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The Trial of the Social Revolutionaries

Social Revolutionary Courts Martial for Communists

(Special Report of the International Press Correspondence.)

Moscow, June 12, 1922.

In the morning session of the S.R. trial Krylenko read the stenographic report of the meeting of the members of the Samara Committee of the Constituent Assembly in reply to the declaration of the Right Social Revolutionaries in which they refused to recognize the jurisdiction of the court because it is composed of Communists. This report contains a motion of Gendelman, one of the accused, according to which legal proceedings were to be instituted against every participant in the October Revolution; furthermore, an order of this Committee provided for the establishment of courts martial to deal with the uprising against the Constituent Assembly in which the participants in this uprising (the October Revolution) were to be charged with espionage, damage to means of transportation, etc.

Gendelman assured other members of the Committee that the Communist Commissars were to be proceeded against without mercy.

Gendelman admitted the existence of courts martial and the fact that he had moved such a resolution, but maintained that steps were taken to guard against the abuse of these courts. He also admitted that the Committee had ordered various arrests and banishments.

Thereupon there commenced the examination of witnesses in connection with the Junker uprising in Petrograd in October 1917. Rakitin-Braun, a former anarchist, who had served ten years in prison and entered the Social Revolutionary Party in 1917, becoming Secretary of the Military Committee of the S.R. Executive, admitted that the S.R.'s had participated in the junker uprising. The aim of the uprising was to attack from the rear the Soviet troops fighting on the Gatchina front against Kerensky. For this purpose they had to turn to the Junkers, since the regular troops refused to take part in the uprising and even the S.R. workers had joined the Bolsheviks.

Rakitin further stated that at the successful commencement of the uprising he, together with Sinani, the representative of the Mensheviks, issued a proclamation in the name of the "Salvation of the Fatherland and the Revolution" Committee calling for the spread of the uprising. As, however, the leaders of the Committee, Gotz and Avksentiev, were not to be found, he signed their names to the appeal, since everything had been done in accordance with their orders. After the failure of the uprising, however, a letter from Gotz, Avksentiev and Sinani (who had actually signed the proclamation), appeared in the press denying all connection with the proclamation. The witness branded such action as betrayal.

At the close of the morning sitting Gotz gave an explanation of Nitikin's statements. The statements made by Gotz were confused and contradictory. He quoted a letter, which was published in a Social Revolutionary organ, *Dyelo Naroda*, in which he assumes full responsibility for the Petrograd rising of the Junkers and military cadets. His abuse of the Workers' and Peasants' Government was frequently interrupted by the irritated cries of the public. Gotz further explained that the political leadership of the rising created by the October conditions, did not rest with him. "I received certain instructions from the Central Committee of the S.R. Party, to carry on an armed fight against the October Revolution, and the Central Committee was informed of all my activities. The technical leadership was exclusively in my hands."

The question as to why Podolkovnikov was at the head of the armed resistance, embarrassed Gotz and he was unable to give any satisfactory answer. Gotz related that he was arrested by the sailors during an attempt to break his way through to the Kerensky Army. He was brought to the Smolny Institute where he remained. At the close Gotz explained "We considered it our moral duty to rise against the dictatorship of the Bolshevik Central Committee, and to take up arms."

Lunatcharski asked why Gotz only assumed responsibility upon himself for the rising, six days after its suppression, whether he feared the indignation of the workers. Gotz, however, returned evasive answers.

Krylenko enquired, whether Gotz would have been able to leave Smolny, if he had frankly stated his part in the uprising, as he had done after having escaped out of the hands of the proletarian state. The first troops should have intervened in the rising on October 24th.

In the further examination Gotz stated that it was known to him that Kerensky had, before the 24th of November, recalled troops from the front against revolutionary Petrograd. After the 24th of November, Gotz personally led negotiations to make possible the obtaining of the reactionary part of the troops.

The accused Usov then took the stand. He stated he was a worker and a Social Revolutionary member of the Worker's Council of Kolpino, near Petrograd. He refuted Gotz' claims that the Petrograd proletariat had adopted a hostile attitude to the October Revolution. Usov said that the average workers of the mass type, who had lost faith in the compromise policy of the Social Revolutionaries, were enraged at the Provisional Government. They fought on the side of the Soviet Government against the Kerensky troops. When the Petrograd Soviets asked the workers which side they would take, they all declared for the Soviet Power.

Usov further declared: Very many Social Revolutionary workers took part in the battles against Kerensky and Krasnov, among them he himself. The workers did not then know that the Junker uprising had been instigated by the Social Revolutionaries and that these latter were misleading the people.

