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Fully Armed: Kamenev and *Pravda* in March 1917

Immediately following the overthrow of the tsar in early March 1917, several senior Bolsheviks returning from internal exile in Siberia – Lev Kamenev, Koba Stalin, and Matvei Muranov – arrived in Petrograd and promptly took over the editorial direction of the recently resuscitated *Pravda*. What line did they take on the burning questions of the day? Did prewar Bolshevism give them adequate intellectual tools to forge a political line both realistic and revolutionary?

An answer to these questions can be found in a short editorial on 14 March that announced the arrival of the new editorial team. Although unsigned, it is almost certainly the work of Lev Kamenev. According to almost any secondary source you pick up, during this period Kamenev advocated something that was later termed “critical support” of the Provisional Government. And indeed, you can find the words “criticize” and “support” in this editorial:

Just as we will energetically support [the new government] in the complete liquidation of the old regime and the monarchy, in the implementation of freedoms, etc., we will just as energetically criticize each failure of the Provisional Government to act on its declared intentions [*neposledovatelnost*], each deviation from decisive struggle, each attempt to tie the hands of the *narod* or to put out the raging revolutionary fire.

Kamenev’s implied strategy seems neither realistic nor revolutionary. The elite-dominated Provisional Government was not going to carry out basic popular demands for liberty, land or peace. To situate oneself as some sort of loyal opposition to this government also meant shirking the revolutionary task of replacing it with a *vlast* (sovereign authority) based on the people. No wonder Kamenev has been called a “semi-Menshevik.” The real story of Bolshevism in 1917 evidently starts only in April, after Lenin’s arrival in Russia.

But here is the rub. You get one impression of Kamenev’s argument if the passage just quoted is the only knowledge you have of the editorial. You would have an entirely different impression if all you knew of the editorial was, say, the following:

We must realize that the paths of democratic forces and of the Provisional Government will diverge – that when the bourgeoisie comes to its senses, it will inevitably attempt to halt the revolutionary movement and not permit it to develop to the point of satisfying the essential needs of the proletariat and the peasantry. . . . This full satisfaction of their demands is possible only when full and complete *vlast* [*vsia polnota vlasti*] is in their own hands. Insofar as the revolution is going to develop and to deepen, it will come to this, to the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

On the basis of this passage, one would argue that from the very beginning of the revolution, the Bolsheviks wagered on the inevitability of a clash between the Provisional Government and the people or *narod* – a clash that would lead directly to the replacement of the Provisional Government by some sort of revolutionary *vlast* based directly on the workers and peasants. And since this is exactly what happened, it was a pretty good wager.

Which impression is closer to the correct one? The *Pravda* editorial is a short document, and I have provided a translation (as far as I know, the first in English) at the end of this article. I will argue that the second of the two quoted passages gives us the key to the Bolshevik outlook in March 1917. Let me preface my remarks by stating my conviction that correct interpretation of this document is *crucial* for an understanding of Bolshevik policies and the dynamics of the 1917 revolution. And for this reason, we should look carefully at the *Pravda* editorial entitled “The Provisional Government and Revolutionary Social Democracy.”

Development and deepening of the revolution

Kamenev gives us a scenario of how the revolution will “develop and deepen” (the word “develop” is a key one in the editorial). This focus on the process of revolution gives us a general idea of the time-frame for his scenario. If the 1905 revolution began on Bloody Sunday in January 1905, then ten months passed until the first major climax of the revolution (the October Manifesto) and about thirty months until the final end of the revolutionary era (Stolypin’s mini-coup d’état in June 1907).

Thus, when Kamenev predicts the eventual replacement of the Provisional Government by a *vlast* based on the workers and peasants, he is not thinking in terms of hours, days or weeks (as were some eager Bolshevik activists in Petrograd) nor was he thinking in terms of a stable regime lasting for years and decades. He was evidently thinking in terms of months.

