

# BETWEEN RED & WHITE

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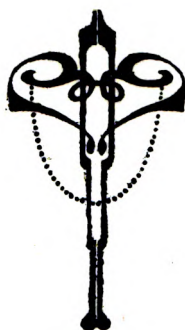
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*A Study of some fundamental  
questions of Revolution, with  
particular reference to Georgia*

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BY  
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# DEDICATION

*To the memory of Stepan Shaumian, Alexei Djaparidze, and 34 other Baku Communists, who were shot without investigation or trial, on a lonely spot between the stations of Pereval and Akhtcha in Transcaucasia, on September 20th, 1918 by Teague-Jones, the chief of the British military mission at Askhabad, with the knowledge and approbation of the other British Authorities in Transcaucasia, notably the commander of the British forces in Transcaucasia, Major-General Thompson;*

*To the memory of the workers, shot by the Menshevik government during a meeting in Alexander Gardens at Tiflis, on February 10th, 1918;*

*To the memory of tens, hundreds and thousands of Caucasian Communists, who perished in the struggle for the Soviet regime, shot, hanged, tortured to death, by the coalition "democratic" government of Transcaucasia, by the Menshevik Government of "democratic" Georgia, by the troops of the Sultan, the ally of the Transcaucasian "democracy," by the troops of the Hohenzollern protector of Menshevik Georgia; by the British troops which entered Georgia for a joint struggle with the Mensheviks against the Communists, by the White Guards of Denikin and Wrangel directly and indirectly aided by the Georgian Mensheviks;*

*To the memory of the revolutionary leaders of the peasant revolts in Ossetia, Abkhazia, Adjaria, Guria, etc., shot by the Menshevik government of Georgia;*

THE AUTHOR DEDICATES THIS BOOK,

*written for the purpose of unmasking the lies, calumny, and slander that rise like a thick cloud from the camp of the oppressors, exploiters, imperialists, robbers, and murderers and their political hirelings and willing flunkeys.*



# INTRODUCTION

As these lines are written we are less than three weeks removed from the time set for the Genoa Conference. Nobody, apparently, can yet tell how much time separates us from the actual opening of the Conference. The diplomatic contest around this Conference is very closely interwoven with the political agitation about Soviet Russia. Between the diplomacy of the bourgeoisie and its own social-democracy, the principle of subdivision of labour is faithfully observed; diplomacy conducts its intrigues, while social-democracy mobilises public opinion against the Republic of workers and peasants.

What is the aim of this democracy? To impose upon revolutionary Russia the heaviest possible tribute; to compel her to pay the utmost reparations; to develop upon the widest possible scale the encroachment of private capital upon Soviet territory; to create the greatest possible privileges for foreign and Russian financiers, industrialists and usurers, as against the workers and peasants. The mask hitherto concealing these demands, viz. "democracy," "right," "liberty," etc., has now been cast aside by bourgeois diplomacy, just as the merchant throws off the paper wrappings from a piece of cloth when it is necessary to dispay the goods, bargain, and measure it out in yards.

But bourgeois society allows nothing to be wasted. The paper wrapper of "right" is handed over to the social-democracy, because it happens to be its particular line of goods, its stock-in-trade, so to speak. The Second International—and what is said about the latter applies also to its shadow on the Left, the 2<sup>nd</sup> International—exerts every effort to prove to the workers that, since the Soviet Government observes neither "right" nor "democracy," the toiling masses of Russia deserve no support in their struggle against the world's usurers.

We committed our most flagrant act of disrespect to "right" and "democracy," as everybody knows, by the November Revolution. It represents our original sin. During the first years the bourgeoisie tried to destroy the Revolution by the sword. Now it contents itself with the introducing of substantial capitalist amendments. The struggle now centres around the scope of these amendments.

The Second International, however, wishes to avail itself of the Genoa Conference to restore the "right," which should have meant quite a definite programme—not to admit to Genoa the "usurers," "dictators," "terrorists" of the Soviet Government, but to bring thither instead the democratic relics of the Constituent Assembly. But such a formulation of the question would be too ridiculous, and besides, it would run counter to the plans of the bourgeoisie. The Second International least of all lays claim to the role of knight errant of democracy. It is only its

Sancho-Panza. It dare not put the question in its full scope. It hankers merely after small gains.

The banner of the struggle for small democratic gains is furnished just now by Georgia. The Soviet Revolution in Georgia took place but a year ago. At the helm in Georgia was a party of the Second International. The Menshevik Republic was manœuvring all the time between imperialism and the proletarian revolution, seeking the side of the former in its struggle against the latter. This is quite in keeping with the role of the Second International. The Georgian Mensheviks paid with their own downfall for their liaison with the counter-revolution. The same inevitable result is in store for the Second International itself. No wonder then if the struggle of the international social-democracy for a "democratic" Georgia has assumed a somewhat symbolic character.

Yet even the most fertile brains of the Second International could not evolve any argument in favour of the pretensions of the Georgian Mensheviks that has not already been worn thread-bare by the defenders of the "democratic rights" of Milukov, Kerensky, Tchernov or Martov. As a matter of principle there is no difference whatever between the two sets of claimants. The Social-Democrats now present *in octavo* what the imperialist press has previously published *in folio*. Of this one can easily become convinced by perusing the resolution of the Executive Committee of the Second International on the question of Georgia.

The text of the resolution deserves to be examined. The style not merely reflects the men but the party. Let us listen to the political style of the Second International in addressing itself to the proletarian revolution:—

1. *The territory of Georgia has been occupied by the troops of the Moscow Government, which maintains in Georgia a government that is loathed by the population and is regarded by the proletariat of the world as being solely responsible for the destruction of the Georgian Republic and for the terrorist regime established in that country.*

Is not this the language that has been used for the last four years by the reactionary press of the whole world in regard to the Soviet Federation as a whole? Did it not argue that the Soviet regime was loathed by the population of Russia and was maintained by military terrorism? Did we not hold Petrograd and Moscow by the aid of "Lettish, Chinese, German and Bashkir regiments?" Did not the power of the Soviets "violently" spread to Ukraine, Siberia, Don, Kuban, Azerbaidjan? If now, after we have beaten off the reactionary rabble, the Second International repeats the same phrases, word for word, especially in regard to Georgia, does it in any way alter their character?

