Ten Days That Shook the World

John Reed

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Preface

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

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

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

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

These and many other questions cannot be answered here. In another volume, "Kornilov to Brest−Litovsk," I trace the course of the Revolution up to and including the German peace. There I explain the origin and functions of the Revolutionary organisations, the evolution of popular sentiment, the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, the structure of the Soviet state, and the course and outcome of the Brest− Litovsk negotiations'.

In considering the rise of the Bolsheviki it is necessary to understand that Russian economic life and the Russian army were not disorganised on November 7th, 1917, but many months before, as the logical result of a process which began as far back as 1915. The corrupt reactionaries in control of the Tsar's Court deliberately undertook to wreck Russia in order to make a separate peace with Germany. The lack of arms on the front, which had caused the great retreat of the summer of 1915, the lack of food in the army and in the great cities, the break−down of manufactures and transportation in 1916−−all these we know now were part of a gigantic campaign of sabotage. This was halted just in time by the March Revolution.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

And so developed in Russia, in the midst of a foreign war, the Social Revolution on top of the Political Revolution, culminating in the triumph of Bolshevism.

Mr. A. J. Sack, director in this country of the Russian Information Bureau, which opposes the Soviet Government, has this to say in his book, "The Birth of the Russian Democracy": The Bolsheviks organised their own cabinet, with Nicholas Lenine as Premier and Leon Trotsky−− Minister of Foreign Affairs. The inevitability of their coming into power became evident almost immediately after the March Revolution. The history of the Bolsheviki, after the Revolution, is a history of their steady growth'.

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

William English Walling thus characterises them:

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

Many writers explain their hostility to the Soviet Government by arguing that the last phase of the Russian Revolution was simply a struggle of the "respectable" elements against the brutal attacks of Bolshevism. However, it was the propertied classes, who, when they realised the growth in power of the popular revolutionary organisations, undertook to destroy them and to halt the Revolution. To this end the propertied classes finally resorted to desperate measures. In order to wreck the Kerensky Ministry and the Soviets, transportation was disorganised and internal troubles provoked; to crush the Factory− Shop Committees, plants were shut down, and fuel and raw materials diverted; to break the Army Committees at the front, capital punishment was restored and military defeat connived at.

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

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

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

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

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

And at the end, when the Bolsheviki upset the whole hollow compromise, the Mensheviki and Socialist Revolutionaries found themselves fighting on the side of the propertied classes'. In almost every country in the world to−day the same phenomenon is visible.

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

It is still fashionable, after a whole year of the Soviet Government, to speak of the Bolshevik insurrection as an "adventure." Adventure it was, and one of the most marvellous mankind ever embarked upon, sweeping

into history at the head of the toiling masses, and staking everything on their vast and simple desires. Already the machinery had been set up by which the land of the great estates could be distributed among the peasants. The Factory−Shop Committees and the Trade Unions were there to put into operation workers' control of industry. In every village, town, city, district and province there were Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies, prepared to assume the task of local administration.

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

In the struggle my sympathies were not neutral. But in telling the story of those great days I have tried to see events with the eye of a conscientious reporter, interested in setting down the truth. J. R. New York, January 1st 1919.

Notes and Explanations

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

Political Parties

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

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

2. Cadets. So−called from the initials of its name, Constitutional Democrats. Its official name is "Party of the People's Freedom." Under the Tsar composed of Liberals from the propertied classes, the Cadets were the great party of political reform, roughly corresponding to the Progressive Party in America. When the Revolution broke out in March, 1917, the Cadets formed the first Provisional Government. The Cadet Ministry was overthrown in April because it declared itself in favour of Allied imperialistic aims, including the imperialistic aims of the Tsar's Government. As the Revolution became more and more a social economic Revolution, the Cadets grew more and more conservative. Its representatives in this book are: Miliukov, Vinaver, Shatsky.

2a. Group of Public Men. After the Cadets had become unpopular through their relations with the Kornilov counter−revolution, the Group of Public Men was formed in Moscow. Delegates from the Group of Public Men were given portfolios in the last Kerensky Cabinet. The Group declared itself non−partisan, although its intellectual leaders were men like Rodzianko and Shulgin. It was composed of the more "modern" bankers, merchants and manufacturers, who were intelligent enough to realise that the Soviets must be fought by their own weapon−economic organisation. Typical of the Group: Lianozov, Konovalov.

