In September General Kornilov marched on Petrograd to make himself military dictator of Russia. Behind him was suddenly revealed the mailed fist of the bourgeoisie, boldly attempting to crush the Revolution. Some of the Socialist Ministers were implicated; even Kerensky was under suspicion. Savinkov, summoned to explain to the Central Committee of his party, the Socialist Revolutionaries, refused and was expelled. Kornilov was arrested by the Soldiers' Committees. Generals were dismissed, Ministers suspended from their functions, and the Cabinet fell. Kerensky tried to form a new Government, including the Cadets, party of the bourgeoisie. His party, the Socialist Revolutionaries, ordered him to exclude the Cadets. Kerensky declined to obey, and threatened to resign from the Cabinet if the Socialists insisted. However, popular feeling ran so high that for the moment he did not dare oppose it, and a temporary Directorate of Five of the old Ministers, with Kerensky at the head, assumed the power until the question should be settled.

The Kornilov affair drew together all the Socialist groups—"moderates" as well as revolutionists—in a passionate impulse of self-defence. There must be no more Kornilovs. A new Government must be created, responsible to the elements supporting the Revolution. So the Tsay-ee-kah invited the popular organisations to send delegates to a Democratic Conference, which should meet at Petrograd in September.

In the Tsay-ee-kah three factions immediately appeared. The Bolsheviki demanded that the All-Russian Congress of Soviets be summoned, and that they take over the power. The "centre" Socialist Revolutionaries, led by Tchernov, joined with the Left Socialist Revolutionaries, led by Kamkov and Spiridonova, the Mensheviki Internationalists under Martov, and the "centre" Mensheviki, represented by Bogdanov and Skobeliev, in demanding a purely Socialist Government. Tseretelli, Dan and Lieber, at the head of the right wing Mensheviki, and the right Socialist Revolutionaries under Avksentiev and Gotz, insisted that the propertied classes must be represented in the new Government.

Almost immediately the Bolsheviki won a majority in the Petrograd Soviet, and the Soviets of Moscow, Kiev, Odessa and other cities followed suit.

Alarmed, the Mensheviki and Socialist Revolutionaries in control of the Tsay-ee-kah decided that after all they feared the danger of Kornilov less than the danger of Lenin. They revised the plan of representation in the Democratic Conference, admitting more delegates from the Cooperative Societies and other conservative bodies. Even this packed assembly at first voted for a Coalition Government without the Cadets. Only Kerensky's open threat of resignation, and the alarming cries of the "moderate" Socialists that "the Republic is in danger" persuaded the Conference, by a small majority, to declare in favour of the principle of coalition with the bourgeoisie, and to sanction the establishment of a sort of consultative Parliament, without any legislative power, called the Provisional Council of the Russian Republic. In the new Ministry
the propertied classes practically controlled, and in the Council of the Russian Republic they occupied a disproportionate number of seats.

The fact is that the Tsay-ee-kah no longer represented the rank and file of the Soviets, and had illegally refused to call another All-Russian Congress of Soviets, due in September. It had no intention of calling this Congress or of allowing it to be called. Its official organ, Izviestia (News), began to hint that the function of the Soviets was nearly at an end, and that they might soon be dissolved—At this time, too, the new Government announced as part of its policy the liquidation of "irresponsible organisations"—i.e. the Soviets.

The Bolsheviki responded by summoning the All-Russian Soviets to meet at Petrograd on November 2, and take over the Government of Russia. At the same time they withdrew from the Council of the Russian Republic, stating that they would not participate in a "Government of Treason to the People."

The withdrawal of the Bolsheviki, however, did not bring tranquillity to the ill-fated Council. The propertied classes, now in a position of power, became arrogant. The Cadets declared that the Government had no legal right to declare Russia a republic. They demanded stern measures in the Army and Navy to destroy the Soldiers' and Sailors' Committees, and denounced the Soviets. On the other side of the chamber the Mensheviki Internationals and the Left Socialist Revolutionaries advocated immediate peace, land to the peasants, and workers' control of industry—practically the Bolshevik programme.

I heard Martov's speech in answer to the Cadets. Stooped over the desk of the tribune like the mortally sick man he was, and speaking in a voice so hoarse it could hardly be heard, he shook his finger toward the right benches:

"You call us defeatists; but the real defeatists are those who wait for a more propitious moment to conclude peace, insist upon postponing peace until later, until nothing is left of the Russian army, until Russia becomes the subject of bargaining between the different imperialist groups. You are trying to impose upon the Russian people a policy dictated by the interests of the bourgeoisie. The question of peace should be raised without delay. You will see then that not in vain has been the work of those whom you call German agents, of those Zimmerwaldists who in all the lands have prepared the awakening of the conscience of the democratic masses."

