

there was neither a party program nor party rules; there was no single leading centre, and there was scarcely any connection between the separate Marxist circles and groups.

In order to unite and link together the separate Marxist organizations into a single party, Lenin put forward and carried out a plan for the founding of *Iskra*, the first newspaper of the revolutionary Marxists on an all-Russian scale.

The principal opponents to the creation of a single political working-class party at that period were the "Economists." They denied the necessity for such a party. They fostered the disunity and amateurish methods of the separate groups. It was against them that Lenin and the newspaper *Iskra* organized by him directed their blows.

The appearance of the first issues of *Iskra* (1900-01) marked a transition to a new period—a period in which a single Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party was really formed from the disconnected groups and circles.

CHAPTER TWO

FORMATION OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY. APPEARANCE OF THE BOLSHEVIK AND THE MENSHEVIK GROUPS WITHIN THE PARTY (1901-1904)

I. UPSURGE OF THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN RUSSIA IN 1901-04

The end of the nineteenth century in Europe was marked by an industrial crisis. It soon spread to Russia. During the period of the crisis (1900-03) about 3,000 large and small enterprises were closed down and over 100,000 workers thrown on the streets. The wages of the workers that remained employed were sharply reduced. The insignificant concessions previously wrung from the capitalists as the result of stubborn economic strikes were now withdrawn.

Industrial crisis and unemployment did not halt or weaken the working-class movement. On the contrary, the workers' struggle assumed an increasingly revolutionary character. From economic strikes, the workers passed to political strikes, and finally to demonstrations, put forward political demands for democratic liberties, and raised the slogan, "Down with the tsarist autocracy!"

A May Day strike at the Obukhov munitions plant in St. Petersburg in 1901 resulted in a bloody encounter between the workers and troops. The only weapons the workers could oppose to the armed forces of the tsar were stones and lumps of iron. The stubborn resistance of the workers was broken. This was followed by savage reprisals: about 800 workers were arrested, and many were cast into prison or condemned to penal servitude and exile. But the heroic "Obukhov defence" made a profound impression on the workers of Russia and called forth a wave of sympathy among them.

In March 1902 big strikes and a demonstration of workers took place in Batum, organized by the Batum Social-Democratic Committee. The Batum demonstration stirred up the workers and peasants of Transcaucasia.

From: History of the CPSU (b), ed: CC of the
CPSU (b). New York: Int'l Publishers,
1939.

In 1902 a big strike broke out in Rostov-on-Don as well. The first to come out were the railwaymen, who were soon joined by the workers of many factories. The strike agitated all the workers. As many as 30,000 would gather at meetings held outside the city limits on several successive days. At these meetings Social-Democratic proclamations were read aloud and speakers addressed the workers. The police and the Cossacks were powerless to disperse these meetings, attended as they were by many thousands. When several workers were killed by the police, a huge procession of working people attended their funeral on the following day. Only by summoning troops from surrounding cities was the tsarist government able to suppress the strike. The struggle of the Rostov workers was led by the Don Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. The strikes that broke out in 1903 were of even larger dimensions. Mass political strikes took place that year in the south, sweeping Transcaucasia (Baku, Tiflis, Batum) and the large cities of the Ukraine (Odessa, Kiev, Ekaterinoslav). The strikes became increasingly stubborn and better organized. Unlike earlier actions of the working class, the political struggle of the workers was nearly everywhere directed by the Social-Democratic committees.

The working class of Russia was rising to wage a revolutionary struggle against the tsarist regime.

The working-class movement influenced the peasantry. In the spring and summer of 1902 a peasant movement broke out in the Ukraine (Poltava and Kharkov provinces) and in the Volga region. The peasants set fire to landlords' mansions, seized their land, and killed the detested *zemsky nachalniki* (rural prefects) and landlords. Troops were sent to quell the rebellious peasants. Peasants were shot down, hundreds were arrested, and their leaders and organizers were flung into prison, but the revolutionary peasant movement continued to grow.

The revolutionary actions of the workers and peasants indicated that revolution was maturing and drawing near in Russia.

Under the influence of the revolutionary struggle of the workers the opposition movement of the students against the government assumed greater intensity. In retaliation for the student demonstrations and strikes, the government shut down the universities, flung hundreds of students into prison, and finally conceived the idea of sending recalcitrant students into the army as common soldiers. In response, the students of all the universities organized a general strike in the winter of 1901-02. About thirty thousand students were involved in this strike.

The revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants, and

especially the reprisals against the students, induced also the liberal bourgeois and the liberal landlords who sat on what was known as the Zemstvos to bestir themselves and to raise their voices in "protest" against the "excesses" of the tsarist government in repressing their student sons.

The Zemstvo liberals had their stronghold in the Zemstvo boards. These were local government bodies which had charge of purely local affairs affecting the rural population (building of roads, hospitals and schools). The liberal landlords played a fairly prominent part on the Zemstvo boards. They were closely associated with the liberal bourgeois, in fact were almost merged with them, for they themselves were beginning to abandon methods based on survivals of serfdom for capitalist methods of farming on their estates, as being more profitable. Of course, both these groups of liberals supported the tsarist government; but they were opposed to the "excesses" of tsardom, fearing that these "excesses" would only intensify the revolutionary movement. While they feared the "excesses" of tsardom, they feared revolution even more. In protesting against these "excesses," the liberals pursued two aims: first, to "bring the tsar to his senses," and secondly, by donning a mask of "profound dissatisfaction" with tsardom, to gain the confidence of the people, and to get them, or part of them, to break away from the revolution, and thus undermine its strength.

Of course, the Zemstvo liberal movement offered no menace whatever to the existence of tsardom; nevertheless, it served to show that all was not well with the "eternal" pillars of tsardom.

In 1902 the Zemstvo liberal movement led to the formation of the bourgeois "Liberation" group, the nucleus of the future principal party of the bourgeoisie in Russia—the Constitutional-Democratic Party.

Perceiving that the movement of the workers and peasants was sweeping the country in a formidable torrent, the tsarist government did everything it could to stem the revolutionary tide. Armed force was used with increasing frequency to suppress the workers' strikes and demonstrations; the bullet and the knout became the government's usual reply to the actions of the workers and peasants; prisons and places of exile were filled to overflowing.

