

What we have been waiting for so impatiently has come to pass — the Unity Congress has ended peacefully, the Party has avoided a split, the amalgamation of the groups has been officially sealed, and the foundation of the political might of the Party has thereby been laid.

We must now take account of, and study more closely, the complexion of the congress and soberly weigh up its good and bad sides.

What has the congress done?

What should the congress have done?

The first question is answered by the resolutions of the congress. To be able to answer the second question one must know the situation in which the congress was opened, and the tasks with which the present situation confronted it.

Let us start with the second question. It is now clear that the people's revolution has not perished, that in spite of the "December defeat" it is growing and swiftly rising to its peak. We say that this is as it should be: the driving forces of the revolution still live and operate, the industrial crisis which has broken out is becoming increasingly acute, and famine, which is utterly ruining the countryside, is growing worse every day — and this means that the hour is near when the revolutionary anger of the people will burst out in a menacing flood. The facts tell us that a new action is maturing in the social life of Russia — more determined and mighty than the December action. We are on the eve of an uprising.

On the other hand, the counter-revolution, which the people detest, is mustering its forces and is gradually gaining strength. It has already succeeded in organising a camarilla, it is rallying all the dark forces under its banner, it is taking the lead of the Black-Hundred "movement"; it is preparing to launch another attack upon the people's revolution; it is rallying around itself the bloodthirsty landlords and factory owners — consequently, it is preparing to crush the people's revolution.

And the more events develop, the more sharply is the country becoming divided into two hostile camps — the camp of the revolution and the camp of counter-revolution — the more threateningly do the two leaders of the two camps — the proletariat and the tsarist government — confront each other, and the clearer does it become that all the bridges between them have been burnt. One of two things: either the victory of the revolution and the sovereignty of the people, or the victory of the counter-revolution and the tsarist autocracy. Whoever tries to sit between two stools betrays the revolution. Those who are not for us are against us! That is exactly what has happened to the miserable Duma and its miserable Cadets: they have become stuck between these two stools. The Duma wants to reconcile the revolution with the counter-revolution, it wants the lion and the lamb to lie down together — and in that way to suppress the revolution "at one stroke." That is why the Duma is engaged to this day only in collecting

water with a sieve, that is why it has failed to rally any people around itself. Having no ground to stand on, it is dangling in the air.

The chief arena of the struggle is still the street. That is what the facts say. The facts say that it is in the present-day struggle, in street fighting, and not in that talking-shop the Duma, that the forces of the counter-revolution are daily becoming more feeble and disunited, whereas the forces of the revolution are growing and mobilising; that the revolutionary forces are being welded and organised under the leadership of the advanced workers and not of the bourgeoisie. And this means that the victory of the present revolution, and its consummation, is quite possible. But it is possible only if it continues to be led by the advanced workers, if the class-conscious proletariat worthily fulfils the task of leading the revolution.

Hence, the tasks with which the present situation confronted the congress, and what the congress should have done, are clear.

Engels said that the workers' party "is the conscious exponent of an unconscious process," i.e., that the party must consciously take the path along which life itself is proceeding unconsciously; that it must consciously express the ideas which unconsciously spring from tempestuous life.

The facts say that tsarism has failed to crush the people's revolution, that, on the contrary, it is growing day by day, rising higher, and marching towards another action. Consequently, it is the Party's task consciously to prepare for this action and to carry the people's revolution through to the end.

Clearly, the congress should have pointed to this task and should have made it incumbent upon the members of the Party honestly to carry it out.

The facts say that conciliation between the revolution and counter-revolution is impossible; that having taken the path of conciliation from the very outset the Duma can do nothing; that such a Duma can never become the political centre of the country, cannot rally the people around itself, and will be compelled to become an appendage of the reaction. Consequently, it is the Party's task to dispel the false hopes that have been reposed in the Duma, to combat political illusions among the people and to proclaim to the whole world that the chief arena of the revolution is the street and not the Duma; that the victory of the people must be achieved mainly in the street, by street fighting and not by the Duma, not by talking in the Duma.

Clearly, the Unity Congress should also have pointed to this task in its resolutions, in order thereby clearly to define the trend of the Party's activities.

The facts say that it is possible to achieve the victory of the revolution, to carry it to the end and to establish the sovereignty of the people, only if the class-conscious workers come out at the head of the revolution, if the revolution is led by Social-Democracy and not by the bourgeoisie. Hence it is the Party's task to dig the grave of the hegemony of the bourgeoisie, to rally the revolutionary elements of town and country around itself, to be at the head of their

revolutionary struggle, to lead their actions from now on, and thereby strengthen the ground for the hegemony of the proletariat.

