people's form of rule. Italy is standing upon a social volcano. France is seething with social unrest. The triple alliance of Great Britain—the railroad, transport and mine workers—threaten to overthrow the economic and political bourbonism of 'Merry Old England.' The red tide

* At this time the 2nd All-Union Congress of Soviets was being held in Moscow.

of socialism sweeps on in America. South America is in the throes of revolution.

"Soviet government proceeds apace. It bids fair to sweep over the whole world. The sooner the better. On with the dance!"

W. A. DOMINGO

In 1918 and .1919, a bitter struggle took place in the Socialist Party between those forces who backed imperialist World War I and wanted to keep the SP passive and those who sought the revolutionary road cleared by Lenin and the Soviet Union. Among those who advocated the latter was W. A. Domingo, editor of the Emancipator *and contributing editor to the* Messenger, *who was a leader of the black forces in the Socialist Party. In a report prepared for the leaders of the SP in 1919, Domingo argued that the Negro people are one of the most strategic forces needed to bring socialism to the United States and he asserted that the Negro people could not be won for socialism unless the SP adopted the Lenin line. The pertinent section of Domingo's report follows:*

LET it be supposed that the other alternative happens, that the Left Wing succeeds in gaining control of the party, that it adheres to a strictly theoretical position and shapes party propaganda on the purely theoretical syllogism, viz., the Negro is a worker, he is part of the lowest stratum of the American proletariat, hence when mass action is galvanized into mass movement, he will be swept along with the rest of his class. Such reasoning has the appearance of logic but fails to recognize the existence of such a thing as group psychology and is out of harmony with the practical experiences of the Russian Bolshevik Party from which the extreme groups of American Socialists profess to have copied their tactics. Be it remembered that the program of that party is fundamentally sound although it had a suggestion of opportunism when it adjusted itself to the immediate needs of the Russian proletariat composed of peasants and workers. Land to the peasants and bread and peace to the people are the ultimate aims of Socialism, but in order to gain power Lenin had to give it an immediate application regardless of all else and thus secure the adhesion of the masses to his policies.

In order to accomplish world revolution the Bolsheviki have not hesitated to encouch in their platform statements that are calculated to attract and gain for them the support of all the oppressed peoples of the world. They have made the declaration that they are willing to extend the principle of self-determination to even the toiling "masses of Africa, Asia and all the colonies;" they have gone further

and encouraged the nationalistic ambitions of Ireland, India, and Egypt. Afghan emissaries are reported to have secured aid from Lenin for the purpose of recovering from England territory stolen in former years.

Lenin, himself, has justified his employment of highly paid capitalistic experts, the signing of the Brest-Litovsk treaty with imperial Germany and his treating with French monarchist officers on the ground that the international social revolution is a species of warfare and temporary alliances must be made in order to secure ultimate victory for the proletariat. All of this proves the willingness of Lenin to adjust his tactics to existing conditions provided there is no sacrifices of principle involved. . . . He uses realities, not theories to cope with the facts of a given situation. He, however, does not make the mistake of alienating from or failing to secure to his cause the friendship of those who by virtue of class affiliations are his logical adherents. To this end he stresses the needs of the poorest peasants and the industrial workers, and cements their loyalty by placing them in the first class in the scheme of rationing. Since it is the avowed object of the Left Wing to establish Socialism through the medium of a dictatorship of the proletariat, how can they expect to accomplish it with a large portion of the American proletariat untouched by revolutionary propaganda?

CLAUDE McKAY

Claude McKay, the Black poet and novelist, was a significant figure in US literature in the 1920s and 1930s. Below is an excerpt from his article, "Soviet Russia and the Negro," which he wrote after a visit to the USSR in 1923. The article was published in the December 1923 issue of Crisis, *the monthly magazine of the National Association For the Advancement of Colored People.*

THOUGH Western Europe can be reported as being quite ignorant and apathetic of the Negro in world affairs, there is one great nation with an arm in Europe that is thinking intelligently on the Negro as it does about all international problems. When Russian workers overturned their infamous government in 1917, one of the first acts of the new Premier, Lenin, was a proclamation greeting all the oppressed peoples throughout the world, exhorting them to organize and unite against the common international oppressor—Private Capitalism. Later on in Moscow, Lenin himself grappled with

the question of the American Negroes and spoke on the subject at the Second Congress of the Third International. He consulted with John Reed, the American journalist, and dwelt on the urgent necessity of propaganda and organizational work among the Negroes of the South.

Crisis magazine, December 1922

Black Poets

LANGSTON HUGHES

Langston Hughes, whose literary life began in the 1920s and ended in 1967 upon his death, was a great poet, short story writer and satirist. When he died, he was characterized as "a courageous fighter for human rights and dignity" who "did much to create an identity and purpose in life among black people."

BALLAD OF LENIN

Comrade Lenin of Russia,
High in a marble tomb,
Move over, Comrade Lenin,
And give me room.

I am Ivan, the peasant,
Boots all muddy with soil.
I fought with you, Comrade Lenin.
Now I have finished my toil.

Comrade Lenin of Russia,
Alive in a marble tomb,
Move over, Comrade Lenin,
And give me room.

I am Chico, the Negro,
Cutting cane in the sun.
I lived for you, Comrade Lenin.
Now my work is done.

Comrade Lenin of Russia,
Honored in a marble tomb,

Move over, Comrade Lenin,
And give me room.

I am Chang from the foundries
On strike in the streets of Shanghai.
For the sake of the Revolution
I fight, I starve, I die.

Comrade Lenin of Russia
Rises in the marble tomb:
On guard with the fighters forever—
The world is our room!

LANGSTON HUGHES
Reprinted from Proletarian Literature in the United States, *International Publishers, 1935*

RICHARD WRIGHT

Richard Wright was one of the most significant figures in US literature during the 1930s and 1940s. Out of his experience as a black man in the jungle of US society, he wrote such novels as Native Son *and* Black Boy. *Below is a section of his long poem "Transcontinental."*

TRANSCONTINENTAL

Lenin's line is our stream line
UNITEDFRONT—SSSTRIKE
Through October's windshield we see the road Looping over green hills Dipping toward to-morrow

AmericaAmericaAmerica
Look back See the tiny threads of our tires leaving hammer and sickle prints upon the pavement
See the tree-lined horizon turning slowly in our hearts
See the ripe fields Fields ripe as our love
See the eastern sky See the white clouds of our hope
See the blood-red afterglow in the west Our memory of October
See See See the pretty cottages the bungalows the sheltered homes
See the packing-box cities the jungles the huts
See See See the skyscrapers the clubs the pent-houses
See the bread-lines winding winding winding long as our road
AmericaAmericaAmerica

Tagging Kentucky Tagging Tennessee
Into Ohio Into the orchards of Michigan
Over the rising and falling dunes of Indiana
Across Illinois' glad fields of dancing corn
Slowing Comrades Slowing again
Slowing for the heart of proletarian America
CHICAGO–100 MILES
WOORKERSWOORKERS
Steel and rail and stock All you sons of Haymarket
Swing on We're going your way America is ours
UNITEDFRONT–SSSTRIKE
The pressure of our tires is blood pounding in our hearts
The steam of our courage blows from the radiator-cap
UNITEDFRONT–STRIKE
UNITEDFRONT–SSSTRIKE
The wind screams red songs in our ears
60 70 80 90
AmericaAmericaAmerica

Listen Listen to the moans of those whose lives were laughter
Listen to the howls of the dogs dispossessed
Listen to bureaucratic insects spattering against the windshield
Listen to curses rebounding from fear-proof glass
Listen to the gravel of hate tingling on our fenders
Listen to the raindrops mumbling of yesterday

WHY I LOVE LENIN

by Edwin Brooks

DO YOU know, friend, why I love Lenin, my father, father of oppressed peoples? Because he led the way to the way to the Promised Land. Because he died for the downtrodden. Because he, like other Communists I have known, are like fine pieces of silver, jewels of the people, tellers of the truth. If he were here, alive, in my basement, he would talk to me–not in scorn, not in condescension, not in harsh commands, not in hate or deception–but in comradely love. He would observe my weaknesses, he would strengthen me. Whatever happens, at any place or time, Lenin is deep within me.

EDWIN BROOKS is a black poet, living in Toledo, Ohio.

Listen to the wind whistling of to-morrow
Listen to our tires humming humming humming hymns of victory
AmericaAmericaAmerica

Coasting Comrades Coasting
Coasting on momentum of Revolution
Look Look at that village Like a lonesome egg in the nest of the hills
Soon Soon you shall fly all over the hillsides Crowing the new dawn
Coasting Indulging in Lenin's dream

International Literature, *Moscow, 1936, No. 1*

PAUL ROBESON

NO SEEMING "CHANCE" CHAIN OF EVENTS stretching from one continent to another can halt the advance of socialism; no forces can turn back the leap into a new age ushered in during the October Days of 1917.

Many People's Republics of East and West have been born and pursue their fresh paths toward a new and richer future for their citizens. And the peoples of the colonial, semi-colonial and recently colonial lands know that their struggles are possible precisely because of the example set by the Soviet Union in its relations to the various Soviet National Republics and because of the constant help and continuous sacrifices of the Soviet people.

Often I have said, and I repeat: I was, I am and always will be a true friend of the Soviet people and of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

From greeting to the Soviet people, *Izvestia*, November 7, 1956.

LENIN ON U.S. NEGROES

AMONG U.S. NEGROES there were (in 1900) 44.5 per cent of illiterates.

Such a scandalously high percentage of illiterates is a disgrace to a civilized, advanced country like the North American Republic. Furthermore, everyone knows that the position of the Negroes in America in general is one unworthy of a civilized country–capitalism cannot give either complete emancipation or even complete equality.

It is instructive that among the whites in America the proportion of illiiterates is not more than 6 per cent. But if we divide America into what were formerly slave-holding areas (an American "Russia") and non-slaveholding areas (an American non-Russia), we shall find 11-12 per cent of illiterates among the whites in the former and 4-6 per cent in the latter areas!

The proportion of illiterates among the whites is twice as high in the former slaveholding areas. Shame on America for the plight of the Negroes.

Written in January 1913

GUS HALL

Marxism-Leninism: The Star of Revolutionary Transition

THE STARS in the galaxy of human thought are many but none quite so bright as the star of Marxism-Leninism. As is the case with bodies in the universe, bodies of thought also recede. Many are the "great" ideas that have faded into nothingness. But Marxism-Leninism grows in intensity and becomes an ever greater influence on the affairs of human society. In nature's galaxy of endless bodies, only a select few have served mankind, as a dimensional point of reference, as a guide in unfamiliar terrain. In the universe of human thought Marxism-Leninism has emerged as the most trusted point of reference. It has become the compass in the struggle for social progress.

On this, the 100-year anniversary of the birth of one of its most illustrious advocates and moulders, Lenin, this science has emerged as the single most important influence on the thought patterns of human society. It is the unified field theory of human existence and the nature around it. It is the advanced outpost in mankind's endless search for the truth. It has given human thought an instrument, a science with which to probe ever deeper, to see the interrelationships within an ever-changing reality. It is a science of thought and action.

Marxism-Leninism is the greatest qualitative leap in human consciousness. It is truly the most significant turning point in the history of human thought. One cannot fully understand the significance of this contribution to human thought without seeing it in this broader historic setting.

Gus Hall is the General Secretary of the US Communist Party, a post he has held for ten years. Born in Minnesota in 1910, from early youth he was active in the Young Communist League and in organizing lumberjacks, miners and farmers, and, during the depression, the unemployed. As a steel worker in Ohio, he became a founder of the United Steel Workers of America and a leader of the 1937 Little Steel Strike. He enlisted in the US Navy during World War II and after the war became head of the Communist Party in Ohio. A victim, along with other CP leaders, of prosecution under the Smith Act, he served an eight-year prison sentence. Gus Hall had written some twenty pamphlets, has traveled widely and participated in recent discussions of the world Communist movement.