While tightening up the measures of repression, the tsarist government tried at the same time to resort to other, non-repressive and more "flexible," measures to divert the workers from the revolutionary movement. Attempts were made to create bogus workers' organizations under the aegis of the gendarmes and police. They were dubbed organizations of "police socialism" or Zubatov organizations (after the name

of a colonel of gendarmerie, Zubatov, who was the founder of these police-controlled workers' organizations). Through its agents the *Okhrana* tried to get the workers to believe that the tsarist government was itself prepared to assist them in securing the satisfaction of their economic demands. "Why engage in politics, why make a revolution, when the tsar himself is on the side of the workers?"—Zubatov agents would insinuate to the workers. Zubatov organizations were formed in several cities. On the model of these organizations and with the same purposes in view, an organization known as the Assembly of Russian Factory Workers of St. Petersburg was formed in 1904 by a priest by the name of Gapon.

But the attempt of the tsarist *Okhrana* to gain control over the working-class movement failed. The tsarist government proved unable by such measures to cope with the growing working-class movement. The rising revolutionary movement of the working class swept these police-controlled organizations from its path.

2. LENIN'S PLAN FOR THE BUILDING OF A MARXIST PARTY. OPPORTUNISM OF THE "ECONOMISTS." "ISKRA'S" FIGHT FOR LENIN'S PLAN. LENIN'S BOOK "WHAT IS TO BE DONE?" IDEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE MARXIST PARTY

Notwithstanding the fact that the First Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Party had been held in 1898, and that it had announced the formation of the Party, no real party was as yet created. There was no party program or party rules. The Central Committee of the Party elected at the First Congress was arrested and never replaced, for there was nobody to replace it. Worse still, the ideological confusion and lack of organizational cohesion of the Party became even more marked after the First Congress.

While the years 1884-94 were a period of victory over Narodism and of ideological preparation for the formation of a Social-Democratic Party, and the years 1894-98 a period in which an attempt, although unsuccessful, was made to weld the separate Marxist organizations into a Social-Democratic Party, the period immediately following 1898 was one of increased ideological and organizational confusion within the Party. The victory gained by the Marxists over Narodism and the revolutionary actions of the working class, which proved that the Marxists were right, stimulated the sympathy of the revolutionary youth for Marxism. Marxism became the fashion. This resulted in an influx into the

Marxist organizations of throngs of young revolutionary intellectuals, who were weak in theory and inexperienced in political organization, and who had only a vague, and for the most part incorrect, idea of Marxism, derived from the opportunist writings of the "legal Marxists" with which the press was filled. This resulted in the lowering of the theoretical and political standard of the Marxist organizations, in their infection with the "legal Marxist" opportunist tendencies, and in the aggravation of ideological confusion, political vacillation and organizational chaos.

The rising tide of the working-class movement and the obvious proximity of revolution demanded a united and centralized party of the working class which would be capable of leading the revolutionary movement. But the local Party organizations, the local committees, groups and circles were in such a deplorable state, and their organizational disunity and ideological discord so profound, that the task of creating such a party was one of immense difficulty.

The difficulty lay not only in the fact that the Party had to be built under the fire of savage persecution by the tsarist government, which every now and then robbed the organizations of their finest workers whom it condemned to exile, imprisonment and penal servitude, but also in the fact that a large number of the local committees and their members would have nothing to do with anything but their local, petty practical activities, did not realize the harm caused by the absence of organizational and ideological unity in the Party, were accustomed to the disunity and ideological confusion that prevailed within it, and believed that they could get along quite well without a united centralized party.

If a centralized party was to be created, this backwardness, inertia, and narrow outlook of the local bodies had to be overcome.

But this was not all. There was a fairly large group of people within the Party who had their own press—the *Rabochaya Mysl* (*Workers' Thought*) in Russia and *Rabocheye Delo* (*Workers' Cause*) abroad—who were trying to justify on theoretical grounds the lack of organizational cohesion and the ideological confusion within the Party, frequently even lauding such a state of affairs, and holding that the plan for creating a united and centralized political party of the working class was unnecessary and artificial.

These were the "Economists" and their followers.

Before a united political party of the proletariat could be created, the "Economists" had to be defeated.

It was to this task and to the building of a working-class party that Lenin addressed himself.

How to begin the building of a united party of the working class

was a question on which opinions differed. Some thought that the building of the Party should be begun by summoning the Second Congress of the Party, which would unite the local organizations and create the Party. Lenin was opposed to this. He held that before convening a congress it was necessary to make the aims and objects of the Party clear, to ascertain what sort of a party was wanted, to effect an ideological demarcation from the "Economists," to tell the Party honestly and frankly that there existed two different opinions regarding the aims and objects of the Party—the opinion of the "Economists" and the opinion of the revolutionary Social-Democrats—to start a wide campaign in the press in favour of the views of revolutionary Social-Democracy—just as the "Economists" were conducting a campaign in their own press in favour of their own views—and to give the local organizations the opportunity to make a deliberate choice between these two trends. Only after this indispensable preliminary work had been done could a Party Congress be summoned.

Lenin put it plainly:

"Before we can unite, and in order that we may unite, we must first of all draw firm and definite lines of demarcation." (Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 45.)

Lenin accordingly held that the building of a political party of the working class should be begun by the founding of a militant political newspaper on an all-Russian scale, which would carry on propaganda and agitation in favour of the views of revolutionary Social-Democracy—that the establishment of such a newspaper should be the first step in the building of the Party.

In his well-known article, "Where to Begin?" Lenin outlined a concrete plan for the building of the Party, a plan which was later expanded in his famous work *What Is To Be Done?*

"In our opinion," wrote Lenin in this article, "the starting point of our activities, the first practical step towards creating the organization desired,* finally, the main thread following which we would be able to develop, deepen and expand that organization unswervingly, should be the establishment of a political newspaper on an all-Russian scale. . . . Without it we cannot systematically carry on that all-embracing propaganda and agitation, consistent in principle, which form the chief and constant task of Social-Democrats in general, and the particularly urgent task of the present moment when

* That is, the formation of a party.—Ed.

interest in politics, in questions of Socialism, has been aroused among the widest sections of the population." (*Ibid.*, p. 19.)

Lenin considered that such a newspaper would serve not only to weld the Party ideologically, but also to unite the local bodies within the Party organizationally. The network of agents and correspondents of the newspaper, representing the local organizations, would provide a skeleton around which the Party could be built up organizationally. For, Lenin said, "a newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and collective agitator, but also a collective organizer."

"This network of agents," writes Lenin in the same article, "will form the skeleton of precisely the organization we need, namely, one that is sufficiently large to embrace the whole country, sufficiently wide and many-sided to effect a strict and detailed division of labour; sufficiently tried and tempered to be able unswervingly to carry on *its own* work under all circumstances, at all 'turns' and in all contingencies; sufficiently flexible to be able to avoid open battle against an enemy of overwhelming strength, when he has concentrated all his forces at one spot, and yet able to take advantage of the awkwardness of this enemy and to attack him whenever and wherever least expected." (*Ibid.*, pp. 21-2.)