Between these two groups the Mensheviki and Socialist Revolutionaries wavered, irresistibly forced to the left by the pressure of the rising dissatisfaction of the masses. Deep hostility divided the chamber into irreconcilable groups.

This was the situation when the long-awaited announcement of the Allied Conference in Paris brought up the burning question of foreign policy.

Theoretically all Socialist parties in Russia were in favour of the earliest possible peace on democratic terms. As long ago as May, 1917, the Petrograd Soviet, then under control of the Mensheviki and Socialist Revolutionaries, had proclaimed the famous Russian peace-conditions. They had demanded that the Allies hold a conference to discuss war-aims. This conference had been promised for August; then postponed until September; then until October; and now it was fixed for November 10th.
The Provisional Government suggested two representatives—General Alexeyev, reactionary military man, and Terestchenko, Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Soviets chose Skobeliev to speak for them and drew up a manifesto, the famous nakaz—instructions. The Provisional Government objected to Skobeliev and his nakaz; the Allied ambassadors protested and finally Bonar Law in the British House of Commons, in answer to a question, responded coldly, "As far as I know the Paris Conference will not discuss the aims of the war at all, but only the methods of conducting it."

At this the conservative Russian press was jubilant, and the Bolsheviks cried, "See where the compromising tactics of the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries have led them!"

Along a thousand miles of front the millions of men in Russia's armies stirred like the sea rising, pouring into the capital their hundreds upon hundreds of delegations, crying "Peace! Peace!"

I went across the river to the Cirque Moderne, to one of the great popular meetings which occurred all over the city, more numerous night after night. The bare, gloomy amphitheatre, lit by five tiny lights hanging from a thin wire, was packed from the ring up the steep sweep of grimy benches to the very roof—soldiers, sailors, workmen, women, all listening as if their lives depended upon it. A soldier was speaking—from the Five Hundred and Forty-eight Division, wherever and whatever that was:

"Comrades," he cried, and there was real anguish in his drawn face and despairing gestures. "The people at the top are always calling upon us to sacrifice more, sacrifice more, while those who have everything are left unmolested.

"We are at war with Germany. Would we invite German generals to serve on our Staff? Well we're at war with the capitalists too, and yet we invite them into our Government.

"The soldier says, 'Show me what I am fighting for. Is it Constantinople, or is it free Russia? Is it the democracy, or is it the capitalist plunderers? If you can prove to me that I am defending the Revolution then I'll go out and fight without capital punishment to force me.'

"When the land belongs to the peasants, and the factories to the workers, and the power to the Soviets, then we'll know we have something to fight for, and we'll fight for it!"

In the barracks, the factories, on the street-corners, endless soldier speakers, all clamouring for an end to the war, declaring that if the Government did not make an energetic effort to get peace, the army would leave the trenches and go home.

The spokesman for the Eighth Army:

"We are weak, we have only a few men left in each company. They must give us food and boots and reinforcements, or soon there will be left only empty trenches. Peace or supplies—either let the Government end the war or support the Army."

For the Forty-sixth Siberian Artillery:

"The officers will not work with our Committees, they betray us to the enemy, they apply the death penalty to our agitators; and the counter-revolutionary Government supports them. We thought that the Revolution would bring peace. But now the Government forbids us even to talk
of such things, and at the same time doesn't give us enough food to live on, or enough ammunition to fight with."

From Europe came rumours of peace at the expense of Russia....

News of the treatment of Russian troops in France added to the discontent. The First Brigade had tried to replace its officers with Soldiers' Committees, like their comrades at home, and had refused an order to go to Salonika, demanding to be sent to Russia. They had been surrounded and starved, and then fired on by artillery, and many killed....

On October 29th I went to the white-marble and crimson hall of the Marinsky palace, where the Council of the Republic sat, to hear Terestchenko's declaration of the Government's foreign policy, awaited with such terrible anxiety by all the peace-thirsty and exhausted land.

A tall, impeccably-dressed young man with a smooth face and high cheek-bones, suavely reading his careful, non-committal speech. Nothing.... Only the same platitudes about crushing German militarism with the help of the Allies—about the "state interests" of Russia, about the "embarrassment" caused by Skobeliev's nakaz. He ended with the key-note:

"Russia is a great power. Russia will remain a great power, whatever happens. We must all defend her, we must show that we are defenders of a great ideal, and children of a great power."

Nobody was satisfied. The reactionaries wanted a "strong" imperialist policy; the democratic parties wanted an assurance that the Government would press for peace. I reproduce an editorial in *Rabotchi i Soldat* (Worker and Soldier), organ of the Bolshevik Petrograd Soviet:

**The Government's Answer To The Trenches**

The most taciturn of our Ministers, Mr. Terestchenko, has actually told the trenches the following:

1. We are closely united with our Allies. (Not with the peoples, but with the Governments.)

2. There is no use for the democracy to discuss the possibility or impossibility of a winter campaign. That will be decided by the Governments of our Allies.

