

Before beginning my report, I want to convey the greetings of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Russia to you, the Soviet of Workers' Deputies of Baku, the greetings of the Council of People's Commissars to the Revolutionary Committee of Azerbaijan and its head, Comrade Narimanov, and the ardent greetings of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic to the Eleventh Red Army, which liberated Azerbaijan and is staunchly upholding its liberty. (Applause.)

The basic question in the affairs of Russia during the three years of Soviet power has undoubtedly been the question of her international position. There was a time when Soviet Russia was ignored, disregarded, unrecognized. That was the first period—from the establishment of Soviet power in Russia to the defeat of German imperialism. That was the period when the Western imperialists—the two coalitions, the British and the German, being at each other's throats—disregarded Soviet Russia, had no time for her, so to speak.

The second period was that from the defeat of German imperialism and the beginning of the German revolution down to Denikin's broad offensive against Russia, when he was at the gates of Tula. The distinguishing feature of Russia's international position in that period was that the Entente—the Anglo-French-American coalition—having defeated Germany, directed all its available forces against Soviet Russia. That was the period when we were threatened with an alliance of fourteen states, which afterwards proved to be a myth.

The third period is the one we are in now, when we are not only noticed as a socialist power, not only recognized in fact, but also feared.

THE FIRST PERIOD

Three years ago, on October 25 (or November 7, New Style), 1917, a handful of Bolshevik members of the Petrograd Soviet met and decided to surround Kerensky's palace, take prisoner his already demoralized troops, and transfer power to the Second Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies, which was then assembled.

At that time many looked upon us as cranks at the best, and as "agents of German imperialism" at the worst.

Internationally, this period could be called the period of the complete isolation of Soviet Russia.

Not only were the surrounding bourgeois states hostile to Russia; even our socialist "comrades" in the West looked upon us with distrust.

If Soviet Russia nevertheless survived as a state, it was only because the Western imperialists were then absorbed in a fierce struggle among themselves. Furthermore, they looked upon the Bolshevik experiment in Russia with scorn: they believed that the Bolsheviks would die a natural death.

Internally, this period may be described as the period of the destruction of the old order in Russia, of the destruction of the entire apparatus of the old bourgeois power.

We knew from theory that the proletariat cannot simply take over the old state machine and set it going. That theoretical precept, taught us by Marx, was fully confirmed in practice when we found ourselves in a regular phase of sabotage on the part of the tsarist officials, office employees and a certain section of the upper proletariat—a phase of complete disorganization of state power.

The first and most important apparatus of the bourgeois state, the old army and its generals, was thrown on to the scrap heap. That cost us very dear. It left us for a time without any army at all, and we had to sign the Brest peace. But there was no alternative; history offered us no other way of emancipating the proletariat.

Another and equally important apparatus of the bourgeoisie which was destroyed, thrown on to the scrap heap, was the bureaucracy, the apparatus of bourgeois administration.

In the sphere of economic administration of the country, the most notable thing was that the banks, the main nerve of the bourgeois economic organism, were taken out of the hands of the bourgeoisie. The banks were taken out of the hands of the bourgeoisie, and the latter was, so to speak, deprived of its soul. Then came the work of breaking up the old economic machinery and expropriating the bourgeoisie—depriving it of the mills and factories and turning them over to the working class. Lastly came the break-up of the old machinery of food supply and the attempt to build a new one capable of procuring food and distributing it among the population. Finally, there was the abolition of the Constituent Assembly. These, roughly, were the measures Soviet Russia had to take in this period in order to destroy the bourgeois state apparatus.

THE SECOND PERIOD

The second period began when the Anglo-French-American coalition, having defeated German imperialism, set to work to destroy Soviet Russia.

Internationally, this period can be described as a period of open war between the forces of the Entente and the forces of Soviet Russia. If in the first period we

were disregarded, were sneered at and scoffed at, in this period, on the contrary, all the dark forces stirred into action in order to put an end to the so-called "anarchy" in Russia, which was threatening the decomposition of the entire capitalist world.

Internally, this period must be described as a period of construction, when the destruction of the old apparatus of the bourgeois state was in the main completed and a new phase, a phase of construction had begun; when the mills and factories which had been taken away from the owners were set going; when real workers' control was instituted and the proletariat then passed from control to direct management, and when a new machinery of food supply was being built in place of the one which had been destroyed, a new machinery of railway administration in the centre and in the provinces in place of the destroyed one, and a new army in place of the old army.

It must be confessed that in general the work of construction proceeded very haltingly in this period, because the greater part—nine-tenths—of our creative energy was devoted to the building of the Red Army, since in the mortal struggle against the forces of the Entente the very existence of Soviet Russia was at stake, and in that period its existence could be preserved only by a powerful Red Army. And it must be said that our efforts were not in vain, because already in that period the Red Army demonstrated the full scope of its might by vanquishing Yudenich and Kolchak.