Iskra was to be such a newspaper.

And *Iskra* did indeed become such a political newspaper on an all-Russian scale which prepared the way for the ideological and organizational consolidation of the Party.

As to the structure and composition of the Party itself, Lenin considered that it should consist of two parts: a) a close circle of regular cadres of leading Party workers, chiefly professional revolutionaries, that is, Party workers free from all occupation except Party work and possessing the necessary minimum of theoretical knowledge, political experience, organizational practice and the art of combating the tsarist police and of eluding them; and b) a broad network of local Party organizations and a large number of Party members enjoying the sympathy and support of hundreds of thousands of working people.

"I assert," Lenin wrote, "1) that no revolutionary movement can endure without a stable organization of leaders that maintains continuity; 2) that the wider the masses spontaneously drawn into the struggle . . . the more urgent the need of such an organization, and the more solid this organization must be . . . 3) that such an organization must consist chiefly of people professionally engaged

in revolutionary activity; 4) that in an autocratic state the more we *confine* the membership of such organization to people who are professionally engaged in revolutionary activity and who have been professionally trained in the art of combating the political police, the more difficult will it be to wipe out such an organization, and 5) the *greater* will be the number of people of the working class and of the other classes of society who will be able to join the movement and perform active work in it." (*Ibid.*, pp. 138-39.)

As to the character of the Party that was being built up and its role in relation to the working class, as well as its aims and objects, Lenin held that the Party should form the vanguard of the working class, that it should be the guiding force of the working-class movement, co-ordinating and directing the class struggle of the proletariat. The ultimate goal of the Party was the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of Socialism. Its immediate aim was the overthrow of tsardom and the establishment of a democratic order. And inasmuch as the overthrow of capitalism was impossible without the preliminary overthrow of tsardom, the principal task of the Party at the given moment was to rouse the working class and the whole people for a struggle against tsardom, to develop a revolutionary movement of the people against it, and to overthrow it as the first and serious obstacle in the path of Socialism.

"History," Lenin wrote, "has now confronted us with an immediate task which is the *most revolutionary* of all the *immediate* tasks that confront the proletariat of any country. The fulfilment of this task, the destruction of the most powerful bulwark not only of European but also (it may now be said) of Asiatic reaction would make the Russian proletariat the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat." (*Ibid.*, p. 50.)

And further:

"We must bear in mind that the struggle with the government for partial demands, the winning of partial concessions, are only petty skirmishes with the enemy, petty encounters on the outposts, whereas the decisive engagement is still to come. Before us, in all its strength, stands the enemy's fortress, which is raining shot and shell upon us and mowing down our best fighters. We must capture this fortress; and we shall capture it if we unite all the forces of the awakening proletariat with all the forces of the Russian revolutionaries into one party, which will attract all that is alive and honest in Russia. And only then will the great prophecy of Pyotr Alexeevich, the Russian worker revolutionary, be fulfilled: 'the muscular arm of the working millions will be lifted, and the yoke of despotism,

guarded by the soldiers' bayonets, will be smashed to atoms!'" (*Lenin, Collected Works*, Russ. ed., Vol. IV, p. 59.)

Such was Lenin's plan for the creation of a party of the working class in autocratic tsarist Russia.

The "Economists" showed no delay in launching an attack on Lenin's plan.

They asserted that the general political struggle against tsardom was a matter for all classes, but primarily for the bourgeoisie, and that therefore it was of no serious interest to the working class, for the chief interest of the workers lay in the economic struggle against the employers for higher wages, better working conditions, etc. The primary and immediate aim of the Social-Democrats should therefore be not a political struggle against tsardom, and not the overthrow of tsardom, but the organization of the "economic struggle of the workers against the employers and the government." By the economic struggle against the government they meant a struggle for better factory legislation. The "Economists" claimed that in this way it would be possible "to lend the economic struggle itself a political character."

The "Economists" no longer dared openly to contest the need for a political party of the working class. But they considered that it should not be the guiding force of the working-class movement, that it should not interfere in the spontaneous movement of the working class, let alone direct it, but that it should follow in the wake of this movement, study it and draw lessons from it.

The "Economists" furthermore asserted that the role of the conscious element in the working-class movement, the organizing and directing role of Socialist consciousness and Socialist theory, was insignificant, or almost insignificant; that the Social-Democrats should not elevate the minds of the workers to the level of Socialist consciousness, but, on the contrary, should adjust themselves and descend to the level of the average, or even of the more backward sections of the working class, and that the Social-Democrats should not try to impart a Socialist consciousness to the working class, but should wait until the spontaneous movement of the working class arrived of itself at a Socialist consciousness.

As regards Lenin's plan for the organization of the Party, the "Economists" regarded it almost as an act of violence against the spontaneous movement.

In the columns of *Iskra*, and especially in his celebrated work *What Is To Be Done?*, Lenin launched a vehement attack against this opportunist philosophy of the "Economists" and demolished it.

1) Lenin showed that to divert the working class from the general political struggle against tsardom and to confine its task to that of the economic struggle against the employers and the government, while leaving both employers and government intact, meant to condemn the workers to eternal slavery. The economic struggle of the workers against the employers and the government was a trade union struggle for better terms in the sale of their labour power to the capitalists. The workers, however, wanted to fight not only for better terms in the sale of their labour power to the capitalists, but also for the abolition of the capitalist system itself which condemned them to sell their labour power to the capitalists and to suffer exploitation. But the workers could not develop their struggle against capitalism, their struggle for Socialism to the full, as long as the path of the working-class movement was barred by tsardom, that watchdog of capitalism. It was therefore the immediate task of the Party and of the working class to remove tsardom from the path and thus clear the way to Socialism.

2) Lenin showed that to extol the spontaneous process in the working-class movement, to deny that the Party had a leading role to play, to reduce its rôle to that of a recorder of events, meant to preach *khorvostism* (following in the tail), to preach the conversion of the Party into a tail-piece of the spontaneous process, into a passive force of the movement, capable only of contemplating the spontaneous process and allowing events to take their own course. To advocate this meant working for the destruction of the Party, that is, leaving the working class without a party—that is, leaving the working class unarmed. But to leave the working class unarmed when it was faced by such enemies as tsardom, which was armed to the teeth, and the bourgeoisie, which was organized on modern lines and had its own party to direct its struggle against the working class, meant to betray the working class.

3) Lenin showed that to bow in worship of the spontaneous working-class movement and to belittle the importance of consciousness, of Socialist consciousness and Socialist theory, meant, in the first place, to insult the workers, who were drawn to consciousness as to light; in the second place, to lower the value of theory in the eyes of the Party, that is, to depreciate the instrument which helped the Party to understand the present and foresee the future; and, in the third place, it meant to sink completely and irrevocably into the bog of opportunism.