Throughout history many have added something to the body of human thought, but only exceptions have in any basic sense influenced its overall direction. Before Marx and Engels many had interpreted or discussed one or another phase of social activity but only a few had unearthed connecting links and interrelationships, or understood the objective laws that propel and guide the processes of human affairs. Many had observed the unfolding of life's reality but very few had become a factor in changing it. Many had made one or another discovery about specific phenomena. Marx and Engels gave birth to a new science that encompassed and unified the best in all of human thought. Marxism-Leninism stands in a league by itself because it marked a qualitative leap in human thought.

It marks a new level of human consciousness. It marks the beginning of the end to human thought mainly based on subjective whims, conjectures, fancy, speculation abstracted from reality. It marks the beginning of a new level where the materialist scientific concept becomes the dominating factor influencing human thought.

This qualitative leap in human consciousness was not a thing in itself. It did not come out of the blue. This hurdle in human thought is a reflection of a corresponding shift in man's relationship to his environment. It marked a new era in human thought. Marxism-Leninism is the thought pattern of human consciousness, when mankind becomes the master of its own affairs and the environment around it. It is the dominant influence when mankind becomes a conscious factor determining the direction of its affairs. It is the guide not just for climbing the ladder but also for planning and building the edifice of social progress.

This qualitative leap in human consciousness is revolutionary because the turning point in human affairs is revolutionary. Let us place this projection in more concrete terms. A dominating factor in the history of human social existence has been man's exploitation of man. This produced classes of haves and have-nots; and thus the history of human affairs is a history of class struggle. Until the advent of socialism, social systems have been systems of oppression for the sole purpose of exploitation.

Thought patterns were largely moulded by the reality of exploitation. Most bodies of thought were geared to defending or

justifying man's exploitation of man. When the systems of exploitation spilled over the national boundaries, the systems of thought followed to include the justification for the oppression and exploitation of other peoples and nations. Racism and chauvinism are the most vicious of these thought patterns.

All philosophical schools of thought accepted exploitation as if it was a natural phenomenon. Economic schools explained all economic developments as though exploitation for private profit of the few were the only possible kind of social structure.

History, theology, all social sciences were an extension of the concept of exploitation of man by man. Theologians defended the enslavement of man and promised its end only after death.

Even the newer philosophical concepts of idealism were thought patterns for a period when mankind was not the conscious determining factor influencing the direction of its affairs. They are expressions of hopes, of dreams and the human desire for a more just social order. But they are not assessments of reality—they are not instruments for changing reality. Marxism-Leninism is the qualitative break with all such concepts.

Civilization had reached a point where it was ready to end all concepts and systems based on man exploiting man. To become a force in this qualitative shift in human affairs, humankind had to know the laws of social development. It needed an advanced concept of what kind of a social order to build.

Marxism-Leninism is the accumulated wisdom—the science of this leap in social progress. For this task, a new class, a new human social breed was born: the working class, a class with a unique mission. The working class was born with the task of being the main force in the historic upheaval to put an end to all systems of exploitation of man by man. It was born with the mission to abolish all classes including itself. The mission is forced on the working class by objective forces, by the laws of social development. It is forced to become a conscious factor in the revolutionary transition. To become a force in this revolutionary change, it needed a revolutionary body of thought. A body of thought geared to changing reality.

Marx expressed this new relationship of thought to action in his now famous remark: "The philosophers have interpreted the world in various ways. The point however is to change it." This remark was not only an expression of new ideas but an expression of a new concept of thought as an instrument of changing reality. When applied to social affairs this was revolutionary. It expressed a new

relationship between thinking and being. It closed the gap between theory and practice, thought and action. It introduced a new method of thought. Thus Marxism was moulded as a revolutionary theory of changing the reality of man exploiting man. It is the instrument through which man becomes the master of its social affairs. This was a bold and basic challenge to all schools of thought, because here was not just another interpretation; this was a new way of thinking—a leap in consciousness, corresponding to the new level of action.

The battle was on. The lion had been bearded in his den. The gauntlet was down. No body of thought has ever been under attack as has Marxism. The old schools of thought defending the ruling order did not give up. For them it was a matter of life or death. The new revolutionary patterns of thought challenged their way of life and their schools of thought. They saw the handwriting on the wall—ideas become a material revolutionary force when they are taken up by the masses. The attack has taken every possible form, direct and indirect. With time, the open, direct challenges failed to make headway. The main attack developed from within. A new breed of ideologists appeared on the world scene; they became known as the masters of revisionism, changing Marxism until it had nothing to do with the original. This breed came both from the left and right woodwork. It set out to emasculate the new revolutionary body of thought. Its open attack could not destroy Marxism so they set out to rob it of its revolutionary teeth. They set out to remake Marxism so it would revert to observing reality instead of changing it. They set out to remove the class concepts from Marxism. This was all done in the name of "bringing Marxism up to date."

THIS is where Lenin enters the historic and determining battle for the new revolutionary patterns of thought. His task was to rescue, to defend, and to further develop this scientific instrument of history's greatest revolutionary leap. Lenin undertook to scrape the barnacles of revisionism that had become attached to the body of Marxism. Lenin took up the battle against all forms of opportunism whose ideas had infected and poisoned the bloodstream of the revolutionary movement.

Lenin led the struggle that resulted in a qualitative shift in human consciousness. Lenin's contributions to Marxist thought are basic and fundamental. In a sense. Lenin's extension of Marxism expresses a further qualitative shift in human thought. This is a reflection of a new revolutionary explosion. Because now human society was ready to make the first breakthrough in establishing its first beachhead

for the new system without exploitation. The birth of the first socialist state, the Soviet Union, was that event. This new level of consciousness developed in the form of a further development of Marxism. From this point on it is correctly referred to as Marxism-Leninism. In the process of applying this new science as the revolutionary instrument for changing reality, Lenin gave it new qualities. It now became not only the thought pattern for the historic transition but the guide for the breakthrough and the building of a new society. Marxism-Leninism became the unified field theory for the revolutionary explosion and for the building of a new life without exploitation, or war. Thanks to Lenin the new body of thought again became truly the revolutionary instrument for changing reality. Thus, there never was any contradiction in Lenin, the genius of thought; Lenin, the revolutionary leader of struggle; and Lenin, the builder of Socialism.

Lenin was the embodiment of the synthesis of thought and being. He unified theory and revolutionary practice. The building of the new social system of socialism-communism is accomplished with new qualitative shifts in human consciousness. The advanced concepts of this new consciousness constitute the science of Marxism-Leninism.

Mankind owes an everlasting debt of gratitude to Lenin. His contributions to human thought, his contributions to moulding the science of Marxism-Leninism as the instrument of revolutionary transition from the capitalist system of exploitation and profits to socialism and communism, a system where the interest and welfare of human society is its only propellant. Thus Lenin has made the contribution that has changed the direction of social development. His contribution has made it possible for civilization to make a qualitative shift towards a social order where there will be no poverty, no racism, no bigotry and where there will be *war no more.* Lenin was certainly not a pacifist, yet he declared, "Socialists have always considered wars between nations as barbarous and brutal."

Marxism-Leninism is the guiding pattern of thought for the majority of the world's people. Because of Lenin it is the brightest star in the galaxy of human thought. It will forever be associated with the name of Lenin.

PUBLISHERS OF LENIN AND MARXIST-LENINIST WORKS

WE SHOULD like to call our readers' attention to the fact that the main publisher of Marxist literature and the works of Lenin in this country is International Publishers, 381 Park Avenue South, New York City, New York 10016. We suggest that anyone wishing further information on Marxism-Leninism and the writings of Lenin write for their catalogue.—Ed.

HOWARD L. PARSONS

The Influence of Lenin's Thought On U.S. Philosophers

ALBERT Rhys Williams, a witness to the historical events at Smolny in November 1917, later described those events:

> While a tumultuous, singing throng of peasants and soldiers, flushed with the triumph of their revolution, jammed the great hall at Smolny, while the guns of the *Aurora* were heralding the death of the old order and the birth of the new, Lenin quietly stepped upon the tribunal. . . . After stilling the tornado of applause he said, "Comrades, we shall now take up the formation of the Socialist State." [95].*

These events were remarkable in many ways. What is remarkable for a philosopher looking backward is that a man of philosophical talents and interests presided over the formation of a large modern state, one that was to become one of the dominant powers in the 20th century. This state, moreover, was a socialist one, inspired by the great humanistic visions of past philosophers and seers and by the technological promise of modern science. Philosophers from Confucius and Plato onwards had dreamed of presiding over or advising a new state. But before 1917 they had never succeeded. Warriors, kings, and emperors created, governed, and destroyed states; philosophers continued to dream. But in Lenin the world for the first time witnessed not a king but a leader of the peasants, workers

* Numbers in brackets throughout this article refer to entries in the bibliography, beginning on page 197.

DR. HOWARD L. PARSONS is Chairman of the Department of Philosophy of the University of Bridgeport. He was the first president of the Society for the Philosophical Study of Dialectical Materialism, and is a Founding Sponsor and Board Member of the American Institute for Marxist Studies. He also serves on the Board of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship. Professor Parsons is the author of a number of publications, including the booklet *The Young Marx and the Young Generation.* He has recently completed a book manuscript, *Humanism and Marxist Thought.*

and soldiers, not a dreaming philosopher but a militant revolutionary who knew how to use philosophical ideas as a guide and weapon in achieving political power.

The influence of Lenin's thought on US philosophers has not been widespread or profound. This is not surprising. During the past 25 years the United States has become the leading capitalist world power. Most of its philosophers have been situated in universities dependent upon and responsive to bourgeois interests and ideas. Lenin's passion for the socialist revolution and his philosophy of communism run through all his writings. In capitalist societies it has normally been dangerous and illegal to study and to disseminate such a philosophy. What is surprising, therefore, is that his thought has had as much influence as it has. This, too, is explainable.

Lenin was the leader of a worldwide revolutionary movement which has brought one-third of the world's people under the guidance of a philosophy which he helped to shape, namely, Marxism-Leninism. During this period, 1917-1970, everyone in the world has been *unconsciously* if not consciously affected by this philosophy-in-action, and philosophers have been no exception. Even when after 1917 US philosophers ignored Lenin's thought, they could not avoid being influenced by the pervasive effects which the communist movement was having upon men and societies throughout the world. For example, all American philosophers today pay taxes to support an American war in Vietnam whose avowed purpose is to "stop communism." Awareness of this fact may not bring them to read Lenin. But the evident contradiction between the real destruction of the Vietnam war abroad and at home and the ideal humanism of American democracy does affect philosophers who think. Such contradictions are increasingly affecting not only philosophers but also American citizens generally.

Here, when we speak of US philosophers we mean primarily (but not exclusively) those scholars trained in philosophy and practicing it as a profession. Sometimes we refer to a social scientist whose work borders on philosophy or becomes philosophical. Thousands of American scholars of many kinds have been affected or influenced by Lenin's thought, positively and negatively.

The influence of Lenin's thought on US philosophers has roughly paralleled the changing relations between the US Government and the USSR Government. Before 1917 the philosophical writings of Lenin were unkown to most American scholars. From the year of the Great Revolution in 1917 to the formal recognition by the United States of the Soviet Union in 1933, US philosophers took little ac-

count of Soviet philosophy and Lenin's philosophical writings. But the labor struggles and social conflicts of the 1930's in America revived radical thought and turned American thinkers, including philosophers, to its sources in men like Marx and Lenin. This interest in Lenin's thought continued through the war against fascism and the close cooperation between the American and Soviet Governments and their peoples against a common fascist enemy. The cold war, beginning with the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima in 1945, produced also coldness and hostility on the part of most US philosophers toward the thought of Marxism-Leninism, as well as persecution toward those who showed interest in it or agreement with it. However, by 1960 the US Government, allied with business and the military, began to lose its postwar control over markets and people in Europe, Africa, and Asia. Simultaneously, the Black revolt at home, joined by the university students, broke up the cold-war repression of independent political action and thought. The result was a new interest in revolutionary thought, including the thought of Lenin. This new interest is still growing today.