The accused Ignatiev declared that the statement that the "Home and Revolution" Committee was without an Executive was a lie. The Committee had an Executive at the head of which there stood M. Avksentiev. The Executive decided upon the Junker uprising without consulting the full Committee. After the failure of the uprising the Committee declared that it assumed no responsibility for the uprising organized by the Executive. Thereupon Avksentiev and Gotz left the Executive. In answer to Krylenko's question Gotz admitted that Tchaikovsky, Avksentiev and other members of the "Home and Revolution" Committee had gone to the Cossacks in order to request help for the Junkers. The court was then adjourned until evening.

The evening session was occupied with the examination of Poyevsky, a witness for the prosecution. He was a member of the Military Commission of the Social Revolutionary Party and was active as an organizer of fighting groups. He gave testimony upon the demonstration which the Social Revolutionary Party had prepared for the opening day of the Constituent Assembly in order to hinder the same. According to the testimony of this witness this demonstration was to have been a parade of all the forces hostile to the Soviet Power.

Poyevsky stated that in addition to the Social Revolutionaries only cadets and practically no workers took part in the demonstration. The workers in the streets shouted "Boorzho" (bourgeois) as the demonstration passed by. For this reason the witness left the party shortly after and today is non-partizan. As another reason for his resignation from the party the witness mentioned the large sums at the disposal of the Military Committee which he was convinced could only have come from French sources.

The Activity of the Military Committee of the S.R.'s

(Special Report of the International Press Correspondence.)

Moscow, June 13th, 1922.

On the witness stand Krakowiecki, a noted military official of the Social Revolutionary Party, member of the Party for fourteen years and organizer of the Junker uprising in October 1917, stated that the forces supporting the S.R.'s decreased from hour to hour. All the soldiers' divisions left their posts and the artillery troop even took with them necessary parts of automobiles. Only the Junkers remained true to the S.R.'s. At the head of the armed forces of the S.R.'s there stood the reactionary Polkovnikov. Krakowiecki admitted that armed workers and Red Guards took part in the suppression of the Junker uprising. According to his statements, the majority of the S.R. fraction in the Soviet Congress was against Gotz' motion to carry on an armed struggle against the Bolsheviks. The next witness, Nononov, for 22 years a fighter for the revolution, sketched the dissatisfaction of the workers in the Party with the leaders. The latter had talked and promised a lot but had done nothing for the support of the fighting organizations. The witness lost his faith in the Party and declared that the departure of the members of the Constituent Assembly for Samara could only be considered as abject flight.

The testimony of Veit, member of the Central Committee of the Social Revolutionary Party and manager of the headquarters of the S.R.'s, gave an illuminating picture of the differences within the Party during the eventful October days in 1917. "In the army, sympathy for the Bolshevik Party grew very fast."

In the evening session, Keller, former artillery commander of the S.R. Military Committee, was put on the stand. The witness stated that the Military Committee served to organize troops friendly to the S.R.'s for the preparation of armed struggle against the Soviet Power. The uprising on the day of the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly only failed to take place because of the indecision of the Central Committee.

Lichatch, one of the accused, attempted to represent the activity of the Military Committee as principally directed towards the propaganda of the idea of the Constituent Assembly in the army. This organization played only a minor role in the uprising. Lichatch maintained that the Social Revolutionary Party had no military operation staff and that only Semenov was inclined for immediate action. Semenov and Dashyevsky refuted the testimony of Lichatch. Semenov declared that the staff *did* exist; its members were Gotz, Gerstein, and other members of the Central Committee. The main task of the Military Committee was not propaganda but the organization of armed forces for the defense of the Constituent Assembly. The Eighth Congress of the Social Revolutionary Party approved the military defence of the Constituent Assembly. Dashyevsky and Usov pictured the warlike preparations on the day of the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly. The staff commenced

an investigation into the process of the formation of the Red Army, completed its incomplete figures on various military divisions and was busy placing its men in various departments of the Red Army. Members of the Central Committee of the Social Revolutionary Party, among them Donskoi, very often took part in the sessions of the military staff.

Evening Session, June 14th

(Special Report of the International Press Correspondence.)

Moscow, June 14th, 1922.

Gorotsky, formerly member of the Social Revolutionary Party and now a Communist, took the stand. Shortly after him the examination of Bergemann, sometime secretary of the military general staff, was commenced. They stated that the military work of the Party after the dispersion of the Constituent Assembly assumed a strictly conspirative character instead of as hitherto working within the class organizations. The witness mentioned a mass exodus of soldiers from the Social Revolutionary Party after the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly. The Military Committee and the General Staff did not trust each other. No efficient work was done.