“Without a revolutionary theory,” Lenin said, “there can be no revolutionary movement. . . . The rôle of vanguard can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory.” (Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, pp. 47, 48.)

4) Lenin showed that the “Economists” were deceiving the working class when they asserted that a Socialist ideology could arise from the spontaneous movement of the working class, for in reality the Socialist ideology arises not from the spontaneous movement, but from science. By denying the necessity of imparting a Socialist consciousness to the working class, the “Economists” were clearing the way for bourgeois ideology, facilitating its introduction and dissemination among the working class, and, consequently, they were burying the idea of union between the working-class movement and Socialism, thus helping the bourgeoisie.

“All worship of the spontaneity of the labour movement,” Lenin said, “all belittling of the rôle of ‘the conscious element,’ of the rôle of the party of Social-Democracy, means, *altogether irrespective of whether the belittler likes it or not, strengthening the influence of the bourgeois ideology among the workers.*” (*Ibid.*, p. 61.) And further:

“The only choice is: either the bourgeois or the Socialist ideology. There is no middle course. . . . Hence to belittle the Socialist ideology *in any way, to turn away from it in the slightest degree* means to strengthen the bourgeois ideology.” (*Ibid.*, p. 62.)

5) Summing up all these mistakes of the “Economists,” Lenin came to the conclusion that they did not want a party of social revolution for the emancipation of the working class from capitalism, but a party of “social reform,” which presupposed the preservation of capitalist rule, and that, consequently, the “Economists” were reformists who were betraying the fundamental interests of the proletariat.

6) Lastly, Lenin showed that “Economism” was not an accidental phenomenon in Russia, but that the “Economists” were an instrument of bourgeois influence upon the working class, that they had allies in the West-European Social-Democratic parties in the person of the revisionists, the followers of the opportunist Bernstein. The opportunist trend in Social-Democratic parties was gaining strength in Western Europe; on the plea of “freedom to criticize” Marx, it demanded a “revision” of the Marxist doctrine (hence the term “revisionism”); it demanded renunciation of the revolution, of Socialism and of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Lenin showed that the Russian “Economists” were pursuing a similar policy of renunciation of the revolutionary struggle, of Socialism and of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Such were the main theoretical principles expounded by Lenin in *What Is To Be Done?*

As a result of the wide circulation of this book, by the time of the

Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Party, that is, within a year after its publication (it appeared in March 1902), nothing but a distasteful memory remained of the ideological stand of "Economism," and to be called an "Economist" was regarded by the majority of the members of the Party as an insult.

It was a complete ideological defeat for "Economism," for the ideology of opportunism, *khrvoostism* and spontaneity.

But this does not exhaust the significance of Lenin's *What Is To Be Done?*

The historic significance of this celebrated book lies in the fact that in it Lenin:

- 1) For the first time in the history of Marxist thought, laid bare the ideological roots of opportunism, showing that they principally consisted in worshipping the spontaneous working-class movement and belittling the role of Socialist consciousness in the working-class movement;
- 2) Brought out the great importance of theory, of consciousness, and of the Party as a revolutionizing and guiding force of the spontaneous working-class movement;
- 3) Brilliantly substantiated the fundamental Marxist thesis that a Marxist party is a union of the working-class movement with Socialism;
- 4) Gave a brilliant exposition of the ideological foundations of a Marxist party.

The theoretical theses expounded in *What Is To Be Done?* later became the foundation of the ideology of the Bolshevik Party.

Possessing such a wealth of theory, *Iskra* was able to, and actually did, develop an extensive campaign for Lenin's plan for the building of the Party, for mustering its forces, for calling the Second Party Congress, for revolutionary Social-Democracy, and against the "Economists," revisionists, and opportunists of all kinds.

One of the most important things that *Iskra* did was to draft a program for the Party. The program of a workers' party, as we know, is a brief, scientifically formulated statement of the aims and objects of the struggle of the working class. The program defines both the ultimate goal of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat, and the demands for which the party fights while on the way to the achievement of the ultimate goal. The drafting of a program was therefore a matter of prime importance.

During the drafting of the program serious differences arose on the editorial board of *Iskra* between Lenin, on the one hand, and Plekhanov and other members of the board, on the other. These differences and disputes almost led to a complete rupture between Lenin and Plekha-

nov. But matters did not come to a head at that time. Lenin secured the inclusion in the draft program of a most important clause on the dictatorship of the proletariat and of a clear statement on the leading role of the working class in the revolution.

It was Lenin, too, who drew up the whole agrarian section of the program. Already at that time Lenin was in favour of the nationalization of the land, but he considered it necessary in the first stage of the struggle to put forward the demand for the return to the peasants of the *otrezki*, that is, those portions of the land which had been cut off the peasants' land by the landlords at the time of "emancipation" of the peasants. Plekhanov was opposed to the demand for the nationalization of the land.

The disputes between Lenin and Plekhanov over the Party program to some extent determined the future differences between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks.

3. SECOND CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY. ADOPTION OF PROGRAM AND RULES AND FORMATION OF A SINGLE PARTY. DIFFERENCES AT THE CONGRESS AND APPEARANCE OF TWO TRENDS WITHIN THE PARTY: THE BOLSHEVIK AND THE MENSHEVIK

Thus the triumph of Lenin's principles and the successful struggle waged by *Iskra* for Lenin's plan of organization brought about all the principal conditions necessary for the creation of a party, or, as it was said at the time, of a real party. The *Iskra* trend gained the upper hand among the Social-Democratic organizations in Russia. The Second Party Congress could now be summoned.

The Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. opened on July 17 (30, New Style), 1903. It was held abroad, in secret. It first met in Brussels, but the Belgian police requested the delegates to leave the country. Thereupon the congress transferred its sittings to London.

Forty-three delegates in all, representing 26 organizations, assembled at the congress. Each committee was entitled to send two delegates, but some of them sent only one. The 43 delegates commanded 51 votes between them.

The chief purpose of the congress was "to create a *real* party on that basis of principles and organization which had been advanced and elaborated by *Iskra*." (Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 412.)

The composition of the congress was heterogeneous. The avowed

"Economists" were not represented, because of the defeat they had suffered. But they had since disguised their views so artfully that they managed to smuggle several of their delegates into the congress. Moreover, the Bund delegates differed only ostensibly from the "Economists"; in reality they supported the "Economists."