The scenario set forth by Kamenev is very straightforward and unambiguous. We may paraphrase it as follows: The revolution was carried out by workers and peasants, but the *vlast* ended up in the hands of a Provisional Government that represented the liberal wing of elite society. Under the pressure of the people, kicking and screaming, the Provisional Government is at present still carrying out the necessary task of rooting out the remains of the old regime – and, obviously, this is a good thing. But the bourgeoisie will come to its senses sooner rather than later and will then seek to halt the revolution in its tracks.

The workers and peasants must be ready for this inevitable outcome. They must keep a vigilant and suspicious eye on the activity of the Provisional Government. They must preach absolute mistrust [*absolutnoe nedoverie*] in the promises not only of the liberals but also of the advocates of compromise. And they must energetically organize their own forces in preparation for the great showdown.

And that day will come soon, very soon. The dynamic forces pushing the revolution forward with incredible speed are working *for* us. The Provisional Government is objectively incapable of satisfying the demands of the *narod*, and the *narod* will soon realize this fact. And when this realization sinks in, the task of taking the *vlast* into the hands of the people will become practical politics.

The thrust of Kamenev's scenario would be even more evident if we italicize some small but important words. To think about replacing the Provisional Government *right now* (*seichas*) would be a mistake. The Provisional Government has not tried to halt the revolution because it does not *yet* have the power to do so. But the Provisional Government's counter-revolutionary essence will *inevitably* manifest itself in the near future.

Poskolku-postolku (insofar as)

If Kamenev's editorial advocated replacing the Provisional Government with a peasant-worker *vlast*, then why are we so strongly assured by writers on the topic that it did the opposite? The main answer to this question is easy enough: the majority of those who have purported to analyze it have not read the entire page-and-a-half editorial. They are under the impression that Kamenev used the phrase "critical support" (in any event, this phrase is often supplied with quotation marks). At best, they have read the sentence quoted earlier, in which Kamenev says that the workers will give their support to objectively anti-tsarist acts by the Provisional Government, while continuing to criticize and expose.

If this sentence represented Kamenev's entire scenario, the description of him as a "semi-Menshevik" would be correct – indeed, we could drop

the “semi.” But clearly, Kamenev was here describing only *the opening phase of a rapidly developing revolutionary process*. In Kamenev’s scenario, this revolutionary process will quickly produce open conflict, preparation for battle, and replacement of the Provisional Government by a worker-peasant *vlast* based on the soviets.

We should recall the concrete circumstances when, two weeks after the fall of the tsar, Kamenev wrote this editorial. The great mass of soldiers and workers, newly awakened to political life, still trusted the new Provisional Government and its seemingly excellent anti-tsarist credentials. This trust was not just based on a deluded burst of revolutionary good feeling, as we usually describe the situation with more than a little condescension. The fact of the matter is that in this slice of time, the Provisional Government was actually carrying out revolutionary measures: dismantling the tsarist police apparatus, releasing political prisoners, setting up guarantees of basic political freedoms, laying the groundwork for national elections, and so forth.¹ When Lenin returned in April, he famously said that Russia was now one of the freest countries in the world. He knew whereof he spoke.

What was an aggressively left-wing political party to say when asked about its attitude toward a “bourgeois” Provisional Government acting in a progressive way? Deny that policies such as ending censorship was a good thing? Tell the enthusiastic workers and soldiers “we don’t support *anything* done by this government, even otherwise laudable measures.” Both these approaches seem like dead ends.

A better approach is to admit the obvious – the Provisional Government is carrying out measures that strengthen the revolution – but in the most grudging way possible. Yes, yes, the bourgeois government is doing some good things, but – against its will, only at the behest of the workers and peasants, and only insofar as the masses keep up the pressure. And no amount of pressure will keep this government from turning actively counter-revolutionary. No amount of pressure will get it to fulfill the demands of the people. Yes, of course, we support specific actions, but not the politicians forced to carry out these actions. “We will keep our hands untied,” ready to withdraw our support and go on the offensive, because decisive battles loom ahead.