3. Populist Socialists, or Trudoviki (Labour Group). Numerically a small party, composed of cautious intellectuals, the leaders of the Cooperative societies, and conservative peasants. Professing to be Socialists,

the Populists really supported the interests of the petty bourgeoisie−clerks, shopkeepers, etc. By direct descent, inheritors of the compromising tradition of the Labour Group in the Fourth Imperial Duma, which was composed largely of peasant representatives. Kerensky was the leader of the Trudoviki in the Imperial Duma when the Revolution of March, 1917, broke out. The Populist Socialists are a nationalistic party. Their representatives in this book are: Peshekhanov, Tchaikovsky.

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

a. Mensheviki. This party includes all shades of Socialists who believe that society must progress by natural evolution toward Socialism, and that the working−class must conquer political power first. Also a nationalistic party. This was the party of the Socialist intellectuals, which means: all the means of education having been in the hands of the propertied classes, the intellectuals instinctively reacted to their training, and took the side of the propertied classes. Among their representatives in this book are: Dan, Lieber, Tseretelli.

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

c. Bolsheviki. Now call themselves the Communist Party, in order to emphasise their complete separation from the tradition of "moderate" or "parliamentary" Socialism, which dominates the Mensheviki and the so−called Majority Socialists in all countries. The Bolsheviki proposed immediate proletarian insurrection, and seizure of the reins of Government, in order to hasten the coming of Socialism by forcibly taking over industry, land, natural resources and financial institutions. This party expresses the desires chiefly of the factory workers, but also of a large section of the poor peasants. The name "Bolshevik" can not be translated by "Maximalist." The Maximalists are a separate group. (See paragraph 5b). Among the leaders: Lenin, Trotzky, Lunatcharsky.

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

e. Yedinstvo. A very small and dwindling group, composed almost entirely of the personal following of Plekhanov, one of the pioneers of the Russian Social Democratic movement in the 80's, and its greatest theoretician. Now an old man, Plekhanov was extremely patriotic, too conservative even for the Mensheviki. After the Bolshevik coup d'etat, Yedinstvo disappeared.

5. Socialist Revolutionary party. Called Essaires from the initials of their name. Originally the revolutionary party of the peasants, the party of the Fighting Organisations−the Terrorists. After the March Revolution, it was joined by many who had never been Socialists. At that time it stood for the abolition of private property in land only, the owners to be compensated in some fashion. Finally the increasing revolutionary feeling of peasants forced the Essaires to abandon the "compensation" clause, and led to the younger and more fiery intellectuals breaking off from the main party in the fall of 1917 and forming a new party, the Left Socialist

Revolutionary party. The Essaires, who were afterward always called by the radical groups "Right Socialist Revolutionaries," adopted the political attitude of the Mensheviki, and worked together with them. They finally came to represent the wealthier peasants, the intellectuals, and the politically uneducated populations of remote rural districts. Among them there was, however, a wider difference of shades of political and economic opinion than among the Mensheviki. Among their leaders mentioned in these pages: Avksentiev, Gotz, Kerensky, Tchernov, "Babuschka" Breshkovskaya.

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

b. Maximalists. An off−shoot of the Socialist Revolutionary party in the Revolution of 1905, when it was a powerful peasant movement, demanding the immediate application of the maximum Socialist programme. Now an insignificant group of peasant anarchists.

Parliamentary Procedure

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

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

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

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

Popular Organisations

1. Soviet. The word soviet means "council." Under the Tsar the Imperial Council of State was called Gosudarstvennyi Soviet. Since the Revolution, however, the term Soviet has come to be associated with a certain type of parliament elected by members of working−class economic organisations−the Soviet of Workers', of Soldiers', or of Peasants' Deputies. I have therefore limited the word to these bodies, and wherever else it occurs I have translated it "Council."

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

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

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

3. Factory−Shop Committees. These were spontaneous organisations created in the factories by the workers in their attempt to control industry, taking advantage of the administrative break−down incident upon the Revolution. Their function was by revolutionary action to take over and run the factories. The Factory−Shop Committees also had their All−Russian organisation, with a Central Committee at Petrograd, which co−operated with the Trade Unions.

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

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

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

7. Army Committees. The Army Committees were formed by the soldiers at the front to combat the reactionary influence of the old regime officers. Every company, regiment, brigade, division and corps had its committee, over all of which was elected the Army Committee. The Central Army Committee cooperated with the General Staff. The administrative break−down in the army incident upon the Revolution threw upon

the shoulders of the Army Committees most of the work of the Quartermaster's Department, and in some cases, even the command of troops.