3. The 1st of July offensive was beneficial and a very happy affair. (He did not mention the consequences.)

4. It is not true that our Allies do not care about us. The Minister has in his possession very important declarations. (Declarations? What about deeds? What about the behaviour of the British fleet?)

The parleying of the British king with exiled counter-revolutionary General Gurko? The Minister did not mention all this.)

5. The nakaz to Skobeliev is bad; the Allies don't like it and the Russian diplomats don't like it. In the Allied Conference we must all 'speak one language.'

And is that all? That is all. What is the way out? The solution is, faith in the Allies and in Terestchenko. When will peace come? When the Allies permit.
That is how the Government replied to the trenches about peace!

Now in the background of Russian politics began to form the vague outlines of a sinister power—the Cossacks. Novaya Zhizn (New Life), Gorky's paper, called attention to their activities:

At the beginning of the Revolution the Cossacks refused to shoot down the people. When Kornilov marched on Petrograd they refused to follow him. From passive loyalty to the Revolution the Cossacks have passed to an active political offensive (against it). From the background of the Revolution they have suddenly advanced to the front of the stage.

Kaledin, ataman of the Don Cossacks, had been dismissed by the Provisional Government for his complicity in the Kornilov affair. He flatly refused to resign, and surrounded by three immense Cossack armies lay at Novotcherkask, plotting and menacing. So great was his power that the Government was forced to ignore his insubordination. More than that, it was compelled formally to recognise the Council of the Union of Cossack Armies, and to declare illegal the newly-formed Cossack Section of the Soviets.

In the first part of October a Cossack delegation called upon Kerensky, arrogantly insisting that the charges against Kaledin be dropped, and reproaching the Minister-President for yielding to the Soviets. Kerensky agreed to let Kaledin alone, and then is reported to have said, "In the eyes of the Soviet leaders I am a despot and a tyrant. As for the Provisional Government, not only does it not depend upon the Soviets, but it considers it regrettable that they exist at all."

At the same time another Cossack mission called upon the British ambassador, treating with him boldly as representatives of "the free Cossack people."

In the Don something very like a Cossack Republic had been established. The Kuban declared itself an independent Cossack State. The Soviets of Rostov-on-Don and Yekaterinburg were dispersed by armed Cossacks, and the headquarters of the Coal Miners' Union at Kharkov raided. In all its manifestations the Cossack movement was anti-Socialist and militaristic. Its leaders were nobles and great land-owners, like Kaledin, Kornilov, Generals Dutov, Karaulov and Bardizhe, and it was backed by the powerful merchants and bankers of Moscow.

Old Russia was rapidly breaking up. In Ukraine, in Finland, Poland, White Russia, the nationalist movements gathered strength and became bolder. The local Governments, controlled by the propertied classes, claimed autonomy, refusing to obey orders from Petrograd. At Helsingfors the Finnish Senate declined to loan money to the Provisional Government, declared Finland autonomous, and demanded the withdrawal of Russian troops. The bourgeois Rada at Kiev extended the boundaries of Ukraine until they included all the richest agricultural lands of South Russia, as far east as the Urals, and began the formation of a national army. Premier Vinnitchenko hinted at a separate peace with Germany—and the Provisional Government was helpless. Siberia, the Caucasus, demanded separate Constituent Assemblies. And in all these countries there was the beginning of a bitter struggle between the authorities and the local Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

Conditions were daily more chaotic. Hundreds of thousands of soldiers were deserting the front and beginning to move in vast, aimless tides over the face of the land. The peasants of Tambov and Tver Governments, tired of waiting for the land, exasperated by the repressive measures of
the Government, were burning manor-houses and massacring land-owners. Immense strikes and lock-outs convulsed Moscow, Odessa and the coal-mines of the Don. Transportation was paralysed; the army was starving and in the big cities there was no bread.

The Government, torn between the democratic and reactionary factions, could do nothing: when forced to act it always supported the interests of the propertied classes. Cossacks were sent to restore order among the peasants, to break the strikes. In Tashkent, Government authorities suppressed the Soviet. In Petrograd the Economic Council, established to rebuild the shattered economic life of the country, came to a deadlock between the opposing forces of capital and labour, and was dissolved by Kerensky. The old régime military men, backed by Cadets, demanded that harsh measures be adopted to restore discipline in the Army and the Navy. In vain Admiral Verderrevsky, the venerable Minister of Marine, and General Verkhovsky, Minister of War, insisted that only a new, voluntary, democratic discipline, based on cooperation with the soldiers' and sailors' Committees, could save the army and navy. Their recommendations were ignored.

