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I

BAKU

The Situation in the Oil Industry

After the country became "pacified" to some extent, after the good harvest in Russia and a revival of activity in the Central Industrial region, the oil industry entered the phase of a minor boom. Owing to the risky nature of partial strikes (because of the cruel political reprisals and the growing organisation of the oil owners) arrears of oil output due to strikes dropped to a matter of half a million poods (in 1908 they amounted to 11,000,000 poods and in 1907 to 26,000,000 poods). The absence of strikes and the steady rate of oil bailing served as one of the favourable conditions for increasing the output of gusher oil. The (relative) stability which set in in the oil industry helped it to recover the market it had lost during the past few years. This year oil output rose to 500,000,000 poods—a figure not reached in any of the past four years (last year it amounted to 467,000,000 poods). Thanks to the increased demand for liquid fuel in the Central Industrial region and to the substitution of oil for Donets coal on the South-Eastern, Ryazan-Urals and Moscow-Kazan railways, oil deliveries this year greatly exceed those of last year. Notwithstanding the wailing of the oil owners, the price of oil is not dropping but remains steady, for the average price for the year is the same as that of last year (twenty-one kopeks). And every now and again the heaven-blessed wells burst out in gushers, and it rains oil for the benefit of the oil owners.

In short, "business" is improving for the oil owners.

Meanwhile, economic reprisals, far from subsiding, are steadily increasing. "Bonuses" and rent allowances are being withdrawn. The three-shift system (eight hours' work) is being replaced by the two-shift system (twelve hours' work), while overtime gang work is becoming systematic. Medical assistance and expenditure on schools are being reduced to a minimum (although the oil owners spend over 600,000 rubles per annum on the police!). Canteens and people's halls have already been closed. The oil field and works commissions and the trade unions are absolutely ignored, class-conscious comrades are being discharged as in the old days. Fines and beatings are being reintroduced.

The police and the gendarmerie—the servants of the tsarist regime—are entirely at the service of the oil kings. The inundation of the Baku oil districts with spies and provocateurs, the mass deportation of workers for the slightest conflict with the oil owners, complete destruction of actual "liberties"—Baku's privileges—and arrests after arrests—such is the picture of the "constitutional" activities of the local authorities. This is quite understandable: firstly, they cannot "by their very nature" refrain from strangling every "liberty," even the most elementary; secondly, they are obliged to behave in this way because the oil industry, which provides the Treasury with a "revenue" of not less than 40,000,000 rubles per annum in the shape of royalties, quotas in money or in kind from government fields, excise duties and transportation charges, "needs" tranquillity and

uninterrupted production. This is quite apart from the fact that every hitch in the oil industry has a depressing effect upon the Central Industrial region, and this, in turn, disturbs the government's "affairs." True, in the recent past the government considered it necessary to permit certain "liberties" in the oil districts and arranged "conferences" between the workers and the oil owners. But this was in the past, when the chances of the counter-revolution were not yet clear—then the policy of flirting with the workers was the most profitable one. Now, however, the situation is clear, the counter-revolution is "definitely" established—and the policy of brutal reprisals has taken the place of the flirting policy, the pogromist-Martynov has replaced the silver-tongued Junkovsky. Meanwhile, the workers are becoming completely disillusioned about the expediency of partial strikes; they are more and more resolutely talking about a general economic strike. The fact that "business" is improving for the oil owners but that their acts of persecution are increasing for all that, greatly incenses the workers and puts them in a fighting mood. And the more resolutely their former gains are withdrawn the more the idea of a general strike matures in their minds, and the greater is the impatience with which they are "waiting" for the "declaration" of a strike.

The organisation took into account the favourable situation for a strike in the oil industry and the strike mood among the workers and decided to start preparatory work for a general strike. At present the Baku Committee is engaged in canvassing the masses and in drawing up common demands that can rally the entire oil proletariat. In all probability the demands will include: an eight-hour day, higher wages, abolition of overtime and gang work, increased medical assistance, housing settlements and rent allowances, people's halls and schools, recognition of the commissions and the unions. The organisation and its executive body, the Baku Committee, believe that, in spite of the intensification of the counter-revolution and the growing organisation of the oil owners, the workers will succeed in gaining what they want if they oppose the enemy forces with their class organisation by uniting the oil field and works commissions, by enlarging and strengthening the unions and by rallying around Social-Democracy. The choice of the moment to launch the struggle depends upon a variety of conditions which are difficult to foresee. So far, one thing is clear, namely, that a strike is inevitable and that it is necessary to prepare for it "without a moment's delay." . . .