As regards the international position of Russia, this second period may be said to have been one of the gradual elimination of Russia's isolation. Her first allies began to appear. The German revolution produced closely-welded cadres of workers, communist cadres and laid the foundation of a new Communist Party in the shape of the Liebknecht group

In France, a small group which nobody had paid any attention to before, the Lorient group, became an important group of the communist movement. In Italy, the communist trend, which had been weak at first, came to embrace practically the whole Italian Socialist Party, its majority.

In the East, the Red Army's successes started a ferment which, for instance in Turkey, developed into an outright war against the Entente and its allies.

The bourgeois states themselves in this period were no longer the solid body of hostility to Russia which they had been in the first period, to say nothing of the disagreements within the Entente itself over the question of recognizing Soviet Russia, which grew more acute as time went on. Voices began to be raised

advocating negotiation and agreement with Russia. Estonia, Latvia and Finland were examples.

Lastly, "Hands off Russia!" had become a popular slogan among the British and French workers and made it impossible for the Entente to intervene directly in Russia's affairs by force of arms. The Entente had to stop sending British and French soldiers against Russia. It had to confine itself to using the armies of others against Russia, armies which it could not order about at its own discretion.

THE THIRD PERIOD

The third period is the one we are in now. It may be called a transition period. The distinguishing feature of the first part of this period was that, having defeated the main enemy, Denikin, and foreseeing the end of the war, Russia set about converting the state apparatus, which had been adapted to the purposes of war, to new tasks, the tasks of economic construction. Whereas, formerly, the cry had been: "Everything for the war!" "Everything for the Red Army!" "Everything for victory over the foreign enemy!"—now it became: "Everything for the strengthening of the economy!" However, this phase of the third period, which began after the defeat of Denikin and his ejection from the Ukraine, was interrupted by Poland's attack on Russia. The Entente's purpose in this was to prevent Soviet Russia from getting on its feet economically and becoming a great world power. The Entente feared this, and incited Poland against Russia.

The state apparatus, already adapted for economic construction, had to be reconstructed again; the Labour Armies which had been formed in the Ukraine, the Urals and the Don area had again to be put on a war footing in order to rally the fighting units around them and dispatch them against Poland. This period is ending with Poland already neutralized and no new external enemies are so far in sight. The only direct enemy is the remnants of Denikin's army, represented by Wrangel, who is now being smashed by our Comrade Budyonny.

Now there are grounds for assuming that, for a short period at least, Soviet Russia will receive a valuable respite in which to direct all the energies of its indefatigable forces, who brought the Red Army into being almost in one day, to the work of economic construction, and to put our factories, our agriculture and our food agencies on their feet.

Externally, internationally, the distinguishing feature of the third period is not only that our enemies have ceased to ignore Russia, nor only that they have begun to fight her—even brandishing the bogey of the mythical fourteen states with which Churchill threatened Russia—but that, having received a series of

drubbings, they have even begun to fear Russia, realizing that she is growing into a great socialist people's power, which will not allow itself to be ill-used.

Internally, the distinguishing feature of this period is that, with the defeat of Wrangel, Russia is getting her hands free and is devoting all her energies to internal affairs. Indeed, it is already observable that our economic bodies are working much better, much more thoroughly, than they did in the second period. In the summer of 1918 the workers of Moscow received one-eighth of a pound of bread mixed with oilcake once in two days. That difficult and distressful period is now a thing of the past. The workers of Moscow, as well as of Petrograd, now receive a pound and a half of bread a day. That means that our food agencies have got properly going, have improved, have learned how to procure grain.

As to our policy towards internal enemies, it remains, and must remain, what it was in all the three periods, that is, a policy of crushing all the enemies of the proletariat. This policy cannot of course be called a policy of "universal freedom"—in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat there can be no universal freedom, that is, no freedom of speech, freedom of the press, etc., for

our bourgeoisie. The sum and substance of our home policy is to grant maximum freedom to the proletarian sections of town and country, and to deny even minimum freedom to the remnants of the bourgeois class.

That is the essence of our policy, which rests upon the dictatorship of the proletariat.

PROSPECTS

Of course, our constructive work in these three years has not been as effective as we would have liked. But allowances must be made for the difficult, the impossible conditions in which the work had to be done, conditions which could not be evaded and could not be gainsaid, but which had to be overcome.

Firstly, we had to build under fire. Imagine a mason who has to lay bricks with one hand and defend what he is building with the other.

Secondly, what we were building was not a bourgeois economy in which each pursues his own private interest and has no concern for the country as a whole and does not set himself the problem of the planned organization of the economy on a country-wide scale. No, it was a socialist society we were building. That means that we must take into account the requirements of society as a whole, that the economy of the whole of Russia must be organized in a

planned and conscious way. That is undoubtedly a task of incomparably greater complexity and difficulty.

That is why our constructive efforts could not yield the maximum results.