The reactionaries seemed determined to provoke popular anger. The trial of Kornilov was coming on. More and more openly the bourgeois press defended him, speaking of him as "the great Russian patriot." Burtzev's paper, Obshtchee Dielo (Common Cause), called for a dictatorship of Kornilov, Kaledin and Kerensky!

I had a talk with Burtzev one day in the press gallery of the Council of the Republic. A small, stooped figure with a wrinkled face, eyes near-sighted behind thick glasses, untidy hair and beard streaked with grey.

"Mark my words, young man! What Russia needs is a Strong Man. We should get our minds off the Revolution now and concentrate on the Germans. Bunglers, bunglers, to defeat Kornilov; and back of the bunglers are the German agents. Kornilov should have won."

On the extreme right the organs of the scarcely-veiled Monarchists, Purishkevitch's Narodny Tribun (People's Tribune), Novaya Rus (New Russia), and Zhivoye Slovo (Living Word), openly advocated the extermination of the revolutionary democracy.

On the 23rd of October occurred the naval battle with a German squadron in the Gulf of Riga. On the pretext that Petrograd was in danger, the Provisional Government drew up plans for evacuating the capital. First the great munitions works were to go, distributed widely throughout Russia; and then the Government itself was to move to Moscow. Instantly the Bolsheviki began to cry out that the Government was abandoning the Red Capital in order to weaken the Revolution. Riga had been sold to the Germans; now Petrograd was being betrayed!

The bourgeois press was joyful. "At Moscow," said the Cadet paper Ryetch (Speech), "the Government can pursue its work in a tranquil atmosphere, without being interfered with by anarchists." Rodzianko, leader of the right wing of the Cadet party, declared in Utro Rossii (The Morning of Russia) that the taking of Petrograd by the Germans would be a blessing, because it would destroy the Soviets and get rid of the revolutionary Baltic Fleet:

Petrograd is in danger (he wrote). I say to myself, "Let God take care of Petrograd." They fear that if Petrograd is lost the central revolutionary organisations will be destroyed. To that I answer that I rejoice if all these organisations are destroyed; for they will bring nothing but disaster upon Russia.
With the taking of Petrograd the Baltic Fleet will also be destroyed. But there will be nothing to regret; most of the battleships are completely demoralised. . . .

In the face of a storm of popular disapproval the plan of evacuation was repudiated.

Meanwhile the Congress of Soviets loomed over Russia like a thunder-cloud, shot through with lightnings. It was opposed, not only by the Government but by all the "moderate" Socialists. The Central Army and Fleet Committees, the Central Committees of some of the Trade Unions, the Peasants' Soviets, but most of all the Tsay-ee-kah itself, spared no pains to prevent the meeting. Izviestia and Golos Soldata (Voice of the Soldier), newspapers founded by the Petrograd Soviet but now in the hands of the Tsay-ee-kah, fiercely assailed it, as did the entire artillery of the Socialist Revolutionary party press, Dielo Naroda (People's Cause) and Votia Naroda (People's Will).

Delegates were sent through the country, messages flashed by wire to committees in charge of local Soviets, to Army Committees, instructing them to halt or delay elections to the Congress. Solemn public resolutions against the Congress, declarations that the democracy was opposed to the meeting so near the date of the Constituent Assembly, representatives from the Front, from the Union of Zemstvos, the Peasants' Union, Union of Cossack Armies, Union of Officers, Knights of St. George, Death Battalions, protesting. The Council of the Russian Republic was one chorus of disapproval. The entire machinery set up by the Russian Revolution of March functioned to block the Congress of Soviets.

On the other hand was the shapeless will of the proletariat—the workmen, common soldiers and poor peasants. Many local Soviets were already Bolshevik; then there were the organisations of the industrial workers, the Fabritchno-Zavodskiye Comitieti Factory-Shop Committees; and the insurgent Army and Fleet organisations. In some places the people, prevented from electing their regular Soviet delegates, held rump meetings and chose one of their number to go to Petrograd. In others they smashed the old obstructionist committees and formed new ones. A ground-swell of revolt heaved and cracked the crust which had been slowly hardening on the surface of revolutionary fires dormant all those months. Only an spontaneous mass-movement could bring about the All-Russian Congress of Soviets.

Day after day the Bolshevik orators toured the barracks and factories, violently denouncing "this Government of civil war." One Sunday we went, on a top-heavy steam tram that lumbered through oceans of mud, between stark factories and immense churches, to Obukhovsky Zavod, a Government munitions-plant out on the Schlüsselburg Prospekt.