Thus we may distinguish five main periods in the history of our theme: (1) 1917-1928—the founding of the USSR, the establishment of the US Communist Party and its ideas, US reaction, and little philosophical activity in Marxism in the United States; (2) 1928-1941—the period of the first Five-Year Plan, Stalin's rise, Communist vs. Socialist parties and then the Popular Front in 1935, the spread of Marxist-Leninist literature in the United States, the Great Depression, the organization of the trade unions and welfare legislation, the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union, accelerated American inquiry into Marxism-Leninism, and increasing polarization between communists (Leninists) and socialists; (3) 1941-1945—the alliance against fascism; (4) 1945-1960—the cold war and for the most part the indifference or antagonism of US philosophers to Leninism; (5) 1960-1970—the break-up of cold-war patterns and the revival of interest in Marxism-Leninism.

Before World War I, Marxist philosophical writing in America was confined largely to non-academic persons, who in a non-technical way expounded Marxism or sought to synthesize it with other philosophies. [27] From 1890 Marxist socialism was dominant over communitarian and Lasallean socialism, largely as a result of the labor struggles at the end of the century. One of the earliest books by a professional philosopher in America to defend socialism was Roy Wood Sellars' *The Next Step in Democracy*, published in 1916. It was written in a time when American scholars were primarily concerned with the economic aspects of Marxism.

Lenin's famous *Letter to American Workers* (1918) helped to convince the more radical sector of the Socialist Party that Bolshevism was the correct road. In consequence, the Workers Party (Communist) emerged as legal in 1921 and the organs of the Party took various forms, the most enduring of which were the monthly and later weekly *New Massess* (1926-1949), the monthly *Masses and Mainstream* and later *Mainstream* (1949-1963), the monthly *Communist* and later *Political Affairs* (1922-), and the *Daily Worker, Worker* and *Daily World* (1924-). The writers for these organs followed Lenin's emphasis on a revolutionary worker's party, rejecting in 1928 both the Trotskyites and the Lovestoneites who argued that American capitalism was not ready for revolution. William Z. Foster, the Party leader for many years, was a loyal Leninist, and a leading Party theoretician in the postwar period, Dr. Herbert Aptheker, one of America's authorities on slavery and Black history, places himself in the line of Marxist-Leninist thought. [2]

The postwar 1920's were a period of reaction in American life, and the fear of Bolshevism by government, business, and large parts of the middle class produced a wave of repression against the "Reds." So not only Leninism but socialism itself came under attack by the defenders of the capitalist order.

But as the society moved through the decade, some thinkers, aware of the first socialist experience in the Soviet Union and of the growing signs of crisis in American society, turned their attention to Marxism as a philosophy of society and history. A. S. Sachs' *Basic Principles of Scientific Socialism* (New York, 1925) stressed the dialectical, materialistic, militant, and class character of Marxism. Max Eastman's *Marx and Lenin: The Science of Revolution* (New York, 1927) opposed the ontology in Marxism-Leninism but stressed its science and art of revolution. This work was significant, for though Eastman himself later became an anti-communist, [23] he established an interest in Marxism and a style of literary approach in America which was taken up by critics like Kenneth Burke and Edmund Wilson. [27]

In 1928 the eminent American philosopher, John Dewey, made a visit to the Soviet Union and wrote enthusiastically about it in *The New Republic* and *Impressions of Soviet Russia and the Revolutionary World.* (New York, 1929). Dewey, however, never succeeded in reconciling his own individualism with the spirit of socialist collectivism, in spite of his *Individualism, Old and New* (New York, 1930). [17]

Dewey's student, Sidney Hook, went still further than his teacher in his opposition to communism and became, in fact, its leading philosophical antagonist in America for three decades.

As during the 1930's the acute social struggles of working men against low wages and exploitive conditions began to mount, the universities felt their impact. Students and professors took a new interest in the literature of Marxism-Leninism. One of the earliest American Ph.D. dissertations (if not the first) written on the thought of Marx, Engels, and Lenin was Theodore B. H. Brameld's in 1931, published in 1933 as *A Philosophic Approach to Communism.* [3] In a carefully documented study, Brameld concluded that Marx's, Engels' and Lenin's thought uniquely balanced both activity and acquiescence toward the world. This work was "the first systematic American interpretation of Lenin's political philosophy in comparision with Marx and Engels." Brameld was a philosopher of education, and an article of his [4] claiming the relevance of Marxist thought to education brought forth criticisms from R. Bruce Raup, William H. Kilpatrick, and John Dewey. [16] In answer [5] Brameld clarified Marxism-Leninism on the class struggle, seeking to dispel erroneous notions about the class struggle, the use of violence, democracy, the role of the majority in social change, and the like. Brameld later characterized his philosophy of education as "reconstructionism" in distinction from the "progressive" philosophy of Dewey and his followers.

The first American philosopher to deal directly and systematically with Soviet philosophy and, in that context, with Lenin's philosophy was John Somerville. Somerville was also a student of Dewey's, but his studies led him to quiet different conclusions from those of the pragmatist Hook. As the Cutting Traveling Fellow of Columbia University, he lived in the Soviet Union from 1935 to 1937, studying materials available only in Russian there and visiting many types of social institutions. Because of the deep US prejudice against communism and the Soviet Union, however, he was not able to publish his findings until 1946, in *Soviet Philosophy: A Study of Theory and Practice.* [83] For years this work remained the only one of its kind, treating Soviet philosophy systematically and objectively.

In 1936 *Science and Society,* "an independent journal of Marxism," was formed, and it has appeared regularly since then. Philosophers such as T. B. Brameld, Mario Bunge, Barrows Dunham, Lewis S. Feuer, Donald Clark Hodges, Corliss Lamont, V. J. McGill, W. T. Parry, Howard Selsam, Dirk Struik, Harry K. Wells, and Ralph B. Winn were among its contributors.

In 1938 Howard Selsam wrote one of the first textbooks in the United States on Marxism-Leninism. [76] It aimed to provide guidance amid concrete conflicting attitudes, movements, and philosophies of the period. In 1943, during the war, Selsam brought out *Socialism*

and Ethics, [77] in which he relied on the thought of Lenin in the areas of morality, sexual relations and the family, and national self-determination. After the war Selsam brought out an abridged English edition of the Russian *Kratkii filosofskii slovar* edited by M. Rosenthal and P. Yudin in 1939. [78] A suggestive contribution to the history of philosophy appeared in 1940 in Alban D. Winspear's study of Plato's class origins and biases. [96] Winspear combined classical knowledge with a Marxist-Leninist approach.

During the 1930's the forces of reaction were polarizing against the new progressive forces engaged in social action and the development of a radical philosophy. Many intellectuals supported radical and communist-led causes in politics and the arts, and the communists and the socialists achieved phenomenal success in the organization of C.I.O. unions in the basic industries of America. But the Moscow trials and convictions in 1936-1938 led to the defection of large numbers of anti-communist intellectuals.

During the war years, however, attacks on Marxism-Lenism by American philosophers subsided and the positive exploration of it went forward. William T. Parry demonstrated the intimate relation between military theory and practice, and dialectics, citing Lenin's distinction between "barbarous" wars and "progressive" wars against absolutism, feudalism, and oppressive foreign nations. He also ascribed the victories of the Soviet armies in the war to this philosophy. [65] Roy Wood Sellars criticized Sidney Hook by arguing that "physical realism is essential to materialism" and that "so long as Hook adheres to his pragmatic theory of knowledge he can not be a materialist." [73] Sellars elsewhere expressed his friendliness to dialectical materialism. [72, 74] V. J. McGill expounded the materialist philosophy of Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* and called for the unity of philosophical theory and social practice in American society. [57]

The interest of American philosophers and scientists in materialism at this time was revealed in a collective volume, *Philosophy for the Future.* [75] Only two Americans, Bernhard J. Stern and Abraham Edel, referred specifically to Lenin, however. Another collective work also made passing reference to Lenin. [28]

In the years immediately following the end of the war in 1945, the philosophical friendliness toward Marxism-Leninism generated before and during the war years continued [91]—though it was soon to be challenged by a new wave of anti-communism marking the cold war. Abraham Edel presented a sympathetic exposition of materialism, including the work of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. [25] Dagobert D. Runes' anthology, *Twentieth Century Philosophy: Living Schools of Thought,*

included a chapter by John Somerville, "Dialectical Materialism." [84] This essay expounded the thought of Lenin and other dialectical materialists. Melvin Rader gave a straightforward and critical presentation of the social thought of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. [70] Corliss Lamont's *Soviet Civilization,* while not explicitly philosophical, was the careful work of a professional philosopher and revealed a knowledge of Marxism and of Lenin's thought and their intimate relation to the concrete working of the Soviet system. [51] Robert S. Cohen's "On the Marxist Philosophy of Education," which appeared in 1955, was a definitive and objective exposition of its subject. Cohen brought out Lenin's caution against a "pseudomilitant destruction or denial of the previous social order's culture" as well as Lenin's definition of communism as Soviet power plus electrification and its implication for polytechnical education. This work is also significant because it showed that during the bitter anti-communist days of McCarthyism sane expositions of Marxist philosophy could still be written and published. [8]

By this time, however, a deeply conservative and rigid mood had begun to overtake the country. Soon after the establishment of the People's Republic of China in October 1949, Senator Joseph McCarthy launched his attacks on "communists" in government, and within a few years a paranoid fear of communism overtook many people. Most intellectual dissent was silenced; and most states and educational institutions required a non-communist affidavit of their employees. This anti-communist ideology was a counterpart of the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, and the US postwar policy of the military and economic containment of communism.

Among philosophers, the principal leader of intellectual anti-communism was Sidney Hook. During the late 1930s Hook had already been active as an informer against his fellow teachers, cooperating with the Rapp-Coudert committee in its efforts to enforce the law banning communists from teaching in New York State. After the war, when anti-communism and McCarthyism swept the country, Hook took up the crusade; he has spent most of his life attacking the Left and ignoring the Right.

In 1951 the philosopher Victor Lowe counterattacked. [54] While he denounced communism, he maintained that the philosophers Sidney Hook, T. V. Smith, and A. O. Lovejoy displayed "vicious intellectualism" in arguing from the general definition of communism to factual conclusions about particular members of the Communist Party.

Among American philosophers the most systematic analysis and critique of the anti-communism of the cold war came from John

Somerville. Appearing as a non-communist expert witness at three of the important Smith Act trials, Somerville undertook to show, by reference to the actual writings of Marx, Engels, and especially Lenin, that the belief in unqualified "force and violence" and overthrow of government by a minority imputed to the communists by the Act was unfounded. [86] He showed, in addition, the similarities between the American revolutionary tradition in political theory and the communist one. Somerville cited and analyzed Lenin's repeated repudiations of Blanquism, terrorism, and the indiscriminate seizure of power by a minority. He cited passages from Lenin's *"Left-Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder* and *War and the Second International,* in which Lenin described the objective conditions of revolution—the ruling classes cannot maintain their power, the oppressed classes (the majority of the people) fall deeper into sufferings, and the majority begin to take action to correct conditions which the upper classes cannot cope with. Somerville's analysis gives the lie to the view, widely shared in government and among the news media and the people, that communism is a movement of a conspiratorial few bent on force and violence regardless of objective conditions. It brought the formulations of Marx, Engels, and Lenin clearly to the fore. At the time of his testimony in 1954 and 1956, little notice was taken of Somerville's analysis of Lenin's views on revolution; most people were in a withdrawn, frightened, and irrational mood. But by 1969 this mood had changed to one of active inquiry into the meaning of revolution. For example, Louis Menashe, a professor of history, cited Lenin's statement on revolution in *"Left-Wing" Communism* as an "accurate" definition of all major 20th century revolutions. [58].

The anti-communism of the cold war was supported by many leaders of the Christian churches, though from the late 19th century onward both Roman Catholics and Protestants had divided in their attitudes toward socialism. [27] When Catholic philosophers came to deal with Marxism-Leninism, they were, like their clerical counterparts and the secular philosophers, nearly always hostile toward it.