Thus the congress was attended not only by supporters of *Iskra*, but also by its adversaries. Thirty-three of the delegates, that is, the majority, were supporters of *Iskra*. But not all those who considered themselves *Iskra*-ists were real Leninist *Iskra*-ists. The delegates fell into several groups. The supporters of Lenin, or the firm *Iskra*-ists, commanded 24 votes; nine of the *Iskra*-ists followed Martov; these were unstable *Iskra*-ists. Some of the delegates vacillated between *Iskra* and its opponents; they commanded 10 votes and constituted the Centre. The avowed opponents of *Iskra* commanded 8 votes (3 "Economists" and 5 Bund-ists). A split in the ranks of the *Iskra*-ists would be enough to give the enemies of *Iskra* the upper hand.

It will therefore be seen how complex the situation was at the congress. Lenin expended a great deal of energy to ensure the victory of *Iskra*.

The most important item on the agenda was the adoption of the Party program. The chief point which, during the discussion of the program, aroused the objections of the opportunist section of the congress was the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat. There were a number of other items in the program on which the opportunists did not agree with the revolutionary section of the congress. But they decided to put up the main fight on the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, on the plea that the programs of a number of foreign Social-Democratic parties contained no clause on the dictatorship of the proletariat, and that therefore the program of the Russian Social-Democratic Party could dispense with it too.

The opportunists also objected to the inclusion in the Party program of demands on the peasant question. These people did not want revolution; they, therefore, fought shy of the ally of the working class—the peasantry—and adopted an unfriendly attitude towards it.

The Bundists and the Polish Social-Democrats objected to the right of nations to self-determination. Lenin had always taught that the working class must combat national oppression. To object to the inclusion of this demand in the program was tantamount to a proposal to renounce proletarian internationalism and to become accomplices in national oppression.

Lenin made short work of all these objections.

The congress adopted the program proposed by *Iskra*.

This program consisted of two parts: a maximum program and a minimum program. The maximum program dealt with the principal aim of the working-class party, namely, the Socialist revolution, the overthrow of the power of the capitalists, and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The minimum program dealt with the immediate aims of the Party, aims to be achieved before the overthrow of the capitalist system and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, namely, the overthrow of the tsarist autocracy, the establishment of a democratic republic, the introduction of an 8-hour working day, the abolition of all survivals of serfdom in the countryside, and the restoration to the peasants of the cut-off lands (*otrezki*) of which they had been deprived by the landlords.

Subsequently, the Bolsheviks replaced the demand for the return of the *otrezki* by the demand for the confiscation of all the landed estates.

The program adopted by the Second Congress was a revolutionary program of the party of the working class.

It remained in force until the Eighth Party Congress, held after the victory of the proletarian revolution, when our Party adopted a new program.

Having adopted the program, the Second Party Congress proceeded to discuss the draft of the Party Rules. Now that the congress had adopted a program and had laid the foundation for the ideological unity of the Party, it had also to adopt Party Rules so as to put an end to amateurishness and the parochial outlook of the circles, to organizational disunity and the absence of strict discipline in the Party.

The adoption of the program had gone through comparatively smoothly, but fierce disputes arose at the congress over the Party Rules. The sharpest differences arose over the formulation of the first paragraph of the rules, dealing with Party membership. Who could be a member of the Party, what was to be the composition of the Party, what was to be the organizational nature of the Party, an organized whole or something amorphous?—such were the questions that arose in connection with the first paragraph of the rules. Two different formulations contested the ground: Lenin's formulation, which was supported by Plekhanov and the firm *Iskra*-ists; and Martov's formulation, which was supported by Axelrod, Zasulich, the unstable *Iskra*-ists, Trotsky, and all the avowed opportunists at the congress.

According to Lenin's formulation, one could be a member of the Party who accepted its program, supported it financially, and belonged to one of its organizations. Martov's formulation, while admitting that

acceptance of the program and financial support of the Party were indispensable conditions of Party membership, did not, however, make it a condition that a Party member should belong to one of the Party organizations, maintaining that a Party member need not necessarily belong to a Party organization.

Lenin regarded the Party as an *organized* detachment, whose members cannot just enrol themselves in the Party, but must be admitted into the Party by one of its organizations, and hence must submit to Party discipline. Martov, on the other hand, regarded the Party as something organizationally *amorphous*, whose members enrol themselves in the Party and are therefore not obliged to submit to Party discipline, inasmuch as they do not belong to a Party organization.

Thus, unlike Lenin's formulation, Martov's formulation would throw the door of the Party wide open to unstable non-proletarian elements. On the eve of the bourgeois-democratic revolution there were people among the bourgeois intelligentsia who for a while sympathized with the revolution. From time to time they might even render some small service to the Party. But such people would not join an organization, submit to Party discipline, carry out Party tasks and run the accompanying risks. Yet Martov and the other Mensheviks proposed to regard such people as Party members, and to accord them the right and opportunity to influence Party affairs. They even proposed to grant any striker the right to "enrol" himself in the Party, although non-Socialists, Anarchists and Socialist-Revolutionaries also took part in strikes.

And so it was that instead of a monolithic and militant party with a clearly defined organization, for which Lenin and the Leninists fought at the congress, the Martovites wanted a heterogeneous and loose, amorphous party, which could not be a militant party with firm discipline because of its heterogeneous character, if for no other reason.

The breaking away of the unstable *Iskra*-ists from the firm *Iskra*-ists, their alliance with the Centrists, joined as they were by the avowed opportunists, turned the balance in favour of Martov on this point. By 28 votes to 22, with one abstention, the congress adopted Martov's formulation of the first paragraph of the Rules.

After the split in the ranks of the *Iskra*-ists over the first paragraph of the Rules the struggle at the congress became still more acute. The congress was coming to the last item on the agenda—the elections of the leading institutions of the Party: the editorial board of the central organ of the Party (*Iskra*), and the Central Committee. However, before the elections were reached, certain incidents occurred which changed the alignment of forces.

In connection with the Party Rules, the congress had to deal with the question of the Bund. The Bund laid claim to a special position within the Party. It demanded to be recognized as the sole representative of the Jewish workers in Russia. To comply with this demand would have meant to divide the workers in the Party organizations according to nationality, and to renounce common territorial class organizations of the workers. The congress rejected the system of organization on national lines proposed by the Bund. Thereupon the Bundists quit the congress. Two "Economists" also left the congress when the latter refused to recognize their Foreign League as the representative of the Party abroad. The departure of these seven opportunists altered the balance of forces at the congress in favour of the Leninists.

From the very outset Lenin focussed his attention on the composition of the central institutions of the Party. He deemed it necessary that the Central Committee should be composed of staunch and consistent revolutionaries. The Martovites strove to secure the predominance of unstable, opportunist elements on the Central Committee. The majority of the congress supported Lenin on this question. The Central Committee that was elected consisted of Lenin's followers.