Clearly, the Unity Congress should have drawn special attention to this third and main task in order thereby to indicate to the Party its enormous importance.

That is what the present situation demanded of the Unity Congress, and that is what the congress should have done.

Did the congress carry out these tasks?

II

To obtain an answer to the foregoing question it is necessary to study the complexion of the congress.

The congress dealt with numerous questions at its sittings; but the main question, around which all the other questions revolved, was the question of the present situation. The present situation in the democratic revolution and the class tasks of the proletariat — that is the question in which all our disagreements on tactics became entangled as in a knot.

In the towns the crisis is growing more acute, said the Bolsheviks; in the countryside the famine is growing more intense; the government is rotting to its foundation, the anger of the people is rising day by day. Consequently, far from subsiding, the revolution is growing day by day, and is preparing for another offensive. Hence, the task is to help on the growing revolution, to carry it to the end and crown it with the sovereignty of the people (see the resolution proposed by the Bolsheviks : "The Present Situation . . .").

The Mensheviks said almost the same thing.

But how is the present revolution to be carried to the end; what conditions are needed for this?

In the opinion of the Bolsheviks, the present revolution can be carried to the end and crowned with the sovereignty of the people only if the class-conscious workers are at the head of this revolution, only if the leadership of the revolution is concentrated in the hands of the socialist proletariat and not of the bourgeois democrats. The Bolsheviks said : "Only the proletariat is capable of carrying the democratic revolution to the end, provided however, that it . . . carries with it the masses of the peasantry and introduces political consciousness into their spontaneous struggle. . . ." If the proletariat fails to do this, it will be compelled to abandon the role of "leader of the people's revolution" and will find itself "at the tail of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie," which will never strive to carry the revolution to the end (see resolution "The Class Tasks of the Proletariat . . ."). Of course, our revolution is a bourgeois revolution, and in this respect it resembles the Great French Revolution, the fruits of which were reaped by the bourgeoisie. But it is also clear that there is a great difference between these two revolutions. At the time of the French revolution, large-scale machine production, such as we have in our country today, did not exist, and class antagonisms were not so sharp and distinct as they are in our country today; hence, the proletariat there was weak, whereas here it is stronger and more united. We must also take into account the fact that there the proletariat did not have its own party, whereas here it has its own party, with its own programme and tactics. It is not surprising that the French revolution was headed by the bourgeois democrats and that the workers dragged at the tail of these gentlemen; that "the workers did the fighting, while the bourgeoisie achieved power." On the other hand, it can be readily understood that the proletariat of Russia is not content with dragging at the tail of the liberals, that it comes out as the leader of the revolution and is rallying all the "oppressed and dispossessed" to its banner. This is where our revolution has the advantage over the Great French Revolution, and this is why we think that our revolution can be carried to the end and be crowned with the sovereignty of the people. All that is needed is that we should consciously further the hegemony of the proletariat, rally the militant people around it, and thereby make it possible for the present revolution to be carried to the end. But the revolution must be carried to the end in order that the fruits of this revolution shall not be reaped by the bourgeoisie alone, and in order that the working class, in addition to achieving political freedom, shall achieve the eight-hour day, and better conditions of labour, and shall fully carry out its minimum programme, thereby hewing a path to socialism. Hence, whoever champions the interests of the proletariat, whoever does not want the proletariat to become a hanger-on of the bourgeoisie, pulling the chestnuts out of the fire for it, whoever is fighting to convert the proletariat into an independent force and wants it to utilise the present revolution for its own purpose — must openly condemn the hegemony of the bourgeois democrats, must strengthen the

ground for the hegemony of the socialist proletariat in the present revolution. That is how the Bolsheviks argued.

