

17. CRITICISM OF THE "LEFT-WING" INFANTILE DISORDER IN THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

THE TWO ERRONEOUS TRENDS IN THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT

The guiding of the proletarian revolution to the road of victory demanded of every Communist Party that it should be like the Bolshevik Party, firm in principle, flexible in tactics, neither sinking into the mire of the Right opportunism and capitulationism of the Second International nor making the error of "Left" dogmatism and adventurism. And to serve this very need, in April 1920 Lenin wrote "*Left-Wing' Communism, an Infantile Disorder*."

In this work, Lenin summed up the experience of both the Russian and the international working-class movement. He pointed out that Bolshevism had grown up, had gained in strength, and had become steeled in long years of struggle against the internal enemies in the working-class movement. He spoke of Right opportunism as "the principal enemy of Bolshevism within the working-class movement". He added, "It remains the principal enemy internationally too. The Bolsheviks devoted, and continue to devote, most attention to this enemy."¹ The other enemy of Bolshevism within the

¹ "Left-Wing' Communism, an Infantile Disorder", *Selected Works*, Moscow, Vol. II, Part 2, p. 353.

working-class movement was the "Left" trend, the petty-bourgeois revolutionism "which falls short, in anything essential, of the conditions and requirements of a consistently proletarian class struggle".¹ Lenin maintained:

The history of the working-class movement now shows that in all countries it is about to experience (and has already begun to experience) a struggle between Communism, which is growing, gaining strength and marching towards victory, and, first and foremost, its *own* (in each country) "Menshevism," i.e., opportunism and social-chauvinism, and, secondly — as a supplement so to say — "Left-wing" Communism.²

Of the "Left" error that existed at the time in the international communist movement, Lenin gave the following estimation:

. . . the mistake of Left doctrinairism in Communism is at present a thousand times less dangerous and less significant than the mistakes of Right doctrinairism (i.e., social-chauvinism and Kautskyism); but, after all, that is only due to the fact that Left Communism is a very young trend, is only just coming into being.³

The comrades who committed the "Left" error had communist revolutionary fervour. Lenin wrote:

This temper is highly gratifying and valuable; we must learn to value it and to support it, for without it, it would be hopeless to expect the victory of the proletarian revolution in Great Britain, or in any other

¹ *Ibid.*

² *Ibid.*, pp. 418-19.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 432.

country for that matter. People who can give expression to this temper of the masses, who can rouse such a temper (which is very often dormant, unrealized and unaroused) among the masses, must be valued and every assistance must be given them. And at the same time we must openly and frankly tell them that temper *alone* is not enough to lead the masses in a great revolutionary struggle, and that such and such mistakes that very loyal adherents of the cause of the revolution are about to commit, or are committing, may damage the cause of the revolution.¹

The Right and "Left" trends are both non-proletarian and anti-Marxist in nature. In given conditions, they complement each other or even change into one another. Lenin repeatedly stressed that the international communist movement must go on putting the major effort into fighting Right opportunism, while at the same time must oppose the "Left" error which had emerged in certain Communist Parties.

In "*Left-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder*," Lenin trenchantly condemned the betrayal by the opportunists of the Second International, and thoroughly criticized the "Left" trend. He summed up the experience of the three Russian revolutions and the early days of the Soviet state, and the lessons of the failure of the revolutions in Germany and Hungary. He developed the theory of proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat and explained Marxist strategy and tactics. Again and again he showed how Communists should master the scientific theory and methods of struggle of proletarian revolution and exert their best efforts in leading

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 406.

millions of people to victory in the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat throughout the world.

THE COMBINATION OF UNIVERSAL LAWS AND NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Lenin described the sufferings of the Russian revolutionaries in their search for the truth, and recounted the many forms of struggle which the Bolsheviks used. He said:

Russia achieved Marxism, the only correct revolutionary theory, through veritable *suffering*, through half a century of unprecedented torment and sacrifice, of unprecedented revolutionary heroism, incredible energy, devoted searching, study, practical trial, disappointment, verification and comparison with European experience.¹

Built on this theoretical foundation, Bolshevism passed through fifteen years (1903-17) of practical history. Through complicated struggles, "legal and illegal, peaceful and stormy, underground and open, circles and mass movements, parliamentary and terrorist",² the Bolsheviks mastered the revolutionary tactics of advance and retreat, offensive and defensive, and accumulated an unequalled wealth of experience. Lenin said:

. . . on certain very essential questions of the proletarian revolution, *all* countries will inevitably have to perform what Russia has performed.³

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 346.