On Lenin's proposal, Lenin, Plekhanov and Martov were elected to the editorial board of *Iskra*. Martov had demanded the election of all the six former members of the *Iskra* editorial board, the majority of whom were Martov's followers. This demand was rejected by the majority of the congress. The three proposed by Lenin were elected. Martov thereupon announced that he would not join the editorial board of the central organ.

Thus, by its vote on the central institutions of the Party, the congress sealed the defeat of Martov's followers and the victory of Lenin's followers.

From that time on, Lenin's followers, who received the majority of votes in the elections at the congress, have been called Bolsheviks (from *bolshinstvo*, majority), and Lenin's opponents, who received the minority of votes, have been called Mensheviks (from *menshinstvo*, minority). Summing up the work of the Second Congress, the following conclusions may be drawn:

- 1) The congress sealed the victory of Marxism over "Economism," over open opportunism.
- 2) The congress adopted a Program and Rules, created the Social-Democratic Party, and thus built the framework of a single party.
- 3) The congress revealed the existence of grave differences over questions of organization which divided the Party into two sections, the

Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, of whom the former championed the organizational principles of revolutionary Social-Democracy, while the latter sank into the bog of organizational looseness and of opportunism.

4) The congress showed that the place of the old opportunists, the "Economists," who had already been defeated by the Party, was being taken by new opportunists, the Mensheviks.

5) The congress did not prove equal to its task in matters of organization, showed vacillation, and at times even gave the preponderance to the Mensheviks; and although it corrected its position towards the end, it was nevertheless unable to expose the opportunism of the Mensheviks on matters of organization and to isolate them in the Party, or even to put such a task before the Party.

This latter circumstance proved one of the main reasons why the struggle between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, far from subsiding after the congress, became even more acute.

4. SPLITTING ACTIVITIES OF THE MENSHEVIK LEADERS AND SHARPENING OF THE STRUGGLE WITHIN THE PARTY AFTER THE SECOND CONGRESS. OPPORTUNISM OF THE MENSHEVIKS. LENIN'S BOOK "ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK." ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF THE MARXIST PARTY

After the Second Congress the struggle within the Party became even more acute. The Mensheviks did their utmost to frustrate the decisions of the Second Congress and to seize the central institutions of the Party. They demanded that their representatives be included in the editorial board of *Iskra* and in the Central Committee in such numbers as would give them a majority on the editorial board and parity with the Bolsheviks on the Central Committee. As this ran directly counter to the decisions of the Second Congress, the Bolsheviks rejected the Menshevik's demand. Thereupon the Mensheviks, secretly from the Party, created their own anti-Party factional organization, headed by Martov, Trotsky and Axelrod, and, as Martov wrote, "broke into revolt against Leninism." The methods they adopted for combating the Party were, as Lenin expressed it, "to disorganize the whole Party work, damage the cause, and hamper all and everything." They entrenched themselves in the Foreign League of Russian Social-Democrats, nine-tenths of whom were émigré intellectuals isolated from the work in Russia, and from this position they opened fire on the Party, on Lenin and the Leninists.

The Mensheviks received considerable help from Plekhanov. At the Second Congress Plekhanov sided with Lenin. But after the Second Congress he allowed the Mensheviks to intimidate him with threats of a split. He decided to "make peace" with the Mensheviks at all costs. It was the deadweight of his earlier opportunist mistakes that dragged Plekhanov down to the Mensheviks. From an advocate of reconciliation with the opportunist Mensheviks he soon became a Menshevik himself. Plekhanov demanded that all the former Menshevik editors of the *Iskra* who had been rejected by the congress be included in the editorial board. Lenin, of course, could not agree to this and resigned from the *Iskra* editorial board in order to entrench himself in the Central Committee of the Party and to strike at the opportunists from this position. Acting by himself, and in defiance of the will of the congress, Plekhanov co-opted the former Menshevik editors to the editorial board of *Iskra*. From that moment on, beginning with the 52nd issue of *Iskra*, the Mensheviks converted it into their own organ and began to propagate their opportunist views in its columns.

Ever since then Lenin's Bolshevik *Iskra* has been known in the Party as the *old Iskra*, and the Menshevik, opportunist *Iskra* as the *new Iskra*.

When it passed into the hands of the Mensheviks, *Iskra* became a weapon in the fight against Lenin and the Bolsheviks, and an organ for the propaganda of Menshevik opportunism, primarily on questions of organization. Joining forces with the "Economists" and the Bundists, the Mensheviks started a campaign in the columns of *Iskra*, as they said, against Leninism. Plekhanov could not stick to his position as an advocate of conciliation, and soon he too joined the campaign. This was bound to happen by the very logic of things: whoever insists on a conciliatory attitude towards opportunists is bound to sink to opportunism himself. There began to flow from the columns of the new *Iskra*, as from a cornucopia, articles and statements claiming that the Party ought not to be an organized whole; that free groups and individuals should be allowed within its ranks without any obligation to submit to the decisions of its organs; that every intellectual who sympathized with the Party, as well as "every striker" and "every participant in a demonstration," should be allowed to declare himself a Party member; that the demand for obedience to all the decisions of the Party was "formal and bureaucratic"; that the demand that the minority must submit to the majority meant the "mechanical suppression" of the will of Party members; that the demand that all Party members—both leaders and rank-and-filers—should equally observe Party discipline meant establishing "serfdom" within the Party; that what "we" needed in the Party was not central-

ism but anarchist "autonomism" which would permit individuals and Party organizations not to obey the decisions of the Party.

This was unbridled propaganda of organizational license, which would undermine the Party principle and Party discipline; it was glorification of the individualism of the intelligentsia, and a justification of the anarchist contempt of discipline.

The Mensheviks were obviously trying to drag the Party back from the Second Congress to the old organizational disunity, to the old parochial outlook of the circles and the old amateurish methods.

A vigorous rebuff had to be given the Mensheviks.

This rebuff was administered by Lenin in his celebrated book, *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*, published in May 1904.

The following are the main organizational principles which Lenin expounded in his book, and which afterwards came to form the organizational foundations of the Bolshevik Party.

1) The Marxist Party is a part, a detachment, of the working class. But the working class has many detachments, and hence not every detachment of the working class can be called a party of the working class. The Party differs from other detachments of the working class primarily by the fact that it is not an ordinary detachment, but the *vanguard* detachment, a *class-conscious* detachment, a *Marxist* detachment of the working class, armed with a knowledge of the life of society, of the laws of its development and of the laws of the class struggle, and for this reason able to lead the working class and to direct its struggle. The Party must therefore not be confused with the working class, as the party must not be confused with the whole. One cannot demand that every striker be allowed to call himself a member of the Party, for whoever confuses Party and class lowers the level of consciousness of the Party to that of "every striker," destroys the Party as the class-conscious vanguard of the working class. It is not the task of the Party to *lower* its level to that of "every striker," but to *elevate* the masses of the workers, to *elevate* "every striker" to the level of the Party.

