

**Russian Revolution
75 Anniversary
Supplement**



Trotsky arrives in Petrograd – June 1917

75 years after October 1917

The roots of our revolution

75 YEARS after the Russian Revolution, only Trotskyists, today's consistent marxists uphold the principles that created it.

**The
lessons
of 1905**

IN JANUARY 1905 a political strike of 100,000 St Petersburg workers brought the city to a standstill. On January 9, a mass demonstration of workers – dressed in Sunday-best and led by a priest – marched to the Winter Palace to petition the Tsar.

Dozens were brutally gunned down by Tsarist officers: but with the victims perished many illusions of peacefully winning reforms from the autocracy. Barricades were thrown up in the working class districts, and street fighting broke out.

When the first wave of fighting ebbed, towards the end of February 1905, the 'liberal' capitalists and academics held conferences and banquets, politely to press their request for



Red guards

the Tsar to establish a constituent assembly. They were ignored.

From exile in Geneva, Lenin insisted (learning the lessons from the abortive European revolutions of 1848) that the bourgeoisie could not be entrusted with the tasks of the democratic revolution. He argued that only a revolutionary provisional government, brought to power by the workers and peasants, could establish a genuine democratic and functioning constituent assembly.

Lenin expressed this in his call for the 'democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry'. In his view this would still be a *bourgeois* government: but the workers and peasants would be the driving force of the revolution.

The workers would need to continue their independent struggles and build their own class leadership *after* the establishment of the 'democratic dictatorship'. The Mensheviks, in contrast, looked forward to collaboration with the bourgeoisie in a prolonged period of capitalist development.

Trotsky, however, returning from exile, was the first to translate Plekhanov's 1889 insistence on the working class character of the revolution, and Karl Marx's post mortem of the 1848 revolutions, into a direct claim to working class power in Russia.

'Stages' theory rejected

He argued for a *rejection* of dogmatic notions of 'stages' of development, and for a recognition of the international character and uneven development of capitalism, as well as the impotence of the Russian bourgeoisie and the vacillations of the peasantry.

Trotsky argued that the only consistent revolutionary class was the proletariat, which had to take the leadership of the democratic revolution, and carry it through as part of its own, *socialist*, revolution – establishing not a 'democratic' bourgeois regime, but the dictatorship of the proletariat.

For this analysis, Trotsky revived Marx's terminology after 1848, referring to it as the 'permanent [uninterrupted, unbroken] revolution'. It was to be the key to the October events of 1917.

These debates were far from abstract exchanges. The relative calm of the summer of 1905 broke down with a new wave of strikes in October.

Typesetters in St Petersburg came out demanding wage increases, triggering stoppages in other industries. Political demands for constitutional rights were added.

On October 7, Moscow-Kazan railworkers joined the stoppage, and within a week the rail network was paralysed. Postal and telegraph workers walked out, schools and universities closed and commerce col-

lapsed.

As Cossack troops were sent out to repress the strikers, barricades again went up and workers raided gun shops.

Most significantly, the events saw on October 13 the birth from the printers' strike committee of the St Petersburg *soviet* (council). Though it began with delegates from only one district, soon 500 delegates from across the country were attending, and an executive including three Bolsheviks, three Mensheviks and three Social Revolutionaries was elected. The soviet launched a newspaper *Izvestiya* (Tidings) on October 17.

At this point the Tsar, in a change of tactics, picked a new prime minister and issued a manifesto promising a constitution, civil liberties and universal suffrage.

Face value

While the liberals took all this at face value and celebrated, Trotsky, speaking at a huge rally in the university, hailed the developments as the first great victory of the working class, but warned:

"Do not hasten to celebrate victory: it is not yet complete. Does the promissory note weigh as much as pure gold?"

"Are the gates of our prisons open? ... The Tsar's manifesto ... see! It is only a scrap of paper. Today it has been given to us, and tomorrow it will be taken away and torn into pieces as I am now tearing it to pieces, this paper-liberty, before your very eyes."

Though the general strike was called off, the soviet continued to organise, raiding each major print works in turn to force them to print *Izvestiya*, edited by Trotsky. The soviet threw down its challenge to the Tsarist state on the censorship issue, deciding that:

"Only those newspapers may be published whose editors ignore the censorship committees, refuse to submit their issues for censorship, and generally act in the same way as the soviet in publishing its own paper ... Newspapers which fail to accept the present resolution will be confiscated from their sellers."