² *Ibid.*, p. 347.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 352.

And certain fundamental features of the Russian revolution, he stated, possess "the international validity of the historical inevitability of a repetition on an international scale".¹ In that sense, the basic theory and tactics of the Bolsheviks are of international significance, and the road of the October Revolution reflects the universal laws of proletarian revolution in all countries. But, as Lenin pointed out:

This the "revolutionary" leaders of the Second International, such as Kautsky in Germany and Otto Bauer and Friedrich Adler in Austria, failed to understand, and therefore proved to be reactionaries and advocates of the worst kind of opportunism and social treachery.²

Undoubtedly, in their application of the universal truth of Marxism and the laws of proletarian revolution as reflected by the October Revolution, the Communists in each country must combine these laws with the specific economic, political and cultural features of their own country. Anyone failing to do so would commit the mistake of dogmatism. Lenin said:

. . . the Communists of every country should quite consciously take into account both the main fundamental tasks of the struggle against opportunism and "Left" doctrinairism and the *specific features* which this struggle assumes and inevitably must assume in each separate country in conformity with the peculiar features of its economics, politics, culture, national composition (Ireland, etc.), its colonies, religious divisions, and so on and so forth.³

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 341.

² *Ibid.*, p. 342.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 419-20.

The unity of tactics of the international communist movement demands not the elimination of variety, not the abolition of national differences, but "such an application of the *fundamental* principles of Communism (Soviet power and the dictatorship of the proletariat) as will *correctly modify* these principles in certain *particulars*, correctly adapt and apply them to national and national-state differences".¹ Lenin wrote:

Investigate, study, seek, divine, grasp that which is peculiarly national, specifically national in the *concrete manner* in which each country approaches the fulfillment of the *single* international task, in which it approaches the victory over opportunism and "Left" doctrinairism within the working-class movement, the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, and the establishment of a Soviet republic and a proletarian dictatorship — such is the main task of the historical period through which all the advanced countries (and not only the advanced countries) are now passing.²

THE LEADERS, THE PARTY, THE CLASS, THE MASSES
AND PARTY DISCIPLINE

In the same book, "*Left-Wing*" Communism, an *Infantile Disorder*, Lenin elaborated on the relationship between the leaders, the Party, the class, the masses, and Party discipline, and criticized the wrong views of the "Left" Communists on these questions.

Sharp divergence between "leaders" and the masses was a particular striking phenomenon in all countries at

^{1,2} *Ibid.*, p. 420.

the end of and after the imperialist war. The betrayal of the proletarian revolutionary cause by the opportunist leaders roused indignation against them among the rank-and-file Party members and the working people. In the circumstances, some "Left" Communists posed the question: "Dictatorship of the Party *or* dictatorship of the class, dictatorship (Party) of the leaders, *or* dictatorship (Party) of the masses?"¹ because, lacking a historical-materialist approach, they did not understand the question of the relationship between leaders, the Party, the class and the masses. Lenin pointed out that it was inconceivable for the proletariat and its party to engage in revolutionary activity without leaders. The question was what kind of leaders they were to choose. He said:

To go so far in this connection as to contrast, *in general*, dictatorship of the masses to dictatorship of the leaders is ridiculously absurd and stupid. What is particularly curious is that actually, in place of the old leaders, who hold the common human views on ordinary matters, *new leaders* are put forth (under cover of the slogan: "Down with the leaders!") who talk unnatural stuff and nonsense.²

He stated:

Everyone knows that the masses are divided into classes; that the masses can be contrasted to classes only by contrasting the vast majority in general, regardless of division according to status in the social

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 363.

² *Ibid.*, p. 365.

system of production, to categories holding a definite status in the social system of production. . . .¹

He added, “. . . the dictatorship is exercised by the proletariat, organized in the Soviets; the proletariat is led by the Communist Party (Bolsheviks). . . .”² He also said that usually “classes are led by political parties” and that “political parties, as a general rule, are directed by more or less stable groups composed of the most authoritative, influential and experienced members, who are elected to the most responsible positions and are called leaders”.³ A proletarian party had to learn how to link together the leaders and the class, the leaders and the masses, in one integral whole, or otherwise it would not deserve the name.