Local Government in the Oil Fields

The revival in the oil industry is not the only important event in the life of the Baku proletariat. A no less important event is the "Zemstvo campaign" that was launched here recently. We refer to local government in the Baku oil districts. After the Minister of the Interior's well-known "plan" for setting up Zemstvos for the border regions and the corresponding "circular" issued by the Viceroy of the Caucasus on the practical measures to be taken to introduce the Zemstvo in the Caucasus, the oil owners set to work to draw up a scheme of local

government for the oil fields. The principles of the scheme, which the next (28th) oil owners' congress will undoubtedly endorse, are approximately as follows: The oil region (Balakhany, Romany, Sabunchi, Surakhany and Bibi-Eibat) is to form a Zemstvo unit separate from the city and the uyezd, to be called the oil field local government body. The functions of the oil field local government body are to cover: water supply, lighting, road building, tramways, medical assistance, people's halls, schools, erection of slaughter-houses and baths, workers' settlements, etc. In general the local government body is to be organised in conformity with the "regulations" of June 12, 1890, 2 with the difference, however, that according to these "regulations" half the seats in the Zemstvo are guaranteed to the nobility, whereas here, owing to the absence of members of the nobility (by separating the oil region from the uyezd the oil owners have insured themselves against the predominance of the landowners and have established their own predominance) this proportion of seats is guaranteed not even to all the oil owners, but to 23 of the biggest. Of the 46 seats in this local government body, 6 are allocated to representatives of government departments and public institutions, 4 to the working population numbering 100,000, 18 to the group paying two-thirds of all the taxes, i.e., to 23 of the biggest oil owners (the total budget is to amount to about 600,000 rubles per annum), 9 to the group paying one-sixth of the taxes, i.e., 140 to 150 medium oil owners who are in vassal dependence upon the big ones, and the remaining 9 seats are to go to the petty trading and industrial bourgeoisie (about 1,400 persons).

As you see, we have before us, first, the privileged capitalists, and second, a purely industrial Zemstvo, which is bound to become the arena of sharp conflicts between labour and capital.

By setting up a Zemstvo of precisely this character the oil owners want: firstly, to shift most of the cultural and municipal functions from their "congress" to the oil field local government body and thus convert the "congress" into a pure syndicate; secondly, to pass on some of the expenditure on the needs of the oil-field working population to the rest of the bourgeoisie, the owners of auxiliary enterprises, boring contractors, etc. As regards the allocation of four seats to the workers, who will elect "in conformity with the regulations governing the Third State Duma" (delegates to be elected by the workers' curia who are to elect four electors), this, far from being a sacrifice on the part of the oil owners, is very much to their advantage: four workers' representatives as window-dressing for the local government body is so "liberal" and . . . so cheap, that the oil kings can readily concede this.

On the other hand, there can be no doubt that in so far as the oil field local government body will unite the oil bourgeoisie and the "auxiliary" bourgeoisie, so to speak, it must also unite the hitherto disunited oil industry workers and the

workers in the auxiliary enterprises and give them the opportunity to voice their common demands through their four representatives.

Taking all this into account, the Baku Committee, in its resolution on oil field local government, decided to utilise the proposed scheme of local government by participating in it for the purpose of conducting agitation for the general economic needs of the workers and of strengthening the latter's organisation. Further, with a view to expanding the electoral system, and bearing in mind that the oil field local government body will, in general, deal with the same questions that excite the workers as those which the conferences hitherto called dealt with—and in the latter the workers always had equal representation with the oil owners—the organisation is demanding in its resolution equal representation for the workers in the local government body, emphasising in this resolution that the struggle inside the local government body will be effective only to the extent

that it is backed by the struggle outside the local government body and serves the interests of that struggle.