Kachimi, a witness for the defence, gave testimony which diametrically contradicted the testimony of other witnesses as well as that of the accused. He stated for instance in connection with the Junker uprising that Gotz did not direct this uprising but was an ordinary member of the "Salvation of the Fatherland" Committee although the testimony of cadet officer, Krakuvetzky, who was in command of the Junkers, directly participated in the uprising on October 29th, 1917, and was informed as to the role of the Central Committee in the events connected with the uprising, directly contradicted Kachimi's statements.

France and the Russian Revolution

Frossard's Testimony.

(Special Report of the International Press Correspondence.)

Moscow, June 15th, 1922.

In view of the fact that Frossard was compelled by Party matters to travel abroad as soon as possible, the Court decided to put him on the witness stand at once. In answer to a question of the Public Prosecutor, Lunatcharsky, Frossard pictured the attitude of the French Government and that of the proletarian circles in France to the Russian Revolution in February and October 1917. The witness stated that the workers rejoiced over the news of the February Revolution. The Government on the contrary lost its head. The French Government made the recognition or non-recognition of the Provisional Government dependent upon the latter's recognition of the Czarist debts. The French Government was finally calmed by the report that the revolution was won in the name of the continuation of the war to the victorious end. In order to induce the Russian Army to attack, the French Socialist Minister of Munitions, Albert Thomas, was sent to Russia. The French Government received, however, the news of the October Revolution with indignation as it considered this overthrow of the Kerensky Government treason to the joint cause of carrying on the war. On the other hand, according to Frossard, the October Revolution was joyfully received by the revolutionary workers of France, especially as it was followed by the general peace proposals of the Russian Soviet Government which were not even considered by the other belligerent governments. The policy of the French Government has been based from 1917 to 1922 on un-interrupted intervention. The French Government was never ready to permit a Socialist Government to remain in power in Russia, as it considered the constitutional monarchy Russia's permanent form of government. It therefore supported all attempts at the overthrow of the Bolsheviks, no matter by whom they were made. Frossard stated that any attempt of the French Socialist Party to propose a Coalition French Government would be met with the greatest indignation by the workers of France. As for the activity of the French Mission in Russia after the October Revolution, the diplomatic representatives did all in their power to aid the counter-revolutionary uprisings in the interior of the country and were instigators of attempts on the lives of various representatives of the Soviet Power. The witness pointed out that according to figures at his disposal, these actions required 50,000,000 francs monthly and that the total cost of all the interventions to the French people was about 1,000,000,000 francs.

Timofeyev, one of the accused, attempted to prove that the Social Revolutionary Party had opposed this intervention. Krylenko read documents which showed that, according to the reports

of the Supreme Administration of the Northern Government (Archangelsk), of which Lichatch, one of the accused, was a member, the proclamation of martial law, the introduction of military and press censorship as well as the appointment of special military courts, took place under the proviso that all death sentences were to be submitted to the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied military forces. Thus this Allied control was evidently another and special sort of intervention. Krylenko stated that the testimony of Frossard proved that the Social Revolutionaries supported the most reactionary government in the whole world and therefore had lost all right to call themselves a Socialist Party.

Donskoi's Testimony

(Special Report of the International Press Correspondence.)
Moscow, June 16th, 1922.

In the evening session on June 15th, after the testimony of Gerassimov, Donskoi, one of the accused, made an exhaustive statement. He began with a picture of the situation in Russia and Petrograd, which he attempted to paint in the grayest colours, picturing the "decay and chaos which at that time ruled all over Russia". According to the accused this decay compelled the Social Revolutionary Party "to commence the organization of the working and peasant class". The accused gave testimony on his activity as representatives of the Central Committee of the Social Revolutionary Party in the Military Committee of that Party. The answer of the accused to a question put by Zelenkovsky showed that the organization, "which was created for the good of the Russian working people" (sic!), served to hinder the steps taken by the workers and peasants to bring order out of chaos. According to the statement of the accused himself the work of the Social Revolutionary Party aimed at the organization of its forces and cadres among the workers and peasants, and principally in the Red Army. For this purpose trusted members of the Party were sent everywhere to organize shock troops which were later to be used against the Soviet Government. Donskoi's words go to show that the Social Revolutionary Party entered into connection with other organizations preparing for the overthrow of the Soviet Government for the purpose of joint action. In its search for such associates the Social Revolutionary Party came across the organization of a certain Ivanov with which it allied itself. Donskoi stated that this organization was most reactionary and that the S.R.'s refused to have anything more to do with it. The examination of Donskoi which could not be concluded in the evening, will be continued in the next session.