8. Fleet Committees. The corresponding organisations in the Navy.

Central Committees

In the spring and summer of 1917, All−Russian conventions of every sort of organisation were held at Petrograd. There were national congresses of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Soviets, Trade Unions, Factory−Shop Committees, Army and Fleet Committees−besides every branch of the military and naval service, Cooperatives, Nationalities, etc. Each of these conventions elected a Central Committee, or a Central Executive Committee, to guard its particular interests at the seat of Government. As the Provisional Government grew weaker, these Central Committees were forced to assume more and more administrative powers.

The most important Central Committees mentioned in this book are:

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

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

Tsentroflot. "Centre−Fleet"−the Central Fleet Committee.

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

Other Organisations

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

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

Tekhintsi. The so−called "Savage Division" in the army, made up of Mohametan tribesmen from Central Asia, and personally devoted to General Kornilov. The Tekhintsi were noted for their blind obedience and their savage cruelty in warfare.

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

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

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

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

Chronology and Spelling

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

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

Sources

Much of the material in this book is from my own notes. I have also relied, however, upon a heterogeneous file of several hundred assorted Russian newspapers, covering almost every day of the time described, of files of the English paper, the Russian Daily News, and of the two French papers, Journal de Russie and Entente. But far more valuable than these is the Bulletin de la Presse issued daily by the French Information Bureau in Petrograd, which reports all important happenings, speeches and the comment of the Russian press. Of this I have an almost complete file from the spring of 1917 to the end of January, 1918.

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

Ten Days That Shook The World

Chapter I. Background

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

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

There was a feeling among business men and the intelligentzia generally that the Revolution had gone quite far enough, and lasted too long; that things should settle down. This sentiment was shared by the dominant

"moderate" Socialist groups, the oborontsi (See App. I, Sect. 1) Mensheviki and Socialist Revolutionaries, who supported the Provisional Government of Kerensky.

On October 14th the official organ of the "moderate" Socialists said:

The drama of Revolution has two acts; the destruction of the old régime and the creation of the new one. The first act has lasted long enough. Now it is time to go on to the second, and to play it as rapidly as possible. As a great revolutionist put it, "Let us hasten, friends, to terminate the Revolution. He who makes it last too long will not gather the fruits...."

Among the worker, soldier and peasant masses, however, there was a stubborn feeling that the "first act" was not yet played out. On the front the Army Committees were always running foul of officers who could not get used to treating their men like human beings; in the rear the Land Committees elected by the peasants were being jailed for trying to carry out Government regulations concerning the land; and the workmen (See App. I, Sect. 2) in the factories were fighting black−lists and lockouts. Nay, furthermore, returning political exiles were being excluded from the country as "undesirable" citizens; and in some cases, men who returned from abroad to their villages were prosecuted and imprisoned for revolutionary acts committed in 1905.

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

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

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

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

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

Here is a list of their services.(See App. I, Sect. 3)

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

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

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

Tchernov: signed the "Imperial" manifest, ordering the dissolution of the Finnish Diet.

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

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

Nikitin: acted as a vulgar policeman against the Railway Workers.

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

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

We demand the immediate removal from the ranks of the Provisional Government of the "Socialist," the political adventurer−Kerensky, as one who is scandalising and ruining the great Revolution, and with it the revolutionary masses, by his shameless political blackmail on behalf of the bourgeoisie....

The direct result of all this was the rise of the Bolsheviki....

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

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

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

But more potent still, they took the crude, simple desires of the workers, soldiers and peasants, and from them built their immediate programme. And so, while the oborontsi Mensheviki and Socialist Revolutionaries involved themselves in compromise with the bourgeoisie, the Bolsheviki rapidly captured the Russian masses. In July they were hunted and despised; by September the metropolitan workmen, the sailors of the Baltic Fleet, and the soldiers, had been won almost entirely to their cause. The September municipal elections in the large cities (See App. I, Sect. 4) were significant; only 18 per cent of the returns were Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary, against more than 70 per cent in June....

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

At the same time there were signs everywhere that the forces of reaction were gaining confidence.(See App. I, Sect. 5) At the Troitsky Farce theatre in Petrograd, for example, a burlesque called Sins of the Tsar was interrupted by a group of Monarchists, who threatened to lynch the actors for "insulting the Emperor." Certain newspapers began to sigh for a "Russian Napoleon." It was the usual thing among bourgeois intelligentzia to refer to the Soviets of Workers' Deputies (Rabotchikh Deputatov) as Sabatchikh Deputatov−Dogs' Deputies.

On October 15th I had a conversation with a great Russian capitalist, Stepan Georgevitch Lianozov, known as the "Russian Rockefeller"−a Cadet by political faith.