Moreover, in view of the fact that the decision of the gubernia conference to exclude from the oil field local government area the villages of Balakhany, Sabunchi and Romany—which are actually workers' settlements—is disadvantageous to the workers, the organisation is demanding that these villages be included in the oil field local government area.

Lastly, in the general part of the resolution, pointing to universal, equal, direct and secret suffrage as an essential condition for the free development of local government bodies and for the free manifestation of existing class antagonisms, the Baku Committee emphasises the necessity of overthrowing the tsarist regime and of convening a popular Constituent Assembly as a preliminary condition for the creation of consistently democratic local government bodies. . . .

Oil field local government is still in the formative stage. The scheme proposed by the oil owners' commission has yet to be endorsed by the oil owners' congress, after which it must be submitted to the Ministry of the Interior through the Viceroy's office, after that to the State Duma, etc.

Nevertheless, the organisation decided to launch a campaign forthwith, and to convene meetings in the oil fields and at the works for the purpose of exposing the oil owners, of popularising our platform among the broad masses and of agitating for a popular Constituent Assembly. With the same objects in view it will not reject either "participation" in the oil owners' congress or utilisation of the floor of the Duma, and will supply our group in the Duma with the necessary materials.

The State of the Organisation

In view of certain specifically Baku conditions prevailing in the oil fields (some possibility of holding meetings not yet entirely destroyed by the authorities, the existence of the oil field and works commissions), the state of the organisation in Baku differs favourably from the state of the organisations in other parts of Russia. Furthermore, the existence of so-called legal possibilities also facilitates our work. As a consequence, the organisation has fairly considerable connections. But these connections are not being utilised owing to a shortage of forces and funds. Oral, and more especially printed, agitation must be conducted in the Tatar, Armenian and Russian languages, but, owing to the shortage of funds (and forces) we are obliged to confine ourselves to the Russian language, although the Moslem workers, for example, occupy the most important post in the industry (bailing) and they are relatively more numerous than the Russians or Armenians. Bakinsky Proletary (the organ of the Baku Committee) 3 which is published in Russian, has not come out for threemonths owing, chiefly, to the absence of funds. At its last meeting the Baku Committee accepted the proposal of the Tiflis Committee to publish a joint organ, if possible in four, or three, languages (Russian, Tatar, Georgian and Armenian). The membership (in the strict sense of the term) of our organisation does not exceed 300. Amalgamation with the Menshevik comrades (about 100 members) has not yet entered the phase of accomplishment— so far only wishes are observable, but the split cannot be liquidated by wishes alone. . . . Propaganda is being conducted only in the advanced study circles, which we here call "discussion groups." The system is one of lectures. A great shortage of serious propaganda literature is felt. . . . Isolation from the Party and complete lack of information about what the Party organisations in Russia are doing have a bad effect upon the Party membership. An all-Russian organ, regular general Party conferences, and systematic tours by members of the Central Committee could help matters. Of the decisions of a general organisational character adopted by the Baku Committee, the most important are the following two: on a general Party conference, and on an all-Russian organ. On the first question, the Baku Committee considers that it is

necessary to convene a conference at the earliest possible date to settle urgent, mainly organisational, questions. The Baku Committee also considers that it is necessary to convene, parallel with this conference, a conference of Bolsheviks to liquidate the abnormal situation that has existed within the group for the past few months. On the second question the Baku Committee, noting the isolation of the organisations from one another, and believing that only an all-Russian organ published in Russia can link up the Party organisations into a single whole, proposes that the Party should set to work to organise such a newspaper.