The Mensheviks said something entirely different. Of course, the revolution is growing, they said, and it must be carried to the end, but the hegemony of the socialist proletariat is not at all needed for that—let the bourgeois democrats act as the leaders of the revolution Why? What is the point? the Bolsheviks asked. Because the present revolution is a bourgeois revolution, and therefore, the bourgeoisie should act as its leader — answered the Mensheviks. What is the function of the proletariat, then? It must follow in the wake of the bourgeois democrats, "prod them on," and thereby "push the bourgeois revolution forward." This was said by Martynov, the leader of the Mensheviks, whom they put up as their "reporter." The same idea was expressed, although not so distinctly, in the Mensheviks' resolution on "The Present Situation." But already in his *Two Dictatorships* Martynov had said that "the hegemony of the proletariat is a dangerous utopia," a fantasy; that the bourgeois revolution "must be led by the extreme democratic opposition" and not by the socialist proletariat; that the militant proletariat "must march behind bourgeois democracy" and prod it along the path to freedom (see Martynov's well-known pamphlet *Two Dictatorships*). He expressed this idea again at the Unity Congress. In his opinion, the Great French Revolution was the original, whereas our revolution is a faint copy of this original; and, as the revolution in France was first headed by the National Assembly and later by the National Convention in which the bourgeoisie predominated, so, in our country, the leader of the revolution which rallies the people around itself should be first the State Duma, and later some other representative body which will be more revolutionary than the Duma. Both in the Duma and in this future representative body the bourgeois democrats are to predominate — hence, we need the hegemony of bourgeois democracy and not of the socialist proletariat. All we need to do is to follow the bourgeoisie step by step and prod it further forward towards genuine freedom. It is characteristic that the Mensheviks greeted Martynov's speech with loud applause. It is also characteristic that in none of their resolutions do they refer to the necessity of the hegemony of the proletariat — the term "hegemony of the proletariat" has been completely expunged from their resolutions, as well as from the resolutions of the congress (see the resolutions of the congress).

Such was the stand the Mensheviks took at the congress.

As you see, here we have two mutually exclusive standpoints, and this is the source of all the other disagreements.

If the class-conscious proletariat is the leader of the present revolution and the bourgeois Cadets predominate in the present Duma, it is self-evident that the present Duma cannot become the "political centre of the country," it cannot unite the revolutionary people around itself and become the leader of the growing revolution, no matter what efforts it exerts. Further, if the class-conscious proletariat is the leader of the revolution and the revolution cannot be

led from the Duma— it is self-evident that the street and not the floor of the Duma must, at the present time, become the chief arena of our activities. Further, if the class-conscious proletariat is the leader of the revolution and the street is the chief arena of the struggle — it is self-evident that our task is to take an active part in organising the struggle in the street, to give concentrated attention to the task of arming, to augment the Red detachments and disseminate military knowledge among the advanced elements. Lastly, if the advanced proletariat is the leader of the revolution, and if it must take an active part in organising the uprising — then it is self-evident that we cannot wash our hands of and remain aloof from the provisional revolutionary government; that we must conquer political power in conjunction with the peasantry and take part in the provisional government 2 : the leader of the revolutionary street must also be the leader in the revolution's government.

Such was the stand taken by the Bolsheviki.

If, on the other hand, as the Mensheviki think, the bourgeois democrats will lead the revolution, and the Cadets in the Duma "approximate to this type of democrat," then it is self-evident that the present Duma can become the "political centre of the country," the present Duma can unite the revolutionary people around itself, become their leader and serve as the chief arena of the struggle. Further, if the Duma can become the chief arena of the struggle, there is no need to give concentrated attention to the task of arming and organising Red detachments; it is not our business to devote special attention to organising the struggle in the street, and still less is it our business to conquer political power in conjunction with the peasantry and to take part in the provisional government — let the bourgeois democrats worry about that for they will be the leaders of the revolution. Of course, it would not be bad to have arms and Red detachments, in fact they are actually necessary, but they are not so important as the Bolsheviki imagine.

Such was the stand taken by the Mensheviki.

The congress took the second path, i.e., it rejected the hegemony of the socialist proletariat and endorsed the stand taken by the Mensheviki.

The congress thereby clearly proved that it failed to understand the urgent requirements of the present situation.

This was the fundamental mistake the congress made, and from it necessarily followed all the other mistakes.

III

After the congress rejected the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat it became clear how it would settle the other questions: "the attitude to be taken towards the State Duma," "armed insurrection," etc.

Let us pass to these questions.

Let us begin with the question of the State Duma.

We shall not discuss the question as to which tactics were more correct—the boycott or participation in the elections. We shall note only the following: today, the Duma does nothing but talk; it lies stranded between the revolution and counter-revolution. This shows that the advocates of participation in the elections were mistaken when they called upon the people to go to the polls and thereby roused false hopes among them. But let us leave this aside. The point is that at the time the congress was in session the elections were already over (except in the Caucasus and in Siberia); we already had the returns and, consequently, the only point of discussion was the Duma itself, which was to meet within a few days. Clearly, the congress could not turn to the past; it had to devote its attention mainly to the question as to what the Duma was, and what our attitude towards it should be.

And so, what is the present Duma, and what should be our attitude towards it?