The "Peace Demonstration" on January 5th, 1922

(Special Report of the International Press Correspondence.)
Moscow, June 17, 1922.

Berg, the only worker in the first group of the accused, pointed out that the S.R.'s had no opportunity to act in the open

during the session of the Petrograd Soviet, as they met with the hostility of the workers' delegates. They were therefore obliged to convoke the assembly of shop delegates. Berg attempted to represent the assembly of shop delegates as an organization of non-party workers, although his own words prove that he himself, as member of the Central Committee of the Social Revolutionary Party, and the Menshevik Smirnov, participated in the foundation of this organization. The workers boycotted the assembly of shop delegates and as a result the assembly, according to its own admission, "represented only a small section of the Petrograd workers".

Moratchyevsky and Usov, two of the accused, took the stand to testify on the "Peace Demonstration" of January 5th, 1918. Moratchyevsky, a member of the Territorials, gave testimony which revealed an interesting fact bearing upon the events of the day in question. He came with his Territorial division to the rendezvous unarmed, as it was taken for granted that the Semenov regiment, with which the Territorials were to march, were to furnish the arms in order to offer resistance to their disarmament.

Usov related in detail the events on January 5th in the Kolpinsky district. The Central Committee had ordered that the troops were to come to Petrograd fully armed, and it was further commanded that recruiting be commenced among the ex-soldiers who walked the street armed not only with revolvers but with infantry rifles. The remainder of Usov's testimony described how he, together with Kononov, elaborated a plan for a secret military organization in Petrograd.

Timofyeyev, one of the accused, unexpectedly rose to make a statement on the attitude of the S.R.'s to the Red Army. In contradiction to Donskoi's statements in the session of the 16th Timofyeyev attempted to prove that the S.R.'s sent their men into the Red Army, not to bore from within in an endeavor to undermine the Army, but because they wanted to strengthen and consolidate it. According to Timofyeyev, the Social Revolutionary Party at that time considered the Red Army the force which would form an integral part of Russia's future apparatus of national defense, as the S.R.'s at first expected that the Soviet Power would not last long. Only after the collapse of their illusion of the immediate downfall of the Soviet regime, did the S.R.'s decide to enter the Red Army in order to destroy it. The apparent contradictions in the attitude of the Social Revolutionary Party to the Red Army were completely cleared up by Dashyevsky, one of the accused, who had directly participated in the military work of the Party. At the beginning, according to Dashyevsky, the S.R.'s tried to get into positions of command in the Red Army in order to have the Army in their hands when the overthrow took place. After they had to give their hope of an immediate downfall of the Soviets, the S.R.'s commenced open warfare against the Red Army, using espionage and accepting the aid of the Entente—Koltchak, Denikin and other counter-revolutionaries.

The Historical Significance of the Trial of the Social Revolutionaries

by Karl Radek.

The Social Democratic press of all shades continues to carry on the concert which it began with the information that its accomplices, the Russian Social Revolutionaries, had been brought before the tribunal of the Russian working class to answer for all the crimes which they have committed against the Russian Revolution.

In South Africa, the workers were routed and shot down; the mining barons caused them to be arrested in hundreds and maltreated in the prisons. There was no outcry over this. The American press is full of reports concerning the White Terror which has again broken out in Chicago and the coal mining districts. There is no outcry over this. In Esthonia, the leader of the Esthonian Communists, Comrade Kingisepp, was shot 24 hours after his arrest in accordance with the sentence of a "democratic" court, for the sole reason that he was a Communist. In democratic Poland the Communist Peasant Deputy, Dombal, in spite of his immunity as a deputy, was thrown into prison and maltreated and will now be tried upon the ground of confessions which the Polish police extorted by means of torture. All this is of no concern to the guardians of democracy and the interests of the working class in the camp of the Second and 2½ Internationals. Their eyes are only centred upon Moscow where the leaders of

their party are to be tried (what a terrible enormity!) these leaders who sold the March Revolution of 1917 to the bourgeoisie and the Entente, prepared the way for every white government, organized assassinations of the leaders of the Russian working class, daily propagated the armed struggle against the Soviet Government, against the same Government of whom the manifesto of the Amsterdam International declared that its downfall would mean a hard blow for the international proletariat and a victory for the international counter-revolution.