"Legal Possibilities"

The fact that our organisation has coped with the crisis with relative ease, that it never suspended its activities and always responded to all the questions of the day in one way or another, is due to a large extent to the "legal possibilities" it enjoys, which continue to exist to this day. The "legal possibilities," in their turn, owe their existence, of course, to the special conditions prevailing in the oil industry, to the special role the latter plays in the national economy, but that is not the point just now. . . . Of the "legal possibilities" in Baku, of special interest are the oil field and works commissions. These commissions are elected by all the workers of a given firm without exception, irrespective of nationality and political convictions. Their function is to negotiate on behalf of the workers with the firm's management on questions affecting the oil fields and works. They are not yet legal organisations in the direct sense of the term, but indirectly, and actually, they are fully legal, for they exist on the basis of the "December agreement," the whole of which is published in the workers' "pay books" that have been issued with the permission of the authorities. The importance of the oil field and works commissions for our organisation is clear; they enable our organisation to exercise organised influence upon the entire mass of the oil workers; all that is necessary is that the commissions should uphold the decisions

of our organisation before the masses. True, the importance of the commissions is not so great now, for the oil owners no longer reckon with them, but the workers do "reckon" with them, and that is the most important for us. . . .

In addition to the commissions there are also the unions, actually two unions: that of the "oil industry workers" (about 900 members) and that of the "mechanical workers" (about 300 members). The union for "oil extraction" can be ignored, as its importance is extremely small. We shall not speak of the unions of other crafts which have no direct connection with the oil industry, or of the illegal seamen's union (about 200 members), which is under the influence of the Socialist-Revolutionaries, although this union is important for the oil industry. Of the two unions mentioned, the first (under Bolshevik influence) is especially popular among the workers. It is organised on the principle of

industrial unionism and unites the workers of all categories of labour in the oil industry (extraction, boring, mechanical, refining, general labour). This type of organisation is dictated by the conditions of the struggle, which make inexpedient strikes of mechanics, for example, independently of the oil producers, etc. This the workers realised * and they began to desert en masse the union of "mechanical workers." The point is that this union (under Menshevik influence) is organised as a craft union, rejects the principle of industrial unionism and instead of one general union proposes three separate unions (mechanics, oil workers, and refiners). The craft union principle, however, was rejected by Baku practice long ago. This, incidentally, explains the steady decline of the "mechanical workers" union. The leaders of the union themselves admit this by accepting as members workers other than mechanics, thereby violating their own principle. Had it not been for the false pride of the above-mentioned leaders, the union of "mechanical workers," after openly admitting its mistake, would long ago have merged with the union of the "oil industry workers."

Incidentally, about merging. "Negotiations" for merging the unions have been going on for two years already, but so far they have been fruitless because: 1) the Menshevik leaders are deliberately hindering the merger for fear that they will be submerged by the Bolshevik majority; 2) the groups under whose influence the unions are functioning have so far not yet united. And besides, with whom shall we unite? The 80 to 100 "members" that perhaps the Mensheviks have are themselves not yet united. At all events, during the past eight months we have not seen a single leaflet or heard a single pronouncement from the Menshevik "leading body," in spite of the fact that during this period the oil districts have witnessed important campaigns such as the general strike, the Zemstvo, the temperance, and other campaigns. The Menshevik organisation is practically non-existent, liquidated. To put it plainly, there is nobody to unite with. And this state of affairs naturally hinders the merging of the unions. . . . Both unions are non-party; but this does not prevent them from maintaining the closest connection with the Party organisation.

The influence of the unions upon the masses is considerable, especially that of the union of the "oil industry workers," and this automatically facilitates the task of uniting the most active elements around our organisation.

Of the other "legal possibilities," those worthy of attention are the clubs (under Social-Democratic influence) and the "Trud" consumers' co-operative society 4 (under Socialist-Revolutionary and Social-Democratic influence), both being centres where the most active elements of the Baku proletariat are concentrated. Concerning their attitude towards the organisation, especially the attitude of the "Znanie-Sila" club, 5 which operates in all the oil districts (the "Nauka" club operates only in the town), the same may be said as about the unions. . . .