It was already known from the Manifesto of October 17 that the Duma would not have particularly great powers: it is an assembly of deputies who "have the right" to deliberate, but "have no right" to overstep the existing "fundamental laws." The Duma is supervised by the State Council, which "has the right" to veto any of its decisions. And on guard, armed to the teeth, stands the tsarist government, which "has the right" to disperse the Duma if it does not rest content with its deliberative role.

As regards the Duma's complexion, we knew before the congress what its composition would be; we knew that it would consist largely of Cadets. We do not wish to say that the Cadets by themselves would have constituted the majority in the Duma—we only say that out of approximately five hundred members of the Duma, one third would be Cadets while another third would consist of the intermediary groups and the Rights (the "Party of Democratic Reform,"³ the moderate elements among the non-party deputies, the Octobrists,⁴ etc.) who, when it came to clashes with the extreme Lefts (the workers' group and the group of revolutionary peasants) would unite around the Cadets and vote with them; consequently, the Cadets would be the masters of the situation in the Duma.

What are the Cadets? Can they be called revolutionaries? Of course, not! What, then, are the Cadets? The Cadets are a party of compromisers: they want to restrict the powers of the tsar, but not because they are in favour of the victory of the people, as they claim—the Cadets want to replace the autocracy of the tsar by the autocracy of the bourgeoisie, not the sovereignty of the people (see their programme)—but in order that the people should moderate its revolutionary spirit, withdraw its revolutionary demands and come to some arrangement with the tsar; the Cadets want a compromise between the tsar and the people.

As you see, the majority of the Duma was bound to consist of compromisers and not of revolutionaries. This was already self-evident in the early part of April. Thus, on the one hand, the Duma was a boycotted and impotent body with insignificant rights; on the other hand, it was a body in which the majority was non-revolutionary and in favour of a compromise. The weak usually take the path of compromise in any case; if in addition their strivings are non-revolutionary, they are all the more likely to slip into the path of compromise. That is exactly what was bound to happen with the State Duma. It could not entirely take the side of the tsar because it wished to limit the tsar's powers; but it could not go over to the side of the people because the people were making revolutionary demands. Hence, it had to take a stand between the tsar and the people and endeavour to reconcile the two, that is, to busy itself collecting water with a sieve. On the one hand, it had to try to persuade the people to abandon their "excessive demands" and somehow reach an understanding with the tsar; but on the other hand, it had to act as a go-between, and go to the tsar to plead

that he should make some slight concession to the people and thereby put a stop to the "revolutionary unrest."

That is the kind of Duma the Unity Congress of the Party had to deal with.

What should have been the Party's attitude towards such a Duma? Needless to say, the Party could not undertake to support such a Duma, because to support the Duma means supporting a compromising policy; but a compromising policy fundamentally contradicts the task of intensifying the revolution, and the workers' party must not accept the role of pacifier of the revolution. Of course, the Party had to utilise the Duma itself as well as the conflicts between the Duma and the government, but that does not mean that it must support the non-revolutionary tactics of the Duma. On the contrary, to expose the two-faced character of the Duma, ruthlessly to criticise it, to drag its treacherous tactics into the light of day — such should be the Party's attitude towards the State Duma.

And if that is the case, it is clear that the Cadet Duma does not express the will of the people, that it cannot fulfil the role of representative of the people, that it cannot become the political centre of the country and unite the people around itself.

Under these circumstances, it was the Party's duty to dispel the false hopes that had been reposed in the Duma and to declare publicly that the Duma does not express the will of the people and, therefore, cannot become a weapon of the revolution; that the chief arena of the struggle today is the street and not the Duma.

At the same time it was clear that the peasant "Group of Toil" 5 in the Duma, small in numbers compared with the Cadets, could not follow the compromising tactics of the Cadets to the end and would very soon have to begin to fight them as the betrayers of the people and take the path of revolution. It was the Party's duty to support the "Group of Toil" in its struggle against the Cadets, to develop its revolutionary tendencies to the full, to contrast its revolutionary tactics to the non-revolutionary tactics of the Cadets, and thereby to expose still more clearly the treacherous tendencies of the Cadets.

How did the congress act? What did the congress say in its resolution on the State Duma?

The resolution of the congress says that the Duma is an institution that has sprung "from the depths of the nation." That is to say, notwithstanding its defects, the Duma, nevertheless, expresses the will of the people.

Clearly, the congress failed to give a correct appraisal of the Cadet Duma; the congress forgot that the majority in the Duma consists of compromisers; that compromisers who reject the revolution cannot express the will of the people and, consequently, we have no right to say that the Duma has sprung "from the depths of the nation."

What did the Bolsheviki say on this question at the congress?