There is another reason why an inattentive reader might be misled by Kamenev’s editorial: the presence of words and phrases that later became strongly associated with the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries

1. One of the best descriptions of the policies of the Provisional Government in its first weeks is by the Soviet historian V. I. Startsev in *Vnutrenniaia politika Vremen-nogo Pravitel'stva* (Domestic Policy of the Provisional Government) (Leningrad: Nauka, 1980).

who did provide crucial “critical support” for the Provisional Government: “insofar as” (the famous *poskolku-postolku*), *kontrol*, and perhaps even “demands.” Such readers draw a straight line from the presence of such vocabulary items to a specific political strategy, without paying attention to the actual argument.

A fundamental choice faced the socialist parties in 1917: *either* to support the Provisional Government and, more widely, to try to keep at least some portion of educated elite society on the side of the revolution – *or* to aim at replacing the Provisional Government with some sort of *narodnaia vlast*, some sort of sovereign authority based on the workers and peasants, no matter what opposition arose from any and all segments of elite society. *This fundamental political choice gives meaning to the vocabulary* and not the other way around. This maxim is especially true in the early days of the revolution, before the phrases became strongly associated with one or another party.

Take *poskolku-postolku*, for instance. This phrase bubbled to the surface during the first hours of the creation of the new regime, when the relationship between Soviet and Provisional Government was still being defined. The constituents of the Soviet, the Petrograd workers and soldiers, pledged support for the Provisional Government “insofar as” (*poskolku-postolku*) the government carried out a revolutionary program. In a way that was only intuited at the time; this was an exercise in sovereignty: we, the members of the Soviet, have the real *vlast*, and we are delegating you, the government, to carry out our program.

This phrase became associated with those socialists who desperately wanted the arrangement with the Provisional Government to work, who made it their mission to mobilize popular support for it. Look (they said), you can trust this government, “bourgeois” as it undoubtedly is, because it knows it will have our support only *insofar* as it carries out a revolutionary program. And this would have been a convincing argument – except for the growing evidence that the Provisional Government did not want to carry out a revolutionary program and was energetically searching for ways to free itself from any need for support from the soviets.

One could argue that the Bolsheviks were the only party to take seriously the strategy of “insofar as” – the only one that was genuinely prepared to turn against the government if it failed to carry out the revolutionary program. Or rather, as Kamenev’s editorial demonstrates, they maintained from the beginning that the Provisional Government had neither the desire nor the ability to accomplish popular demands, so that any support based on the logic of “insofar as” would be fleeting at best.

The same with *kontrol* and “criticism”: these words take on a very different connotation when used by people on opposite sides of the funda-

mental choice. *Kontrol* (like French *contrôle*) can best be translated into English by something like “supervision”: keeping tabs on what was happening, making sure the Provisional Government was not getting away with anything. For someone whose basic perspective was *support* for the Provisional Government, *kontrol* was a means of *reassurance*: look, we’re keeping an eye on these guys, they won’t try anything outrageous, so there’s no need to overthrow them.

For someone whose basic perspective was *replacement* of the Provisional Government, *kontrol* was a means of *exposure*: look, we’re keeping an eye on these home-grown imperialists to find out whether they’re making any serious moves toward peace or giving land to the peasants – and we’re here to tell you that, as predicted, they’re doing just the opposite.

Similarly, when socialists like Kamenev talk about making “demands,” they intended to use them as a means of exposure. As Kamenev asserted in his April debates with Lenin:

Should we, as a political party, take on ourselves to demand the publication of the secret treaties – announce that this is our political demand? People will say to me: excuse me, you’re demanding something impossible. But the demands I make are not founded on the expectation that Miliukov will respond to me and publish the treaties. The policy of making demands that I am advocating is an agitational device for the development of the masses, a method of exposure of the fact that Guchkov and Miliukov cannot do this, that they do not want the publication of the secret treaties, that they are against the policy of peace. It is a device for showing the masses that if they really want to create a revolutionary policy on an international level, then the *vlast* must be transferred into the hands of the Soviet.²

Misleading Approaches

In a standard work on the evolution of Bolshevism, Robert Daniels writes that “the February Revolution caught the Bolsheviks completely off guard. The assumption of power by a conservative middle-class regime, supposedly impossible, made Lenin’s doctrine of the ‘democratic dictatorship’ meaningless.”³ This is exactly 180° wrong. In actuality,

2. As cited in Lars T. Lih, “The Ironic Triumph of Old Bolshevism: The Debates of April 1917 in Context,” *Russian History* 38 (2011): 228.