"Revolution," he said, "is a sickness. Sooner or later the foreign powers must intervene here−as one would intervene to cure a sick child, and teach it how to walk. Of course it would be more or less improper, but the nations must realise the danger of Bolshevism in their own countries−such contagious ideas as 'proletarian dictatorship,' and 'world social revolution'... There is a chance that this intervention may not be necessary. Transportation is demoralised, the factories are closing down, and the Germans are advancing. Starvation and defeat may bring the Russian people to their senses...."

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

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

Winter was coming on−the terrible Russian winter. I heard business men speak of it so: "Winter was always Russia's best friend. Perhaps now it will rid us of Revolution." On the freezing front miserable armies continued to starve and die, without enthusiasm. The railways were breaking down, food lessening, factories closing. The desperate masses cried out that the bourgeoisie was sabotaging the life of the people, causing defeat on the Front. Riga had been surrendered just after General Kornilov said publicly, "Must we pay with Riga the price of bringing the country to a sense of its duty?" [*] [* See "Kornilov to Brest−Litvosk" by John Reed. Boni and Liveright N.Y., 1919]

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

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

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

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

Beneath all this external rottenness moved the old−time Dark Forces, unchanged since the fall of Nicholas the Second, secret still and very active. The agents of the notorious Okhrana still functioned, for and against the Tsar, for and against Kerensky−whoever would pay.... In the darkness, underground organisations of all sorts, such as the Black Hundreds, were busy attempting to restore reaction in some form or other.

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

all over the world!"

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

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

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

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

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

September and October are the worst months of the Russian year−especially the Petrograd year. Under dull grey skies, in the shortening days, the rain fell drenching, incessant. The mud underfoot was deep, slippery and clinging, tracked everywhere by heavy boots, and worse than usual because of the complete break−down of the Municipal administration. Bitter damp winds rushed in from the Gulf of Finland, and the chill fog rolled through the streets. At night, for motives of economy as well as fear of Zeppelins, the street−lights were few and far between; in private dwellings and apartment−houses the electricity was turned on from six o'clock until midnight, with candles forty cents apiece and little kerosene to be had. It was dark from three in the afternoon to ten in the morning. Robberies and housebreakings increased. In apartment houses the men took turns at all−night guard duty, armed with loaded rifles. This was under the Provisional Government.

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

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

Of course all the theatres were going every night, including Sundays. Karsavina appeared in a new Ballet at the Marinsky, all dance−loving Russia coming to see her. Shaliapin was singing. At the Alexandrinsky they were reviving Meyerhold's production of Tolstoy's "Death of Ivan the Terrible"; and at that performance I remember noticing a student of the Imperial School of Pages, in his dress uniform, who stood up correctly between the acts and faced the empty Imperial box, with its eagles all erased.... The Krivoye Zerkalo staged a sumptuous version of Schnitzler's "Reigen."

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

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

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

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

Then the Talk, beside which Carlyle's "flood of French speech" was a mere trickle. Lectures, debates, speeches−in theatres, circuses, school−houses, clubs, Soviet meeting−rooms, Union headquarters, barracks.... Meetings in the trenches at the Front, in village squares, factories.... What a marvellous sight to see Putilovsky Zavod (the Putilov factory) pour out its forty thousand to listen to Social Democrats, Socialist Revolutionaries, Anarchists, anybody, whatever they had to say, as long as they would talk! For months in

Petrograd, and all over Russia, every street−corner was a public tribune. In railway trains, street−cars, always the spurting up of impromptu debate, everywhere....

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

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

What though the outward and visible signs of change were many, what though the statue of Catharine the Great before the Alexandrinsky Theatre bore a little red flag in its hand, and others−somewhat faded−floated from all public buildings; and the Imperial monograms and eagles were either torn down or covered up; and in place of the fierce gorodovoye (city police) a mild−mannered and unarmed citizen militia patrolled the streets−still, there were many quaint anachronisms.

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

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

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

Chapter II. The Coming Storm

IN September General Kornilov marched on Petrograd to make himself military dictator of Russia. Behind him was suddenly revealed the mailed fist of the bourgeoisie, boldly attempting to crush the Revolution. Some of the Socialist Ministers were implicated; even Kerensky was under suspicion. (See App. II, Sect. 1) Savinkov, summoned to explain to the Central Committee of his party, the Socialist Revolutionaries, refused and was expelled. Kornilov was arrested by the Soldiers' Committees. Generals were dismissed, Ministers suspended from their functions, and the Cabinet fell.

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

The Kornilov affair drew together all the Socialist groups−"moderates" as well as revolutionists−in a passionate impulse of self−defence. There must be no more Kornilovs. A new Government must be created, responsible to the elements supporting the Revolution. So the Tsay−ee−kah invited the popular organisations