2. *The responsibility of the Moscow Government was further aggravated by the recent events in Georgia, particularly after*



*the protest strikes organised by the workers (?) and suppressed by force, as is done by reactionary governments.*

Yes, the revolutionary government of Georgia forcibly frustrated the plans of the Menshevik chiefs of the railway bureaucracy, the petty officials and the White Guard officers who failed to make their escape, to practice sabotage against the workers' and peasants' State. With reference to these repressions, Merrheim, a quite well-known petty servitor of Imperialism in France, writes of "thousands" of Georgian citizens that were compelled to quit their homes. "Among those refugees"—we are quoting him textually—"there are a great number of officers, former officials of the Republic, and all the leaders of the National Guard." This was the very Menshevik machinery which for three years ruthlessly suppressed the revolutionary workers, and the incessantly rebellious Georgian peasants, and after the overthrow of the Mensheviks they remained as ready tools for the attempts of the Entente at restoration. That the revolutionary government of Georgia dealt firmly with the sabotaging bureaucracy we fully admit. But this very thing we have done through the entire territory of the revolution. The establishment of Soviet domination at Petrograd and Moscow met its first obstacle in an attempted railway strike, under the guidance of the Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary bureaucracy. Supported by the workers, we smashed this bureaucracy, purified and subordinated it to the authority of the toilers. The reactionary scum of the whole world raised a howl about our barbarous terrorism. The same lamentations of the reactionary scum are now repeated, this time only with regard to Georgia, by the social-democratic leaders. Where is the difference?

But is it not rather strange that the social-democratic leaders can now twist their tongues to speak of the forcible suppression of the strikes and the mode of action of "reactionary governments?" For do we not know the kind of men that compose the Second International? Noske and Ebert are its leading members. Or have they been expelled? How many workers' strikes and rebellions have they crushed? Or, perhaps they are not the murderers of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht? Perhaps it was not the social-democrat Hoersing, a member of the Second International, who provoked the March movement in Germany in order to drown it in blood? And what about the very latest measures of the social-democrat Ebert, against the German railway strike?

Perhaps the Executive Committee in London does not see what is going on upon the Continent? But, in that case, one might be allowed to put a polite question to Henderson: was he not a Privy Councillor during the Easter Rebellion in Ireland in 1916, when the royal troops bombarded Dublin, and executed 15 Irishmen, including the Socialist Connolly, already wounded previously? Perhaps Vandervelde, a former president of the Second

International, the little Privy Councillor of a little kingdom, did not appeal to the Russian Socialists during the war to make peace with Tsarism, which was wading up to its neck in the blood of the workers and peasants, and which was soon to drown in it? Are any more instances required? The leaders of the Second International have as much right to defend the right to strike as Judas Iscariot had to preach loyalty.

3. *At the moment when the Moscow Government demands its recognition by other countries, it should treat the rights of other nations with the same respect it desires for itself, and must refrain from violating the elementary principles upon which the intercourse between civilised nations must be based.*

The political style reflects the very soul of the party. The last point is the highest achievement of the Second International. If Soviet Russia desires recognition (by whom?) it should "treat the rights of other nations with the same (which?) respect, and not violate (*sic*) the elementary principles upon which the intercourse between civilised nations *must* be based."

Who wrote this? We would have suspected Longuet himself, but for the fact that he has migrated to the International No. 2½. Perhaps it was written by Vandervelde, the elegant jurist of the Belgian crown? Or perhaps by Mr. Henderson, inspired by one of his own Sunday sermons at a Brotherhood meeting? It is essential for the sake of history to establish the identity of the author of this incomparable resolution. Who is responsible for this product of a diseased mind?

Let us, however, return to the text. In order to be recognised by the bourgeois, imperialist, slave-owning governments (for the reference is obviously to them), the Soviet Government should refrain from violating "principles" and "treat with the same respect the right of other nations." With the same . . . with *what* "respect?"

For three years the imperialist governments tried to overthrow us. They have failed. Their economic position is a hopeless one. Their mutual jealousies and struggles have reached a state of extreme acuteness. They have found themselves compelled to enter into relations with Soviet Russia for the sake of her raw materials, her markets and her debt payments. In extending this invitation Lloyd George explained to Briand that international morality admits the conclusion of agreements not only with the murderers of the East (Turkey), but also with the murderers of the North (Soviet Russia). We take no offence at the strong expression used by Lloyd George. Upon this question we fully accept his outspoken formula. Yes, we do consider it possible, admissible and necessary—within certain limits—to conclude agreements with the imperialist murderers of the West as well as the East.

An agreement which imposes obligations upon us ought at the same time to compel our enemies to give up their armed attacks upon us. Such is the sum-total of four years' open fighting, as far as it can be gauged for the moment. Of course, the bourgeois governments demand the recognition of the "elementary principles, upon which the intercourse between civilised nations must be based." But these principles have nothing in common with the questions of democracy and national self-determination. We are drily asked to recognise debts contracted by Tsarism for the purpose of crushing this very Georgia, Finland, Poland, all the border provinces, and the toiling masses of Great Russia herself.

And we are also called upon to pay compensation to the private capitalists who have suffered loss as a result of the revolution. It cannot be denied that the proletarian revolution has caused damage to some pockets and purses, which are regarded as the most sacred principles upon which "the intercourse between civilised nations" rests. This will be dealt with at Genoa and other places; but of what principles do the leaders of the Second International speak? Is it the predatory principles of the Versailles Peace, which at this moment determine the relations between States, i.e., the principles of Clemenceau, Lloyd George, and the Mikado?

Or do they, in their crafty, evasive tongue, speak of the principles which do not as yet but which ought to determine the intercourse between nations? If the latter, why then do they put them forward now as conditions for our being accepted into the respectable "family" of the present imperialistic States? Or do they wish us to disarm to-day, and to evacuate territory before the imperialists, on the expectation of the relations that will exist to-morrow? We have already made one such experiment in the sight of the whole world. We openly disarmed during the Brest-Litovsk negotiations; did that prevent German militarism from invading our frontiers? Perhaps the German social-democracy, the bulwark of the Second International, at that time raised the standard of revolt? Not a bit. It remained the governing party of the Hohenzollerns.