The meeting took place between the gaunt brick walls of a huge unfinished building, ten thousand black-clothed men and women packed around a scaffolding draped in red, people heaped on piles of lumber and bricks, perched high upon shadowy girders, intent and thunder-voiced. Through the dull, heavy sky now and again burst the sun, flooding reddish light through the skeleton windows upon the mass of simple faces upturned to us.

Lunatcharsky, a slight, student-like figure with the sensitive face of an artist, was telling why the power must be taken by the Soviets. Nothing else could guarantee the Revolution against its enemies, who were deliberately ruining the country, ruining the army, creating opportunities for a new Konilov.
A soldier from the Rumanian front, thin, tragic and fierce, cried, "Comrades! We are starving at the front, we are stiff with cold. We are dying for no reason. I ask the American comrades to carry word to America, that the Russians will never give up their Revolution until they die. We will hold the fort with all our strength until the peoples of the world rise and help us! Tell the American workers to rise and fight for the Social Revolution!"

Then came Petrovsky, slight, slow-voiced, implacable: "Now is the time for deeds, not words. The economic situation is bad, but we must get used to it. They are trying to starve us and freeze us. They are trying to provoke us. But let them know that they can go too far—that if they dare to lay their hands upon the organisations of the proletariat we will sweep them away like scum from the face of the earth!"

The Bolshevik press suddenly expanded. Besides the two party papers, Rabotchi Put and Soldat (Soldier), there appeared a new paper for the peasants, Derevenskaya Byednota (Village Poorest), poured out in a daily half-million edition; and on October 17th, Rabotchi i Soldat. Its leading article summed up the Bolshevik point of view:

The fourth year's campaign will mean the annihilation of the army and the country. There is danger for the safety of Petrograd. Counter-revolutionists rejoice in the people's misfortunes. The peasants brought to desperation come out in open rebellion; the landlords and Government authorities massacre them with punitive expeditions; factories and mines are closing down, workmen are threatened with starvation. The bourgeoisie and its Generals want to restore a blind discipline in the army. Supported by the bourgeoisie, the Kornilovtsi are openly getting ready to break up the meeting of the Constituent Assembly.

The Kerensky Government is against the people. He will destroy the country. This paper stands for the people and by the people—the poor classes, workers, soldiers and peasants. The people can only be saved by the completion of the Revolution—and for this purpose the full power must be in the hands of the Soviets.

This paper advocates the following: All power to the Soviets—both in the capital and in the provinces.
Immediate truce on all fronts. An honest peace between peoples.
Landlord estates—without compensation—to the peasants.
Workers' control over industrial production.
A faithfully and honestly elected Constituent Assembly.

It is interesting to reproduce here a passage from that same paper—the organ of those Bolsheviki so well known to the world as German agents:

The German Kaiser, covered with the blood of millions of dead people, wants to push his army against Petrograd. Let us call to the German workmen, soldiers and peasants, who want peace not less than we do, to—stand up against this damned war!

This can be done only by a revolutionary Government, which would speak really for the workmen, soldiers and peasants of Russia, and would appeal over the heads of the diplomats directly to the German troops, fill the German trenches
with proclamations in the German language. Our airmen would spread these proclamations all over Germany.

In the Council of the Republic the gulf between the two sides of the chamber deepened day by day.

"The propertied classes," cried Karelin, for the Left Socialist Revolutionaries, "want to exploit the revolutionary machine of the State to bind Russia to the war-chariot of the Allies! The revolutionary parties are absolutely against this policy."

Old Nicholas Tchaikovsky, representing the Populist Socialists, spoke against giving the land to the peasants, and took the side of the Cadets: "We must have immediately strong discipline in the army. Since the beginning of the war I have not ceased to insist that it is a crime to undertake social and economic reforms in war-time. We are committing that crime, and yet I am not the enemy of these reforms, because I am a Socialist."

Cries from the Left, "We don't believe you!" Mighty applause from the Right.

Adzhemov, for the Cadets, declared that there was no necessity to tell the army what it was fighting for, since every soldier ought to realise that the first task was to drive the enemy from Russian territory.

Kerensky himself came twice, to plead passionately for national unity, once bursting into tears at the end. The assembly heard him coldly, interrupting with ironical remarks.

Smolny Institute, headquarters of the Tsay-ee-kah and of the Petrograd Soviet, lay miles out on the edge of the city, beside the wide Neva. I went there on a street-car, moving snail-like with a groaning noise through the cobbled, muddy streets, and jammed with people. At the end of the line rose the graceful smoke-blue cupolas of Smolny Convent outlined in dull gold, beautiful; and beside it the great barracks like façade of Smolny Institute, two hundred yards long and three lofty stories high, the Imperial arms carved hugely in stone still insolent over the entrance.