The press of the Second International has not gone to great expense in order to justify its howls somehow. The Noske party, which has on its conscience the murdering of 20,000 workers, which today still keeps hundreds and hundreds of Communist workers in prison, declares concisely and briefly that it is imperative not to persecute any Socialists. Enough said! The British Labour Party whose leader was a member of the government which caused the Irish, Syndicalist Connolly to be shot; the British Labour Party whose leader Thomas had recourse to the bourgeois courts against the Communists, is also opposed on principle to the persecution of "Socialists".

On the other hand there is the 2½ International and its affiliated section, the Independent Socialist Party of Germany

(U.S.P.D.). Germany was once the blessed country of the best beer and of Marxism. The war hit both the beer and the Marxism very hard; of both there now remains only the color. Now, almost four years after the conclusion of the war, the quality of the German beer has greatly improved, but the Marxism of the Social Democratic party still remains war-adulterated, whether promulgated by Leusch as chief editor of *Stümes'* newspaper or by Herr Levi, the renegade Communist in the U.S.P.D. press. This quasi-Marxist who now will probably end his political career as the distinguished Marxist of the U.S.P.D., publishes in his *Weg* which he calls *Unser Weg* in which, in the place of Clara Zetkin, Toni Sender will now be his comrade-in-arms, and in the *Freiheit* an article, which boasts to have found out the historical significance of the trial of the S.R.'s.

In brief, Levi's brilliant idea is as follows:—

The Soviet Government was a workers' government; but inasmuch as the peasants are stronger than the workers in Russia, it had definitely to decide to become a peasants' government; and as the peasants are a petty bourgeois class, it not only had to abolish the beginnings of Communist organization but had to make concessions to European capital, and since (as Marxism teaches) economic concessions must be followed by political concessions, the Bolsheviks are thus compelled to proceed to persecute the labor movement. The Social Revolutionaries are now the party of the proletariat and the Soviet Government plays the same role towards them as Thiers and Co., played towards the vanquished Communards.

This trash is served up with sundry quotations from Marx's "18th Brumaire". Of course, Marx is no longer able to defend himself.

We will not put the patience of the reader to too severe a test in refuting all this learned nonsense. It suffices only to ask, "What was the Social Revolutionary Party in the past and what is it at present?" When the Social Revolutionary Party was founded it protested against Marxist orthodoxy which considered the *working class* the leading revolutionary element. The S.R.'s could on no account be a working class party; they always declared that the intellectuals, the peasants, and the workers were equal revolutionary forces, and their greatest ambition was to be a *peasant party*. The Russian Marxists, regardless of tendency, — Martov and Plekhanov as well as Lenin and Trotzky—at the time of the formation of the party characterized it as a petty bourgeois revolutionary party. As such, as primarily a party of petty bourgeois intellectuals supported by the peasants, the Social Revolutionaries survived the revolution of 1905 and 1906. But the second revolution, which found them in a condition of complete dissolution, has shown that, be the critics of Marxism never so sharp, they are worsted by historical reality. In the second revolution millions of peasants gathered round the Social Revolutionaries. They were consequently the strongest party of the March revolution. They suffered bankruptcy mainly because during the storm and stress of the first eight months they proved themselves to be not only an anti-proletarian, but also an anti-peasant party. While they were in power, they resisted with all their strength the solution of the agrarian problem; they fed the peasants with promises of what they would get after the war, although they knew that the demobilized unarmed peasant would be at the mercy of the despotism of the White Guards organized by the Junkers. They cast the peasants into prison if they ventured to touch the property of the Junkers.

All this occurred because the Social Revolutionary Party, whose leaders are intellectuals, was through its petty bourgeois nationalism bound to the bourgeoisie and the Junkers, and through them to world capital. The imperialist robber war was won by the Allies, by the Paris, London and New York Stock Exchanges. The leaders of the S.R. served this cause which bound them to world capital and made the early terrorists—the former Peasant Socialists—the agents of world capital. When the time came for them to pay their bill, when the mass of Russian workers and Russian peasants overthrow the Kerensky Government, the Convention of the Social Revolutionary Party displayed some thing like an understanding of the cause that led to the downfall of this Party, once so strong. But one lucid interval does not make an habitual drunkard a healthy man. The Party of the Social Revolutionaries did not recover. The hatred that the dethroned intelligentsia bore the proletariat a revolution on account of their democratic illusions held them fast in the grip of the counter-revolution, although they could not help but see that, as a Party that encouraged foreign intervention, they trampled their nationalism underfoot and became the agents of foreign capital which was striving to make a colony of Russia. And when the S.R.'s as the Party of intervention became the Party of national enslavement, they repeatedly used the democratic aims of their policy as the stirrup for the most outspoken reaction of the