Among Protestant thinkers Reinhold Niebuhr, a theologian, and Paul Tillich, a philosophical theologian, were both influenced by Marxism but repudiated what they considered its "demonic" tendencies toward idolatry. [63, 90]

In addition to books expressing a religious opposition to Marxism-Leninism, a number of works appeared in the 1950's reflecting the political anti-communism of the times. [55, 59, 64, 71]

One of the few American philosophers to express open espousal of

Marxism-Leninism during the 1950's was Harry K. Wells. After the war Wells brought out a Marxist critique of Whitehead's philosophy, [92] and his critique of pragmatism in 1954 sought to show how Lenin's criticism of Mach's positivism applied also to James' empiricism and exposed it as subjective idealism. [93] Wells in addition offered a searching critique of Freud. [94] Significant also during this period was Stanley W. Moore's scholarly study of the political theory of Marxism-Leninism. [61]

Another voice of light and human affirmation during this period of dark repression appeared in the work of Barrows Dunham. *Man Against Myth* [18] was a sunny and witty book, whose author made his way over the social landscape dispelling the clouds of superstition that hung upon it, preventing the inhabitants from enjoying happiness. In higher language, this was a critique of ideology, that instrument by which one class dominates another. Chapters like "Thinking Makes it So" and "All Problems Are Merely Verbal" showed that the subjectivism and solipsism assailed by Lenin at the turn of the century were, in the 1940's, still flourishing, especially among the fascists and nazis. Though Lenin was not in the foreground of this book, his philosophy of a material universe as the source and referent of our active and rational problem-solving was in the background; and the examples of the fascists and the nazis—error and disaster *à l'outrance* —proved that Lenin had not been fighting a straw man, either in his writing or his political activity. In *Giant in Chains* [19] Dunham showed that the problems and solutions of philosophy inhere in the problems and solutions of the everyday lives of men on the turning earth. Such a philosophy turned out to be dialectical and materialistic. But the book was born out of its time. Its optimism reflected the progressive faith of the 1930's and 1940's; its warmheartedness and reason came forth in 1953 into the adverse environment of the cold war. By the 1960's (when the book was reprinted) the "Giant" was once more rousing himself from his slumbers and breaking his chains.

The 1950's in American philosophy were marked by a rapid and extensive growth of analytic, linguistic philosophy, which soon became dominant among philosophers adapting themselves to American capitalism during a period of conservatism at home and the cold war abroad. During this period, also, when such reflection, following social practice, tended to be conventional and unoriginal, other European philosophies, relatively new on the American scene, attracted attention. Existentialism and phenomenology spread, though more slowly than analytic philosophy, and in the 1960's they began to make gains on their chief competitor. All three philosophies repre-

sented reactions against the routinized, stereotyped, dehumanized world of western industry and technology, with their theoretical counterpart in thought—mechanical materialism, calculating pragmatism, and positivism. All three were movements within the bourgeois world—critical of the theory and techniques of the sciences, skeptical or indifferent to the world of society and nature, and subjective if not solipsistic. All three articulated "the irrational man" of contemporary society—the existentialist freedom, the phenomenological intuition, and analytic trust in convention. Like the positivism that tends toward subjectivism, all three have been used as a base or theology.

In the *real* world of concrete men faced with concrete problems of survival and fulfillment in concrete societies, the defining and final features are change and interaction, decline and advance, conflict and struggle, destruction and creation, opposition and unity, formation and dissolution and transformation. National liberation movements among peasants and workers against imperialism and colonialism; the advance of socialism; the revolution in human rights among colonials, colored, poor, women, and youth; the decline of European capitalism; nuclear weaponry; population explosion and pollution; spreading industrialization and technology; automation and cybernation—these were and still are the determinative acts and processes of the post-war world. In the 1960's (and even before) they caught up with a temporarily isolated American society, and in 1970 the tempo of struggle in America increases every day.

In response to their own oppression under white American capitalism, as well as to the emerging national movements in Africa and Asia since World War II, the blacks took the lead. In 1958 the Negro bus boycott began in Montgomery. In 1960 the first black sit-in at a lunch counter took place; SNCC was organized; President Kennedy excited the support of youth; northern students picketed Woolworth stores in sympathy for southern students; California youth protested against the House Un-American Activities Committee in San Francisco; the revolution in Cuba alerted many youths to imperialism; protests against nuclear testing increased. In 1961 came the abortive Bay of Pigs invasion, the CORE Freedom Rides, the anti-nuclear test march, and from 1962 to 1964 the formation of Students for a Democratic Society, the Northern Students Movement, the Cuban missile crisis and the reaction to it, the mass campaign for the test-ban treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union, the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, the formation of the Du Bois Clubs, and many other kindred events. All of these struggles —against black oppression, against nuclear weapons and nuclear war,

against the cold war, against unemployment—were direct and indirect reactions to world conditions and contradictions. And such open conflict and struggle in turn produced the demand for a new philosophy to deal with social problems and in turn provided the conditions under which and toward which the new philosophy was forced to be tested. The new philosophy, in short, had to be active realistic, interactive, social, and practical. In short, it had to be dialectical and materialistic. Thus it was natural that American philosophers in the 1960's revived or discovered Marxism-Leninism.

The social conflicts of the 1960's were reflected in literally hundreds of new publications and in a range of ideologies, from anarchism to the extreme right. [1, 31] I shall not deal with this literature here. But two important developments among philosophers should be noted. The first was the formation of the American Institute for Marxist Studies in 1963. Directed by Herbert Aptheker, a historian, the Institute counted among the members of its board several philosophers: Robert Cohen (Chairman), Howard L. Parsons, Howard Selsam, and Dirk J. Struik. The Institute has issued a number of publications, all of them presupposing the importance of Marxism-Leninism.

The second development was the organization of the Society for the Philosophical Study of Dialectical Materialism in 1962. This was and is a group of professional philosophers, members of the American Philosophical Association, who convene twice a year at the time and place of the meetings of the Association to conduct their own symposia, as well as in the context of the meetings of the International Congress of Philosophy. The first president of the Society was Howard L. Parsons, and the current president is John Somerville, with Donald Clark Hodges as secretary-treasurer. [66] Lenin's thought has come in for consideration on frequent occasions, and a centenary symposium in 1970 will be devoted to the topic, "Lenin as a Philosopher."

A related development in 1962 was the formation of the quarterly journal, *Soviet Studies in Philosophy*, edited by John Somerville. This journal translated into English current articles by Soviet philosophers, and thus made available to American philosophers the work of philosophers operating directly in the tradition of Marxism-Leninism.

We cannot here review all the major work done by US philosophers on Lenin during the decade of the 1960's, but perhaps a glance at some representative work will suffice.

One of the most searching American studies of Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* was written by Robert S. Cohen and printed

in 1963. [9] In criticizing empiricism and the positivist or phenomenalist tendency within it, Cohen offered a careful and sympathetic exposition of Lenin's criticism of Mach. While he asserted that a number of Lenin's criticisms of logical empiricism have been overcome since 1908, he himself was persistently critical of the tendencies in positivism—subjectivism that leads to solipsism, skepticism that leads to conventionalism, and the tendency of skepticism, in seeking certainty, to take refuge in philosophical atomism and phenomenalism. By putting Lenin's work in its historical setting—Lenin summarized a half-century of reaction to an empiricist science and sought to combat positivism for both political and scientific reasons—Cohen showed the timeliness of the issues with which Lenin struggled.

The crisis of the modern world since the emergence of capitalism lies at the center of these philosophical questions. Can man know the reality of others and the natural world and deal with them in ways that are humanly fulfilling? Bourgeois man, alienated from others and nature by an industrial-technological system that concentrates power in a ruling group, is tempted to answer, No. He is inclined to assert his isolation, his doubt, his individuality, his loneliness, his inability to go beyond appearance, and his final reliance on custom. Among powerless people, this attitude takes the form of anomie and the quest for relief from anxiety in entertainment, sports, alcohol, drugs, and the like. Among the power elite, this philosophy comes out as cynical self-seeking and the mechanical manipulation of masses of people. A socialist answers the question quite differently: he affirms the real, objective existence of the material world and of people, a world that can be known through sensuous, purposeful practice that is social and that aims at the collective fulfillment of men. "Science" itself does not decide this issue, for "science" is only an abstraction and individual scientists may fall on one side or the other of the issue. The question is, What is science all about? Lenin's analysis indicates that it is a human activity directed toward the real world, and that its knowledge is achieved and tested through sensuous practice upon that world and through reflection upon it.

Lenin did not develop his full epistemology in a single work. In an article on Lenin's *Philosophical Notebooks,* Howard Selsam stated that "Lenin is struggling to make dialectics more materialistic and materialism more dialectical than they had been heretofore. . . ." [81] Lenin objected to the simplicity and rigidity of many "Marxists" and in the *Notebooks* he was seeking a more flexible, subtle method that would more accurately correspond to the complex processes of the real world. At this time Lenin could not have been satisfied with his

formulation in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* as a final statement of the knowing process.

Perhaps the best summary of Lenin's development as a creative philosopher has been given by Howard Selsam in a private communication to the author:

> In my opinion, as I have read him over the years, Lenin had extraordinary philosophical acumen although without any formal training. As early as 1894, in his *What the "Friends of the People" Are,* he expounded the meaning of Marx's "idea of materialism in sociology." In 1908 he studied the British empiricists and Kant in order to answer the Machians in his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism.* Even though he presented here an over-simplified "sensationalism," in Chapter V on "The Revolution in Natural Science," he achieved a unique breakthrough in the understanding of matter in the light of the new developments in physics. When Lenin returned to philosophy in 1914-15 and ploughed through much of Hegel, his *Philosophical Notebooks* represented a new and advanced philosophical position which his leadership of the Russian Revolution prevented him from developing to its logical conclusions. Thus, I believe Lenin can be understood only as a revolutionary whose philosophical world-outlook evolved in several stages from a more or less mechanistic position to a sophisticated and subtle dialectical one. American philosophers who have read Lenin at all tend to pick out only the more limited phases of his thought and not its development over the years.

Roy Wood Sellars has criticized Lenin from another angle. While holding that "Lenin was nearer right than the positivists," Lenin's reflection theory, he says, does not show how he gets to things. [72] It is true that in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticsm* the epistemological priority of things over mind is not argued. Lenin takes this to be established by the demonstrated scientific view of the ontological priority of matter over mind in evolution and "the million of examples . . . of knowledge replacing ignorance when an object acts upon our sense-organs, and conversely of ignorance replacing knowledge when the possibility of such action is eliminated."

In this work Lenin also stresses *practice* as over against mere sensuous contemplation. Sensuous and theoretical (hypothetic-deductive) knowledge is always provoked, produced, and tested in a material situation in which man must act upon his environment in order to fulfill his driving needs. The character of this practical dialectic was not developed in Lenin's answer to the Machians but it was explored in his writings on dialectics. Thus Lenin's overall view does not appear to be incompatible with Sellars'. Both insist on the material source and the material validating terminus of sensuous knowledge, as well as practice as the link between the knowing man and the known and knowable world. But Sellars starts with the biological

situation as the setting for knowledge, whereas Lenin, following Marx and Engels, sees knowledge also in the setting of society, classes, and the dynamic movement of history.

In an article in 1944, [72] Sellars spelled out the "generic likeness" between dialectical materialism and his own "reformed materialism." He seemed to take the dialectical processes of nature and society more loosely than did Engels—who "took Hegel's *Naturphilosophie* too seriously." He joined dialectical materialism in a common opposition to positivism, supernaturalism, cosmic rational natural law, and reductive symbolic logic. But he thought that the theory of "emergence" and "evolutionary novelty" was "less ambiguous" than the Hegelian transformation of quantity into quality; and he claimed that consciousness is more than the functioning of the brain. However, Sellars was more influenced by the natural sciences than by sociology and politics, and the class struggle did not play a prominent role in his thinking. Nor, to my knowledge, has Sellars discussed Lenin's dialectics in detail. But he remains the one American philosopher who has most searchingly tried to find "some major community" between the principles of dialectical materialism and those of his own hard-won materialism. Sellars has recently completed a book which is on social and political philosophy, and contains several chapters on Marxism.