In Georgia there ruled the petty-bourgeois party of the Mensheviks. To-day it is the Georgian Bolshevik Party that governs it. The Mensheviks depended upon the material assistance of the European and American imperialism, the Georgian Bolsheviks rely upon the support of Soviet Russia. Upon what logical grounds does the Social-Democratic International desire to condition the conclusion of peace between the Soviet Federation and the capitalist countries by the return of Georgia to the Mensheviks?

The logic is bad, but the aim is clear. The Second International desired and desires now, the overthrow of the Soviet Power. In this direction it has done everything possible. It has conducted this struggle side by side with capitalism under the

mask of democracy fighting against dictatorship. The toiling masses of Europe have driven it from this position and prevented an open struggle against the Soviet Republic. Now social democracy has renewed the struggles under the camouflage of defending Georgia.

The labouring masses of the whole world immediately showed a readiness to regard the Russian Revolution as a whole, and in this their revolutionary instinct coincided, not for the first time, with high theoretical sense, which teaches that a revolution, with its heroism and cruelty, the struggle for individuality and the suppression of individuality, can only be understood in the material logic of its internal relations, and not by any valuation of its individual phases or separate episodes according to the price list of Right, Ethics, and Aesthetics. The first great theoretical battle which Communism put up in defence of the revolutionary law of dictatorship and its methods has brought its fruits. Social-democracy has finally parted company with the methods and even with the phraseology of Marxism. The German Independents, the Italian Socialists, and others like them, under the pressure of their workers, "recognised" dictatorship, the more clearly to reveal their incapability to fight for it. The Communist Party grew up and became a force. But a great hitch occurred in the development of the proletarian revolution. Its meaning and importance were sufficiently clearly explained at the Third Congress of the Communist International. The crystallisation of revolutionary consciousness expressed in the growth of the Communist Party was accompanied by the ebb of the revolutionary temper of the first post-war period. Bourgeois public opinion passed over to the offensive. Its chief task was to destroy or at least to break the spell of the revolution.

A great work was commenced in which crude and clamorous lying brought the bourgeois much less advantage than the careful selection of scraps of truth. The bourgeoisie, by means of its newspaper reconnoitring, approached the revolution by the back door. Do you know what a proletarian republic means? It means locomotives suffering from asthma, it means typhus-bearing lice, it means the daughter of a well-known respected lawyer living in an unheated flat, it means Mensheviks imprisoned, filthy lavatories; that is what the working class revolution means! The bourgeois journalists exhibited the Soviet louse under a microscope to the whole world. The first thing that Mrs. Snowden found it necessary to do, on returning from the Volga district to the Thames, was to scratch herself in public. This became almost a rite symbolising the advantage of civilisation over barbarity. However, this did not solve the question. The gentlemen who kept bourgeois public opinion informed, approached the revolution . . . by the back door, and armed with a microscope. Some details they examined with considerable and even extraordinary care; but what they examined was not the proletarian revolution.

However, the mere transference of the question to the plane of our economic difficulties and defects in our social amenities, was an advance. From monotonous and not very clever talk about the advantages of the Constituent Assembly over the Soviet system, bourgeois public opinion, as it were, came to realise that we do exist, and that the Constituent Assembly does not exist and never will. The businesslike exposures of transport and other disorders were in their way equal to a *de facto* recognition of the Soviets. These exposures, however, coincide with our own fears and efforts in the same direction. Recognition in no case, however, meant reconciliation. It only meant that the futile attacks were substituted by a war of positions. We all remember how, during the Great War, the fight on the Franco-German front was suddenly concentrated around some "woodman's hut." For several weeks this hut figured in the communiques. Really the fight for this hut signified either an attempt to break through the opposite front, or, at any rate, to do the greatest possible damage to the enemy.

In continuing this life and death struggle against us, bourgeois public opinion naturally seized upon Georgia as the woodman's hut in the present stage of the war of positions. Lord Northcliffe, Huysmans, Gustave Herve, the ruling Rumanian bandits, Martoff, the Royalist Leon Daudet, Mrs. Snowden, and her maiden aunt Kautsky, and even Frau Louisa Kautsky (of the *Wiener Arbeiter Zeitung*), in a word, all the weapons in the armoury of bourgeois public opinion, were brought into play in defence of democratic, loyal, and strictly neutral Georgia.

And thus we observe, what at first sight is inexplicable, a fresh outburst of frenzy: all the charges—political, juridical, moral, criminal—that were first directed against the Soviet system as a whole, are now mobilised against the Soviet authorities in Georgia. It appears that it is in Georgia that the Soviet fails to express the will of the people. But what about Great Russia? Have they really forgotten the dispersal of the Constituent Assembly with the aid of Lettish and Chinese regiments? Has it not been proved long ago that, although not rooted anywhere, we, nevertheless, with the aid of armed forces from "outside" (!!!), scattered to the winds the most solid democratic governments, no matter how deep rooted they may be? Why, gentlemen, this is the very argument with which you started! It is precisely on this ground that you foretold the collapse of the Soviets within a few weeks! So Clemenceau prophesied at the beginning of the Versailles negotiations, and so did Kautsky at the beginning of the German revolution. Why then is all the talk confined to Georgia now? Is it because Jordania and Tseretelli are now emigres? Then what about the others? The Azerbaidjan Musavatists, the Armenian Dashnaks, the Kuban Rada, the Don Krug, the Ukrainian Petlurists, Martoff and Chernoff, Kerensky and Miliukov? Why is all this preference

given to Georgian Mensheviks as against the Moscow Mensheviks? For the Georgian Mensheviks they demand the restoration of power, and for the Moscow Mensheviks they merely demand reforms in the methods of persecution. This is not very logical, but the political aim is too clear. Georgia provides a new pretext for the mobilisation of hate and hostility against us in this protracted war of positions. These are the laws of wars "of exhaustion." Our opponents are reproducing *in octavo* the failure they committed *in folio*.

This in a large measure defines the contents and character of this work. We have once again to examine questions, the principles of which have already been laid down particularly in my "Terrorism and Communism."\* In that book I attempted to be as concrete as possible. My task consisted in showing, by concrete examples, the operation of the basic forces of our epoch. In the history of "democratic" Georgia, we attempt to trace the policy of the ruling social-democratic parties which were compelled to pick their pact between imperialism and the proletarian revolution. We hope that just such a detailed and concrete exposition as this will bring the internal problems of the revolution, its requirements and difficulties, to the closer understanding of a reader who does not possess direct revolutionary experience, but who is interested in acquiring it.