In this way the soviet had gone far beyond its original task of strike co-ordination: it was now championing political demands and workers' control in defiance of the central state apparatus.

The Tsar could not even find a commercial printer for his manifesto. There was a *dual power* in the land: the power of the soviet was challenging the authority of the state machinery.

Two weeks after the general strike ended, another massive general strike showed the power of the movement. The demands were for an end to the Tsar's imposition of martial law in Poland, and against the court-martial

Trotsky revived Marx's terminology after 1848, referring to the 'permanent [uninterrupted, unbroken] revolution'. It was to be the key to the October events of 1917.



Vladimir Ilyich Lenin and Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya – key organisers of the revolution

and execution of mutineers at the Kronstadt fortress.

A five-day strike brought total victory to the workers – on two issues which not even the most blinkered ‘economist’ could have claimed were trade union concerns.

This politicisation of the working class alarmed the liberal bourgeoisie as much as the Tsar. They began to swing back behind the government, creating conditions for a new state crackdown.

At the end of November, the president of the St Petersburg soviet was arrested: Trotsky was elected in his place. On December 2-3 he, and the other officers of the soviet were also arrested. Uprisings led by the Moscow soviet and in St Petersburg were left isolated from peasant support and most of the army: they were ruthlessly repressed.

and colonies, the politics of reformist social democracy could only play the most reactionary role. Wedded as it was to capitalism and seeking reforms from its ‘own’ national capitalist class, reformism degenerated into a ‘social patriotism’ which reinforced the official chauvinism of the imperialist governments and helped line up worker against worker in the service of the bosses.

The Bolshevik line on the war flowed from this internationalist, class analysis. The opportunity of the war should be exploited by the workers – to turn their guns on their ‘own’ ruling class, and turn the imperialist war in each country into a *civil* war.

In Russia the war was both a disgrace and a catastrophe by any terms. Out of fifteen million Russians mobilised, two

The autumn of 1916 saw growing agitation and mobilisation in the factories, increasing Bolshevik propaganda; political strikes and demonstrations; fraternisation between workers and soldiers, and revolutionary activity among sailors of the Baltic fleet.

Bitter resentment against the Tsar developed at all levels. Even the ‘rank and file nobility’ – the grand dukes, showed their irritation in December, by ordering the murder of Rasputin, the mystic who had exercised a hypnotic power over all aspects of royal policy.

By January 1917, 575,000 workers were out on political strikes, and the onset of bread rationing provoked mass resistance on February 19. On 21 February workers at the giant Putilov works in Petrograd (St Petersburg) were locked out after demanding a fifty per-

cent pay increase.

and breaking the resistance of the troops. On February 27 the first company of troops mutinied and shot their commander. They swiftly approached other barracks, and began to disarm police, distribute arms and free jailed political prisoners.

The same day saw the Petrograd soviet formed once again, setting up at the Tauride palace, where the *duma* sat. Unable to mobilise forces to contain the Petrograd rebellion, and begged by his generals to abdicate, the Tsar did so on March 2. The Mensheviks and the capitalist Kadet party were still terrified of a revival of Tsarism – and even more fearful of the awakening working class. Though the workers and soldiers called upon them to take power, they would not do so.

Dropping demands

The workers and soldiers controlled Petrograd, holding the state bank, the treasury, the mint and the post office. Only the soviet was recognised as the authority. Yet the Mensheviks and SR leaders of the soviet promptly dropped all of the demands for which workers had been fighting – the eight hour day, land reform, peace and the republic. Instead they meekly sought freedom for political parties and an elected constituent assembly some time in the future.

It was on this feeble basis that the leaders of the soviet gave their endorsement to a *bourgeois* provisional government which included the SR Kerensky as minister of justice.

Only fifteen out of 900 votes at the soviet were cast against the provisional government, but as Trotsky pointed out:

“In voting for such leaders, the proletarians and peasantry erected a partition wall between themselves and their own aims. They could not move forward at all without knocking into this wall erected by themselves, knocking it over.”

This began quickly, when militant soldiers marched to the soviet demanding support for political rights – and the right of army units to elect their own officers.