In the 1960's American Catholic philosophy continued, in general, to be anti-communist in ways that obscured an understanding of the philosophy of communism. However, in part because of the spirit of Vatican II and Pope John XXIII and Pope Paul VI, American philosophers associated with the Catholic Church began in the 1960's to consider Marxism-Leninism more openly and objectively than in previous years. One of the leaders in this effort to deal in a serious and scholarly way with the philosophy of communism was George Hampsch. [32, 33, 34, 35, 36] Another was Richard T. De George, though his work was more critical than Hampsch's. De George published extensively on Lenin and Soviet thought during this decade. [12, 13, 14] Louis K. Dupré also approached the problems of Marxism without many of the traditional blinders. [21] Nicholas Lobkowicz edited a volume of papers presented at an International Symposium on Marx held at Notre Dame University in April 1966. Symposiasts from socialist and non-socialist countries were of course widely divided in their views of Marx and Lenin. [53] This symposium was one of the first large Christian-Marxist dialogues in America. The literature on the Christian-Marxist dialogue is important, but it is too bulky to itemize here in detail, and most of it has come from scholars who are neither philosophers nor Americans. [89]

Before the 1960's the American textbooks of philosophy that dealt systematically and thoroughly with the thought of Marx, Engels, and Lenin were rare. We have already indicated the social causes for this neglect—the anti-Bolshevism before the war, and the cold war and McCarthyism after the war. (One of the first philosophy textbooks to put Lenin's thought alongside that of representatives of liberal democracy, fascism, and nazism was Albert R. Chandler's published in 1940.) [6] But in the 1960's a bibliography on Marxist-Leninist philosophy, [50] a history of Russian philosophy, [26] and many new textbooks appeared [7, 60, 88] in which Marxism and Marxism-Leninism were presented either by themselves or alongside other philosophies. Sometimes the authors of such textbooks allowed Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, and Mao Tse-tung to speak for themselves. Sometimes the authors gave their own exposition of the classical writings of Marxism-Leninism. [30, 52] One of the most informed and seasoned of this latter kind was John Somerville's study, which systematically treated dialectical and historical materialism, logic and dialectics, and the theory of progress and values. [87] Somerville also analyzed and developed the principle of peaceful coexistence among nations of different social systems—a principle of Lenin's. *The Philosophy of Peace* [85] was a singular appeal for peace during the cold war.

Howard Selsam brought out two new works in this period, applying his line of thought to the new problems of world revolution during the 1960's [79, 82] His *Reader*, jointly edited with Harry Martel, was one of the first textbooks in philosophy to give the work of Lenin wide exposure. [80]

A number of articles dealing directly or indirectly with the thought of Lenin appeared in the 1960's. [10, 11, 22, 24, 29, 62, 67, 81] One of the most prolific and thorough writers on Lenin during this period was Donald Clark Hodges. Several articles of his developed "some of the implications of Lenin's concept of 'bureaucracy.'" [37, 42, 46, 47, 48, 49] Another set started off from "Lenin's concept of 'social class' as a group defined *not* in terms of property relations, but directly in terms of exploitative relations and the revolutionary struggle to abolish exploitation." [38, 39, 43, 44] Still a third set of writings explored "the implications of Lenin's concept of 'democracy' in relation to the philosophical tradition." [40, 41, 45] Among American philosophers of Marxism, Hodges displayed a distinctive acquaintance with economics and sociology and sought to apply classical concepts to concrete problems.

One of the important philosophical achievements of the 1960's was

Barrows Dunham's *Heroes and Heretics.* [20] In addition to its adornments of learning and elegant style, Dunham's work set an example among American Marxist writers to reclaim and advance the great tradition of creative dissent. Commenting on the disposition of the capitalists to accept even Lenin as a great thinker—"apparently on the doubtful premise that the dead are no longer dangerous"—Dunham wrote:

> Any assertion that economic and political power is to be taken from those who presently possess it is the very heart and blood of heresy. Capitalist governments, therefore, have surrounded the doctrine of "the dictatorship of the proletariat" with an enormous and redundant mass of punitive legislation. For the doctrine plainly states what capitalists must ultimately fear—namely, their permanent political nullity.

The thought of Marx and Lenin forms a recent and heroic part of man's long history of heresy against orthodoxy. (Dunham has stated, in a private communication, that "Lenin's assertion that orthodoxy and heresy do not arise unless there is a mass movement and great political questions are at stake" was "part of the ground of *Heroes and Heretics.*") Marxism-Leninism must remain fresh, creative, and imaginative, in order to maintain and extend its power. If it lapses into dull and repressive orthodoxy, it will die like all orthodoxies.

As the decade of the 1960's closed and the decade of the 1970's opens, the interest in Marxism-Leninism on the part of American philosophers is accelerating and probably will continue to do so. The conditions for this trend are evident to observation and reflection: the deepening conflicts and crises in American life and the accelerating search for solutions. Lenin's thought is regarded with favor and fervor by some. For others, Lenin is thought to be the embodiment of all the vices: he is seen as hate-provoking, ruthless, cruel, [56] vengeful, hateful, blood-seeking, plotting, deceptive, immoral, and unprincipled. [71] These two polarized interpretations of Lenin will no doubt develop together as the antagonism between social groups sharpens in the United States.

An interest in Lenin is evident among the thinkers of the new left and the young philosophers. [15, 68, 69] In the foregoing brief and incomplete survey, I have not undertaken to give an account of the work of these young philosophers, in order to keep this essay in bounds. Such a study is important and should be done: it might reveal promising trends of thought developing among young people who, like Marx, Engels, and Lenin, are working outside established institutions and who are the recipients and creators of insights that will guide the future.

In the anniversary year of Lenin's birth, 1970, it is a tribute to the power and relevancy of Lenin's thought that it is increasingly finding a place of serious consideration among American philosophers. Lenin was not an academic philosopher. His philosophy was forged in the fire of revolutionary struggle and under the blows of Tsarism, capitalism, and imperialism. What realistic, humanistic philosopher today can ignore Lenin, both as revolutionary and as thinker? Lenin developed and applied in Russia a philosophy for guiding his society from capitalism to socialism, from a destructive, inhuman society to a creative, human one. The America of 1970 is quite different from the Russia of 1917. But it is still capitalist and imperialist, and the only road to a more human society is toward some form of American socialism. At that point Lenin's work and thought become necessary and relevant to the future of American society.

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CYRUS S. EATON

Leading American Industrialist and Public Figure

TWICE THIS year I had the pleasure of visiting the Soviet Union and seeing for myself the tremendous progress your nation is achieving in industry, agriculture and education. You have reason to be proud of your country whose vast geography is the most extensive of any nation in the world.

I cannot fail to commend the perfect order maintained in your cities where a visitor may walk in the streets at any hour of the day or night in complete safety.

I have long been a reader of the works of Lenin in the many areas in which he expressed himself with clarity and profoundness. While I happen to live under a different political system I feel strongly that every nation has a right to adopt its own form of government and the economic policies which it considers best for its society.

I recognize the devotion of your people to the principles enunciated by this great statesman and leader whose 100th anniversary will be celebrated in the coming year.

It is a pleasure to send my heartiest greetings to all of your readers.

Statement on the Lenin Centenary
published in *Moscow News*, January 10, 1970.

JOHN HOWARD LAWSON

Lenin's Impact on Culture

TWO years ago I wrote an article on "The Soviets and US Culture," commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. I began by noting that much "effort and research are needed to make even a preliminary survey," and I restricted myself "to some notes and observations, designed to suggest the scope of the problem."

I am reluctant to begin this essay with a similar disclaimer. But what is the measure of Lenin's influence on culture? Even if we concentrate on one place and period—for example, the United States in the first years after the revolution—where does the research begin? And where does it end?

We see Lenin too narrowly and in false perspective if we focus on the first shock and glory of the revolution. Lenin's achievement is more real and visible today than it was in his lifetime. He strides across the twentieth century, exhorting and warning. His heritage interpenetrates our lives, shaping our culture in unacknowledged ways.

These generalizations might have made Lenin uncomfortable. I doubt whether he would have been pleased by "metaphysical" meditations on his greatness. I wish to avoid metaphysics, but I do not have the materials for a concrete approach to his effect on art and artists. I do not believe the materials are available. The massive study of his political and social thought has tended, even in socialist

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JOHN HOWARD LAWSON has written many plays, movie scripts and books, and has spent considerable time in the Soviet Union writing and observing cultural developments. A past president of the Screen Writers Guild and one of the famous "Hollywood Ten," he has numerous Hollywood productions to his credit. Among his books are *The Hidden Heritage, Theory and Technique of Playwriting,* and *Film: The Creative Process* (these are currently available in paperback editions). He is at present working on his autobiography.

countries, to treat his views on art as a detached and subordinate part of a sacred heritage.

This continues a traditional separation between the world of action and the realm of art. Among many intellectuals in the United States and Western Europe, the separation is so final that they can see no sense in considering Lenin's relation to the arts. They cannot deny his revolutionary role—how can anyone deny it?—but they assume as an undisputed fact that his dedication to *action* causes him to invade and destroy the inner life and sensibility of the artist.

I want to dispute this view, to build a bridge between Lenin and the aesthetic sensibility, or at least to show that such a bridge can be built. If it is possible, it must rest on the assumpion that revolution and art are not incompatible, but are interacting aspects of man's creative experience.

In our time there have been innumerable "revolutions" in the arts. Whether these aesthetic rebellions have shaken or changed the world is debatable. Perhaps it is time to ask: what can Lenin teach the artist, not solely from the viewpoint of political action, but in terms of art itself?

First we shall consider Lenin as a symbol, meaning different things to different people and classes. Then we shall examine the man behind the legends, taking a fresh look at his role as an artist, exploring elements of creative drama in his life and writing. Third, we turn to his opinions and theories concerning the arts. We can then proceed to an appraisal of the lessons which he offered to Americans and the way in which our culture in the United States was affected by his work. This leads us to many questions which cannot be answered, and we conclude with some of the questions which seem most urgently related to contemporary issues.

1. Lenin as Symbol

AMONG oppressed people, Lenin is a savior, a legend told in peasant huts, a song in the fields, a rumor in the cities.

But in the culture of capitalism, and especially in the United States, he is pictured as a cruel and heartless politician. The contradictory images reflect two concepts of revolution—to the poor, it is life and freedom; to those who profit by exploitation, it is a threat to all "human" values.

The two symbols do not always appear in these elementary forms. But it is characteristic of all cultures to create myths to justify class attitudes and policies. We must understand the battle of symbols in order to get at the reality behind it. If we take the symbols at face

value, we oversimplify or vulgarize the class struggle in culture. Artists are not *free*, but neither are they willing servants of the dominant class. It is evident today that the power structure, expending millions on culture and education, has trouble controlling what it has bought and paid for. This is in part due to the fact that capitalism cannot understand culture. Nor can it understand the rebellious spirit of artists and scholars, who resent their dependence on the "establishment," while at the same time they cannot escape from it. The struggle is within themselves as well as in their situation. There is a definite movement today, especially among black intellectuals, toward revolutionary consciousness. However, historical action, as Lenin reminded us, "is not the pavement of the Nevsky Prospect."[1] There are difficulties and roadblocks.

Attitudes toward Lenin are a key to basic class positions. In the first days of the Bolshevik Revolution, Lenin's sudden rise to world prominence facilitated the making of legends. Philip Foner observes that "so little was known about Lenin in the United States that his name was most often incorrectly spelled."[2] But misrepresentation of Lenin was not restricted to bad spelling. The "Sisson Documents," distributed by a committee of the US Government with Wilson's authorization, purported to prove that Lenin and his closest associates were German agents. Many prominent people denounced the documents as crude forgeries, and they were exposed by the New York *Evening Post, The Nation,* and other periodicals.

The virulence of the campaign against Lenin may account for the reluctance of cultural people to take a public stand in favor of Bolshevism. Among 143 items in Foner's book, only six or seven come from people associated with the arts. It was a time of repression, wild red-baiting and witch-hunting, culminating in the Palmer Raids at the beginning of 1920. I can give my personal testimony to the pessimism and fear which led me, and many others, to leave the United States—presumably forever—early in 1920. Yet we were aware of the importance of the Soviet Union; the existence of a socialist country was the primary cause of the regimentation and false patriotism that inhibited free expression in the United States. The migration to Europe was a protest as well as an escape. Many of the rebels thought that capitalism was all-powerful, and were doubtful about the permanence or world effect of the Russian events. Yet there were

[1] The passage, in *A Letter to American Workers,* is a quotation from Chernyshevsky.