3. *Conscience of the Revolution: Communist Opposition in Russia*, p. 38 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1960). For a recent affirmation of this approach, see Christopher Read, *Lenin* (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 154.

prewar Bolshevism provided the party with a solid strategic orientation for the 1917 revolution.

Bolshevism did not primarily make a prediction about the day after the fall of the tsar, but rather proposed a scenario of the “active forces” of Russian society, joined to a corresponding strategy for carrying the revolution “to the end” (*do kontsa*), that is, for achieving the maximum possible revolutionary transformation of Russia (due to the vagaries of Marxist jargon, the target of achieving the maximum possible was termed “the minimum program”). The key task mandated by this strategy was the creation of a revolutionary government, a *narodnaia vlast*, with the socialist proletariat providing leadership and the peasants providing a majority base.

And why was such a revolutionary government needed? Because anti-tsarist elite forces would attempt to take control of the revolution and to stop it way short of the fulfillment of popular demands. These elite forces wanted to go beyond tsarism only to the extent that their own interests were served, while preventing any dangerous concessions to the anti-capitalist workers or the anti-landowner peasants.

If the Bolshevik scenario did contain a prediction about the day after the fall of tsarism, it was this: anti-tsarist liberals will try to seize control of the revolution and will then try to halt or reverse the revolution as it deepens and develops. As can be easily seen, exactly this prediction informs Kamenev’s article. I leave readers to decide whether the prediction was an accurate one.

Other knowledgeable observers say that Kamenev and his colleagues Stalin and Muranov imposed a “sharp turn to the right,” signaled by editorials such as the one under review.⁴ This assertion is an advance over Daniels, since it recognizes that there *were* Bolsheviks who called for replacement of the Provisional Government by a *narodnaia vlast*. Nevertheless, it is seriously misleading.

It has been my experience that when historians of 1917 rely in their analyses on such contrasting pairs as “right/left,” “moderate/radical,” “softline/hardline,” and “pragmatic/extremist,” the result is usually vagueness and confusion. There was a wide variety of issues, disputes and clashes, and the right/left spectrum can mean something very different in each case – if indeed it means anything at all. In the case before us, the idea that Kamenev’s editorial represents a “sharp turn to the right” seems to arise from a confusion of two issues:

– should we or should we not strive for a worker-peasant *vlast* that will replace the Provisional Government?

4. Alexander Rabinowitch, *Prelude to Revolution: The Petrograd Bolsheviks and the July 1917 Uprising* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1968), p. 36.

– should we or should we not go out in the streets to replace the Provisional Government *today*?

The first issue is the same fundamental choice discussed earlier. The second issue only makes sense *within the framework of agreement* about the fundamental choice. I can see how we might describe the first and more fundamental choice in terms of “right” and “left,” although I do not find such descriptive terms very useful. But I see no reason to analyze disputes of the second kind in similar terms. Two equally left-radical-extremist activists can disagree over whether actual conditions are ripe for an uprising or not.

The first reaction of some Bolsheviks in Petrograd after the fall of the tsar was to call for the instant establishment of the worker-peasant government mandated by the prewar Bolshevik scenario. This call was expressed in an editorial in the very first issue of *Pravda* on 5 March, where we read this stirring call to action: “All over Russia the Red Flag of Revolution is being raised. The whole *narod* is taking its fate into its hands. There can be no turning back.” This editorial does not mention the existence of either the Soviet or the Provisional Government. The fact that the mass-based Soviet was freely offering support to the Provisional Government was a surprise and a disorienting one. We can see this in the anguished complaints of Bolsheviks in the early days that “we wuz robbed” because of irregularities in elections to Soviet leadership bodies.