They said that "the State Duma, which it is already evident has now become Cadet (predominantly) in composition, cannot under any circumstances fulfil the role of a genuine representative of the people." That is to say, the present Duma has not sprung from the depths of the people, it is against the people and, therefore, does not express the will of the people (see the resolution of the Bolsheviks).

On this question the congress rejected the stand taken by the Bolsheviks. The resolution of the congress says that "the Duma," notwithstanding its "pseudo-constitutional" character, nevertheless, "will become a weapon of the revolution" . . . its conflicts with the government may grow to such dimensions "as will make it possible to use them as the starting point for broad mass movements directed towards the overthrow of the present political system." This is as much as to say that the Duma may become a political centre, rally the revolutionary people around itself and raise the standard of revolution.

Do you hear, workers? The compromising Cadet Duma, it appears, may become the centre of the revolution and find itself at its head — a dog, it appears, can give birth to a lamb! There is no need for you to worry — henceforth the hegemony of the proletariat and the rallying of the people around the proletariat are no longer necessary: the non-revolutionary Duma will of its own accord rally the revolutionary people around itself and everything will be in order! Do you see how simple it is to make a revolution? Do you see how the present revolution is to be carried to the end?

Obviously, the congress failed to realise that the two-faced Duma, with its two-faced Cadets, must inevitably get stuck between two stools, will try to make peace between the tsar and the people and then, like all two-faced people, will be obliged to swing over towards the side which promises most!

What did the Bolsheviks say on this point at the congress?

They said that "the conditions are not yet at hand for our Party to take the parliamentary path," i.e., we cannot yet enter into tranquil parliamentary life; the chief arena of the struggle is still the street, and not the Duma (see the resolution of the Bolsheviks).

On this point, too, the congress rejected the resolution of the Bolsheviks. The resolution of the congress says nothing definite about the fact that in the Duma there are representatives of the revolutionary peasantry (the "Group of Toil") who remain a minority, and who will be obliged to reject the compromising tactics of the Cadets and take the path of the revolution; and it says nothing about it being necessary to encourage them and support them in their struggle against the Cadets or to help them to set their feet still more firmly on the revolutionary path.

Obviously, the congress failed to understand that the proletariat and the peasantry are the two principal forces in the present revolution; that at the present time the proletariat, as the leader of the revolution, must support the

revolutionary peasants in the street as well as in the Duma, provided they wage a struggle against the enemies of the revolution.

What did the Bolsheviks say on this point at the congress?

They said that Social-Democracy must ruthlessly expose "the inconsistency and vacillation of the Cadets, while watching with special attention the elements of peasant revolutionary democracy, uniting them, contrasting them to the Cadets and supporting those of their actions which conform to the interests of the proletariat" (see resolution).

The congress also failed to accept this proposal of the Bolsheviks. Probably, that was because it too vividly expressed the leading role of the proletariat in the present struggle; for the congress, as we have seen above, regarded the hegemony of the proletariat with distrust — the peasantry, it said in effect, must rally around the Duma, and not around the proletariat!

That is why the bourgeois newspaper *Nasha Zhizn* 6 praises the resolution of the congress; that is why the Cadets of *Nasha Zhizn* began to shout in one voice: At last the Social-Democrats have come to their senses and have abandoned Blanquism (see *Nasha Zhizn*, No. 432).

Obviously, it is not for nothing that the enemies of the people — the Cadets — are praising the resolution of the congress. And it was not for nothing that Bebel said: What pleases our enemies is harmful to us!

IV

Let us pass to the question of an armed uprising.

It is no longer a secret to anybody today that action by the people is inevitable. Since the crisis and famine are growing in town and country, since unrest among the proletariat and the peasantry is increasing day by day, since the tsarist government is decaying, and since, therefore, the revolution is on the upgrade — it is self-evident that life is preparing another action by the people, wider and more powerful than the October and December actions. It is quite useless to discuss today whether this new action is desirable or undesirable, good or bad: it is not a matter of what we desire; the fact is that action by the people is maturing of its own accord, and that it is inevitable.