monarchist Junker elements. In the name of the restoration of democracy they allied themselves with the Czecho-Slovaks and with the Koltchak officers who in turn threw them on the dung hill of history. Arrested by Koltchak, the leaders of the Social Revolutionaries accepted an indemnity and disappeared for Paris where they continued to conspire with French imperialism, as if their democratic virginity had not been soiled time and time again by the virtuous Koltchak Cossacks in the gutters of Siberia. In Archangelsk, they overthrew the Soviet Government with the aid of Allied troops, only to be overthrown themselves by the English and Russian generals. And in spite of all these lessons, they renewed their policy of coalition with the bourgeoisie at the Paris Conference in 1921. Although the S.R.'s in Russia opposed this policy of their foreign leaders, because its unnecessary frankness compromised them, the coalitionary Social Revolutionaries, the Kerensky's and Avksentiev's, are today still members and leaders of their Party. And it takes the colossal ignorance of a Levi and his impudent assumption of the ignorance of his readers, to attempt to portray these Girondists of the Russian Revolution as its Montaguards, nay, as its Enragés.

II.

The attempt to represent the enemies of the Russian Commune as Communards and the Russian Communards as Thiers only goes to prove that not only the bourgeoisie but also the renegades of Socialism, use the press as a means of besotting the working class. But this confirmation does not remove the relation that exists between the S.R. trial and the present phase of the Russian Revolution. The Soviet Government would have tried the S.R. leaders in 1918, 1919 or 1920 if it had had the evidence which is now in its hands, thanks to the fact that some of these S.R.'s, who at the command of their leaders had conspired against the Soviet Government and organized terrorist acts, were disgusted by the policy of their Party and the hypocrisy of its leaders, left it and told the truth about the activities of this prostituted counter-revolutionary Party. But in 1922, the Soviet Government is particularly bound to conduct the trial against the Social Revolutionaries and to make the truth about it and its activities known to the Russian people. It is the duty of the Soviet Government to do so for the very reason of the extraordinary circumstances under which the Russian working class and the Soviet Government are now fighting. Herr Levi and the Berlin *Freiheit* say "Because the Soviet Government is making economic concessions to capitalism, and because it is also compelled to make political concessions, it now proceeds against the Social Revolutionaries as against the representatives of awakening Socialism and the awakening working class". But the truth of the matter is as follows: because the Soviet Government is compelled by the slow development of the world revolution to make economic concessions to capitalism, and because it wants to retain power in the hands of the working class, because it refuses to cede a single atom of this power to the Russian or to the world bourgeoisie it must grasp the sword against the counter-revolutionaries who are masquerading under the guise of petty bourgeois Socialism, in the effort to open the gates of Russia to the rule of the bourgeoisie.

World capitalism fought for three long years under the battle cry of "democracy" in the attempt to overthrow the Soviet Government. The English, French and American capitalist barons knew only too well that in view of the condition of Russian traffic routes and means of transportation, and the fact that the illiterate peasantry with its local church interests constitutes an overwhelming majority in Russia, the creation of a parliament in reality would only have meant the creation of a totally uncontrolled central government in the hands of a handful of intellectuals, officers, and stock exchange sharks, insofar as the Junkers and capitalists would have not preferred to remove the screen of a parliament altogether and announce their dictatorship openly. The weapons of the Red Army that swept the Russian soil of the armies of foreign intervention and of the White Guards rendered the open pursuit of this goal impossible. What is more, the agents of the foreign countries in Russia were convinced that the Russian peasant cling fast to the Soviet System because the peasant sees in it the form of his self-management. Thus we see how Milicoukov, one of the shrewdest leaders of the Russian counter-revolution, saw during the Kronstadt revolt, that even the rebellious peasant youth wanted to retain the Soviets and substituted for the old slogan, the "Constituent Assembly", the new rallying cry "Soviets without Communists". Should the Communist Party fall, the most faithful proletarian and peasant revolutionary fighters would fall with it. Without the spiritual link of the Communist Party the masses would disintegrate and fall an easy prey to the counter-revolution and the "Soviets without Communists" would be scattered to the seven winds like sand, only to make place for