Under pressure, and against their own wishes, the soviet leaders were obliged to agree and endorse this in General Order No. 1, which also asserted soviet control over all troop movements in Petrograd. It was published in *Izvestiya* and distributed far and wide.

The workers were the next to challenge the line of the provisional government, refusing to return to work without pay increases and an eight hour day. They stayed on strike another twenty days after the soviet had urged them to return to work, forcing the soviet to negotiate with the employers on their behalf, and winning their demands.

The Bolshevik forces, however, were seriously disorientated. Some veered towards a ‘defencist’ position of support for the war effort; some merely tail-ended events; others appeared on the ultra-left calling for an immediate new uprising.

Matters worsened with the return from exile of Stalin and Kamenev, who immediately took over control of *Pravda*. The paper promptly dropped the line of opposition to the war. Instead it appealed for the (bourgeois) provisional government to ‘make an attempt to induce the warring countries to open immediate negotiations,’ promising that ‘until then, every man remains at his fighting post’.

Lenin’s telegram in response to this on March 6 insisted on an opposite line:

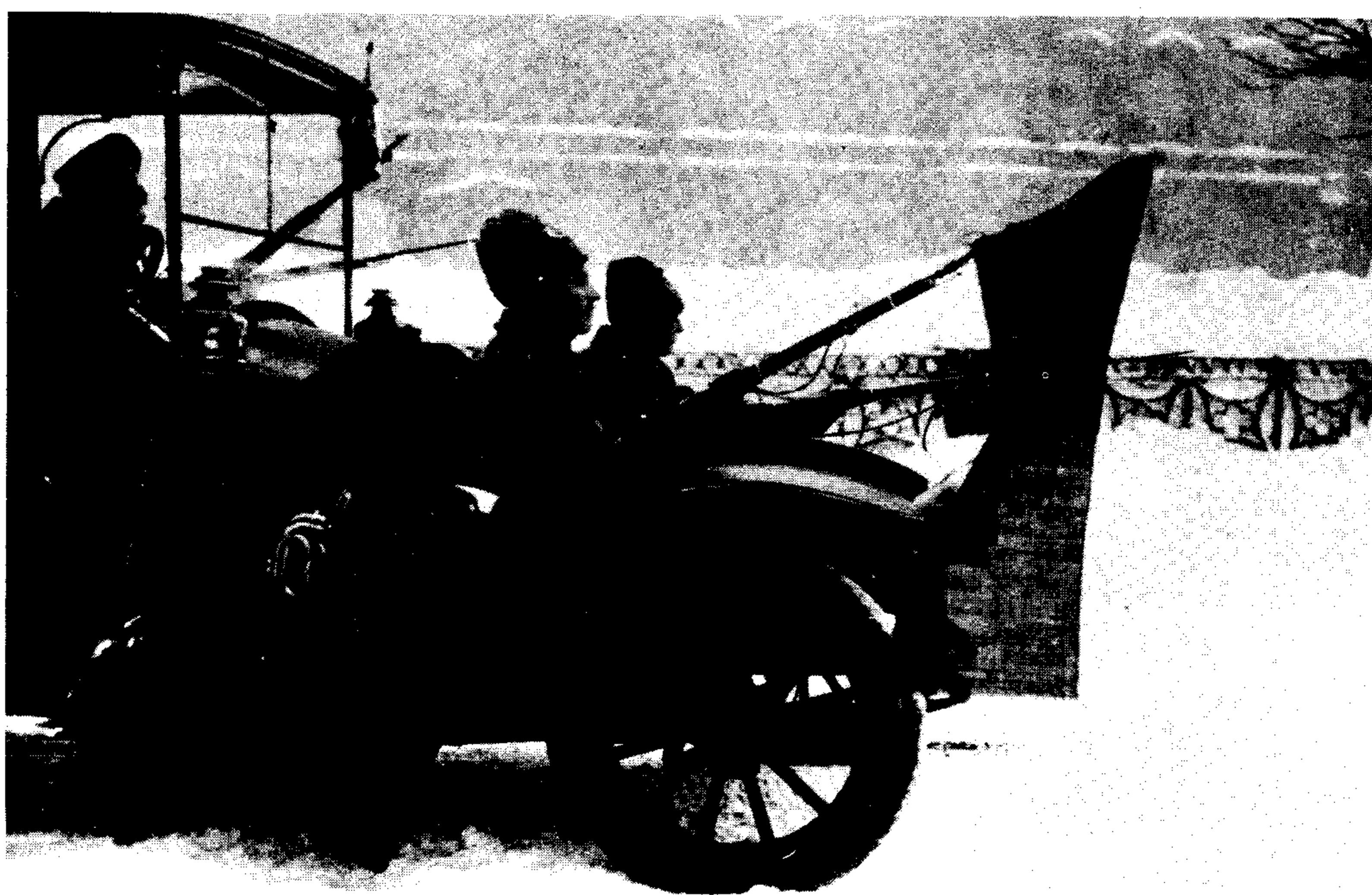
From 1914 to October

With the outbreak of world war in August 1914, the opportunist and reformist evolution of the majority of social democratic parties gave way to the collapse of internationalism in the Second International.

Lenin in September cut through the waffle and spelled out the harsh reality of the war:

“The struggle for markets and for plundering foreign lands; the eagerness to head off the revolutionary movement of the proletariat and to crush democracy within each country; the urge to deceive, divide and crush the proletarians of all countries, to incite the wage slaves of one nation against the wage slaves of another nation for the profits of the bourgeoisie – that is the real content and meaning of the war.”

Under these conditions, where capitalist property relations and national boundaries served only to fetter rather than advance the development of the productive forces, and warring imperialists fought to redivide the markets



and a half million were killed and another three million taken prisoner or wounded. Most of those conscripted for the army were peasants, and the war-time crisis coincided with a new twist in the problem of the agrarian revolution in Russia.

A wave of peasant rebellion took shape alongside the emergence of the numerically small but economically powerful working class. While Russian capitalists sought to exploit the war as a chance to make fabulous profits, the workers quickly rejected the patriotic propaganda and had begun to fight back by the summer of 1915.

cent pay increase.