But there is action and action. Needless to say, the January general strike in St. Petersburg (1905) was an action by the people. So also was the October general political strike an action by the people, as also was the "December clash" in Moscow, and the clash in Latvia. It is clear that there were also differences between these actions. Whereas in January (1905), the chief role was played by

the strike, in December the strike served only as a beginning and then grew into an armed uprising, which assumed the principal role. The actions in January, October and December showed that however "peacefully" you may start a general strike, however "delicately" you may behave in presenting your demands, and even if you come on to the battle-field unarmed, it must all end in a clash (recall January 9 in St. Petersburg, when the people marched with crosses and portraits of the tsar); the government will, nevertheless, resort to guns and rifles; the people will, nevertheless, take to arms, and thus, the general strike will, nevertheless, grow into an armed uprising. What does that prove? Only that the impending action of the people will not be simply a demonstration, but must necessarily assume an armed character; thus, the decisive role will be played by armed insurrection. It is useless discussing whether bloodshed is desirable or undesirable, good or bad: we repeat — it is not a matter of what we desire; the fact is that armed insurrection will undoubtedly take place, and it will be impossible to avert it.

Our task today is to achieve the sovereignty of the people. We want the reins of government to be transferred to the hands of the proletariat and the peasantry. Can this object be achieved by means of a general strike? The facts say that it cannot (recall what we said above). Or perhaps the Duma with its grandiloquent Cadets will help us, perhaps the sovereignty of the people will be established with its aid? The facts tell us that this, too, is impossible; for the Cadet Duma wants the autocracy of the big bourgeoisie and not the sovereignty of the people (recall what we said above).

Clearly, the only sure path is an armed uprising of the proletariat and the peasantry. Only by means of an armed uprising can the rule of the tsar be overthrown and the rule of the people be established, if, of course, this uprising ends in victory. That being the case, since the victory of the people is impossible today without the victory of the uprising, and since, on the other hand, life itself is preparing the ground for armed action by the people and, since this action is inevitable — it is self-evident that the task of Social-Democracy is consciously to prepare for this action, consciously to prepare the ground for its victory. One of two things: either we must reject the sovereignty of the people (a democratic republic) and rest content with a constitutional monarchy — and in that case we shall be right in saying that it is not our business to organise an armed uprising; or we must continue to have as our present aim the sovereignty of the people (a democratic republic) and emphatically reject a constitutional monarchy — and in that case we shall be wrong in saying that it is not our business consciously to organise the spontaneously growing action.

But how should we prepare for an armed uprising? How can we facilitate its victory?

The December action showed that, in addition to all our other sins, we Social-Democrats are guilty of another great sin against the proletariat. This sin is that we failed to take the trouble, or took too little trouble, to arm the workers and to

organise Red detachments. Recall December. Who does not remember the excited people who rose to the struggle in Tiflis, in the west Caucasus, in the south of Russia, in Siberia, in Moscow, in St. Petersburg and in Baku? Why did the autocracy succeed in dispersing these infuriated people so easily? Was it because the people were not yet convinced that the tsarist government was no good? Of course not! Why was it, then?

First of all because the people had no arms, or too few of them. However great your consciousness may be, you cannot stand up against bullets with bare hands! Yes, they were quite right when they cursed us and said: You take our money, but where are the arms?

Secondly, because we had no trained Red detachments capable of leading the rest, of procuring arms by force of arms and of arming the people. The people are heroes in street fighting, but if they are not led by their armed brothers and are not set an example, they can turn into a mob.

Thirdly, because the uprising was sporadic and unorganised. While Moscow was fighting at the barricades, St. Petersburg was silent. Tiflis and Kutais were preparing for an assault when Moscow was already "subdued." Siberia took to arms when the South and the Letts were already "vanquished." That shows that the fighting proletariat entered the uprising split up into groups, as a consequence of which the government was able to inflict "defeat" upon it with comparative ease.

Fourthly, because our uprising adhered to the policy of the defensive and not of the offensive. The government itself provoked the December uprising. The government attacked us; it had a plan, whereas we met the government's attack unprepared; we had no thought-out plan, we were obliged to adhere to the policy of self-defence and thus dragged at the tail of events. Had the people of Moscow, from the very outset, chosen the policy of attack, they would have immediately captured the Nikolayevsky Railway Station, the government would have been unable to transport troops from St. Petersburg to Moscow, and thus, the Moscow uprising would have lasted longer. That would have exerted corresponding influence upon other towns. The same must be said about the Letts; had they taken the path of attack at the very outset, they would first of all have captured artillery and would thus have sapped the forces of the government.

It was not for nothing that Marx said :

". . . The insurrectionary career once entered upon, act with the greatest determination, and on the offensive. The defensive is the death of every armed rising. . . . Surprise your antagonists while their forces are scattering, prepare new successes, however small, but daily; keep up the moral ascendant which the first successful rising has given to you; rally thus those vacillating elements to your side which always follow the strongest impulse and which always look out for the safer side; force your enemies to a retreat before they can collect their strength against you; in the words of Danton, the greatest master of

revolutionary policy yet known: de l'audace, de l'audace, encore de l'audace!"
(See K. Marx, Historical Sketches, p. 95.)