the rule of foreign capitalism under the guise of democracy. *The only way to establish this dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and of capitalism in Russia is to aid the petty bourgeois counter-revolutionary parties with all the means available.* This task of first weakening the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia and then overthrowing it has now become the historic function of the petty bourgeois counter-revolutionaries, and they are fulfilling this function. The ones unscrupulous, fully conscious of the master they serve; the others blinded by illusions, ignorant of what they are doing. For after all there are such Social Revolutionaries as the latter. There is a certain kind of superficial woman, who, after a life full of joy and pleasure, turns extremely pious and virtuous, and completely forgets the years and decades in which she served totally different gods. In political life it matters not whether a deed is committed with good or bad intentions and in this light the counter-revolutionaries suffering from democratic illusions are really more dangerous than those free from these illusions, because they cloak their dirty counter-revolutionary work with a certain inner pathos. Who can believe that the same Social Revolutionaries, who under the rule of the bourgeoisie fought desperately against the strikes as against acts of "anarchy", are today acting in good faith, when they take advantage of the congestion that now marks food transportation (caused by themselves through their revolts and sabotage) to call upon the workers to strike, although they know only too well that the misery of the Russian worker which was caused by the intervention—blockade, sabotage of the intellectuals and capitalist speculation—can only be reduced by increased production and through the reinforcement of the power of the proletarian state. Who would be so credulous as to believe that the same Social Revolutionaries who considered it a crime and an act of insanity to expropriate capitalists and nationalize industry, are now acting in good faith when they represent the concessions made by us to capitalism (the introduction of leases is of course to be taken as such) as an alienation from Socialism? Who is so blind as not see the crass contradiction in the howlings of these people. "The concessions to capitalism", they shout, "are dangers", and demand at the same time freedom of the press and of organization for the bourgeoisie and even advocate bourgeois democracy. The bourgeoisie is passing through the period of its original accumulation. The speculator is dominated by the single thought of how to circumvent the measures by means of which the Soviet Government seeks to keep in check the newly excited appetite of

capitalism. The political weapon of the *Nepman* (speculators are so called in Russia from the abbreviation N.E.P. — new economic policy) is corruption, and the bribing of hungry Soviet officials. The petty bourgeois intellectuals as well as those intellectuals connected with the bourgeoisie in their capacity of lawyers, engineers, etc., and finally the openly counter-revolutionary elements, constitute the vanguard of the bourgeoisie. Before the *Nepman* becomes so strong as to demand political concessions from the Soviet Government on the ground of his economic strength this demand is already made for him by the S.R.'s and by the Mensheviks in the name of "Democracy" and "Socialism", nay, even in the name of the workers' interests, which they themselves have time and again tremped under foot. And the engineer, the lawyer, the doctor and the agriculturist make these same demands in the name of the work they do. The growing impudence displayed by the so-called petty bourgeois Socialists, is only a part of the growing audacity of the liberal vanguard, the bourgeoisie, which is strengthened by the new economic policy, a process that is necessary until the revolution succeeds in at least one big industrial country and opens the door for the influx of new economic forces into proletarian Russia. The Soviet Government is fighting with all its energy against every attempt of the bourgeoisie to raise its head. Everybody remembers how last year, when the Cadet gentlemen were permitted to form an organization for the purpose of getting bread for the starving, they attempted to assert themselves as a political power. The Soviet Government rapped them sharply on the knuckles and the S.R. gentlemen and the Mensheviks protested. The bourgeois circles of Russia look upon the S.R. trial as an attack upon their outposts and they are right. For instance, the *Berlin Rul*, the leading organ of the Cadets, voices its protest against this trial no less than the Second and the 2½ Internationals. Such is the historical significance of the trial of the Social Revolutionaries, which the fools of the world counter-revolution, the Levis and the Crispiens, are trying to mask in costumes borrowed from the history of proletarian tragedy. And in order that the Russian revolution shall not suffer the same fate that befell the attempts of the Enragés, the Babeufs and the Communards, the Soviet Government is holding its sword drawn against the petty bourgeois wing of the counter-revolution which serves as the outpost of the capitalist and Junker wing, and which seeks to transform the stronghold of the world proletariat into an arena for a new civil war.

Some Questions to Victor Tschernov

Tschernov has undertaken legal proceedings for libel against the journal *Novy Mir*, a Russian daily in Berlin, because of statements in that journal to the effect that he was guilty of those deeds for which the 47 Social Revolutionaries are now being tried by the Revolutionary Tribunal. Mr. Tschernov was a Minister, he considers himself today still President of the Constituent Assembly, he can therefore hardly have any objections to our putting to him the following questions.