Under the old régime a famous convent-school for the daughters of the Russian nobility, patronised by the Tsarina herself, the Institute had been taken over by the revolutionary organisations of workers and soldiers. Within were more than a hundred huge rooms, white and bare, on their doors enamelled plaques still informing the passerby that within was "Ladies' Class-room Number 4" or "Teachers' Bureau"; but over these hung crudely-lettered signs, evidence of the vitality of the new order: "Central Committee of the Petrograd Soviet" and "Tsay-ee-kah" and "Bureau of Foreign Affairs"; "Union of Socialist Soldiers," "Central Committee of the All-Russian Trade Unions," "Factory-Shop Committees," "Central Army Committee"; and the central offices and caucus-rooms of the political parties.

The long, vaulted corridors, lit by rare electric lights, were thronged with hurrying shapes of soldiers and workmen, some bent under the weight of huge bundles of newspapers, proclamations, printed propaganda of all sorts. The sound of their heavy boots made a deep and incessant thunder on the wooden floor. Signs were posted up everywhere: "Comrades! For the sake of your health, preserve cleanliness!" Long tables stood at the head of the stairs on every floor, and on the landings, heaped with pamphlets and the literature of the different political parties, for sale.
The spacious, low-ceilinged refectory downstairs was still a dining-room. For two rubles I bought a ticket entitling me to dinner, and stood in line with a thousand others, waiting to get to the long serving-tables, where twenty men and women were ladling from immense cauldrons cabbage soup, hunks of meat and piles of *kasha*, slabs of black bread. Five kopeks paid for tea in a tin cup. From a basket one grabbed a greasy wooden spoon. The benches along the wooden tables were packed with hungry proletarians, wolfing their food, plotting, shouting rough jokes across the room.

Upstairs was another eating-place, reserved for the *Tsay-ee-kah*—though every one went there. Here could be had bread thickly buttered and endless glasses of tea.

In the south wing on the second floor was the great hall of meetings, the former ball-room of the Institute. A lofty white room lighted by glazed-white chandeliers holding hundreds of ornate electric bulbs, and divided by two rows of massive columns; at one end a dais, flanked with two tall many-branched light standards, and a gold frame behind, from which the Imperial portrait had been cut. Here on festal occasions had been banked brilliant military and ecclesiastical uniforms, a setting for Grand Duchesses.

Just across the hall outside was the office of the Credentials Committee for the Congress of Soviets. I stood there watching the new delegates come in—burly, bearded soldiers, workmen in black blouses, a few long-haired peasants. The girl in charge—a member of Plekhanov's *Yedinstvo* group—smiled contemptuously. "These are very different people from the delegates to the first *Siezd* (Congress)," she remarked. "See how rough and ignorant they look! The Dark People." It was true; the depths of Russia had been stirred, and it was the bottom which came uppermost now. The Credentials Committee, appointed by the old *Tsay-ee-kah*, was challenging delegate after delegate, on the ground that they had been illegally elected. Karakhan, member of the Bolshevik Central Committee, simply grinned. "Never mind," he said, "When the time comes we'll see that you get your seats."

*Rabotchi i Soldat* said:

> The attention of delegates to the new All-Russian Congress is called to attempts of certain members of the Organising Committee to break up the Congress, by asserting that it will not take place, and that delegates had better leave Petrograd. Pay no attention to these lies. Great days are coming. . . .

It was evident that a quorum would not come together by November 2, so the opening of the Congress was postponed to the 7th. But the whole country was now aroused; and the Mensheviki and Socialist Revolutionaries, realising that they were defeated, suddenly changed their tactics and began to wire frantically to their provincial organisations to elect as many "moderate" Socialist delegates as possible. At the same time the Executive Committee of the Peasants' Soviets issued an emergency call for a Peasants' Congress, to meet December 13th and offset whatever action the workers and soldiers might take. . . .

What would the Bolsheviks do? Rumours ran through the city that there would be an armed "demonstration," a *vystuplennie*—"coming out" of the workers and soldiers. The bourgeois and reactionary press prophesied insurrection, and urged the Government to arrest the Petrograd Soviet, or at least to prevent the meeting of the Congress. Such sheets as *Novaya Rus* advocated a general Bolshevik massacre.
Gorky's paper, *Novaya Zhizn*, agreed with the Bolsheviki that the reactionaries were attempting
to destroy the Revolution, and that if necessary they must be resisted by force of arms; but all the
parties of the revolutionary democracy must present a united front.

As long as the democracy has not organised its principal forces, so long as the
resistance to its influence is still strong, there is no advantage in passing to the
attack. But if the hostile elements appeal to force, then the revolutionary
democracy should enter the battle to seize the power, and it will be sustained by
the most profound strata of the people. . . .