[2] Philip S. Foner, *The Bolshevik Revolution: Its Impact on American Radicals, Liberals, and Labor,* New York, 1967, p. 61.

courageous intellectuals who disputed this view. A major contribution was made by Jack Reed's *Ten Days that Shook the World,* revealing the truth about the world-shaking change and giving it an immediate relevance to class conflict in the United States.

This relationship to American history and experience was stressed in Lenin's *Letter to American Workers,* first published in December 1918, and reprinted many times. Lenin's appeal occasioned controversy among intellectuals; many felt that his faith in the working class of the United States was unrealistic—an argument that continues today.

Over these fifty years, the contrasting images of Lenin—as a brutal opportunist, and as a dedicated leader in the battle for human freedom—have reflected the global division between capitalism and socialism. Cultural people have tended to treat the symbolic figures as absolute realities, ignoring the fact that they, as artists or scholars, are largely responsible for the myth-making.

The negative picture of Lenin is espoused by the dominant culture of the West, not only in full-length portraits, but in casual hints and ambiguities which are often the artist's most effective service to the *status quo.* For example, Ezra Pound made a "non-political" comment on Lenin's style in 1928: "He never wrote a sentence that has any interest in itself, but he evolved almost a new medium, a sort of expression half-way between writing and action. This was a definite creation, as the Napoleonic Code was a creation."[3]

Pound pretends to make a literary judgment, but the reference to the Napoleonic Code gives the game away. Lenin would have laughed at the poet's naive assumption that Lenin's revolutionary perspective could not go beyond the codification of laws relating to property rights and the interests of the bourgeoisie.

Pound made his comment at a time of impending crisis in the West. Even before the economic breakdown of 1929, the rebellious temper of the period after World War I had become increasingly political; the comparative success of the Soviet Union and its flowering culture impressed intellectuals, and Lenin's direct appeal to American workers assumed new meaning as the crisis of capitalism led to the mass movements and militant organizations of the thirties. Artists found new themes in the activity of people, the anger and hope of people in motion, the black liberation struggle, the threat of Hitler and the agony of the Spanish Civil War.

The fundamental question was the question of socialism. If capi-

[3] *Exile,* No. 4, 1928.

talism did not work, if it made hunger and war in spite of its vast resources, a more equitable social order, abolishing exploitation and giving the people control of the wealth they produced, was an historic necessity.

But there was a sharp conflict in the culture of the thirties concerning the actual accomplishments of the Soviet Union. This conflict involved troubling questions, but the issues tended to assume an abstract and final form, which was expressed in the images of Lenin. Those on the left idealized him, avoiding the hard task of studying and using his heritage. The opposite symbol made him an ogre, a monstrous representative of the evils of socialism, a threat to the comforts and illusions of the capitalist *status quo.*

Martin Andersen Nexö wrote in 1940: "For the most part, the creative spirits of Western Europe, whether in the sphere of art, literature or science, are still unable to grasp the tremendous significance of Lenin."[4] This was true of the United States as well as Europe, and it may account for the cultural limitations and the lack of clarity or cohesion among progressive intellectuals in the last two decades.

Yet Lenin's influence is more potent today and affects more millions of the world's people than at any time in the past. The reality that shook the world in 1917 is still world-shaking, and it was foreseen and shaped by Lenin. It becomes imperative to reexamine his influence on world culture as we cross over the threshold into the seventies.

2. *Lenin as Artist*

IT SEEMS strange to speak of him in this way. But the idea comes from him. He quoted Marx, "who called uprising nothing but an *art*, who said that uprising must be treated as an art." He emphasized the point, as he often did, by repetition and italics: "To refuse to treat the uprising *as an art* means to betray Marxism and the revolution."[5]

But what did he mean? Was he talking about art in the usual sense of the word? His statement seems to contradict other pronouncements by him concerning the specialized skill of the artist and his own lack of special competence in cultural matters. In attempting to interpret his meaning, we touch difficult problems of aesthetic theory which go far beyond the scope of this article.

Lenin would not have called himself an artist in terms of making

[4] *International Literature*, 4-5, 1940.

[5] *On the Eve of October, Marxism and Uprising.* The date is September 26, 27, 1917.

what are usually regarded as *works of art.* Yet his insistence on the *art* of uprising came at a dramatic moment, a few days before the seizure of power, and it related specifically to the timing of the event. His opponents disagreed with him about the exact timing, and it was necessary to convince them. This involved the structure of events leading to a climax, and in calling it art, he revealed his feeling for drama. I hold that his sense of drama is "Shakespearian" in vision, magnitude and detail. It permeates his writing and determines his style. Like Shakespeare, he is sensitive to human values and motives, emotional drives which may be decisive in determining the outcome.

These dramatic qualities are in all his major works, from *What Is to Be Done* in 1902 to *"Left-Wing" Communism: An Infantile Disorder* in 1920. In the whole course of his writing, there is strong emotion, a vision of far-reaching causes and effects. I shall deal briefly with three works, written from 1914 to 1917. Lenin saw the First World War as a complex dramatic event. Shortly after the fall of the Tsarist regime, he wrote: "Every sudden turn of history . . . unfolds such unexpectedly peculiar coordinations of forms of conflict . . . that there is much that must appear miraculous to the burgher's mind." He continued: "This all-powerful 'regisseur,' this mighty accelerator of events, was the imperialist World War."[6]

The use of the theatrical term, *regisseur,* indicates his view of the organization of an historical action. Yet he uses the term impersonally. He does not think of himself as a regisseur. Planning the revolution in Switzerland, he does not foresee the crowds who will greet him at the Finland Station. Finding himself in the spotlight, he proceeds with the systematic preparation of the event. No revolution in history was ever undertaken with such painstaking labor of thought—all directed toward the practical "happening," the climactic situation.

Three great works are like three acts of a giant spectacle. In the first year of the world conflict, Lenin analyzed *Capitalism and Agriculture in the United States.* His second "act," *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism,* was completed in 1916, shortly before the United States entered the war. Finally, while he was hiding in Finland, he confronted the crucial question of power in *State and Revolution.*

The three acts have an aesthetic structure: exposition, rising action, obligatory scene and climax. All three have a special relationship

[6] *Letters from Afar,* written in Switzerland, March and April 1917.

PABLO NERUDA

I love to see Lenin, fishing in the transparency
Of Lake Razliv, her waters
A tiny mirror lost among the verdure
Of the vast shivering silver-plated North:
Loneliness this, cold-hearted solitude
Plant-life martyred by night and snow,
Arctic whistling of wind in his hut.
I love to see him lonely there, listening
To the rainfall, to the fluttering flight
Of turtle-doves,
The vivid pulsation of the virgin forest.
Lenin mindful of the forest and of life,
Feeling the footsteps of wind and history
In the solemnity of Nature.

Excerpt from the Chilean poet's 1940 poem, *Ode to Lenin.* Translated by David Laibman. A full translation is in preparation.

to the United States, destined to become the leading defender of imperialism and the last citadel of state control by a privileged class.

The first and least known of the three works has the most direct bearing on American life, analyzing the decline of the small farmer and predicting that he faced extinction. Lenin derides the contention of economists that "the great majority of farms in the United States are toiler farms. . . . This theory is an illusion, a dream, the self-deception of the whole of bourgeois society."[7] The deception is necessary, because the "free" farmer is the last free enterpriser, and his disappearance brings a train of consequences—industrialization draws population to the cities; the small town serving an agricultural area dies or becomes part of a larger economic complex. The end result is the corruption and deterioration of the cities.

The death of the small town and the shift to cities is a basic theme of American literature (and other arts) in the twentieth century. At the moment when Lenin wrote his *New Data* on rural America, Edgar Lee Masters told the stories of people buried on a hill above an Illinois village, making *Spoon River* an obituary for a disappearing society. Not long afterward, Sherwood Anderson

[7] Lenin, Selected Works, Vol. XII, *Theory of the Agrarian Question,* New York, 1938, pp. 190-191.

wrote his farewell to Winesberg, Ohio. From 1914 to 1918, artists celebrated the glaring contrasts, the splendor and crime, of the expanding cities. Carl Sandburg's *Chicago Poems* were accused of "gutter naturalism," the same charge being leveled against American painters of the "Ash-can school."

Artists knew little of Lenin, nor could they share his vision of the relationship between the decline of small-scale farming and the crisis of world capitalism. Since the connection is more apparent today, it is useful to go back and examine the ways in which the revolutionist and the artist observed the same phenomena from different angles.

The tragedy of the free farmer is the subject of one of the finest novels of the thirties, John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath,* and the author's conclusions lead in the direction that was taken by Lenin.

For most artists the city is the magnet, the symbol and reality of power. Dreiser saw New York as an *imperium,* "the walled city" of wealth. Thomas Wolfe, coming from a small Southern town, described New York as a "tremendous fugue of hunger and fulfillment . . . as full of warmth, passion, and of love, as it was full of hate."[8]

These are poetic insights, but they have the same essential meaning as Lenin's comments on the increasing extremes of wealth and poverty in the United States. Wolfe often comes close to a political statement, as when he speaks of being "mocked by the city's terrible illusions of abundance and variety, and by the cruel enigma of man's loneliness among eight million, his poverty and desolation at the seat of a stupendous power and wealth."[9]

Awareness of the city as a metaphor for the whole society is not new. We find it in Whitman, and there is a shock of modern relevance when the nineteenth century poet speaks of "entering by the suburbs some vast and ruined city." But there is an awesome change in recent years; the deterioration of the cities seems to be reaching a point of no return. It is a long journey from Spoon River to suburbia, from Dreiser and Wolfe to smoldering ghettos.

The three acts of the world drama in which we are all actors are the acts which Lenin offered to justify the first socialist revolution—the expansion and concentration of capital destroys independent agriculture; imperialism is the highest and last stage of capitalism; the attempt to dominate the world brings opposition at home and abroad; to control the opposition, wars are inevitable and the pre-

[8] Thomas Wolfe, *The Web and the Rock,* New York, 1966, pp. 415, 439.
[9] *Ibid.,* p. 542.

tense that the state is neutral is abandoned in favor of control by force and demagogy.

Lenin's *Letter to American Workers*, written before the revolution was a year old, is an epilogue to the Russian drama and a prologue to the world drama in which the United States is a central factor. In his letter, Lenin contrasts the heritage of the American revolution with the contemporary position of the United States—in "the first place among free and cultured nations. But at the same time America has become one of the foremost countries as regards the depth of the abyss which divides a handful of billionaires . . . on the one hand, and millions of toilers who are always on the verge of starvation." This is the country of the golden cities and the miserable slums described by Thomas Wolfe and a hundred others.

Lenin's appeal to the history of the United States is unique for its time, a pioneering effort to reinterpret our past, to take it away from what Lenin called "the pedantry of bourgeois intellectualism." He heaped scorn on those dogmatists who want revolution to "proceed easily, smoothly," looking at "the raging class struggle without feeling." There is even more dramatic intensity in his final plea to save "perishing culture and perishing mankind."

This is a gigantic claim. Is it a figure of speech, or does he mean, literally, that the proletarian revolution is destined to save *all* culture and *all* humanity? I think this is exactly what he means, and that he has been proved right.

3. Lenin as Critic

LENIN did not devise a comprehensive system of aesthetics. He was aware of his lack of specialized knowledge, and his judgments are fragmentary comments, or measures taken under the whip of necessity. Within these limits, he is a perceptive critic.

His respect for literature goes back to his childhood, when he devoured the novels of Turgenev. In his early twenties, he was strongly affected by Chekhov's story, *Ward No. 6*. At the same time, he was beginning to study Engels' *Anti-Duhring*. Chekhov seems to have supplemented Marx and Engels in convincing the young student that there could be no compromise with the cruel and irrational society depicted by Chekhov in his portrayal of a psychiatric ward in a provincial hospital. Chekhov's story concerns a young man suffering from persecution mania and the head doctor who is tortured by guilt because he does nothing to remedy the horrible conditions in the ward. The doctor and the patient become friends, engaging in long conversations about the futility of human existence. A brutal

and ignorant young assistant covets the doctor's post, and is eventually able to get him discharged and then accused of insanity and dragged into the ward. The doctor, beaten and degraded, feels that he has expiated his guilt, sharing the suffering which he had imposed on others.