The muddled views of the “Left” Communists on the inter-relationship between the leaders, the Party, the class and the masses actually reflected their denial of Party principle and Party discipline. Lenin said that this was tantamount to completely disarming the proletariat in the interests of the bourgeoisie. It was equivalent to the kind of petty-bourgeois diffuseness, instability, incapacity for sustained effort, unity and organized action, which, if indulged, would inevitably destroy every proletarian revolutionary movement.

In summing up the historical experience of the Bolshevik Party, Lenin took the view that absolute centralization and extremely strict proletarian discipline constituted

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 363-64.

² *Ibid.*, p. 370.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 364.

one of the fundamental conditions for the Bolsheviks' victory over the bourgeoisie and their success. He wrote:

. . . the dictatorship of the proletariat is essential, and victory over the bourgeoisie is impossible without a long, stubborn and desperate war of life and death, a war demanding perseverance, discipline, firmness, indomitableness and unity of will.¹

How is this discipline maintained, tested and reinforced? Lenin said:

First, by the class consciousness of the proletarian vanguard and by its devotion to the revolution, by its perseverance, self-sacrifice and heroism. Secondly, by its ability to link itself with, to keep in close touch with, and to a certain extent, if you like, to merge with the broadest masses of the toilers—primarily with the proletariat, *but also with the nonproletarian* toiling masses. Thirdly, by the correctness of the political leadership exercised by this vanguard, by the correctness of its political strategy and tactics, provided that the broadest masses have been convinced *by their own experience* that they are correct.²

Lenin stressed:

Without these conditions, discipline in a revolutionary party that is really capable of being the party of the advanced class, whose mission it is to overthrow the bourgeoisie and transform the whole of society, cannot be achieved. Without these conditions, all at-

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 344.

² *Ibid.*, p. 345.

tempts to establish discipline inevitably fall flat and end in phrasemongering and grimacing.¹

IT IS NECESSARY TO MASTER ALL FORMS
OF STRUGGLE

Analysing the situation in the international communist movement, Lenin held that the task coming up on the agenda for the Communist Parties was the organizing of vast battalions and the bringing into alignment of all the class forces of a given society so as to hasten the ripening of conditions for the decisive battle. What this required was that: (1) all the hostile class forces should become sufficiently entangled, sufficiently at loggerheads with each other, sufficiently weakened in a struggle beyond their strength; (2) all the vacillating, wavering, unstable, intermediate elements should sufficiently expose themselves in the eyes of the people; and (3) a mass sentiment in favour of the most determined, supremely bold, revolutionary action against the bourgeoisie should have arisen and begun to gain vigour among the proletariat. Then the time for revolution would be ripe. And if the Communists chose the moment rightly, they would be assured of victory.

To this end Communists had to combine the strictest devotion to communism with the ability to make whatever practical compromises were necessary, to manoeuvre, to make agreements, zigzags, retreats and so on, in order to make the fullest use of the contradictions in the enemy's camp and accelerate its disintegration and col-

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 345.

lapse. They must be able to master all forms or facets of social activity without any exception, to move the masses into action to the fullest degree, and to be ready to pass from one form to another in the quickest and most unexpected manner. Lenin said:

Everyone will agree that an army which does not train itself to wield all arms, all the means and methods of warfare that the enemy possesses or may possess, behaves in an unwise or even in a criminal manner. But this applies to politics even more than it does to war. . . . Unless we master all means of warfare, we may suffer grave, often even decisive, defeat if changes beyond our control in the position of the other classes bring to the forefront forms of activity in which we are particularly weak.¹

Lenin taught Communists that when the conditions for direct, open, really mass and really revolutionary struggle do not yet exist, they must be able to champion the interests of the revolution in non-revolutionary bodies, and even in downright reactionary bodies, among people who are incapable of immediately appreciating the need for revolutionary methods of action, and to lead the masses forward to undertake the real, last, decisive, and great revolutionary struggle.