But it was women textile workers, defying Bolshevik advice and walking out on strike on International Women’s Day (23 February) who triggered the events of the February Revolution.

Joined by the vast bread queues who had been told there would be no bread that day, they marched on the Petrograd municipal *duma* (assembly), demanding food. Next day 240,000 workers were on strike, with transport halted and school students on the streets.

The women workers – in their actions far ahead of most revolutionary groups – also played a key role in winning over

"Our tactic: absolute lack of confidence; no support to the new government; suspect Kerensky especially; immediate elections to the Petrograd дума; no rapprochement with other parties."

This was ignored. The Bolshevik line became under Stalin less and less distinguishable from the Menshevik line: in many areas the two parties began acting as one.

When Lenin returned on April 3, his first words were of the imminence of socialist revolution. He went on to fight for this line on the central committee, spelling out his views in the pamphlet, the *April Theses*.

The democratic gains of February could only be defended and completed by socialist revolution, with the working class taking the lead and resolving the question of dual power by establishing its own dictatorship, he argued.

End the war

The rising clamour for an end to the war could only be satisfied if the capitalists and their state were toppled.

Scarcely a single leading Bolshevik supported Lenin on any of these questions, though his views effectively echoed the earlier analysis by Trotsky arguing his conception of 'permanent revolution' after 1905. Only the day before Lenin announced these views, an all-Russian Bolshevik congress, led by Stalin and Kamenev, had endorsed a quite opposite line!

The party had to be won over at the eleventh hour. But this was no historical exception, as Trotsky later explained:

"The fundamental instrument of proletarian revolution is the party. On the basis of our experience—even taking only one year, from February 1917 to February 1918—and on the basis of the supplementary experience in Finland, Hungary, Italy, Bulgaria and Germany, we can posit as almost an unalterable law that a party crisis is inevitable in the transition from the preparatory revolutionary activity to the immediate struggle for power." (*Lessons of October*)

Lenin was able however to rely on support from rank and file Bolshevik workers and soldiers in his campaign to reverse the leadership's policy. By the time of the next all-Russian conference on April 24, the majority of 150 delegates representing 79,000 members had swung behind most of his positions.

The successful resolution opposed union with the Mensheviks and denounced the provisional government as 'a government of landowners and capitalists'. It called for working class power in the belligerent countries as the way to end the war, and the Bolsheviks began to raise the slogan of 'all power to the soviets'.