So an adjustment was needed to accommodate these unexpected realities. But the adjustment was hardly a profound one – in any event, it was made by the time Kamenev published his editorial on 14 March. By this time, the fact of genuine Soviet support for the new government had been assimilated. Furthermore, Kamenev and the other returning Bolsheviks were thinking in national terms, and they realized that the provinces were even less ready to support a worker-peasant *vlast*.

The needed adjustment certainly did not consist of abandoning the goal of a worker-peasant *vlast*, that is, of switching to the other side of the fundamental divide (as is implied by calling the adjustment “a sharp turn to the right”). Rather, it consisted of saying to fellow Bolsheviks: we do not have the mass support to replace the Provisional Government today, and it would be disorganizing in the extreme to make a premature attempt. But do not lose heart: events are working for us, and when the counter-revolutionary nature of the Provisional Government is exposed for all to see, we will obtain the needed mass support. It *will* come to this, to the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

The *Pravda* editorial in the first issue said “The whole *narod* is taking its fate into its hands.” As if in response, Kamenev wrote “only then, when the Provisional Government of the liberals has exhausted itself be-

fore the face of the democracy [that is, the *narod*] of Russia, will the question of the transfer of *vlast* into its own hands stand before the democracy as a practical question.”

Other informed observers lay heavy stress on the fact that the prewar Bolshevik scenario called for a *democratic* revolution, and therefore, they claim, it was a radically inadequate orientation for the *socialist* October revolution. The danger of this approach is that it obscures the really fundamental question (the goal of a worker-peasant *vlast*) in order to focus on something much less fundamental (the exact program of such a *vlast*).

The prewar Bolshevik scenario called for a government based on the workers and peasants, and therefore hostile to the elite, to carry out a vast revolutionary transformation of Russia. The exact nature of this transformation, the proper Marxist label for it, is a question that could and inevitably would be worked out only in practice. In Lenin’s lifetime, as he himself recognized, the actual accomplishments of the revolution – as opposed to goals for the future – were much more impressive on the “democratic” side of the ledger (land to the peasants, civil and national equality, and the like) than on the “socialist.” Kamenev’s editorial talked about “the revolution,” without giving it a learned label, and this, I think, was the proper approach under the circumstances

We can disagree on the question of how vital it was that, for example, nationalization of the banks was included as part of the Bolshevik program in 1917. Where there is less room for disagreement is over this question: is an orientation toward a socialist revolution a necessary precondition for a revolutionary drive to replace the Provisional Government with a worker-peasant *vlast* that would carry out the revolution to the end? Kamenev’s editorial of 14 March seems to me to be fairly conclusive evidence that the answer is “no.”

Fully Armed

As I remarked in the beginning, getting Kamenev’s editorial of 14 March 1917 right is crucial for a correct understanding of the dynamic of the revolution. One reason for this is the profound difficulties that the editorial creates for the widespread approaches to Bolshevism in 1917 that I have just critiqued. But the appearance of this editorial also marks a significant date in the evolution of Bolshevism.

From the beginning of the revolution, the Bolsheviks possessed a solid strategic orientation based on a long-standing account of Russia’s “active forces.” In order to be fully armed for the battles ahead, they needed to absorb an unexpected reality: although a soviet network with strong mass support was in place, the soviets were reluctant to assume “full and complete *vlast*” (*vsia polnota vlasti*). Speaking at a session of the Petersburg

Bolshevik Committee on 18 March, Kamenev pointed to this situation in defense of his editorial⁵:

After pointing out the role of the Bolsheviks and then their insignificant influence in the Petrograd Soviet at the present moment, he [Kamenev] examined this incongruity: It is surprising that the Bolsheviks are not occupying a dominant position in the Petrograd Soviet of Worker and Soldier Deputies – and why do they allow into the Soviet the liquidators, who do not express the outlook of the Petrograd workers? We are the representatives of the revolutionary element in Petrograd, but in the meantime, it seems that the wide masses do not understand us. Evidently, since we are essentially correct, we are formulating our resolutions and decisions in a way that the masses do not understand.