It was precisely this "audacity" and the policy of an offensive that the December uprising lacked.

We shall be told: these are not the only reasons for the December "defeat"; you have forgotten that in December the peasantry failed to unite with the proletariat, and that, too, was one of the main reasons for the December retreat. This is the downright truth, and we do not intend to forget it. But why did the peasantry fail to unite with the proletariat? What was the reason? We shall be told: lack of political consciousness. Granting that, how should we make the peasants politically conscious? By distributing pamphlets? This is not enough, of course! Then how? By fighting, by drawing them into the struggle, and by leading them during the struggle. Today it is the mission of the town to lead the countryside, it is the mission of the workers to lead the peasants; and if an uprising is not organised in the towns, the peasantry will never march with the advanced proletariat in this action.

Such are the facts.

Hence, the attitude the congress should have adopted towards the armed uprising and the slogans it should have issued to the Party comrades are self-evident.

The Party was weak in the matter of arming, and arming was a neglected matter in the Party — consequently, the congress should have said to the Party: arm, give concentrated attention to the matter of arming, so as to meet the impending action at least to some extent prepared.

Further. The Party was weak in the matter of organising armed detachments; it did not pay due attention to the task of augmenting the number of Red detachments. Consequently, the congress should have said to the Party: form Red detachments, disseminate military knowledge among the people, give concentrated attention to the task of organising Red detachments, so as to be able later on to procure arms by force of arms and extend the uprising.

Further. The December uprising found the proletariat disunited; nobody thought seriously of organising the uprising—consequently, it was the duty of the congress to issue a slogan to the Party urging it energetically to proceed to unite the militant elements, to bring them into action according to a single plan, and actively to organise the armed uprising.

Further. The proletariat, adhered to a defensive policy in the armed uprising; it never took the path of the offensive; that is what prevented the victory of the uprising. Consequently, it was the duty of the congress to point out to the Party comrades that the moment of victory of the uprising was approaching and that it was necessary to pass to the policy of offensive.

How did the congress act, and what slogans did it issue to the Party?

The congress said that ". . . the Party's main task at the present moment is to develop the revolution by expanding and intensifying agitation activities among broad sections of the proletariat, the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and

among the armed forces, and by drawing them into the active struggle against the government through the constant intervention of Social-Democracy, and of the proletariat which it leads, in all manifestations of political life in the country. . . ." The Party "cannot undertake the obligation of arming the people, which can only rouse false hopes, and must restrict its tasks to facilitating the self-arming of the population and the organisation and arming of fighting squads. . . ." "It is the Party's duty to counteract all attempts to draw the proletariat into an armed collision under unfavourable circumstances . . ." etc., etc. (see resolution of the congress).

It appears, then, that today, at the present moment, when we are on the threshold of another action by the people, the main thing for achieving the victory of the uprising is agitation, while the arming and organising of Red detachments is something unimportant, something which we must not get enthusiastic about, and in relation to which we must "restrict" our activities to "facilitating." As regards the necessity of organising the uprising, of not carrying it out with scattered forces, and the necessity of adopting an offensive policy (recall the words of Marx)—the congress said not a word. Clearly, it did not regard these questions as important.

The facts say: Arm and do everything to strengthen the Red detachments. The congress, however, answers: Do not get too enthusiastic about arming and organising Red detachments, "restrict" your activities in this matter, because the most important thing is agitation.

One would think that until now we have been busy arming, that we have armed a vast number of comrades and have organised a large number of detachments, but have neglected agitation—and so the congress admonishes us: Enough of arming, you have paid quite enough attention to that; the main thing is agitation! It goes without saying that agitation is always and everywhere one of the Party's main weapons; but will agitation decide the question of victory in the forthcoming uprising? Had the congress said this four years ago, when the question of an uprising was not yet on the order of the day, it would have been understandable; but today, when we are on the threshold of an armed uprising, when the question of an uprising is on the order of the day, when it may start independently and in spite of us—what can "mainly" agitation do? What can be achieved by means of this "agitation"?

Or consider this. Let us assume that we have expanded our agitation; let us assume that the people have risen. What then? How can they fight without arms? Has not enough blood of unarmed people been shed? And besides, of what use are arms to the people if they are unable to wield them, if they have not a sufficient number of Red detachments? We shall be told: But we do not reject arming and Red detachments. Very well, but if you fail to devote due attention to the task of arming, if you neglect it—it shows that actually you do reject it. We shall not go into the point that the congress did not even hint at the necessity of organising the uprising and of adhering to an offensive policy. It could not

have been otherwise, because the resolution of the congress lags four or five years behind life, and because, to the congress, an uprising was still a theoretical question.