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We do not always in the text give the references for our quotations: this would be too wearisome for the reader, particularly to a foreign reader, as most of the sources are Russian publications. Those who wish to confirm our quotations, and obtain more complete documentary evidence, may refer to the following brochures: "Documents and material on the foreign policy of Trans-Caucasia and Georgia," Tiflis, 1919; "The Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic and the Georgian Democratic Republic and their relations," Moscow, 1922; Makharadze, "The Dictatorship of the Menshevik Party in Georgia," Moscow, 1921; Meshckeviakoff, "In the Menshevik Paradise," Moscow, 1921; Shaffier, "Civil War in Russia and in Menshevik Georgia," Moscow, 1921. By the same author, "Secrets of the Reign of the Mensheviks," Tiflis, 1921. The last two brochures are based on part of the material discovered by the Commission of the Communist International in Georgia and the Crimea. Furthermore, we have made use of the archives of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs and the People's Commissariat for War.

Our exposition and our sources of information cannot by any means pretend to be complete. The most valuable material is inaccessible to us. This material consists of the most compromising documents, as well as the archives of the respective

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\*Published in Great Britain under the misleading title of *The Defence of Terrorism*. Labour Publishing Co. (3s. 6d.).

British and French institutions, taken out of the country by the late Menshevik government, since November, 1918.

If any one were conscientiously to collect all these documents and publish them, we should get a very instructive book for the guidance of the Second and Two-and-a-half Internationals. In spite of the financial embarrassment of the Soviet Republic, its government would undoubtedly undertake the cost of publishing such a book. It goes of course without saying that it would reciprocally hand over for such a publication all the documents referring to Georgia at present in the Soviet archives. We fear, however, that this proposal will not be accepted. Well, we shall have to wait until the day comes when other methods are found for revealing these secrets. In the long run that day will come.

L. TROTSKY.

Moscow, 20th February, 1922.

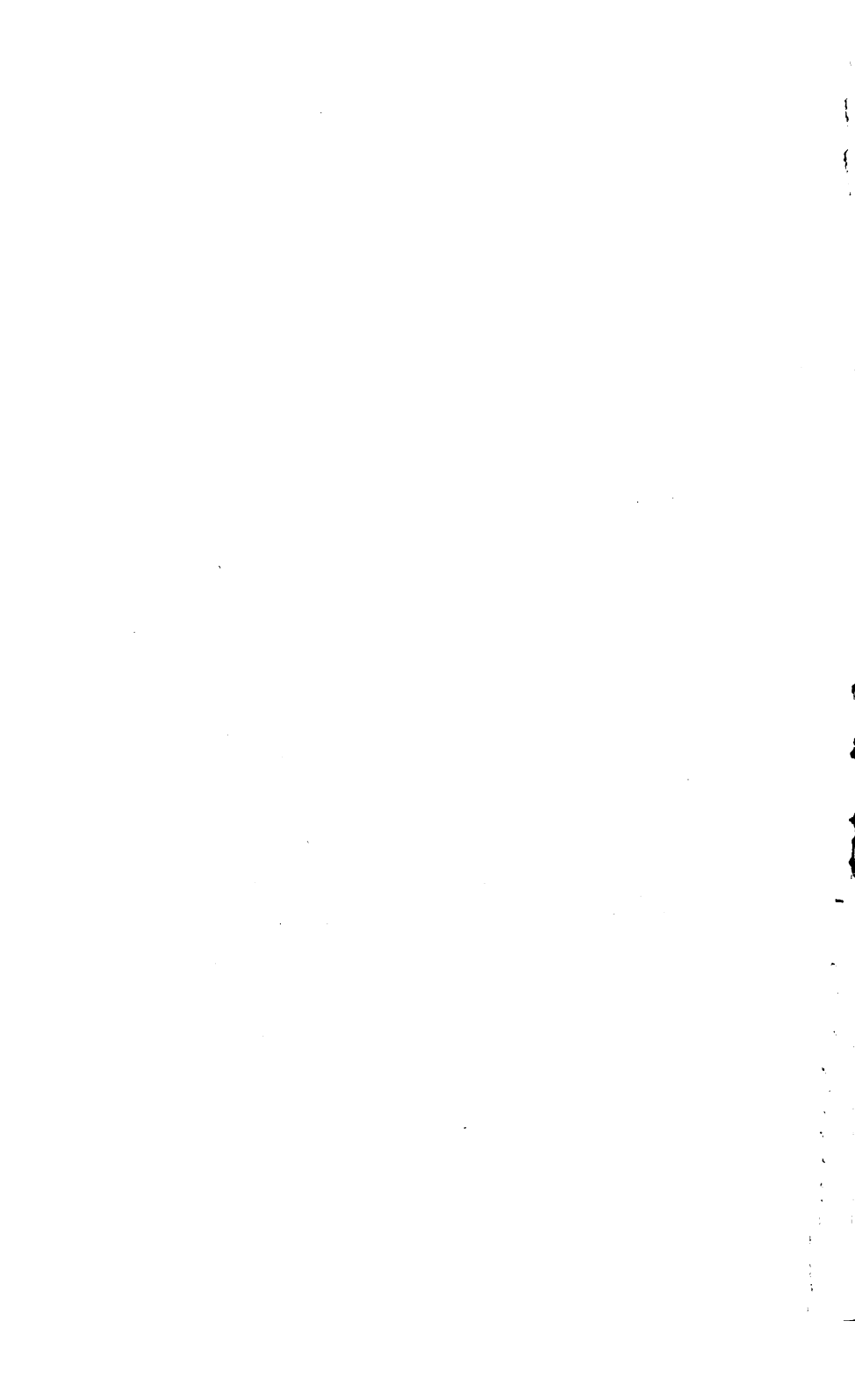
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#### EDITOR'S NOTE

Cis-Caucasia is the term given to the lands on the North of the great range of Caucasus mountains. The western portion of this district is called the Kuban, a region inhabited by Cossacks who were the backbone of Denikin's army. Plumb against the Kuban, but on the other side of the mountains, was the independent state of Georgia, the "ideal I.L.P. State," ruled by Mensheviks, and nominally neutral. It was mainly a peasant state but was important because it was on the way to Azerbaidjan.