If we are correct in calling the Provisional Government counter-revolutionary, then, clearly, we should overthrow it and institute a new, revolutionary one. Therefore, either we should declare open war on the Provisional Government, or we should take up some other position in regard to it. The latter is just what is necessary. Have we developed to the point that we can create the dictatorship of the proletariat? No. What is important is not taking power – what is important is keeping it. [*Nevazhno–vziat' vlast, vazhno–uderzhat'.*] This moment will come, but it will be advantageous for us to put it off, since right now our forces are still inadequate.

By 14 March, when Kamenev's editorial was published, the necessary adjustment had been made: a wager on an inevitable clash between Provisional Government and the Soviet—a clash that ensured that the counter-revolutionary nature of the Provisional Government would be exposed for all to see, so that the masses would move forward and take the *vlast* into their own hands. This wager took the Bolsheviks all the way to October.

5. *Pervyi legal'nyi PK Bol'shevikov v 1917 g.* (Leningrad: Gosizdat, 1927), pp. 49-50.

Kamenev's *Pravda* Editorial of 14 March 1917: Translation

The Provisional Government and Revolutionary Social Democracy

The Provisional Government, created by the revolution, is much more moderate than the forces that gave it birth. The workers and the peasants dressed in soldier's greatcoats were the ones who created the revolution. But in formal terms the *vlast* passed into the hands, not of the representatives of the revolutionary proletariat and peasantry, but of people pushed forward by the liberal movement of the class of property-owners. The proletariat and the peasantry and the army composed of these classes will consider the revolution now begun as completed only when it has satisfied their demands entirely and in full – when all remnants of the former regime, economic as well as political, have been torn up to their very roots. This full satisfaction of their demands is possible only when full and complete *vlast* [*vsia polnota vlasti*] is in their own hands. Insofar as the revolution is going to develop and to deepen, it will come to this, to the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry.

In contrast, the Provisional Government, in accordance with the social nature of the strata from which it came, would like to hold back the development of the revolution at its first steps. If they haven't done so as yet, it is only because they don't have the strength for it. Balking, against their will, they are compelled under the pressure of the revolutionary *narod* to still go forward. And for us, revolutionary Social Democrats, there is no need even to state that insofar as [*poskolku . . . postolku*] the Provisional Government actually struggles against the remnants of the old regime, to that extent it is assured of support from the revolutionary proletariat. Always and everywhere, when the Provisional Government, bowing to the will of revolutionary democracy, as represented by the Soviet of Worker and Soldier Deputies, clashes with the reaction or the counter-revolution, the revolutionary proletariat must be ready with its support.

But this is support of actions [*delo*] and not of persons – support, not of the given composition of the Provisional Government, but of those objectively revolutionary steps that it is compelled to take and to the extent that it actually undertakes them.

Therefore our support should in no way tie our hands. Just as we will energetically support it in the complete liquidation of the old regime and the monarchy, in the implementation of freedoms, etc., we will just as energetically criticize each failure of the Provisional Government to act on its declared intentions [*neposledovatelnost*], each deviation from decisive struggle, each attempt to tie the hands of the *narod* or to put out the raging revolutionary fire.

We call upon the revolutionary democracy, headed by the proletariat, to the most unwearied *kontrol* on all the actions of the *vlast*, whether in the center or in the localities. We must realize that the paths of the democracy and of the Provisional Government will diverge – that, when the bourgeoisie comes to its senses, it will inevitably attempt to halt the revolutionary movement and not permit it to develop to the point of satisfying the essential needs of the proletariat and the peasantry.

We must be on the alert and ready to act. Calmly and cold-bloodedly weighing our forces, we must use all our energy to gather, organize and consolidate the revolutionary proletariat. But there is no reason to force events. They are developing with immense speed by themselves.

And precisely for this reason, it would be a political mistake to pose the question right now of replacing the Provisional Government.

The active forces of the great revolution are working for us; they are exposing the inadequacy and the limitations of any attempt to solve the tasks of the revolution by means of compromise.

And only then, when the Provisional Government of the liberals has exhausted itself before the face of the democracy of Russia, will the question of the transfer of *vlast* into its own hands stand before the democracy as a practical question.