That being the state of affairs, our prospects are clear: we are on the threshold of the liquidation of our external enemies, on the threshold of the conversion of our entire state machinery from war purposes to economic purposes. Our foreign policy is one of peace; we are no believers in war. But if war is forced upon us—and there are signs that the Entente is trying to transfer the theatre of hostilities to the South, to Transcaucasia—if the Entente, which we have given a beating several times, forces war upon us again, then it goes without saying that we shall not allow the sword to slip from our hand, we shall not disband our armies. We shall continue as before to bend every effort to ensure that the Red Army flourishes and is ready for action, so that it may be able to defend Soviet Russia against its enemies as boldly and bravely as it has done until now.

Reviewing the past of the Soviet power, I cannot help recalling that evening three years ago, on October 25, 1917, when we, a small group of Bolsheviks headed by Comrade Lenin, who had at our disposal the Petrograd Soviet (it was then already Bolshevik), a small Red Guard, and a quite small and still not fully cemented Communist Party of 200,000-250,000 members—when we, this small group, deposed the representatives of the bourgeoisie and transferred power to the Second Congress of Soviets of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies.

Since then three years have elapsed.

And now we see that in this period Russia has steeled herself in the crucible of fire and storm and has become a great socialist world power.

Whereas at that time we had only the Petrograd Soviet, now, three years later, all the Soviets of Russia are rallied around us.

Instead of the Constituent Assembly, for which our adversaries were then preparing, we now have the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of Soviets, which sprang from the Petrograd Soviet.

Whereas at that time we had a small guard composed of Petrograd workers, who were able to cope with the military cadets who had raised revolt in Petrograd, but were unable to fight an external enemy because they were too weak, now we have a glorious Red Army many million strong, which is smashing the enemies of Soviet Russia, which has vanquished Kolchak and Denikin, and which is now, by the hand of the tried and tested leader of our cavalry, Comrade Budyonny, destroying the last remnants of Wrangel's army.

Whereas at that time, three years ago, we had a small and still not fully cemented Communist Party of some 200,000-250,000 members in all, now, three years later, after the fire and storms through which Soviet Russia has passed, we have a party of 700,000, a party forged out of steel; a party whose members can be re-marshalled at any moment and concentrated by hundreds of thousands on any party task; a party which, without fear of confusion in its ranks, is able at a wave of the hand of the Central Committee to re-form its ranks and march against the enemy.

Whereas at that time, three years ago, we had only small groups of sympathizers in the West—the groups of Loriot in France, of MacLean in Britain, of Liebknecht, who was murdered by the capitalist scoundrels, in Germany—now, three years later, a grand organization of the international revolutionary movement has sprung up—the Third, Communist International, which has won the adherence of the major European parties: the German, the French, the Italian. In the Communist International, which has shattered the Second International, we now have the main core of the international socialist movement.

And it is not by chance that the leader of the Second International, Herr Kautsky, has been thrown out of Germany by the revolution, and that he has been forced to seek asylum in backward Tiflis, with the Georgian social-innkeepers. 1

Lastly, whereas three years ago we observed in the countries of the oppressed East nothing but indifference to the revolution, now the East has begun to stir, and we are witnessing a whole number of liberation movements there directed against the Entente, against imperialism. We have a revolutionary nucleus, a rallying centre for all the other colonies and semi-colonies, in the shape of the Kemal Government, a bourgeois revolutionary government but one which is waging an armed struggle against the Entente.

Whereas three years ago we did not even dare to dream that the East might stir into action, now we not only have a revolutionary nucleus in the East, in the shape of bourgeois revolutionary Turkey; we also possess a socialist organ of the East—the Committee of Action and Propaganda.

All these facts indicating how poor we were in the revolutionary sense three years ago and how rich we have become now; all these facts furnish us with grounds for affirming that Soviet Russia will live, that it will develop and defeat its enemies.

Undoubtedly, our path is not of the easiest; but, just as undoubtedly, we are not to be frightened by difficulties. Paraphrasing the well-known words of Luther, 2 Russia might say:

"Here I stand on the border line between the old, capitalist world and the new, socialist world. Here, on this border line, I unite the efforts of the proletarians of the West and of the peasants of the East in order to shatter the old world. May the god of history be my aid!"

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Notes

1. Vandervelde, MacDonald, Renaudel and other leaders of the Second International arrived in Georgia on September 14, 1920, under the guise of a "socialist delegation." Karl Kautsky, who was considered to be one of the leaders of the "delegation," arrived in Tiflis on September 30. He and the "delegation" were given a ceremonial welcome by the Mensheviks. After a stay of two weeks, the "delegation" returned to Western Europe, but Kautsky remained in Tiflis until December 1920.

2. From Luther's speech in his defence at the Diet of Worms (1521), where he was called upon by the Catholic Church to recant his teachings (see D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kri-tische Gesamtausgabe. Weimar, 1897, Band 7, S. 838).