The past two weeks were taken up with the temperance campaign, which called for the activity of nearly all the legal organisations. The stand taken by the Baku Committee on this question is expressed in its resolution. In the latter,

drunkenness is regarded as an inevitable evil under capitalism, which can be abolished only with the fall of capitalism and the triumph of socialism. By reducing the workers and peasants to the condition of rightless slaves and robbing them of the opportunity to satisfy their cultural requirements, the existing autocratic-feudal regime helps to spread drunkenness among the toiling population to the utmost degree. This is apart from the fact that representatives of the "authorities" deliberately encourage drunkenness as a source of revenue for the Treasury. In view of all this, the Baku Committee maintains that neither the sermons preached by the "liberals," who convene congresses to combat drunkenness and organise "temperance societies," nor the exhortations of priests can diminish, let alone abolish, drunkenness, which is engendered by the inequalities in society, and intensified by the autocratic regime. All that is possible and necessary within the framework of the capitalist system is a struggle with the object not of abolishing drunkenness, but of reducing it to a minimum. But for such a struggle to be successful it is first of all necessary to overthrow the tsarist regime and to win a democratic republic, which will create the possibility for the free development of the class struggle and for the organisation of the proletariat in town and country, for raising its cultural level and for widely training its forces for the great struggle for socialism. The Baku Committee regards the forthcoming congress to combat drunkenness ⁶ as a means of agitating for the democratic and socialist demands of the Russian proletariat, and instructs our delegate to combat the opportunist delegates at the congress who obscure the class tasks of the proletariat. . . .

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II

Tiflis

As regards industrial development, Tiflis is the very opposite of Baku. While Baku is interesting as the centre of the oil industry, Tiflis can be of interest only as the administrative-commercial and "cultural" centre of the Caucasus. The

total number of industrial workers in Tiflis is about 20,000, i.e., less than the number of troops and police. The only large enterprise here is the railway workshops (employing about 3,500 workers). Other enterprises employ 200 or 100 workers each, but most employ from 40 to 20. On the other hand, Tiflis is literally crammed with commercial establishments and with a "commercial proletariat" connected with them. Its small dependence on the big markets of Russia, which are always animated and feverish, puts an impress of stagnation on Tiflis. The absence of the sharp class conflicts that are characteristic only of large industrial centres converts it into something in the nature of a marsh, waiting to be stirred from outside. It is this, in particular, that explains why Menshevism, real, "Right" Menshevism, has held on so long in Tiflis. How different from Baku, where the sharp class stand of the Bolsheviks finds a lively response among the workers!

What is "self-evident" in Baku becomes evident in Tiflis only after prolonged discussion—the uncompromising speeches of the Bolsheviks are assimilated with great difficulty. It is this, in particular, that explains the "exceptional propensity" of the Tiflis Bolsheviks for discussion and, on the contrary, the desire of the Mensheviks to "avoid" discussion as far as possible. But the only conclusion to be drawn from the above is that the work of the revolutionary Social-Democrats in promoting the socialist education of the Tiflis proletariat will very often and inevitably assume the form of an ideological struggle against Menshevism. In view of this, exceptional interest attaches to even a cursory analysis of the ideological atmosphere, which must first of all be combated, and

which is created by the Tiflis Mensheviks who so far are predominant in Tiflis. This atmosphere may be described as liquidationist, liquidationist not only in the organisational sense, but also in the tactical and programmatic sense. It is with a description of this atmosphere that we shall begin our cursory sketch of the state of Party affairs in Tiflis.

Programmatic Liquidationism

The organ in which Menshevik "public opinion" finds expression is the Georgian Menshevik press. The credo of the Tiflis Mensheviks is expressed in the articles "Questions of the Day" (see issues of the Azri and Dasatskisi 7). The author of these articles is the most influential of the Tiflis Mensheviks, Comrade An. 8

Let us proceed to review these articles, which provided the ideological ground for Liquidationism in Tiflis.

In the above-mentioned articles the author undertakes a "reevaluation of all values" and arrives at the conclusion that the Party (and the Bolsheviks in particular) has erred in certain theses of its programme, especially its tactical theses. In the author's opinion, it is necessary "radically to change the entire tactics of the Party" in order to make it possible "to unite the forces of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat"—the sole guarantee of victory for the revolution. But let the author himself speak.

"The Bolsheviks argued," says the author, "that it (the proletariat) must carry out (in the bourgeois revolution) its entire minimum programme. But the carrying out of the social section of this minimum would fetter bourgeois production, would rouse the protest of the entire bourgeoisie, and lay the basis for a gigantic counter-revolution. . . . Who will dare assert that the introduction of an eight-hour day harmonises with the interests of the present-day undeveloped bourgeoisie?" Clearly, "the carrying out of the Bolshevik minimum programme

is mere declamation" (see Azri, No. 17, February 1908).