Azerbaidjan was the name of a new state of very mixed population—Russian, Turk, Persian, Armenian, Georgian, Tartar—but mainly Tartar, formed on the Eastern side of the Trans-Caucasus, facing the Caspian Sea, as Georgia faced the Black Sea. Its centre was the great industrial town of Baku, perhaps the richest oil centre in the whole world and by far the most important place in this whole region.

There remained to the South-west the feeble and distracted country of Armenia, chiefly impelled by extreme fear of the Turks and without any remarkable mineral resources to call forth the protective instincts of the Western powers. All these three states were for a few weeks united under the name of the "Trans-Caucasian Republic," but at the time of which Trotsky writes they were separate jealous capitalist states, united only in their subservience first to the Germans and then to the Allies.





## CHAPTER I.

# MYTH AND REALITY

How do the overthrown Mensheviks and their diverse patrons picture the fate of Georgia? In this connection quite a myth has been created, calculated to deceive simpletons; and simpletons exist in this world.

The Georgian people, by its own free will, so the myth commences, decided, in a peaceful and friendly manner, to separate from Russia. This decision the Georgian people expressed by a democratic vote. At the same time, it inscribed on its banner the programme of absolute neutrality in international relations. Neither in thought nor in deed did Georgia interfere in the Russian civil war. Neither the Central Empires nor the Entente could divert her from this path of neutrality. Her motto was: "Live and let live"! Hearing of this righteous land, several pilgrims of the Second International, known for their piety—Vandervelde, Renaudel, and Mrs. Snowden—immediately booked a direct passage to it. Immediately after them followed Kautsky, bent with age and wisdom. All these, like the apostles of old, conversed in tongues they did not understand and saw visions which they afterwards described in articles and books. Kautsky on his return journey from Tiflis to Vienna unceasingly sang the psalm: "Lord, now lettest thou Thy servant depart in peace. . . for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation."

Hardly had these pilgrims managed to bring these good tidings to their flocks, however, than a terrible thing happened. Without any cause, Soviet Russia threw her army against peaceful neutral and democratic Georgia and ruthlessly suppressed this social-democratic Republic, so whole-heartedly beloved by the masses of the people. The cause of this unexampled outrage is to be sought in the imperialism and Bonapartism of the Soviet Government, and particularly in its hatred of the democratic successes of the Georgian Mensheviks. This is about all the myth contains: what follows further are apocalyptic prophesies of the inevitable fall of the Bolsheviks, and of how the Mensheviks will rise in their glory.

Karl Kautsky has written a pious tract devoted to the establishment of this myth.\* The resolution of the Second International on Georgia, the articles in *The Times*, the speeches of

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\* "Georgien, Eine social-demokratische Bauern republik" Vienna, 1921. "I did not see anything," says Kautsky, "except what could be seen from the window of the train or in Tiflis. To this I must add my lack of knowledge of the Georgian and Russian languages." Subsequently he relates "the Communists avoided me." He should have added further that the hospitable Mensheviks deceived their respected guest at every step, which he on his part willingly facilitated. The result of the combination of these fortunate circumstances was the appearance of this tract, which represents a worthy theoretical climax to the international campaign against Soviet Russia.

Vandervelde, the undoubted sympathies of the Belgian Queen, and the writings of Herve and Merrheim, are all based on this myth. The only reason why a Papal Encyclical has not been published is the untimely death of Benedict XV. Let us hope that his successor will make good this omission.

We must declare, however, that, while the myth about Georgia does not lack poetic dignity, nevertheless, like all myths, it is contrary to facts. To be precise, the Georgian myth is a lie, which must be attributed not to the creative effort of the people, but to the machine production of the capitalist press. Lies, and nothing but lies, are at the basis of the frenzied anti-Soviet agitation in which the leaders of the Second International played the first fiddle. We shall prove this point by point.

\* \* \*

Mr. Henderson first heard of the existence of Georgia from Mrs. Snowden, and Mrs. Snowden became acquainted with the activities of Jordania and Tseretelli during her educational tour in Batoum and Tiflis.

As for ourselves, we knew the gentlemen before, not as the lords of independent democratic Georgia, of which they never dreamed, but as Russian politicians in Petrograd and Moscow. *Chkheidze* became the head of the Petrograd Soviet and subsequently of the Central Executive Committee of Soviets, during the period of Kerensky, when the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries dominated the Soviets. *Tseretelli* was a Minister in the Kerensky government and the inspirer of the policy of compromise.\* *Chkheidze*, *Dan*, and others served as intermediaries between the Menshevik Soviet and the Coalition Government. *Gegechkori* and *Chkhenkelli* carried out responsible tasks for the Provisional Government. *Chkhenkelli* was its plenipotentiary in the Trans-Caucasus.

The position of the Mensheviks fundamentally was as follows: the revolution must preserve its bourgeois character; for that reason the bourgeoisie must remain at its head; the function of the Coalition between the Socialists and the bourgeoisie should be to accustom the masses of the people to the domination of the bourgeoisie; for the proletariat to strive to capture power is fatal to the revolution; ruthless war must be declared against the Bolsheviks, said the ideologists of the bourgeois republic. *Chkheidze* and *Tseretelli* as well as all their friends, irreconcilably insisted on the unity and integrity of the Republic within the framework of the former Tsarist Empire. The claims of Finland for the widening of her autonomy and the attempts of the Ukrainian national democracy in the direction of independence met with the ruthless resistance of

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\* Kautsky introduces confusion and garbles facts even where his lofty aim does not require it; thus he states that *Chkheidze* and *Tseretelli* were at the head of the Petrograd Soviet in 1905. As a matter of fact, nobody Petrograd at that time had even heard of them.

Tseretelli and Chkheidze. Chkhenkelli, at the Congress of Soviets, thundered against the separatist tendencies of some border countries, although at that time even Finland did not demand complete independence. For the suppression of these tendencies towards autonomy Tseretelli and Chkheidze organised armed force. They would have applied this force had history allowed them sufficient time for that purpose. Their main efforts, however, were directed towards fighting the Bolsheviki.