Is he aware of the fact that at the end of 1921 Colonel Makhlin published in the *Revolutionaya Rossia* an article on the methods of organizing an armed peasant revolt against the Soviet Government, of blowing up the railways of Soviet Russia and of the massacre of the Red Army? (The *Revolutionaya Rossia* is Tschernov's organ.)

Is Victor Tschernov aware of the fact that during the Kronstadt revolt there appeared an article in the *Revolutionaya Rossia* from the pen of Victor Tschernov calling upon the peasantry to rise. "And you despots, Bolsheviks!", this article reads, "your days are counted; if you care for your lives, clear out of the way. The people is rising and judgement will be pronounced."

Is Victor Tschernov aware of the fact that his journal in view of the Kronstadt rising stated: "Those who do not support the people of Kronstadt are allies of the bloodstained Field Marshal Trotzky and his hangmen. We have made up our minds. We are with the Kronstadt people against their oppressors and hangmen."

Is it known to Mr. Tschernov that the Ninth Congress of the Social Revolutionary Party passed the following resolutions:

"The armed struggle of the party against the Bolshevik power is inevitable and therefore the active elements of the people must be organized."

Has Victor Tschernov knowledge of the fact that Victor Tschernov wrote the following in his journal on this decision of the Party: —

"The Social Revolutionary Party takes up the struggle against the Bolshevik despots on all fronts."

Is Victor Tschernov aware of the fact that the French Government financed the enterprises of the Social Revolutionary Party; that this took place in the territory of Soviet Russia through the medium of the Danish Embassy and that at present it is being done through the Czecho-Slovak Government at Prague?

Is it known to Mr. Tschernov that the Social Revolutionary Party supported Antonov's uprising and that the latter executed hundreds of revolutionary workers?

Is Victor Tschernov aware of the fact that in Samara and Kazan when the Social Revolutionary Party was in power there the Bolsheviks were killed off with beastly cruelty?

Is Mr. Tschernov aware of the fact that the Social Revolutionary Party committed robberies and expropriations on the territory of the Soviet Republic with the connivance of its Executive Committee; that the stolen money was handed over to a member of the E. C. (Rakov) and that the Eighth Congress of the S. R. Party sanctioned the expropriations?

Is Mr. Tschernov aware of the fact that the Social Revolutionary Party received from the French military mission explosives in order to blow up the railways of Soviet Russia?

Is Mr. Tschernov aware of the fact that the "shock troops" of the Social Revolutionary Party prepared an attempt upon the lives of Trotzky and Zinoviev and that the E. C. of that Party approved of individual terrorism?

Mr. Tschernov knows that Volodarsky was killed with the approval of the E. C. of the Social Revolutionary Party and that the murderer Sergejev, a member of the Social Revolutionary Party, received orders for this deed from Gotz, a member of the E. C.

Is Mr. Tschernov aware of the fact that the Social Revolutionary Party negotiated with the Ivanov counter-revo-

lutionary organization with the object of inducing the German Northern Army to attack Petrograd and deliver political power to a bourgeois government?

Is it known to him that the Social Revolutionary Party delegated as participant in these negotiations Colonel Postnikov, who got into communication with the commandant of the German Northern Army with a view of obtaining information?

Is he aware of the fact that the Party was also receiving financial support from the Ivanov counter-revolutionary organization?

Is Mr. Tchernov aware of the fact that the Social Revolutionary Party cooperated with Filanenko's counter-revolutionary organization with the object of organizing the counter-revolution and was also receiving financial support from the latter.

Is Mr. Tchernov aware of the fact that the Social Revolutionary Party was organizing party-cells within the Red Army and that on many occasions it prepared mutinies, for instance even immediately after the October Revolution, when the members of that party led an army against Petrograd.

Is it known to him that Avksentiev, Kerensky and Tchernov participated in this movement?

Is Mr. Tchernov aware of the fact that Lydia Konopleva communicated with the Executive Committee of the party upon the intended plot against Lenin. Does he know that on behalf of the Executive Committee Tchernov and Goiz negotiated with Konopleva in this matter? Is he aware of the fact that the E.C. approved of the plan? Is he aware of the fact that the Executive Committee sent its member Richter to Moscow in order to prepare the assassination?

Does Mr. Tchernov know what punishment is prescribed by the laws of bourgeois states for such crimes?

Can Mr. Tchernov answer satisfactorily these questions; can he prove that this is not counter-revolution pure and simple?

Will Tchernov be able to give an answer to these questions which would satisfy the really international and really revolutionary proletariat? For these are some of the charges preferred in the trial of the Social Revolutionaries, and this cannot be answered even by the sly cunning of lawyers like Vandervelde and his colleagues.