Of course, the Bolsheviks were not the only ones to talk about carrying out the entire minimum programme, and history knows of no Bolshevik minimum programme, it knows only of the minimum programme of the whole Party—but that is not the point of interest just now. The important thing is that in view of "the undeveloped state of the bourgeoisie" and the danger of counter-revolution that follows from it, our author rises in arms against the "social section" of the programme as "mere declamation," which, evidently, ought to be liquidated. No analysis of the actual state of industry (Comrade An, obviously, uses incorrect terms in describing the backwardness of industry as the "undeveloped state of the bourgeoisie"—K. St.), no figures, nothing like serious data, are to be found in Comrade An's articles. He simply starts out with the bare proposition that the bourgeoisie will not tolerate the introduction of an eight-hour day, and yet, without the "union of the forces of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie," the

victory of the revolution is impossible—hence, down with the "social section" of the programme. . . .

We shall not attempt to prove the absurdity of the author's assertions, which the liberals of our times advance against Social-Democrats every now and again. In our opinion it is quite sufficient to quote them to be able at once to grasp the nature of the Tiflis Mensheviks. . . .

But our author rises in arms not only against the "social section" of the programme. He does not spare its political section either, although he does not attack it so bluntly and openly. Let us hear what he says :

"The struggle of the proletariat alone, or of the bourgeoisie alone, will under no circumstances smash the reaction. . . . Clearly, the union of their forces, their combination in one form or another, and their direction towards one common goal is the only path (our italics) to victory over the reaction." . . . "The defeat of the reaction, the winning of a constitution and the putting of the latter into effect,

depends upon the conscious union of the forces of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat and their direction towards a common goal." . . . Moreover, "the proletariat must march in such a way as not to weaken the general movement by its uncompromising attitude." But as "the immediate demand of the bourgeoisie can consist only of a moderate constitution," obviously it is the duty of the proletariat to cast aside its "radical constitution" if it does not wish "to weaken the general movement by its uncompromising attitude" and prevent the "conscious direction of the forces of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat towards one common goal," in short, if it does not want to prepare the ground for the victory of the counter-revolution (see Dasatskisi, No. 4, 1908).

The conclusion is obvious: down with the democratic republic, long live the "general movement" and . . . a "moderate constitution" "to promote the victory" of the revolution, of course. . . .

Before us, as you see, is a poor paraphrasing of the well-known article by the ex-Social-Democrat Vasilyev, in *Tovarishch* of 1906, on "the union of classes," on temporarily forgetting the class tasks of the proletariat, on withdrawing the demand for a democratic republic, etc. The difference is that Vasilyev spoke out bluntly and clearly, whereas Comrade An is ashamed to talk with sufficient clarity.

We have neither the time nor the inclination at the present moment to analyse the whole of this liberal prattle which, in the main, was analysed and appraised in the Russian Social-Democratic press long ago. We would only like to call things by their proper names: our author's programmatic exercises, which the Tiflis Men-sheviks have accepted as a "new" group manifesto, are tantamount to the liquidation of the Party's minimum programme, a liquidation that calls for the adaptation of our programme to the programme of the Cadets.

Let us pass from the "new" programme of the Tiflis Mensheviks to their "new tactics."

Tactical Liquidationism

Comrade An is particularly displeased with the Party's tactics, which, in his opinion, must be "radically changed" (see Dasatskisi, No 4). He therefore devotes the greater part of his articles to a criticism of these tactics. He particularly attacks the well-known "Plekha-nov formula" ("the revolution in Russia will be victorious as a workers' movement, or will not be victorious at all" 9), identifies it with the proposition about the hegemony of the proletariat and decides that it does not stand criticism. He proposes that this "formula" be replaced by a "new" (old!) proposition about "uniting the forces of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat" in the interests of the "general movement" . . . "towards one common goal." Listen to this :

"The proposition concerning the leading role of the proletariat in the bourgeois revolution is justified neither by Marx's theory nor by historical facts."