Although history knows of many campaigns of venom, hatred and persecution, it is hardly likely that anything similar to that which was conducted against us during the Kerensky period ever has occurred. The newspapers of all shades and tendencies, in all their articles and sections, in poetry and prose, in words and cartoons, upbraided, anathemised, and branded the Bolsheviki. There was not an outrage that they did not ascribe to us, collectively and individually. When it seemed that the persecution had reached its highest point, some new episode, sometimes of most trifling character, would give it a new impetus. It would then rise to greater heights, intoxicated with the fumes of its own frenzy. The bourgeoisie sensed the danger of death. In their wild ravings was to be detected a note of fear.

The Mensheviki, as always, reflected the mood of the bourgeoisie. At the height of this campaign, Mr. Henderson visited the Provisional Government, and came to the consoling conclusion that Sir George Buchanan, with sufficient dignity and success, represented the ideals of British democracy in the democracy of Kerensky and Tseretelli.

The Tsarist police and the Secret Service, temporarily remaining idle out of fear of over-reaching themselves, were bursting with eagerness to prove their loyalty to the new masters. All parties in educated society unanimously pointed out to them the object of their guardianship and care—the Bolsheviki. All the stupid inventions about our connection with the General Staff of the Hohenzollerns, which nobody except petty spies and Moscow merchants' wives really believed, were repeated, developed, exaggerated, and presented in lurid colours day after day and in all notes and keys. The leaders of the Mensheviki, better than anyone else, knew the real value of this accusation. But Tseretelli and his fraternity considered it expedient to support it for political motives. The deep bass of Tseretelli set the tone, which was taken up and repeated by the hoarse barks of the Black Hundred riff-raff. The result was that the Bolsheviki were formally accused of high treason, and of being in the service of German militarism. Our printing press and stores were plundered by the bourgeois rabble, under the leadership of patriotic officers. Kerensky shut down our newspapers, and thousands and thousands of Communists were arrested in Petrograd and in all parts of the country.

The Mensheviki and their allies, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, received power at the hands of the workers' and soldiers'

councils. But they very soon felt that the ground was slipping from under their feet.

They then directed their efforts to creating a counter-balance to the workers' and soldiers' councils by assisting the petty bourgeois and bourgeois elements of the country politically to organise themselves through the democratic municipalities and the zemstvos (county councils). As, however, the Soviets developed too rapidly to the Left, the work of organising the bourgeois classes was supplemented by the Mensheviks weakening and disorganising the Soviets. The re-elections were deliberately delayed, and the Second Congress of the Soviets was avowedly sabotaged. Tseretelli inspired this policy, and Chkheidze completed its organisation. Already, from August-September, 1917, it was argued that the Soviets had outlived their time and that they were "decaying." The more revolutionary, insistent and impatient the working and peasant masses became, the more crude and avowed became the dependence of the Mensheviks upon the propertied classes. The bourgeois democratic municipalities and the zemstvos failed to save the situation. The revolutionary wave swept over this miserable dam. The Second Congress of the Soviets, called by the Mensheviks as a result of our pressure, with the support of the Petrograd garrison, took power in its hands, almost without fighting and without casualties. Then the Mensheviks, together with the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Cadets, began a bitter, and, where possible, armed struggle against the Soviets, i.e., against the workers and peasants. In this manner was the basis laid for the White fronts.

During the course of the first nine months of the revolution, therefore, the Mensheviks passed through three stages: in the spring of 1917, they were unquestioned leaders of the Soviets; in the summer they attempted to occupy a "neutral" position between the Soviets and the bourgeoisie; in the autumn, they, together with the bourgeoisie, declared civil war against the Soviets. These distinct stages characterise the essence of Menshevism, and as we shall see further, completely cover the history of Menshevik Georgia.

Already previous to the November Revolution, Chkheidze slipped off to the Caucasus; caution was always the strongest of his civic virtues. Subsequently he was elected President of the Trans-Caucasian Coalition Seim (Parliament). Thus the role which he played in Petrograd *in folio*, he continued in the Caucasus *in octavo*.

The Mensheviks, in alliance with the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Cadets, became the inspiration of the counter-revolutionary "Committee for the Salvation of the Fatherland and the Revolution," which immediately got in contact with Krassnoff's Cossacks, then advancing on Petrograd, and organised the attempted armed rising of the Junkers. The leaders of the Mensheviks, to whom Kautsky has granted the patent for constructing

bloodless democracies, are the real initiators of the civil war in Russia. From the Petrograd "Committee for the Salvation of the Fatherland and the Revolution," in which the Mensheviks worked jointly with all the White Guard organisations, the threads lead direct to all the further counter-revolutionary risings, plots, and assassinations: to the Czecho-Slovak rising on the Volga, to the government of Chaikovsky and General Miller in the North (Archangel), to Denikin and Wrangel in the South, to the emigre refugees abroad and the secret funds of the Entente. In all this work the leaders of the Mensheviks, including the Georgian Menshevik leaders, took part, not for the defence of the independence of Georgia, of which nothing at that time had been said, but as leaders of one of the anti-Soviet parties, with bases all over the country. The leader of the anti-Soviet block in the Constituent Assembly was none other than Tseretelli.

Together with the whole of the counter-revolution, the Mensheviks retreated from the industrial centre to the backward periphery. They naturally made use of Trans-Caucasia as one of the last lines of retreat. In Samara they entrenched themselves with the motto of the "Constituent Assembly," but in Tiflis they attempted at a certain moment, to raise the banner of an independent republic. But this did not take place immediately. The transition from the bourgeois centralist position to that of the petty-bourgeois separatist position, dictated not by the national demands of the Georgian people, but by the considerations of the all-Russian civil war, passed through several stages.

Three days after the November Revolution in Petrograd, Jordania declared in the Tiflis Municipal Duma: "The insurrection in Petrograd is living its last days. From the first it was doomed to failure." In the natural order of things nobody could demand that Jordania should reveal greater penetration in Tiflis than was revealed by the other philistines in all the other parts of the world. The only difference is this, however, that Tiflis was one of the points of the Russian Revolution and that Jordania was one of the active participators in the struggle that should have put an end to the Bolshevik revolt. However, the "last days" passed by and proved not to be the last. It was found necessary even in November hastily to create an independent Trans-Caucasian Commissariat; not as a government, but a provisional counter-revolutionary *place d'armes*, from which the Georgian Mensheviks hoped to render decisive aid in the re-establishment of "democratic" order in Russia. These hopes had some foundation: economic backwardness, the extreme weakness of the industrial proletariat, the remoteness from Central Russia, the inter-woven character of the national with the various social, traditional, and religious conditions, the prevailing lack of confidence and national antagonism between the various nationalities, and, finally, the propinquity of the Don and Kuban, all this together created favourable conditions for counteracting the labour revolution, and indeed, for a long time converted the Caucasus and the Cis-

Caucasus into a Vendee and a Gironde which were bound together by their unity in the struggle against the Soviets.