"Left" Communists held that Communists should not work in reactionary trade unions; they should leave them and create absolutely brand-new, immaculate "Workers' Unions" consisting only of Communists. Lenin regarded this as "ridiculous and childish nonsense" which

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 425.

clearly revealed the frivolous attitude of the "Left" Communists towards the question of influencing the masses. He pointed out that to refuse to work in the reactionary trade unions meant leaving the insufficiently developed or backward masses of workers under the influence of the reactionary leaders, the agents of the bourgeoisie, the labour aristocrats, or the "workers who have become completely bourgeois". Lenin maintained:

If you want to help "the masses" and to win the sympathy and support of "the masses," you must not fear difficulties, you must not fear the pinpricks, chicanery, insults and persecution on the part of the "leaders" (who, being opportunists and social-chauvinists, are in most cases directly or indirectly connected with the bourgeoisie and the police), but must imperatively *work wherever the masses are to be found*. You must be capable of every sacrifice, of overcoming the greatest obstacles in order to carry on agitation and propaganda systematically, perseveringly, persistently and patiently, precisely in those institutions, societies and associations — even the most ultra-reactionary — in which proletarian or semiproletarian masses are to be found.¹

Of course, the Communists working in the reactionary trade unions must enter into battle against the opportunists. Lenin said that the opportunists and labour-aristocrats had acquired a firm footing in the trade unions of the West European countries. These people were imperialist-minded and imperialist-bribed. The fight against them had to be carried to the point where all the

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 377.

incorrigible opportunist leaders were completely discredited and driven out of the trade unions. Political power could not be captured without carrying this fight to a certain stage.

The "Left" Communists said, "One must emphatically reject . . . all reversion to parliamentary forms of struggle, which have become historically and politically obsolete. . . ." ¹ Lenin's answer to that was: ". . . we must *not* regard what is obsolete *for us* as being obsolete *for the class*, as being obsolete *for the masses*." ² This was an illustration of the fact that the "Left" Communists failed to judge and handle questions as the party of the class, the Party of the masses. Lenin said:

. . . participation in parliamentary elections and in the struggle on the parliamentary rostrum is *obligatory* for the party of the revolutionary proletariat *precisely* for the purpose of educating the backward strata of *its own class*, precisely for the purpose of awakening and enlightening the undeveloped, downtrodden, ignorant rural *masses*.³

He added:

Criticism — the keenest, most ruthless and uncompromising criticism — must be directed, not against parliamentarism or parliamentary activities, but against those leaders who are unable — and still more against those who are *unwilling* — to utilize parliamentary

¹ Quoted by Lenin in "Left-Wing' Communism, an Infantile Disorder", *ibid.*, p. 380.

² "Left-Wing' Communism, an Infantile Disorder", *ibid.*, p. 382.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 383.

elections and the parliamentary tribune in a revolutionary, communist manner.¹

Refusal to participate in parliament was childish; it was a simple, easy and supposedly revolutionary method but provided no solution for the difficult problem of combating bourgeois-democratic influence within the working-class movement. To go that way was in reality to skip difficulties.

Lenin said:

The Communists . . . must learn to create a new, unusual, nonopportunist, noncareerist parliamentarism; the Communist parties must issue their slogans; real proletarians, with the help of the unorganized and downtrodden poor, should scatter and distribute leaflets, canvass workers' houses and the cottages of the rural proletarians and peasants in the remote villages (fortunately there are many times less remote villages in Europe than in Russia, and in England the number is very small); they should go into the most common taverns, penetrate into the unions, societies and casual meetings where the common people gather, and talk to the people, not in learned (and not in very parliamentary) language; they should not at all strive to "get seats" in parliament, but should everywhere strive to rouse the minds of the masses and draw them into the struggle, to hold the bourgeoisie to its word and utilize the apparatus it has set up, the elections it has appointed, the appeals it has made to the whole people, and to tell the people what Bolshevism is. . . .²

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 390.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 427-28.