The appeal to theory :

"The proletariat cannot with its own hands build up the system of its own enemies. Hence, the leadership of the bourgeois revolution by the proletariat is impossible."

The appeal to historical facts :

"Our revolution was at the same time our workers' movement, but in spite of that the revolution was not victorious. Clearly, Plekhanov's formula proved to be wrong" (see Azri, No. 17).

Short and clear. We can only feel sorry for German Social-Democracy which admitted (frivolously no doubt!) in its letter of greeting to the London Congress that the leading role of the proletariat in our revolution is fully proved both by "Marx's theory" and by "historical facts." We shall say nothing about our (unhappy!) Party. . . .

What does our author substitute for the leading role of the proletariat? What does he offer in its place?

"The struggle of the proletariat alone," says Comrade An, "or of the bourgeoisie alone, will under no circumstances smash the reaction. . . . Clearly, the union of their forces, their combination in one form or another, and their direction towards one common goal is the only path to victory over the reaction."

Moreover, "the proletariat must march in such a way as not to weaken the general movement by its uncompromising attitude". . . (see Dasatskisi, No. 4). For, the author assures us, "the weaker the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie the more victorious (all italics ours — K. St.) is the bourgeois revolution, other conditions being equal, of course" (see Azri, No. 15).

What "other equal conditions" the author is referring to—Allah knows! Only one thing is clear, and that is, that he is advocating a weakening of the class struggle in the interests . . . of the revolution. The proposition, confirmed by the experience of our entire revolution, that the more this revolution rests on the class struggle of the proletariat, which leads the rural poor against the landlords and the liberal bourgeoisie, the more complete will the victory of the revolution be—this proposition has remained for our author a secret sealed with seven seals. The only guarantee of the triumph of the revolution that Comrade An can see is: "The union of the forces of the proletariat with the forces of the bourgeoisie."

But what is this bourgeoisie in whom our author reposes such great hopes?

Listen :

"The reactionaries," says our author, "are exceptionally vigorous in fighting the Cadet Party . . . because . . . the future masters of Russia will spring from that very middle class whose ideology the Cadets express. Political power can be wrested from the reactionaries only by the middle bourgeoisie, which has matured for the function of ruling; this class is their direct competitor, and that is why the reactionaries fear it more than any other." In general, "in all revolutions

the reactionary class did not fear the revolutionaries as much as it feared the moderate bourgeoisie. Why? Because only that class takes the reins of government out of the hands of the old regime, as we said above. Hence, thanks to its moderate constitution it is this class that is destined to make the new system acceptable to the overwhelming majority and thereby cut the ground from under the feet of the reaction" (see Azri, No. 24). But as "the bourgeoisie cannot establish the new system without the proletariat," "the proletariat will have to support the bourgeois opposition" (see Dasatskisi, No. 4).

And so, it appears, the "moderate" Cadet bourgeoisie with its "moderate" monarchist constitution will save our revolution.

And the peasantry, what is its role in the revolution?

"Of course," says our author, "the peasantry will intervene in the movement and will lend it a spontaneous character, but only the two modern classes will play a decisive role": the moderate bourgeoisie and the proletariat (see Dasatskisi, No. 4).

And so, it is no use counting much on the peasantry, it appears.

Now everything is clear. For the triumph of the revolution we need the moderate Cadet bourgeoisie with a moderate constitution. But it cannot achieve victory alone, it needs the assistance of the proletariat. The proletariat must assist it because it has nobody to rely on—not even on the peasantry—except the moderate bourgeoisie. But for this it must cast aside its own uncompromising attitude and, extending a hand to the moderate bourgeoisie, wage a common struggle for a moderate Cadet constitution. All the rest will come of its own accord. A party which regards the struggle of the workers and peasants against the moderate bourgeoisie and the feudal landlords as a guarantee of the triumph of the revolution—is making a mistake.

In short, instead of the leading role of the proletariat which leads the peasants, we have the leading role of the Cadet bourgeoisie which leads the proletariat by the nose.

Such are the "new" tactics of the Tiflis Mensheviks.