Lenin however lost on his demand for a break from the pacifist Zimmerwald grouping of social democrats, and his call for the party to change its name to the Communist Party.

Spontaneous mass anti-war demonstrations in Petrograd in April exposed again the precarious balance of



Lenin addresses rally in Dzerzhinsky Square

dual power between the soviet and the state. Military commander General Kornilov wanted to mobilise armoured vehicles against the workers: but the soviet asserted its authority under General Order No. 1 to stop this.

The provisional government was destabilised—and restructured with six 'socialist' ministers including top Menshevik Tsereteli, alongside the capitalists. Against this, the Bolsheviks steadily gained ground throughout May and June, as unionisation, factory committees and strike action continued to grow.

Winning support

At the first all-Russian congress of soviets, 1,000 delegates represented over 20 million workers and soldiers. Less than 20 percent of delegates were Bolsheviks, though the party was rapidly winning support.

The reactionary line of the compromisers was exposed to ridicule on June 24, when the Bolsheviks intervened in a demonstration called by the congress of soviets—and the vast majority of banners carried the bold Bolshevik demands 'Down with the ten capitalist ministers!', 'Down with the offensive!' and 'All power to the soviets!'

But the forces of counter-revolution were also attempting to mobilise. Militant factories were closed down; union members were locked out; divisions at the front were disbanded for disobedience; and top army officers, protected by the capitalist Kadets and funded by bankers and allied embassies, began to prepare for a crackdown.

On July 2, four Kadet ministers pulled out of the provisional government, claiming that the 'socialist' mini-

sters would not act against the workers.

The workers and soldiers for their part were pushing forward—but at an uneven pace. The end of June and beginning of July saw the Bolsheviks struggling in vain to restrain the spontaneous militancy of the Petrograd masses, who had developed far faster than workers in the provinces or troops at the front.

Bolshevik leaders feared that a premature confrontation could give the government an excuse for a crackdown in which Petrograd could be isolated.

However when the workers of the Putilov works and soldiers of the machine gun regiment voted solidly for an armed demonstration on July 3, the Bolsheviks had no choice but to lend support. The march went to the provisional government and the executive of the soviet, both of which sat at the



Petrograd Soviet meets

Tauride palace.

Their demands were for the removal of the ten capitalist ministers, all power to the soviets, a halt to the offensive, confiscation of bourgeois newspapers and printing plants, nationalisation of the land and state control of production.

While the Mensheviks and SRs prevaricated, hoping that loyal troops would return from the front to rescue them from the workers, the Kronstadt soldiers and sailors just down the river decided to march to Petrograd the next day.

Demonstration

'Loyal' army units called in by the frightened ministers turned out to be already marching to Petrograd—to join the demonstration!

When Chernov, the SR minister of agriculture, came out to the demonstrators and declared 'good riddance' to the Kadets

who had left the government, he was greeted with anger. 'Take the power (...) when they give it to you!' yelled one angry worker.

According to the French ambassador, the government actually resigned that afternoon, only to be forestalled by the soviet executive, who refused to accept their resignation and gave them a vote of confidence.

The state, meanwhile, still had reserves of repressive strength, and the compromisers were still determined to prevent revolution. The demonstration came to an end, on Bolshevik advice: but early next morning the first reliable troops, hand-picked from the most reactionary guards battalions, arrived in Petrograd and began arresting workers—to the delight of the compromisers.

The troops had been fed on a diet of lies alleging that Lenin was a German spy. This was to prove the start of a massive witch-hunt against the Bolsheviks as the counter-revolution hit back.

Lenin was forced into hiding. On July 10, Trotsky was arrested. Bolshevik newspapers were suppressed. The Mensheviks and SRs peddled the 'German spy' line relentlessly to further their own coalition with capitalist ministers and to back the war effort.

Since these same parties were still leading the soviets, Lenin on July 10 dropped the slogan of 'all power to the soviets', and re-emphasised the leading role of the working class and of the Bolshevik party in completing the revolutionary struggle:

"The slogan 'all power to the soviets' was a slogan for peaceful development of the revolution which was possible in April, May, June and up to July 5-9, i.e. up to the time when actual power passed into the hands of the military dictatorship.

"The slogan is no longer correct, for it does not take into account that power has changed hands and that the revolution has in fact been completely betrayed by the SRs and the Mensheviks."