The slogan of the moment still remains: organization of the forces of the proletariat, consolidation of the forces of the proletariat, peasantry and army by means of the Soviets of Deputies, absolute lack of belief [*nedoverie*] in any liberal promises, the most constant *kontrol* on the implementation of our demands, an energetic support of each step that leads to the uprooting of all the remnants of the tsarist-landlord regime.

Independent Scholar

Временное Правительство и революционная социал-демократия.

«Правда» № 8, 14 марта 1917 г. статья.

Временное Правительство, созданное революцией, гораздо умереннее тех сил, которые его породили. Создали революцию рабочие и крестьяне, одетые в солдатские шинели. А формально власть перешла в руки не представителей революционного пролетариата и крестьянства, а в руки людей, выдвинутых либеральным движением класса собственников. Пролетариат и крестьянство и составленная из них армия будут считать начавшуюся революцию завершенной лишь тогда, когда она удовлетворит целиком и полно их требования, когда все остатки бывшего режима будут до основания вырваны как в экономической, так и в политической области. Это полное удовлетворение требований рабочих, крестьян и армии возможно лишь тогда, когда вся полнота власти будет в их собственных руках. Поскольку революция будет развиваться и углубляться, она будет идти к этому, к диктатуре пролетариата и крестьянства.

Наоборот, Временное Правительство, согласно с социальной природой тех слоев, из которых оно вышло, склонно было бы задержать развитие революции на ее первых шагах. Если они еще не делают этого, то потому, что у них нет сил для этого. Упираясь и против воли они принуждены под давлением революционного народа идти все вперед. И нам, революционным социал-демократам, нет необходимости даже и говорить о том, что поскольку это Временное Правительство действительно борется с остатками старого режима, постольку ему обеспечена решительная поддержка революционного пролетариата. Всегда и повсюду, где Временное Правительство, повинувшись революционной демократии, представленной в Советах Рабочих и Солдатских Депутатов, столкнется с реакцией или контрреволюцией, революционный пролетариат должен быть готов к его поддержке.

Но это – поддержка дела, а не лиц, поддержка не данного состава Временного Правительства, а тех объективно-революционных шагов, которые оно принуждено предпринимать и поскольку оно их предпринимает.

Поэтому наша поддержка ни в какой мере не должна связывать нам рук. Столь же решительно как мы поддержим его в окончательной ликвидации старого режима, монархии, в осуществлении свобод и т.д., столь же решительно будем мы критиковать и разоблачать каждую непоследовательность Временного Правительства, каждое

уклонение его в сторону от решительной борьбы, каждую попытку связать руки народу или притушить разгорающийся революционный пожар.

Мы призываем революционную демократию во главе с пролетариатом к самому неослабному контролю над всеми действиями власти, как в центре, так и на местах.

Мы должны знать, что пути демократии и Временного Правительства разойдутся, что опомнившаяся буржуазия неизбежно попытается удержать революционное движение и не дать ему развиваться до удовлетворения коренных нужд пролетариата и крестьянства.

Мы должны быть настороже и наготове. Спокойно и хладнокровно взвешивая свои силы, мы должны всю свою энергию употребить на собрание, организацию и сплочение революционного пролетариата. На незачем подгонять события. Они и так развиваются с великолепной быстротой.

И именно поэтому было бы политической ошибкой сейчас ставить вопрос о смене Временного Правительства.

Движущие силы великой революции за нас; они разоблачают недостаточность и ограниченность всякой попытки решить задачи революции путем компромисса.

И только тогда, когда перед лицом демократии России исчерпает себя Временное Правительство либералов, станет перед ней, как вопрос практический, вопрос о переходе власти в ее собственные руки.

Лозунгом же момента остается: организация сил пролетариата, сплочение сил пролетариата, крестьянства и армии в Советах Депутатов, абсолютное недоверие ко всяким либеральным посулам, самый пристальный контроль над осуществлением наших требований, решительная поддержка каждого шага, ведущего к искоренению всех остатков царско-помещичьего режима.