Gorky pointed out that both reactionary and Government newspapers were inciting the
Bolsheviki to violence. An insurrection, however, would prepare the way for a new Kornilov. He
urged the Bolsheviki to deny the rumours. Potressov, in the Menshevik *Dien* (Day), published a
sensational story, accompanied by a map, which professed to reveal the secret Bolshevik plan of
campaign.

As if by magic, the walls were covered with warnings, proclamations, appeals, from the Central
Committees of the "moderate" and conservative factions and the Tsay-ee-kah, denouncing any
"demonstrations," imploring the workers and soldiers not to listen to agitators. For instance, this
from the Military Section of the Socialist Revolutionary party:

Again rumours are spreading around the town of an intended vystuplennie. What
is the source of these rumours? What organisation authorises these agitators who
preach insurrection? The Bolsheviki, to a question addressed to them in the Tsay-
ee-kah, denied that they have anything to do with it. But these rumours
themselves carry with them a great danger. It may easily happen that, not taking
into consideration the state of mind of the majority of the workers, soldiers and
peasants, individual hot-heads will call out part of the workers and soldiers on the
streets, inciting them to an uprising. In this fearful time through which
revolutionary Russia is passing, any insurrection can easily turn into civil war,
and there can result from it the destruction of all organisations of the proletariat,
built up with so much labour. The counter-revolutionary plotters are planning to
take advantage of this insurrection to destroy the Revolution, open the front to
Wilhelm, and wreck the Constituent Assembly. . . . Stick stubbornly to your
posts! Do not come out!

On October 28th, in the corridors of Smolny, I spoke with Kameniev, a little man with a reddish
pointed beard and Gallic gestures. He was not at all sure that enough delegates would come. "If
there is a Congress," he said, "it will represent the overwhelming sentiment of the people. If the
majority is Bolshevik, as I think it will be, we shall demand that the power be given to the
Soviets, and the Provisional Government must resign."

Volodarsky, a tall, pale youth with glasses and a bad complexion, was more definite. "The
'Lieber-Dans' and the other compromisers are sabotaging the Congress. If they succeed in
preventing its meeting,—well, then we are realists enough not to depend on *that*!"

Under date of October 29th I find entered in my notebook the following items culled from the
newspapers of the day:

Moghilev (General Staff Headquarters). Concentration here of loyal Guard
Regiments, the Savage Division, Cossacks and Death Battalions.
The *yunkers* of the Officers' Schools of Pavlovsk, Tsarskoye Selo and Peterhof ordered by the Government to be ready to come to Petrograd. Oranienbaum *yunkers* arrive in the city.

Part of the Armoured Car Division of the Petrograd garrison stationed in the Winter Palace.

Upon orders signed by Trotzky, several thousand rifles delivered by the Government Arms Factory at Sestroretzk to delegates of the Petrograd workmen.

At a meeting of the City Militia of the Lower Liteiny Quarter, a resolution demanding that all power be given to the Soviets.

This is just a sample of the confused events of those feverish days, when everybody knew that something was going to happen, but nobody knew just what.

At a meeting of the Petrograd Soviet in Smolny, the night of October 30th, Trotzky branded the assertions of the bourgeois press that the Soviet contemplated armed insurrection as "an attempt of the reactionaries to discredit and wreck the Congress of Soviets. The Petrograd Soviet," he declared, "had not ordered any *vystuplenie*. If it is necessary we shall do so, and we will be supported by the Petrograd garrison. They (the Government) are preparing a counter-revolution; and we shall answer with an offensive which will be merciless and decisive."

It is true that the Petrograd Soviet had not ordered a demonstration, but the Central Committee of the Bolshevik party was considering the question of insurrection. All night long the 23d they met. There were present all the party intellectuals, the leaders—and delegates of the Petrograd workers and garrison. Alone of the intellectuals Lenin and Trotzky stood for insurrection. Even the military men opposed it. A vote was taken. Insurrection was defeated!

Then arose a rough workman, his face convulsed with rage. "I speak for the Petrograd proletariat," he said, harshly. "We are in favour of insurrection. Have it your own way, but I tell you now that if you allow the Soviets to be destroyed, we're through with you!" Some soldiers joined him. And after that they voted again—insurrection won. . . .

However, the right wing of the Bolsheviki, led by Riazanov, Kameniev and Zinoviev, continued to campaign against an armed rising. On the morning of October 31st appeared in *Rabotchi Put* the first instalment of Lenin's "Letter to the Comrades," one of the most audacious pieces of political propaganda the world has ever seen. In it Lenin seriously presented the arguments in favour of insurrection, taking as text the objections of Kameniev and Riazonov.

"Either we must abandon our slogan, 'All Power to the Soviets,' " he wrote, "or else we must make an insurrection. There is no middle course."