There is no need, in our opinion, to analyse all this vile liberal rubbish. We need only observe that the "new" tactics of the Tiflis Mensheviks mean the liquidation of the Party's tactics, the correctness of which has been confirmed by the revolution, a liquidation which calls for the conversion of the proletariat into an appendage of the moderate Cadet bourgeoisie.

Diskussionny Listok. (Supplement to Sotsial-Demokrat), No. 2, May 25 (June 7), 1910

*. This has not yet been realised by Dmitriyev, who in his book Practical Experience of the Trade Union Movement "proves" the necessity of three unions on the basis of an "analysis" not of the conditions of the oil workers' struggle,

but of . . . the technique of production: there are different crafts, therefore, there must be different unions, he argues.

Notes

1. The "Letters From the Caucasus" were written in November-December 1909 and were intended for publication in *Proletary* or *Sotsial-Demokrat*. As *Proletary* had ceased publication by that time the "Letters" were sent to the Central Organ of the R.S.D.L.P., *Sotsial-Demokrat*. Owing to the fact that the second letter contained sharp criticism of Liquidationism, the Menshevik section of the editorial board of *Sotsial-Demokrat* refused to allow it to be published in the columns of the Central Organ and it was therefore published in *Diskussionny Listok* (Discussion Sheet), a supplement to *Sotsial-Demokrat*.

2. The regulations of June 12, 1890, concerning the *Zemstvo* administrative bodies, were introduced by the tsarist government in place of the regulations of 1864. The new regulations, which introduced electorates according to social estates in place of the former property qualification for election to the *Zemstvo*, gave the nobility an absolute majority in most of the *Uyezd Zemstvo Assemblies* and made the *Zemstvo* more dependent upon the central government.

3. *Bakinsky Proletary* (The Baku Proletarian) — an illegal Bolshevik newspaper published in Baku from June 20, 1907 to August 27, 1909. Seven issues appeared. The first came out as the organ of the Balakhany District of the Baku organisation of the R.S.D.L.P., the second as the organ of the Balakhany and Cherny Gorod districts of the Baku organisation of the R.S.D.L.P., while the third and subsequent issues came out as the organ of the Baku Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. The paper was edited by J. V. Stalin, who wrote a number of leading articles for it which are reproduced in the present volume. Among the contributors were S. Shaumyan, A. Japaridze and S. Spandaryan. After the appearance of the fifth issue, publication was suspended and was resumed on August 1, 1909, when J. V. Stalin returned to Baku after his escape from exile in Solvychegodsk. No. 7, the last issue, came out on August 27, 1909.

The editorial board of *Bakinsky Proletary* was closely connected with *Proletary* and *Sotsial-Demokrat*.

4. *Trud* (Labour)—the name of the united consumers' co-operative society organised in the beginning of 1908 by the workers of the city of Baku and the Baku oil districts and having about 1,200 members. It opened branches in the Balakhany, Bibi-Eibat, Zavokzalny and Cherny Gorod districts. In 1909 the cooperative society published a weekly journal called *Trudovoi Golos* (The Voice of Labour). The Bolsheviks took an active part in the work of this co-operative society.

5. The aim of the clubs "Znanie-Sila" ("Knowledge Is Power") and "Nauka" ("Science") was to promote self-education among the oil industry workers. They organised general educational and technical classes, circles and lectures. They obtained their funds from membership dues and also from receipts from lectures

and theatrical performances. The "Knowledge Is Power" club, which served the oil-field districts, was directed by Bolsheviks; the "Science" club was directed by Mensheviks.

6. The temperance congress was opened in St. Petersburg on December 28, 1909, and lasted several days. Five hundred and ten delegates attended. The workers' group numbered 43 delegates, of whom two represented the Baku workers. Some of the workers' delegates were arrested by the police immediately after the congress closed.

7. Dasatskisi (The Beginning)—a Georgian legal Menshevik newspaper published in Tiflis from March 4 to 30, 1908.

8. An, N. and Kostrov—pseudonyms of Noah Jordania, the leader of the Georgian Liquidator Mensheviks.

9. G. V. Plekhanov uttered these words in a speech he delivered at the International Socialist Congress in Paris in 1889.