At that time in the Trans-Caucasus there were large numbers of Tsarist troops from the Turkish front. The news of the proposals of the Soviet Government for peace and agrarian reform shook not only the soldier masses but also the local labour population.

A period of alarm set in for the counter-revolutionaries entrenched in the Trans-Caucasus. They immediately organised a bloc of "order," composed of all parties, with the exception, of course, of the Bolsheviks. The Mensheviks, who maintained the leadership, inspired the alliance between the Georgian landed nobility and the petty-bourgeoisie, between the Armenian shopkeepers and the oil magnates, and between the Tartar Beks and Khans. The Russian White officers placed themselves entirely at the disposal of the anti-Bolshevik bloc.

At the end of December, there took place the delegate congress of the Trans-Caucasian Front, called under the leadership of the Mensheviks themselves. The majority seemed to be on the side of the Left. The Mensheviks then, together with the right wing of the Congress, made a coup d'etat and created a Regional Soviet of Trans-Caucasian troops *without the Left*, i.e., without the majority. In agreement with the Soviet, the Trans-Caucasian Commissariat in January, 1919 resolved: "to recognise the desirability of dispatching Cossack detachments to those places where disorders are taking place at the present time. . . ." Usurpation as a method and Korniloff Cossacks as an armed force—these are the real points of departure of Trans-Caucasian democracy.

The Menshevik coup d'etat in Trans-Caucasia was not an exception. When at the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets (October, 1917), it was found that the Bolsheviks represented the overwhelming majority, the old Executive Committee (composed of Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries), refused to hand over the affairs of the Committee to the Executive Committee elected by the Congress. Fortunately, we had behind us not only the former majority of the Congress, but the whole garrison of the capital. This saved us from being dispersed, and enabled us to give the Mensheviks an object lesson in Soviet democracy.

The Trans-Caucasian troops continued to be a menace to "order" even after the Menshevik palace revolution. Feeling that they had the support of the revolutionarily minded soldiers, the working and peasant masses of Trans-Caucasia showed the unmistakable intention of following the example of the North.

In order to save the situation it was necessary to disarm and disperse the revolutionary troops.

The plan for disarming the army was secretly worked out by the Government of Trans-Caucasia, together with the representatives of the Tsarist generals. The participants of this bloc were the White general Prjevalsky, the future comrade in arms of Wrangel, Colonel Shatiloff, the future Minister of Foreign

Affairs of Georgia, Ramishvilli, and others. Simultaneously with the measures taken to disarm the revolutionary detachments, it was decided not to disarm the Cossack regiments, i.e., the bulwark of Korniloff, Kaledin, and Krassnoff. The co-operation between the Menshevik Gironde and the Cossack Vendee here assumed a military character. The disarming became converted into the plundering and frequently into the massacre of the returning soldiers by special counter-revolutionary detachments. On some of the railway stations regular battles took place, in which armoured trains and military were used. Thousands of victims fell in these battles, the instigators of which were the Georgian Mensheviks.

The pious Kautsky describes the bolshevistically-minded Trans-Caucasian troops as unbridled bands, who plundered, violated, and murdered. This is exactly how all the blackguards of the counter-revolution described them. Kautsky had to take up this attitude in order to be able to describe the initiators of the disarming, the Georgian Mensheviks, as "knights, in the best sense of the word." We have at our disposal, however, quite other evidence, which, by-the-by, originates from the Mensheviks themselves. The latter took fright at the work of their own hands, when the disarming assumed a sanguinary, pogrom character. The prominent Menshevik, Djugelli, on January 14th, 1918, declared:—

"This was not a disarming, but a plundering of the soldiers. These unfortunate men, weary, longing to get back to their homes, were deprived of everything, even of their boots. At the same time quite a trade was carried on. The arms were sold to robber bands. What took place was disgusting."— ("Slovo," No. 10.)

Several days afterwards, Djugelli, himself a participant in the disarming of the Tiflis garrison (we shall meet this gentleman again), accused Ramishvilli of having employed the most notorious robber detachments of the Trans-Caucasian counter-revolution in this work. Between these two statesmen the following public "exchange of views" took place, which we feel compelled to quote.

*N. Ramishvilli:* Djugelli is a slanderer!

*Djugelli:* And N. Ramishvilli is a liar!

*Ramishvilli:* (Repeating), Djugelli is a slanderer!

*Djugelli:* I beg you to cease addressing these insulting remarks to me!

*Ramishvilli:* I declare that what has been said by Djugelli are insinuations, and that Djugelli is a slanderer!

*Djugelli:* And you are a coward and a scoundrel, and I shall deal with you as you deserve.

("Slovo," No. 32.).

As we see, the disarming of the troops was not such an unmistakably knightly task as Kautsky described it, since two men having the same views, and closely associated with this work,

endeavour in this unknighly fashion to repudiate all responsibility for it.

Nevertheless, one cannot but help sympathising with Kautsky. See what an excess of zeal, accompanied by weakened centres of restraint leads to. Let us observe here that the whole of Kautsky's book, with his unceremoniously apologetic tone, remarkably recalls the writings of several of the superannuated French Academicians, on the civilising mission of the Prince of Monaco, or the philanthropic role of the Karageorgevitches. The superannuated Academicians who have become back numbers in their own countries received orders and pensions from the grateful governments of the Arcadia they discovered. Kautsky, as far as we know, was merely appointed an honorary member of the Georgian National Guard. This proves that he is less selfish than the French Academicians. On the other hand, while equalling them in the profundity of historic generalisations, he must concede considerable ground to them in the niceness of laudatory style.