It was the attempts of the extreme right of the officer corps under General Kornilov to carry through a military coup against the soviets and against Kerensky's provisional government which finally enabled the Bolsheviks to break out of their isolation.

Kerensky's fellow ministers resigned

Scarcely a single leading Bolshevik supported Lenin on any of these questions, though his views effectively echoed the earlier analysis by Trotsky arguing his conception of 'permanent revolution' after 1905. Only the day before Lenin announced these views, an all-Russian Bolshevik congress, led by Stalin and Kamenev, had endorsed a quite opposite line!



40,000 workers mobilised with rifles to combat Kornilov's threats

en bloc on August 26, leaving him confronted with Kornilov, who demanded that the provisional government should surrender all power to him as commander-in-chief.

The workers, however, moved swiftly to prepare their own armed self-defence. This was the period of rapid growth of the militia forces of the Red Guards, a rival to the armed forces of the capitalist state - trained by militant soldiers. The Red Guards announced that they could mobilise 40,000 workers with rifles to combat Kornilov's threats. Meanwhile rail and telegraph workers developed their own style of workers' control, brilliantly sabotaging Kornilov's troop movements and communications. Workers fraternised with troops from even Kornilov's most feared divisions - who then began arresting their officers and holding mass meetings.

The episode ended when Kerensky 'arrested' Kornilov to save him from a revolutionary firing squad. These events had brought the Bolsheviks back to the forefront; they had encouraged new layers of workers to arm and organise themselves; and they had totally discredited the compromising leaders of the provisional government, who were seen as having opened the door to Kornilov.

October!

Rocked by the failed Kornilov revolt, Kerensky's provisional government had collapsed. Worse from his point of view was the new insistence from his own Social Revolutionary party that he should not lead another government containing capitalist ministers.

He was reduced to a directorate of five. Meantime from his hiding place, Lenin wrote two letters to the Bolshevik central committee urging the leadership to prepare the seizure of power. While the objective conditions had not existed in July, the situation had changed in September:

"The point is to make the task clear to the party. The present task must be an armed uprising in Petrograd and Moscow (with its region), the seizing of power and overthrow of the government."

The vanguard of the working class had now swung behind the Bolsheviks, as demonstrated by their dominant positions in the main soviets (they had won control in Petrograd, Moscow,



Kiev, Odessa and other key cities).

A revolutionary upsurge was developing throughout the countryside; the once united 'allies' were now wavering between a war to the victorious finish and a separate peace aimed against Russia. Even the petty bourgeoisie, under pressure from the masses, had begun to move politically.

The Mensheviks and SRs convened a democratic conference, which in turn voted to set up a new talking-shop, known as the pre-parliament.

Boycott

Lenin argued for a boycott of the pre-parliament, winning the support of Trotsky, who had now been released from jail and re-elected president of the Petrograd soviet - this time as a Bolshevik.

Trotsky led the Bolshevik faction out of the pre-parliament amid cries from the Mensheviks about 'German gold'. But the Kadet Miliukov commented:

"They [the Bolsheviks] acted like people feeling a power behind them, knowing that the morrow belonged to them."

The Baltic fleet in the meantime sent a telegram to the central executive committee calling for the removal of

"The Bolsheviks acted like people feeling a power behind them, knowing that the morrow belonged to them"

Kerensky, and began holding up the movement of government freight.

A similar state of affairs was also developing within the army, where fraternisation began again after the witch-hunting of July, and more and more of the most hated officers were arrested or murdered.

The Bolsheviks stepped up their agitation throughout the country; the question was increasingly starkly posed - which class was to rule?

Day by day the rival government of the soviets grew, strengthened as the capitalists began themselves to sabotage the war effort in an attempt to discredit the revolution - only to be usurped by factory committees, which

stepped in and took control of production.

The enormous growth of support for the Bolsheviks, and their success in forcing the executive committee to convene the congress of soviets for October 20 (later postponed to October 25) made Lenin even more impatient to begin the insurrection.

Events leapt forward when the government issued an order for the reorganisation of the Petrograd garrison units in preparation for a new offensive.

The response was immediate. Ignoring the capitalist accusations that the Petrograd soldiers had grown fat in idleness, the workers insisted that the garrison remain intact.