THE COMPROMISES OF A REVOLUTIONARY AND THE COMPROMISES OF A TRAITOR

The "Left" Communists also advanced the slogan: "No compromises!" They said that all compromises with other parties and all policies involving manoeuvring were incorrect, exceedingly dangerous and should be resolutely rejected. Lenin criticized this harmful idea of opposing compromises "on principle", and saw it as an expression of childishness which it was difficult to take seriously. Throughout the history of Bolshevism, there were many instances of compromise. As far back as 1901-02, before Bolshevism emerged, the old editorial board of *Iskra* in which Lenin participated had concluded a political alliance with Struve, the political leader of bourgeois liberalism. In 1907 during the Duma elections, for a brief period the Bolsheviks had entered into a political bloc with the Socialist-Revolutionaries. Between 1903 and 1912, they had been formally united with the Mensheviks in one Social-Democratic Party. During World War I, the Bolsheviks had met with the Kautskyites and their like at the Zimmerwald and Kienthal Conferences and had issued joint manifestoes. At the time of the October Revolution, the Bolsheviks had adopted the Socialist-Revolutionary agrarian programme in its entirety without a single alteration. All these were compromises. Through such compromises, the Bolsheviks had united with these forces, in given conditions for a limited period of time, against the common enemy. However, the Bolsheviks had never allowed themselves to be restricted by these political forces ideologically or politically, and they never ceased pitilessly to expose and combat their errors. Lenin compared the experience

which the Communist Party, as the vanguard of the proletariat, had to undergo in its revolutionary activity, and especially in the struggle for the overthrow of the international bourgeoisie, to the difficult ascent of an unexplored and previously inaccessible mountain. There could be no straight and direct high road; many zigzags and intermediate stations had to be negotiated to arrive at the final destination. In other words, the Party's tactics had to include the use of manoeuvre, agreement and compromise. However, these tactics had to be used in such a way as not to lower but to raise the general level of proletarian class consciousness, revolutionary spirit and ability to fight and win; they had to be used in such a way as to consolidate and strengthen the proletarian forces while weakening and disintegrating the enemy.

The "Left" Communists opposed the revolutionary compromises of the Bolsheviks, while the opportunists tried to cover up their own betrayal by distorting various examples of such compromises. To educate the revolutionaries as well as to make a counter-attack against the opportunists, Lenin repeatedly explained the two different kinds of compromises. He said:

Every proletarian — owing to the conditions of the mass struggle and the sharp intensification of class antagonisms in which he lives — notices the difference between a compromise enforced by objective conditions (such as lack of strike funds, no outside support, extreme hunger and exhaustion), a compromise which in no way diminishes the revolutionary devotion and readiness for further struggle on the part of the workers who have agreed to such a compromise, and a compromise by traitors who try to ascribe to outside causes

their own selfishness (strikebreakers also enter into "compromises"!); cowardice, desire to toady to the capitalists, and readiness to yield to intimidation, sometimes to persuasion, sometimes to sops, and sometimes to flattery on the part of the capitalists.¹

In the former case, the compromise is partial, non-fundamental and temporary, designed to gain time to reorganize the forces and prepare for heroic, fearless attacks against the enemy. In the latter case, the compromise is treacherous, leading to the abandonment of the fundamental interests of the proletariat. Lenin cited the signing of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty by the Bolsheviks as an example, explaining that this was a revolutionary and absolutely correct compromise which left no room whatever for opportunist misinterpretation; whereas the opportunists by their compromises with the capitalist-imperialist robbers made themselves accomplices in bourgeois banditry and betrayed the basic interests of the proletariat. The attempts to confuse the compromises of the opportunists with the compromises of the revolutionaries were inept and contemptible. Lenin said:

A political leader who desires to be useful to the revolutionary proletariat must know how to single out *concrete* cases when such compromises are inadmissible, when they are an expression of opportunism and *treachery*, and direct all the force of criticism, the full edge of merciless exposure and relentless war, against *those concrete* compromises, and not allow the past masters at "practical" Socialism and the parlia-

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 393.

mentary Jesuits to dodge and wriggle out of responsibility by disquisitions on "compromises in general."¹

REVOLUTIONARY FERVOUR AND COOLNESS OF MIND

The victory of the proletarian revolution in Russia and its ever wider impact throughout the world had incensed the bourgeoisie of Russia and the world over, almost to the point of frenzy. On the one hand they used force to suppress revolution, on the other they started an all-round attack on Bolshevism. They founded all sorts of richly endowed organizations, hired any number of extra scholars, sensation-mongers and priests, published numerous books, magazines and newspapers and shrieked at the Bolsheviks in every key. The bourgeoisie and its accomplices thought that they could stifle the truth with guns and verbal attacks, but things turned out contrary to their wishes. Their very campaigns induced wider sections of the people to explore the truth. Lenin commented on their folly in these terms:

. . . we must bow and thank the capitalist gentry. They are working for us. They are helping us to get the masses interested in the nature and significance of Bolshevism. And they cannot do otherwise; for they have *already* failed to stifle Bolshevism, to "ignore" it.²

The "Left" Communists showed their petty-bourgeois revolutionism in the face of the furious enemy attacks. They decided revolutionary tactics solely by emotion, led the masses solely by emotion, and they mistook their

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 359.