That same afternoon Paul Miliukov, leader of the Cadets, made a brilliant, bitter speech in the Council of the Republic, branding the Skobeliev *nakaz* as pro-German, declaring that the "revolutionary democracy" was destroying Russia, sneering at Terestchenko, and openly declaring that he preferred German diplomacy to Russian. The Left benches were one roaring tumult all through.

On its part the Government could not ignore the significance of the success of the Bolshevik propaganda. On the 29th joint commission of the Government and the Council of the Republic hastily drew up two laws, one for giving the land temporarily to the peasants, and the other for
pushing an energetic foreign policy of peace. The next day Kerensky suspended capital punishment in the army. That same afternoon was opened with great ceremony the first session of the new "Commission for Strengthening the Republican Régime and Fighting Against Anarchy and Counter-Revolution" of which history shows not the slightest further trace. The following morning with two other correspondents I interviewed Kerensky—the last time he received journalists.

"The Russian people," he said, bitterly, "are suffering from economic fatigue—and from disillusionment with the Allies! The world thinks that the Russian Revolution is at an end. Do not be mistaken. The Russian Revolution is just beginning." Words more prophetic, perhaps, than he knew.

Stormy was the all-night meeting of the Petrograd Soviet the 30th of October, at which I was present. The "moderate" Socialist intellectuals, officers, members of Army Committees, the Tsay-ee-kah, were there in force. Against them rose up workmen, peasants and common soldiers, passionate and simple.

A peasant told of the disorders in Tver, which he said were caused by the arrest of the Land Committees. "This Kerensky is nothing but a shield to the pomieshtchiki (landowners)," he cried. "They know that at the Constituent Assembly we will take the land anyway, so they are trying to destroy the Constituent Assembly!"

A machinist from the Putilov works described how the superintendents were closing down the departments one by one on the pretext that there was no fuel or raw materials. The Factory-Shop Committee, he declared, had discovered huge hidden supplies.

"It is a provocatzia," said he. "They want to starve us—or drive us to violence!"

Among the soldiers one began, "Comrades! I bring you greetings from the place where men are digging their graves and call them trenches!"

Then arose a tall, gaunt young soldier, with flashing eyes, met with a roar of welcome. It was Tchudnovsky, reported killed in the July fighting, and now risen from the dead.

"The soldier masses no longer trust their officers. Even the Army Committees, who refused to call a meeting of our Soviet, betrayed us. The masses of the soldiers want the Constituent Assembly to be held exactly when it was called for, and those who dare to postpone it will be cursed—and not only platonic curses either, for the Army has guns too."

He told of the electoral campaign for the Constituent now raging in the Fifth Army. "The officers, and especially the Mensheviki and the Socialist Revolutionaries, are trying deliberately to cripple the Bolshevik. Our papers are not allowed to circulate in the trenches. Our speakers are arrested—"

"Why don't you speak about the lack of bread?" shouted another soldier.

"Man shall not live by bread alone," answered Tchudnovsky, sternly.

Followed him an officer, delegate from the Vitebsk Soviet, a Menshevik oboronetz. "It isn't the question of who has the power. The trouble is not with the Government, but with the war. and the war must be won before any change—" At this, hoots and ironical cheers. "These Bolshevik
agitators are demagogues!" The hall rocked with laughter. "Let us for a moment forget the class struggle—" But he got no farther. A voice yelled, "Don't you wish we would!"

Petrograd presented a curious spectacle in those days. In the factories the committe-rooms were filled with stacks of rifles, couriers came and went, the Red Guard drilled. In all the barracks meetings every night, and all day long interminable hot arguments. On the streets the crowds thickened toward gloomy evening, pouring in slow voluble tides up and down the Nevsky, fighting for the newspapers. Hold-ups increased to such an extent that it was dangerous to walk down side streets. On the Sadovaya one afternoon I saw a crowd of several hundred people beat and trample to death a soldier caught stealing. Mysterious individuals circulated around the shivering women who waited in queue long cold hours for bread and milk, whispering that the Jews had cornered the food supply—and that while the people starved, the Soviet members lived luxuriously.

At Smolny there were strict guards at the door and the outer gates, demanding everybody's pass. The committee-rooms buzzed and hummed all day and all night, hundreds of soldiers and workmen slept on the floor, wherever they could find room. Upstairs in the great hall a thousand people crowded to the uproarious sessions of the Petrograd Soviet.

Gambling clubs functioned hectically from dusk to dawn, with champagne flowing and stakes of twenty thousand rubles. In the centre of the city at night prostitutes in jewels and expensive furs walked up and down, crowded the cafés.

Monarchist plots, German spies, smugglers hatching schemes.

And in the rain, the bitter chill, the great throbbing city under grey skies rushing faster and faster toward—what?