This Kafkanesque fantasy moved Lenin so that he could not sleep. He told his sister: "I absolutely had the feeling that I was shut up in Ward 6 myself." Lenin was determined that he would not be shut up in the prison-house of bourgeois illusions, and his feeling about this story may account in part for his intensely personal and angry attitude toward intellectual timidity. In his *Letter to American Workers*, he quotes another story by Chekhov to illustrate the turpitude of those who "shun the revolution" when it demands "the utmost passion and decisiveness."

He learned practical lessons from Chekhov, but Tolstoy taught him more essential lessons about the Russian peasant and his possible revolutionary role. Gorky tells of Lenin's admiration for Tolstoy's authentic and profound insight into the peasant's life and ways of thinking. Lenin's most serious contribution to formal literary criticism is his analysis of the inner conflicts in Tolstoy's work: "The contradictions . . . are really glaring. On the one hand . . . incomparable pictures of Russian life . . . on the other hand, we have before us a landlord who is mentally deranged about Christ." (Did Lenin recall the half-mad guilt of the doctor in *Ward No. 6* when he made this comment about Tolstoy?)

After the seizure of power, the divided conscience of the artist became a pressing practical problem. Lenin confronted a maze of contradictions, all relating to the safety of the revolution, and centering on the conflict that was exemplified by Tolstoy. If one took class allegiances seriously, one could not convert a middle-class intellectual into a "proletarian" by a simple decree. Early in 1919, Lenin said:

> We must take over the entire culture left from capitalism, and out of it build socialism. . . . All science, technology, all knowledge and art . . . are in the hands of specialists. Such is the task we face in all fields. . . . A contradictory task, as all capitalism is contradictory.[10]

He had no patience with the advocates of "Proletarian Art," which he regarded as a manifestation of bourgeois illusions. In the fall of 1922, when the controversy concerning the function of art had been raging for several years, he marked passages in an article proclaim-

[10] Speech in March 1919.

ing "a new proletarian class culture;" his marginal comments were such exclamations as "Hah-ha!" and "rubbish!"[11]

He returned again and again to the same theme: "Proletarian culture cannot be anything but a normal development of the stores of knowledge amassed by mankind, under the oppression of a capitalist society, a landowners' society, a bureaucratic society."[12] At the same time, he urged intellectuals to serve the revolution. Writing to cultural organizations in 1918, he clarified the central need: "The entire mass of toilers and exploited—crushed, downtrodden and disunited by capitalism—are to be united around the urban workers."[13]

It is small wonder that Lenin concluded that the cultural revolution "presents unbelievable difficulties. . . . The cultural problem cannot be solved as rapidly as the political and military problems."[14] These actualities must be taken into account in considering Lenin's lack of sympathy for avantgarde aesthetics, his unfavorable views of expressionism, cubism and futurism. He underestimated the contradictions and possibilities in these movements, but he was not wrong in seeing dangers in the reckless ardor of artists who wanted an immediate "revolution" in culture.

Those years of the first consolidation of Soviet power released vast, disordered creative energies. Leftism in the arts was not unrelated to the opposition of Left Socialist Revolutionaries, whose disruption delayed the Party Congress in the summer of 1918. In combating dangers, Lenin avoided interference with meaningful experimentation. Mayakovsky's *Opera Bouffé*, announced as "a cosmic revolution of the universe," taking place in heaven and hell as well as on earth, a fantastic adventure in theatrical style, was performed under Meyerhold's direction on the first anniversary of the October Revolution.

Lenin could not appreciate the significance of Mayakovsky's abandonment of curtains and footlights in order to make a direct contact between performers and spectators. Nor could he agree with Isadora Duncan's rejection of the sacrosanct Bolshoy Ballet. Yet he was personally responsible for bringing the American dancer to the Soviet Union, and he was present to applaud her gala appearance at the Bolshoy on the fourth anniversary of the revolution.

In a speech in 1922, Lenin praised a poem by Mayakovsky satirizing bureaucracy. He said: "I do not belong to the admirers of his poetic talent, though I fully admit my incompetence in that field. But it is a long time since I have experienced such pleasure from the political and administrative point of view. . . . Mayakovsky makes deadly fun of 'meetings,' and ridicules Communists who sit and oversit in sessions. I do not know about the poetry, but I vouch that politically this is absolutely correct."[15]

The apologetic tone shows how deeply he was disturbed by disagreements with artists, which led him, ironically, to accept a divorcement of art and politics, quite contrary to his insistence on the public responsibility of intellectuals. It is unfortunate that the pressure of events made it impossible for him to undertake to bridge this gap. If he had made a painstaking study of the arts, along the lines of his scrutiny of bourgeois philosophy in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, he might have thrown light on "the unbelievable difficulties" of the Cultural Revolution—difficulties which are still with us.

4. Lessons for Americans

I WAS one of the young people of the early twenties who read the *Letter to American Workers* with puzzled interest. I could not believe that it was addressed to me. Yet Lenin and the Revolution were present in my work in the theater. If the stage was to project a new vision of turmoil and change in the United States, it must take account of the world-stage on which Lenin was the most dramatic figure.

My play, *Roger Bloomer*, produced in New York in 1923, ends with the distant sound of music, "and far off, listen, the tread of marching people singing a new song." Two years later, *Processional* brought the marching people onto the stage: the play is an angry, serio-comic, syncopated, burlesque vision of social strife in a West Virginia mining town. The strike was real and bloody; it had been reported in the newspapers; my version of it was intended to have a larger meaning, showing the violence, frustration and explosive social conflict underlying the "prosperity" of the Roaring Twenties.

In *Processional*, an old mountain woman hears a strange word—"Proletariat! It makes a buzzin' in your ears! It burns in your mouth!" This was my own feeling. The word was "foreign," and yet it expressed class antagonisms which I could *see* around me. Lenin was responsible for my introducing the word "proletariat" in a play about Mingo County, West Virginia: most of the people there came from

[11] Cited in Alexander Kaun, *Soviet Poets and Poetry*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1943, p. 124.
[12] "Address to Third Conference of Communist Youth," October, 1920.
[13] "Letter to Cultural Organizations," September 19, 1918.
[14] Cited in Kaun, *op. cit.*, p. 126.
[15] Cited, Kaun, *op. cit.*, p. 56n.

generations of "free" Americans. But the mines had wrought a fundamental change.

Everything in the United States was changing; the roots of the change were in World War I, which was also the occasion for the Bolshevik Revolution. The American bourgeoisie was flourishing during the twenties, but it was increasingly evident that their wealth was built on mass poverty at home and abroad. Lenin assumed new stature and relevance as Calvin Coolidge graced the presidency with smug platitudes.

In 1927, I joined with four other writers in founding the New Playwrights Theater, the first professional "working class" theater in the United States. There were difficulties in reaching a "proletarian" audience, and we were not clear as to their identity or where they could be found in the crowded streets of New York. But there was no uncertainty concerning the martyrdom of Sacco and Vanzetti: the poor fish-peddler and shoemaker spoke for the poor and oppressed of the world, and intellectuals joined in a movement of protest which circled the world. The execution of these innocent men clarified Lenin's teaching; as a direct result, the New Playwrights began their second season by raising a red flag in front of the Cherry Lane Theater.

The red flag may have seemed like a futile gesture; it did not attract any large number of "proletarians" to the box office. But within a year, there were more potent gestures by millions of people demanding food and jobs. The world crisis confirmed Lenin's description of imperialism "as capitalism in transition, or, more precisely, as moribund capitalism." A few years earlier, it seemed absurd to speak of the American system as moribund, but all of a sudden the adjective was devastatingly appropriate, although it was also probable, as Lenin had predicted, that the system could "continue in a state of decay for a fairly long period."[16]

I quote Lenin's words, written in 1916, concerning the general course of capitalism in the epoch of imperialism, because his message to Americans was implicit in the whole culture of the twenties and became explicit in the thirties. Cultural historians have given a false view of these decades, treating the twenties as non-political and portraying the politics of the thirties as sectarian, alien and conspiratorial.

The radicalism of the twenties and thirties was a peculiarly American phenomenon; it grew out of earlier movements such as

[16] Both quotations are from *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism.*

abolition, populism, woman's rights and socialism, but it moved toward a broader confrontation between the imperial power structure and the mass of workers, sharecroppers, poor farmers, victims of unemployment, poverty and racism.

One day and one event remains fixed in my recollection—a moment of personal decision. It was July 4, 1934: I attended an underground meeting of black miners and their families in a house near Birmingham, Alabama. I was brought to the house with elaborate precautions. It was a hot day, and I sat near a window which was open a few inches. When I put my hand on the sill, a woman touched my arm, warning me that the white hand might be seen and reported, leading to dangerous consequences. The miners were on strike; several pickets had been murdered by sheriff's deputies. I thought of the West Virginia strike in my play, *Processional;* what I experienced in Alabama was sober and heart-breaking, nothing like the "jazz symphony" I had imagined ten years earlier. The day-long discussion gave a new extension to the word, "proletarian": speakers analyzed their local situation in relation to the developing strike of longshoremen in San Francisco; there had been a clash between workers and police on the San Francisco waterfront on the previous day, and the murders on the Embarcadero were to come on the next day. The solidarity of workers was a living necessity to these people, and would determine whether they won or lost their strike. But they also spoke of the sharecroppers who were their own relatives, and the web of world relationships, the rise of Hitler and Roosevelt's New Deal, which were factors in their struggle and would affect its outcome. They sang, "Lenin is our leader, we shall not be moved . . . Like a tree that's standing by the water . . ." The familiar words were an intimate part of their lives: they could defy the big corporations and the sovereign state of Alabama because they had friends as thick as trees along the world's rivers.

A poem written at about the same time by Langston Hughes bears witness to this truth. He speaks of the Russian peasant and the black man "cutting cane in the sun," and the Chinese worker in Shanghai:

> *Comrade Lenin of Russia,*
> *Move over, Comrade Lenin,*
> *And give me room . . .*
> *On guard with the workers forever—*
> *The world is our room!*

A great American scholar noted the same truth in 1935: W. E. B. Du Bois wrote with somber passion of racist education in the United

States. The lies that are taught as history, Du Bois charged, had horrifying consequences: "In Africa, a black man runs red with the blood of the lash. . . . Flames of jealous murder sweep the earth."[17]

I do not mean to suggest that the mainstream of American culture in the thirties had the intense awareness of conflicting forces which we find in the examples I have cited. If this consciousness had been widespread, the history of the period might have been different. Artists and scholars found it difficult to digest Lenin's teachings—because it struck at their deepest illusions, their professional prejudices, their "way of life." At an earlier time, Lenin had warned Lincoln Steffens: "Don't minimize any of the evils of a revolution. . . . They occur. They must be counted upon."[18] The harshness of class struggle, and its manifold dangers, could be appreciated more fully in Alabama or in Harlem than in suburban living rooms.

Yet Lenin's influence permeated the art and life of the thirties in subtle and half-acknowledged ways. Perhaps his greatest contribution was to give us back a sense of our history, as a record of violent contributions—libertarian hopes and brutal exploitation—culminating in the epoch of imperialism. My generation lost its sense of the past during World War I—the way history had been written and taught made no sense to us. Since we had no heritage, we rejected the United States and went into defiant exile in Europe.

I can say for myself that I turned to history in the thirties—as an enormously difficult and rewarding study, which has enriched my understanding of present adversities and future possibilities. After forty years, I feel that I have hardly reached the threshold of knowledge, and Lenin's writing is still a source of fresh insights into the changing American situation.

I observe an increasing recognition of the *necessity of history* in the protest movements that are spreading across the United States. The central factor in the demand for Black Studies is the need to combat degrading lies and to establish a Black identity and culture which cannot function in the present if it is not given its place in history.

The preoccupation with history in the thirties is not solely a matter of formal scholarship. We find it in all the arts. There is a strong historical sense in Dos Passos' *U. S. A.*, the trilogy completed in 1936. John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, in 1939, derives its strength from its broad grasp of the revolutionary issues underlying the plight of itinerant agricultural workers. In both these novels

[17] W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction*, New York, 1935, pp. 727-728.
[18] Cited in Daniel Aaron, *Writers on the Left*, New York, 1961, p. 128.