"We are the party of a class," Lenin wrote, "and therefore *almost the entire class* (and in times of war, in the period of civil war, the entire class) should act under the leadership of our Party, should adhere to our Party as closely as possible. But it would be Manilovism (smug complacency) and '*khvoostism*' (following in the tail) to think that at any time under capitalism the entire class, or almost the entire class, would be able to rise to the level of consciousness and activity of its vanguard, of its Social-Democratic Party. No sensible Social-Democrat has ever yet doubted that under capitalism even the

trade union organizations (which are more primitive and more comprehensible to the undeveloped strata) are unable to embrace the entire, or almost the entire working class. To forget the distinction between the vanguard and the whole of the masses which gravitate towards it, to forget the constant duty of the vanguard to *raise* ever wider strata to this most advanced level, means merely to deceive oneself, to shut one's eyes to the immensity of our tasks, and to narrow down these tasks." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russ. ed., Vol. VI, pp. 205-06.)

2) The Party is not only the vanguard, the class-conscious detachment of the working class, but also an *organized* detachment of the working class, with its own discipline, which is binding on its members. Hence Party members must necessarily be members of some organization of the Party. If the Party were not an *organized* detachment of the class, not a *system of organization*, but a mere agglomeration of persons who declare themselves to be Party members but do not belong to any Party organization and therefore are *not organized*, hence not obliged to obey Party decisions, the Party would never have a united will, it could never achieve the united action of its members, and, consequently, it would be unable to direct the struggle of the working class. The Party can lead the practical struggle of the working class and direct it towards one aim only if all its members are *organized* in one common detachment, welded together by unity of will, unity of action and unity of discipline.

The objection raised by the Mensheviks that in that case many intellectuals—for example, professors, university and high school students, etc.—would remain outside the ranks of the Party, since they would not want to join any of the organizations of the Party, either because they shrink from Party discipline, or, as Plekhanov said at the Second Congress, because they consider it "beneath their dignity to join some local organization"—this Menshevik objection recoiled on the heads of the Mensheviks themselves; for the Party does not need members who shrink from Party discipline and fear to join the Party organization. Workers did not fear discipline and organization, and they willingly join the organization if they have made up their minds to be Party members. It is the individualistic intellectuals who fear discipline and organization, and they would indeed remain outside the ranks of the Party. But that was all to the good, for the Party would be spared that influx of unstable elements, which had become particularly marked at that time, when the bourgeois-democratic revolution was on the upgrade.

"When I say," Lenin wrote, "that the Party should be a *sum* (and not a mere arithmetical sum, but a complex) of *organizations*

... I thereby express clearly and precisely my wish, my demand, that the Party, as the vanguard of the class, should be as *organized* as possible, that the Party should admit to its ranks only such elements as *lend themselves to at least a minimum of organization*. . . .” (*Ibid.*, p. 203.)

And further:

“Martov’s formulation *ostensibly* defends the interests of the broad strata of the proletariat, but *in fact*, it serves the interests of the *bourgeois intellectuals*, who fight shy of proletarian discipline and organization. No one will undertake to deny that it is *precisely its individualism* and incapacity for discipline and organization that in general distinguish the *intelligentsia* as a *separate stratum* of modern capitalist society.” (*Ibid.*, p. 212.)

And again:

“The proletariat is not afraid of organization and discipline. . . . The proletariat will do nothing to have the worthy professors and high school students, who do not want to join an organization, recognized as Party members merely because they work under the control of an organization. . . . It is not the proletariat, but *certain intellectuals* in our Party who lack *self-training* in the spirit of organization and discipline.” (*Ibid.*, p. 307.)

3) The Party is not merely an organized detachment, but “*the highest of all forms of organization*” of the working class, and it is its mission to *guide* all the other organizations of the working class. As the highest form of organization, consisting of the finest members of the class, armed with an advanced theory, with knowledge of the laws of the class struggle and with the experience of the revolutionary movement, the Party has every opportunity of guiding—and is obliged to guide—all the other organizations of the working class. The attempt of the Mensheviks to belittle and depreciate the leading role of the Party tends to weaken all the other organizations of the proletariat which are guided by the Party, and, consequently, to weaken and disarm the proletariat, for “in its struggle for power the proletariat has no other weapon but organization.” (Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, p. 466.)

4) The Party is an *embodiment of the connection* of the vanguard of the working class with the *working class millions*. However fine a vanguard the Party may be, and however well it may be organized, it cannot exist and develop without connections with the non-Party masses, and without multiplying and strengthening these connections. A party

which shuts itself up in its own shell, isolates itself from the masses, and loses, or even relaxes, its connections with its class is bound to lose the confidence and support of the masses, and, consequently, is surely bound to perish. In order to live to the full and to develop, the Party must multiply its connections with the masses and win the confidence of the millions of its class.

“In order to be a Social-Democratic party,” Lenin said, “we must win the *support* precisely of the *class*.” (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russ. ed., Vol. VI, p. 208.)

5) In order to function properly and to guide the masses systematically, the Party must be organized on the principle of *centralism*, having one set of rules and uniform Party discipline, one leading organ—the Party Congress, and in the intervals between congresses—the Central Committee of the Party; the minority must submit to the majority, the various organizations must submit to the centre, and lower organizations to higher organizations. Failing these conditions, the party of the working class cannot be a real party and cannot carry out its tasks in guiding the class.

Of course, as under the tsarist autocracy the Party existed illegally, the Party organizations could not in those days be built up on the principle of election from below, and as a consequence, the Party had to be strictly conspiratorial. But Lenin considered that this *temporary* feature in the life of our Party would at once lapse with the elimination of tsardom, when the Party would become open and legal, and the Party organizations would be built up on the principles of democratic elections, of *democratic centralism*.

“Formerly,” Lenin wrote, “our Party was not a formally organized whole, but only the sum of separate groups, and, therefore, no other relations except those of ideological influence were possible between these groups. *Now* we have become an organized Party, and this implies the establishment of authority, the transformation of the power of ideas into the power of authority, the subordination of lower Party bodies to higher Party bodies.” (*Ibid.*, p. 291.)