What did the Bolsheviks say on this question at the congress?

They said that ". . . in the Party's propaganda and agitation activities concentrated attention must be given to studying the practical experience of the December uprising, to criticising it from the military point of view, and to drawing direct lessons from it for the future," that "still more energetic activity must be developed in augmenting the number of fighting squads, in improving their organisation and supplying them with weapons of all kinds and, in conformity with the lessons of experience, not only should Party fighting squads be organised, but also squads of sympathisers with the Party, and even of non-Party people . . ." that "in view of the growing peasant movement, which may flare up into a whole uprising in the very near future, it is desirable to exert efforts to unite the activities of the workers and peasants for the purpose of organising, as far as possible, joint and simultaneous military operations . . ." that, consequently, ". . . in view of the growth and intensification of another political crisis, the prospect is opening for the transition from defensive to offensive forms of armed struggle . . ." that it is necessary, jointly with the soldiers, to launch ". . . most determined offensive operations against the government . . ." etc. (see the resolution of the Bolsheviks).

That is what the Bolsheviks said.

But the congress rejected the stand taken by the Bolsheviks.

After this, it is not difficult to understand why the resolutions of the congress were welcomed with such enthusiasm by the liberal-Cadets (see *Nasha Zhizn*, No. 432) : they realised that these resolutions lag several years behind the present revolution, that these resolutions totally fail to express the class tasks of the proletariat, that these resolutions, if applied, would make the proletariat an appendage of the liberals rather than an independent force—they realised all this, and that is why they were so loud in their praise of them.

It is the duty of the Party comrades to adopt a critical attitude towards the resolutions of the congress and, at the proper time, introduce the necessary amendments.

It is precisely this duty that we had in mind when we sat down to write this pamphlet.

True, we have here touched upon only two resolutions: "On the Attitude To Be Taken Towards the State Duma," and "On Armed Insurrection," but these two resolutions are, undoubtedly, the main resolutions, which most distinctly express the congress's position on tactics.

Thus, we have arrived at the main conclusion, viz., that the question that confronts the Party is : should the class-conscious proletariat be the leader in the present revolution, or should it drag at the tail of the bourgeois democrats?

We have seen that the settlement of this question one way or another will determine the settlement of all the other questions. All the more carefully, therefore, should the comrades weigh the essence of these two positions.

Notes

1. J. V. Stalin's work *The Present Situation and the Unity Congress of the Workers' Party* was published in the Georgian language in Tiflis in 1906 by Proletariat Publishers. An appendix to the pamphlet contained the three draft resolutions submitted by the Bolsheviks to the Fourth ("Unity") Congress :
 - 1) "The Present Situation in the Democratic Revolution" (see V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 10, pp. 130-31),
 - 2) "The Class Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Situation in the Democratic Revolution" (see Resolutions and Decisions of C.P.S.U.(B.) Congresses, Conferences and Central Committee Plenums, Part I, 6th Russ. ed., 1940, p. 65),
 - 3) "Armed Insurrection" (see V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 10, pp. 131-33), and also the draft resolution on the State Duma submitted to the congress on behalf of the Bolsheviks by V. I. Lenin (see V. I. Lenin, Works, 4th Russ. ed., Vol. 10, pp. 266-67). The appendix also contained the resolution adopted by the congress on armed insurrection, and also the draft resolution of the Mensheviks on "The Present Situation in the Revolution and the Tasks of the Proletariat."
2. We are not dealing here with the principle underlying this question.
3. The Party of Democratic Reform — a party of the liberal-monarchist bourgeoisie, was formed during the election of the First State Duma in 1906.
4. The Octobrists, or Union of October Seventeenth — the counter-revolutionary party of the big commercial and industrial bourgeoisie and big landowners, was formed in November 1905. It fully supported the Stolypin regime, the home and foreign policy of tsarism.
5. Trudoviks, or Group of Toil — a group of petty-bourgeois democrats formed in April 1906, consisting of the peasant deputies in the First State Duma. They demanded the abolition of all caste and national restrictions, the democratisation of the rural and municipal local government bodies, universal suffrage for the election of the State Duma and, above all, the solution of the agrarian problem.
6. *Nasha Zhizn* (Our Life) — a liberal-bourgeois newspaper published in St. Petersburg with interruptions from November 1904 to December 1906.