Lenin's influence can be traced in specific lines and situations, and also in the pattern and structure of the work, which emphasizes shifting class relationships, determining the decisions which confront the characters.

Lenin's shadow lies across the later work of F. Scott Fitzgerald, Thomas Wolfe, and William Faulkner. Fitzgerald was reading Lenin in 1932, and he attended a meeting of the John Reed Club in that year. Later, in his last unfinished novel, there is a curious confrontation between a motion picture mogul (significantly, the novel is entitled *The Last Tycoon*) and a Communist organizer.

Faulkner was inclined to scoff at Marxism in conversations with writers of the Left. Yet his treatment of changing class relationships among white Southerners, his detailed account of regional history, his portrayal of the South as a model of the larger structure of American capitalism, pose tantalizing questions concerning Lenin's indirect influence. In the last volume of the trilogy that occupied Faulkner for most of his life, the heroine is described as "a card-carrying Communist." Her hatred of the banker, her "father" who is not really her father, motivates the action. Why did Faulkner consider that her service in Spain with the Loyalists and her faith in Communism were essential aspects of the story?

The presence of Lenin is more strikingly discernible in Thomas Wolfe's last "statement of belief" shortly before his death in 1938:

> I think the true discovery of America is before us. . . . I think the enemy is before us too. But I think we know the forms and faces of the enemy. . . . I think the enemy is blind, but has the brutal power of his blind grab.[19]

Why did Wolfe write these words as his final *Credo*? What would he have written if death had not intervened? These and a thousand other questions have been ignored by critics.

5. *Questions Without Answers*

> The study of economics brought Brecht to Marx and Lenin, whose works became an invaluable part of his library. Brecht studies and quotes Lenin as a great thinker and a great master of prose.

THE date was October 30, 1947, Brecht was on the witness stand before the Congressional Committee on Un-American Activities. Robert E. Stripling, Grand Inquisitor or Chief Investigator for the Committee, read the passage from an interview with Brecht published in Moscow ten years earlier. Brecht did not remember the interview,

[19] Thomas Wolfe, *You Can't Go Home Again*, New York, 1960, p. 669.

but the Investigator wanted to know whether the author's writings were "based on the philosophy of Lenin and Marx?"

Brecht replied that he had studied Marx's ideas about history, and he did not think "intelligent plays today can be written without such study."

Those hearings marked the beginning of the dark days of repression and thought control in the United States. We have not escaped from the virus of McCarthyism: Brecht understood the sickness very well; he had witnessed the beginnings of Hitlerism in Germany. He spoke to friends of the similarity between the Nazi beginnings and the attack on "subversive" ideas in this country. He left for Europe a few days after the hearings, not even waiting to see the New York production of his play, *Galileo.*

In putting questions about Marx and Lenin in the form of a threat, the inquisitors intended to outlaw these great thinkers—and did in fact go far toward achieving this result. The witch-hunters have imposed their image of Lenin as master of all witches, presiding over a Black Mass celebrating the end of "civilization."

Yet the Brechtian or Epic theory of theater is heavily indebted to Lenin's thought and style. As early as 1924, Erwin Piscator said the new Epic form was like a "manifesto by Lenin." We cannot understand today's dramatic movements unless we explore the revolutionary concepts from which they are derived.

The probability that Lenin would not have approved the way in which artists interpreted his work does not negate his influence: the contradiction between his concept of art and what some of his most dedicated pupils derived from his teaching, already in evidence before his death, casts light on the dialectics of art and revolution.

A fascinating example is his influence on film. His praise of D. W. Griffith's *Intolerance* inspired theater and film craftsmen to make an exhaustive study of Griffith's technique, examining the picture frame by frame. Among the results of these studies were Lev Kuleshov's insistence that a photographic composition is like a musical score, Dziga Vertov's theory of the *Camera-Eye*, and somewhat later the narrative use of *montage* by Eisenstein, Pudovkin, Dovzhenko and others. When Eisenstein undertook to make a film commemorating the 1905 Revolution, he began with a large historical plan, but Lenin's opinion that the *Potemkin* revolt was the turning point of the revolution led Eisenstein to treat this one event as the essence of his theme, "brotherhood and revolution."

Potemkin had multiple effects on the whole history of film; these influences have not been adequately explored, nor has there been

an attempt to correlate cinematic form and technique with Lenin's theoretical writing. There is a suggestive passage in Eisenstein's *Film Form* in which he quotes Lenin's synopsis of Hegelian dialectics in its application to the musical-emotional pattern of cinematic images.[20]

Lenin would have been puzzled at some of Vertov's technical excesses, which lead to his most beautiful film, *Three Songs about Lenin,* with its interweaving of documentary material and folksongs and faces of peasant women to achieve a rare lyricism.

Questions regarding Lenin's relationship to the general development of film art remain unanswered—and at present unanswerable. Are elements of his thought in Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane* (which seems to owe a little to Lenin and much more to Freud), or in Italian neo-realism (which seems to sentimentalize and dilute lessons learned from Lenin), or in avantgarde films of the 1960's?

Similar questions can be asked in every creative field. The first obstacle to answering, or even asking, these questions is bourgeois prejudice—another name for class interest. In 1920, Floyd Dell wrote "A Psychoanalytic Confession," in which his own Unconscious warns him: "You want to see your dream come true. But the dream which you want to see come true is my dream—not Lenin's seven hundred million electric bulbs, but a houseboat and a happy family living in a state of moderately advanced and semi-nude savagery!"[21]

We know that Dell followed *his* dream, and the inner conflict he describes is familiar to all of us. But his unconscious does not speak for art; it is the voice of bourgeois complacency. Nor is it true that seven million electric bulbs are the sole aim of the revolution. Lenin said: "Politics cannot but have preference over economics."[22] I take this to mean that the organization of society, the art of creating a new life, is not limited to production quotas. In this large sense, culture is an essential part of politics, and poetry is restored to its true function, the voice and conscience of the people.

Lenin believed this, and Mayakovsky believed it. The folklore of capitalism (aided and abetted by the CIA) has manufactured an image of Mayakovsky as representative of the divine authority of art opposing Lenin, the crude activist. This "ideal" poet has nothing

[20] *Film Form* and *Film Sense,* edited and translated by Jay Leyda, Cleveland, 1963, *Film Form,* p. 81.

[21] *The Liberator,* April 1920. Cited in Daniel Aaron, *Writers on the Left,* New York, 1961, p. 57.

[22] Reply to Trotsky's and Bukharin's proposals to submit to a Trade Union Conference, January 25, 1921 (*Selected Works,* IX, p. 34).

to do with Mayakovsky and insults his greatness. He was a man of tortured sensibility and frantic dissipations. He believed in the public voice of the poet.

We come to a final question: how did Mayakovsky's theories of art relate to his poetry, and especially to his feeling for Lenin? To doubt the depth of this feeling is to distrust his integrity and ignore some of his best poetry. *Vladimir Ilyich Lenin,* written at the time of Lenin's death, is probably his most potent combination of lyric and dramatic values, a concept of poetic form which owes a great deal to Lenin.

In 1929, Mayakovsky wrote what he called "a progress report," addressed to the portrait of Lenin part of which reads:

Comrade Lenin,
of work
there is a hellish lot . . .
But there is,
sure,
also a handsome output
of nonsense
of all kinds
and trash . . .
But mastering
all
means moving mountains—
Wherever
a factory chimney
is smoking,
all over the country,
under stubbles
of snow,
your heart
and your name,
Comrade Lenin . . .
we think,
breathe and fight, we live
and we grow . . .
thus the day has passed
and faded away.
We are two in the room:
I
and Lenin—
on the white-washed wall
his lifelike portrait.

The politician and the poet are not at odds. As the day fades, they face their common purpose, asking what Lenin asked—"What is to be done?"

BOOKS in review

MURRAY YOUNG
1907-1969

In our Spring 1969 issue we wrote that we knew our readers would share our regret at losing Murray Young, who had been our managing and book review editor for the past twelve years. Now we must ask you to share a deeper grief. Murray died November 28. While we knew he was under medical care, this came as a terrible and unexpected shock.

Murray was a graduate of Notre Dame University and for over twenty years a teacher of English literature in Brooklyn College. He lost that job in the persecutions of the McCarthy era. He was a gifted teacher, and often his old students would drop into our office to express their continuing gratitude for the rewarding experience of studying under his guidance.

Deprived of pursuing his main calling as a teacher, Murray continued to share his love of literature with all of us on the staff, telling us always of the latest book or poem he had read or play or concert he had attended, enriching all our lives with his own enthusiasms and interpretations.

He was part of all the work of New World Review, ***but made special contributions in cultural matters, especially through his wide knowledge of Russian and Soviet as well as world literature. As we wrote of him when he left the magazine, he shared Walt Whitman's dearest dream "for an internationality of poems and poets, binding the lands of the earth closer than all treaties and diplomacy." The mutual enrichment of the American and Soviet peoples through cultural exchanges, and the contribution of such exchanges to peace, were always his passionate concern.***

Ill health prevented Murray from carrying out his plans to do some writing of his own he had long wished to do. But he continued to keep in close contact with us, always carrying away from our office books to review or write notes about for us. We publish on the next page a few of the brief notes he was able to complete before illness overtook him.

Murray has left us a rich legacy in the special quality of his contribution to the magazine that we hope will continue to be reflected in our work. The loss to those of us who were so long associated with him in our work and to his many other friends is beyond measure.

ART

Byzantine Art, by David Talbot Rice. Penguin Books, 1968. 580 pp., $3.95.

FOR anybody interested in Russian and Slavonic art generally Professor Talbot Rice's concise account of Byzantine art has long been considered a classic. First published in 1935, it has been frequently reprinted in carefully revised editions. This third edition to be published in the Penguin Press Pelican art series is of special interest because the black-and-white and color illustrations and the splendid maps are those made originally for the 1964 German edition printed by Prestel-Verlag, Munich. The black-and-whites have been reproduced with exceptional clarity and the color plates wonderfully suggest the richness of the somber and glowing originals.

Some elementary knowledge of the rich and complex history of the various art forms that developed from the great Empire that ruled Eastern Christianity from the 4th to the 15th century is, of course, essential in approaching Russian art and architecture. With more and more of the great religious foundations and churches being opened to tourists in the Soviet Union this handsome and inexpensive edition of Rice's book should be even more widely distributed than it has been in the past.

TRAVEL

A Russian Journey, From Suzdal to Samarkand. Text by Alaric Jacob, drawings by Paul Hogarth. Hill and Wang, 1969. 160 pp., $10.00.

PAUL Hogarth's ability to catch the special ambiance of a foreign place in his drawings — as brilliantly displayed in the book of drawings he made in China some years ago are justly admired. For the first time in the drawings for this book he has used color and the result is even more brilliant. From an Art Nouveau apartment house in Moscow to the blue domes of Rozhdestvensky Cathedral in Suzdal, Hogarth's curious, seemingly naive style, evokes for us with a minimum of effort the places and people he was able to observe on a trip through the Soviet Union in 1967.

Mr. Jacob's text, on the other hand, is all too familiar. How many times before have we read this kind of travel material! This is odd, since it appears that Jacob, a newspaper man, has had first-hand acquaintance with the country over a long period. Perhaps it is that Hogarth's quick, penetrating illustrations set too fresh and high a standard.

NERUDA

Pablo Neruda: A New Decade—1948-1957. Edited with an introduction by Ben Belitt. Translations by Ben Belitt and Alastair Reid. The Grove Press, 1969. 274 pp., $8.50.

THAT Neruda's rich vein of poetic song shows no sign of diminishing, this collection of elaborate new poems written in the past decade clearly testifies. Complex, allusive, symbolic, these poems are not the easiest of the poet's to approach.

But Neruda himself warns us:

I am no one's establishment,
I administer nothing:
it suffices to cherish
the equivocal cut of my song.

NOTE TO READERS

Our regular book review section, with full reviews, book notes and announcements of new publications, will resume in our Spring 1970 issue.

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