Accusing the Mensheviks of organizational nihilism and of aristocratic anarchism which would not submit to the authority of the Party and its discipline, Lenin wrote:

“This aristocratic anarchism is particularly characteristic of the Russian nihilist. He thinks of the Party organization as a monstrous ‘factory’; he regards the subordination of the part to the whole and of the minority to the majority as ‘serfdom’ . . . division of labour

under the direction of a centre evokes from him a tragi-comical outcry against people being transformed into 'wheels and cogs' (to turn editors into contributors being considered a particularly atrocious species of such transformation); mention of the organizational rules of the Party calls forth a contemptuous grimace and the disdainful remark (intended for the 'formalists') that one could very well dispense with rules altogether." (Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, pp. 442-43.)

6) In its practical work, if it wants to preserve the *unity* of its ranks, the Party must impose a *common* proletarian discipline, *equally* binding on all Party members, both leaders and rank-and-file. Therefore there should be no division within the Party into the "chosen few," on whom discipline is not binding, and the "many," on whom discipline is binding. If this condition is not observed, the integrity of the Party and the unity of its ranks cannot be maintained.

"The complete absence of *sensible* arguments on the part of Martov and Co. against the editorial board appointed by the congress," Lenin wrote, "is best of all shown by their own catchword: 'We are not serfs!' . . . The mentality of the bourgeois intellectual, who regards himself as one of the 'chosen few' standing above mass organization and mass discipline, is expressed here with remarkable clarity. . . . It seems to the individualism of the intelligentsia . . . that *all* proletarian organization and discipline is *serfdom*." (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russ. ed., Vol. VI, p. 282.)

And further:

"As we proceed with the building of a *real* party, the class-conscious worker must learn to distinguish the mentality of the soldier of the proletarian army from the mentality of the bourgeois intellectual who makes a display of anarchist phraseology, he must learn to *demand* that the duties of a Party member be fulfilled not only by the rank-and-filers, but by the 'people at the top' as well." (Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. II, pp. 445-46.)

Summing up his analysis of the differences, and defining the position of the Mensheviks as "opportunism in matters of organization," Lenin considered that one of the gravest sins of Menshevism lay in its underestimation of the importance of party *organization* as a weapon of the proletariat in the struggle for its emancipation. The Mensheviks held that the party *organization* of the proletariat was of no great importance for the victory of the revolution. Contrary to the Mensheviks, Lenin

held that the *ideological* unity of the proletariat alone was *not enough* for victory; if victory was to be won, ideological unity would have to be "*consolidated*" by the "material unity of *organization*" of the proletariat. Only on this condition, Lenin considered, could the proletariat become an invincible force.

"In its struggle for power," Lenin wrote, "the proletariat has no other weapon but organization. Disunited by the rule of anarchic competition in the bourgeois world, ground down by forced labour for capital, constantly thrust back to the 'lower depths' of utter destitution, savagery and degeneration, the proletariat can become, and inevitably will become, an invincible force only when its ideological unification by the principles of Marxism is consolidated by the material unity of an organization which will weld millions of toilers into an army of the working class. Neither the decrepit rule of Russian tsardom, nor the senile rule of international capital will be able to withstand this army." (*Ibid.*, p. 466.)

With these prophetic words Lenin concludes his book.

Such were the fundamental organizational principles set forth by Lenin in his famous book, *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*.

The importance of this book lies primarily in the fact that it successfully upheld the Party principle against the circle principle, and the Party against the disorganizers; that it smashed the opportunism of the Mensheviks on questions of organization, and laid the organizational foundations of the Bolshevik Party.

But this does not exhaust its significance. Its historic significance lies in the fact that in it Lenin, for the first time in the history of Marxism, elaborated the *doctrine of the Party* as the leading *organization* of the proletariat, as the principal *weapon* of the proletariat, without which the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be won.

The circulation of Lenin's book, *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back*, among the Party workers led the majority of the local organizations to rally to the side of Lenin.

But the more closely the organizations rallied around the Bolsheviks, the more malicious became the behaviour of the Menshevik leaders.

In the summer of 1904, thanks to Plekhanov's assistance and the treachery of Krassin and Noskov, two demoralized Bolsheviks, the Mensheviks captured the majority on the Central Committee. It was obvious that the Mensheviks were working for a split. The loss of *Iskra* and of the Central Committee put the Bolsheviks in a difficult position. It became necessary for them to organize their own Bolshevik newspaper.

It became necessary to make arrangements for a new Party congress, the Third Congress, so as to set up a new Central Committee and to settle accounts with the Mensheviks.

And this is what the Bolsheviks, headed by Lenin, set to work to do. The Bolsheviks started a campaign for the summoning of the Third Party Congress. In August 1904, under Lenin's guidance, a conference of twenty-two Bolsheviks was held in Switzerland. The conference adopted an appeal addressed "To the Party." This appeal served the Bolsheviks as a program in their struggle for the summoning of the Third Congress.

At three regional conferences of Bolshevik Committees (Southern, Caucasian and Northern), a Bureau of Committees of the Majority was elected, which undertook the practical preparations for the Third Party Congress.

On January 4, 1905, the first issue of the Bolshevik newspaper *Vperyod* (*Forward*) appeared.

Thus two separate groups arose within the Party, the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, each with its own central body and its own press.

BRIEF SUMMARY

In the period 1901-04, with the growth of the revolutionary working-class movement, the Marxist Social-Democratic organizations in Russia grew and gained strength. In the stubborn struggle over principles, waged against the "Economists," the revolutionary line of Lenin's *Iskra* gained the victory, and the ideological confusion and "amateurish methods of work" were overcome.

Iskra linked up the scattered Social-Democratic circles and groups and prepared the way for the convocation of the Second Party Congress. At the Second Congress, held in 1903, the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party was formed, a Party Program and Rules were adopted, and the central leading organs of the Party were set up.

In the struggle waged at the Second Congress for the complete victory of the *Iskra* trend in the R.S.D.L.P. there emerged two groups—the Bolshevik group and the Menshevik group.

The chief differences between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks after the Second Congress centred round questions of organization.

The Mensheviks drew closer to the "Economists" and took their place within the Party. For the time being the opportunism of the Mensheviks revealed itself in questions of organization. The Mensheviks

were opposed to a militant revolutionary party of the type advocated by Lenin. They wanted a loose, unorganized, *khvosist* party. They worked to split the ranks of the Party. With Plekhanov's help, they seized *Iskra* and the Central Committee, and used these central organs for their own purposes—to split the Party.

Seeing that the Mensheviks were threatening a split, the Bolsheviks adopted measures to curb the splitters; they mustered the local organizations to back the convocation of a Third Congress; and they started their own newspaper, *Vperyod*.

Thus, on the eve of the first Russian revolution, when the Russo-Japanese war had already begun, the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks acted as two separate political groups.