The soldiers in return campaigned for the workers to be armed. The compromisers themselves unwittingly helped this process along when they suggested to the soviet a resolution for setting up a 'committee of revolutionary defence', supposedly to protect the capital against the advancing German army.

To their surprise, the Bolsheviks accepted the proposal: they had often discussed setting up an armed organisation of the soviet to lead the insurrection - now the Mensheviks themselves had proposed to set up a body that could do just that!

The central committee met on October 10: it set October 15 as the target date for the insurrection, but this proved impossible. On October 16, at Lenin's insistence, the central committee met again.

Lenin pressed a new resolution calling 'all organisations and all workers and soldiers to an all-sided and most vigorous preparation of armed insurrection'. It was carried by twenty votes to the two of Kamenev and Zinoviev, with three abstentions.

Kamenev and Zinoviev broke ranks and denounced the Bolshevik plans in the non-party press.

Though Lenin branded them as strike-breakers of the revolution and demanded their expulsion, the central committee would not agree.

Military preparations

Meanwhile the committee of revolutionary defence (now renamed the military revolutionary committee) had gone about its work with a will, setting

up departments of defence, supplies, communications and intelligence. One regiment after another was placing itself under the committee's command, refusing to go to the front unless ordered by the soviet.

The prolonged period of dual power was giving way to the power of the soviets. The provisional government found itself more and more isolated, with ever fewer dependable troops.

On October 21, the Petrograd garrison conference called on the all-Russian congress of soviets to 'Take the power in its hands, and guarantee to the people peace, land and bread'.

The next day the Petrograd soviet had called a peaceful review of its for-

ces. It was a huge success, with every large hall filled with workers demanding 'Down with Kerensky!', 'Down with the war!', 'All power to the soviets!'

It was the provisional government itself which gave the pretext for launching the insurrection, when it dispatched troops to close down the Bolsheviks' printing press and shut off the phone to the Smolny Institute which was headquarters to the soviet as well as the Bolshevik party.

The military revolutionary committee responded by fortifying Smolny with machine gunners and armoured vehicles. The insurrectionary forces were now ready for action.

In the early hours of October 25, Red Guard detachments occupied all of the strategic points of the capital, with hardly a shot fired. At 7am the telephone exchange fell, and communications to the Winter Palace, where the provisional government was still in permanent session, were cut off.

When the second congress of the all-Russian soviet of workers' and peasants' deputies eventually opened at 10.40am everything had gone according to plan, except that the Winter Palace still had not fallen - and the Mensheviks and SRs rallied against the Bolsheviks for attacking it.

Walk-out

However the elections for the presiding council saw the Bolsheviks win fourteen seats to the Mensheviks' three and the Internationalists only one. Seeing that they were a minority, the compromisers denounced the Bolsheviks and marched angrily out of the soviet.

John Reed, the American journalist sympathetic to the Bolsheviks who chronicled the revolution in *Ten Days that Shook the World*, described Trotsky that day:

"... standing up with a pale, cruel face, letting out his rich voice in cool contempt. 'All these so-called socialist compromisers, these frightened Mensheviks, social revolutionaries, Bund - let them go! They are just so much refuse which will be swept away into the garbage heap of history.'"

Arrested

By October 26 the Winter Palace had surrendered and the ministers of the provisional government were placed under arrest. Kerensky had fled in order to bring 'loyal' troops to rescue the compromisers.

At 8.40 in the evening of October 26, the praesidium of the congress of soviets, headed by Lenin, came in to the congress, greeted by thunderous applause. When the cheering had died down Lenin announced:

"We shall now proceed to construct the socialist order."

He went on to outline the soviet terms for peace - no annexations, no indemnities, and the right of peoples to self-determination. He then read out the proclamation to the peoples and governments of all the belligerent nations, which was unanimously adopted by the congress.

Next Lenin read the decree on the land. All private ownership of land was abolished; all landowners estates were transferred to land committees and peasants' soviets. The land decree was debated and passed with only one vote against: the working class vanguard had honoured its commitment to the agrarian revolution, and the peasant delegates were overjoyed.

Despite the material and political problems which were to beset the revolution, the conquest of power by the armed working class headed by a conscious marxist revolutionary party stands as a turning point in history.

This was, and, 75 years later still is, OUR revolution.

JOHN LISTER