² *Ibid.*, p. 430.

subjective desires for objective reality. When he analysed the social origin of this kind of mental reaction, Lenin said:

. . . the small owner, the small master . . . , who under capitalism always suffers oppression and, very often, an incredibly acute and rapid deterioration in his conditions, and ruin, easily goes to revolutionary extremes, but is incapable of perseverance, organization, discipline and steadfastness. The petty bourgeois "driven to frenzy" by the horrors of capitalism is a social phenomenon which, like anarchism, is characteristic of all capitalist countries. The instability of such revolutionism, its barrenness, its liability to become swiftly transformed into submission, apathy, fantasy, and even a "frenzied" infatuation with one or another bourgeois "fad" — all this is a matter of common knowledge.¹

Lenin remarked that the temper of the "Left" Communists in some respects expresses the hatred of the oppressed and exploited masses for the bourgeoisie and this temper is highly valuable. But revolutionary fervour alone is not enough for deciding revolutionary tactics, which require a sober and most objective assessment of all the class forces, both in the given country and on a world scale, and also a scrutinizing of the experience of many other revolutionary movements. He said that "politics is a science and an art that does not drop from the skies", that "it is not obtained gratis", and that "the proletariat, if it wants to conquer the bourgeoisie, must train its *own*, proletarian 'class politicians' ".²

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 353-54.

² *Ibid.*, p. 407.

The political representatives of the proletariat have to be able to utilize the contradictions of the enemy and win over the greatest possible number of allies. Lenin said:

The more powerful enemy can be vanquished only by exerting the utmost effort, and *without fail*, most thoroughly, carefully, attentively and skilfully using every, even the smallest, "rift" among the enemies, of every antagonism of interest among the bourgeoisie of the various countries and among the various groups or types of bourgeoisie within the various countries, and also by taking advantage of every, even the smallest, opportunity of gaining a mass ally, even though this ally be temporary, vacillating, unstable, unreliable and conditional. Those who fail to understand this, fail to understand even a particle of Marxism, or of scientific, modern socialism *in general*.¹

Propaganda and agitation alone are not enough to educate the millions upon millions of people politically; the masses needed their own political experience. Lenin said that to lead the masses to the final and decisive battle, "we must not only ask ourselves whether we have convinced the vanguard of the revolutionary class, but also whether the historically effective forces of all classes — positively of all the classes of the given society without exception — are aligned in such a way that everything is fully ripe for the decisive battle".² He also said:

To throw the vanguard alone into the decisive battle, before the whole class, before the broad masses have

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 396.

² *Ibid.*, p. 423.

taken up a position either of direct support of the vanguard, or at least of benevolent neutrality towards it, and one in which they cannot possibly support the enemy, would be not merely folly but a crime. And in order that actually the whole class, that actually the broad masses of the working people and those oppressed by capital may take up such a position, propaganda and agitation alone are not enough. For this the masses must have their own political experience. Such is the fundamental law of all great revolutions. . . .¹

The political representatives of the proletariat have to have firm confidence in the cause of communism and a most intense passion for it, and at the same time they have to be cool and collected in practical struggle. Furthermore, they have to be able to combine these qualities. Lenin said:

Life will assert itself. Let the bourgeoisie rave, work itself into a frenzy, go to extremes, commit follies, take vengeance on the Bolsheviks in advance, and endeavour to kill off (in India, Hungary, Germany, etc.) more hundreds, thousands, and hundreds of thousands of yesterday's and tomorrow's Bolsheviks. In acting thus, the bourgeoisie is acting as all classes doomed by history have acted.²

Everywhere and in every case communism was becoming tempered and was growing; its roots were so deep that persecution did not weaken or debilitate it, but strengthened it. Communists of all countries must have the firm belief that whatever happens the future is theirs.

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 421.

² *Ibid.*, p. 431.

In the midst of the great revolutionary struggles, it is necessary for them to make a full estimate of the frenzied attacks of the bourgeoisie. They have to combine the most intense fervour with the coolest and soberest calculation, to combine the high sense of principle of boundless devotion to the communist cause with the utmost flexibility of tactics, in order to march forward to victory with still greater confidence and firmness.