\* \* \*

The Brest-Litovsk Peace arose out of the collapse of the old army, which was completely shattered by a long series of defeats. The March revolution itself struck a severe blow at its internal organisation. It was necessary to reorganise it from top to bottom, change its social basis and give it a new aim and new internal relations. At the same time, the complete lack of co-ordination between word and deed, the high-sounding revolutionary phrases with an absence of will for change, in a word, the democratic masquerade of Kerensky and Tseretelli, destroyed it. The Minister of War in the Kerensky Government, General Verkhovsky, insistently pointed out the incapability of the army of continuing the war, and the necessity for concluding peace at all costs. The further reliance on miracles, and the waverings concealed by patriotic hysteria, only revealed the hopelessness of the situation. Out of this arose Brest-Litovsk. The Mensheviks demanded that we continue the war with Germany, with the hope that in this way we should be more certain to break our necks. Under this anti-German banner they united with all the forces of reaction. They endeavoured to use against us the last remnants of the war inertia of the people. In this connection the Georgian leaders were in the front ranks.

The conclusion of the Brest-Litovsk Peace created a superficial reason for the declaration of the independence of the Trans-Caucasus (April 22nd, 1918). Judging by previous patriotic rhetoric, one would have thought that the aim was to continue the war against Turkey and Germany. On the contrary, the formal separation of Trans-Caucasia from Russia was dictated by a desire to create more unassailable juridical conditions for foreign intervention. With its aid the Mensheviks, not without reason, calculated on maintaining the bourgeois-democratic regime in Trans-Caucasia and later to deliver a blow against Soviet North.



Not only the bourgeois landlord parties allied with the Mensheviks, but even the leaders of the Georgian Mensheviks themselves, openly spoke and wrote of the struggle against All-Russian Bolshevism as the chief reason for the separation of the Trans-Caucasus. On the 25th April, Tseretelli, speaking in the Trans-Caucasian Seim, said: "When Bolshevism arose in Russia, when that murderous hand was lifted against the life of the State, we fought against it there with all the powers at our command. . . . We fought against the assassins of the Government. *With equal self-sacrifice we will fight against the assassins of a nation.*" (Loud applause). With the same self-sacrifice—and with the same success. . . .

Do these words leave any shadow of a doubt as to how the Mensheviks understood the tasks of "independent" Trans-Caucasia? Not the creation of an ideal social-democratic government, sacred and neutral, between the Black and the Caspian Seas, but the struggle against the assassins of a government (bourgeois), against the Bolsheviks, for the purpose of re-establishing the bourgeois-democratic nation within the framework of the old State. The whole of Tseretelli's speech just quoted is nothing but a repetition of those pathetic generalities which we heard dozens of times in Petrograd. The chairman of this "historic" session of the Trans-Caucasian Seim (Parliament), was the same Chkheidze, who, as permanent chairman, more than once closed the mouths of the Bolsheviks in Petrograd. With this difference, however, that what in the North they did *in folio*, here they did *in octavo*—with the same self-sacrifice and the same success.

The practical refusal to recognise the Brest-Litovsk Peace Treaty immediately placed Trans-Caucasia as a "State" in a hopeless position, because it finally freed the hands of the Turks and their Allies. Within a few weeks the Trans-Caucasian Government begged Turkey to accept the Brest-Litovsk Treaty as a basis. But Turkey would not listen to this. The Pashas and the German generals in Trans-Caucasia became the unquestioned masters of the situation. The main thing, however, was achieved; with the aid of foreign troops, the revolution was temporarily suppressed and the fall of the bourgeois regime was postponed.

With the declaration of the independence of Trans-Caucasia (April 22, 1918), and without consulting the population, the Georgian Mensheviks, in the accepted manner, proclaimed a new era of fraternity between the various races of the republic, upon the basis of democracy. And yet, barely had this new republic been established, than it collapsed. Azerbaidjan sought salvation from the Turks, Armenia feared the Turks more than fire, Georgia sought the protection of Germany. Within five weeks after its solemn proclamation, the Trans-Caucasian Republic was dissolved. The democratic declamations at its obsequies were not less fervent than at its birth. But this does not alter the

fact that the petty-bourgeois democracy revealed its complete impotence to overcome national friction and to harmonise national interests. On May 26th, 1919—again without consulting the population—an independent Georgia was established as a fragment of Trans-Caucasia. Again there was a flood of democratic verbosity. Just five months pass, and between democratic Georgia and equally democratic Armenia, a war breaks out over a disputed bit of territory. From both sides were heard speeches on the lofty aims of civilisation and about the treacherous attack of the enemy. Kautsky does not say a single word about this “democratic” Armeno-Georgian war. Under the leadership of Jordania, Tseretelli, and their Armenian and Tartar doubles, Trans-Caucasia was transformed into a Balkan peninsula, where national massacres and democratic charlatanry, have reached an equally highly flourishing stage. Throughout these indecent vacillations and sanguinary attacks, the Georgian Mensheviks undeviatingly carried through their real guiding idea: ruthless struggle against Bolshevik “anarchy.”

The independence of Georgia made it possible, or, to be precise, made it necessary for the Mensheviks to reveal the place they occupied in the struggle of the Soviet Republic against imperialism. Jordania’s reply to this question could not be clearer.

“The Georgian Government informs the population,” declares an official statement of June 13th, 1918, “that the German troops which have arrived in Tiflis have come on the invitation of the Government of Georgia itself, and that their task is, with the complete agreement of the said government, to defend the frontiers of the Georgian Democratic Republic. Part of these troops have already been sent to the Borchalinsk county for the purpose of clearing it of robber bands” (really for an unofficial war against democratic Azerbaïdjan, once again over a piece of territory).

The blessed Kautsky makes it appear that the Germans were invited exclusively against the Turks, and that, apart from that Georgia preserved her complete independence. Even if it were true that some democratic calf incited General Von Kress to act as a sentry inside the institution of Georgian democracy, still one has to confess that General Von Kress was hardly fitted for such a role. But it would be quite out of place to over-rate the naivete of the democratic calf. The role of the German troops in the border states of Russia during 1918 was quite definite. In Finland they acted as the executioners of the workers’ revolution, in the Baltic states they did the same. They passed through the whole of the Ukraine, breaking up the Soviets, massacring the Communists, and disarming the workers and peasants. Jordania had no reason to expect that they would enter Georgia with any other aim. But it was precisely for this reason that the Menshevik government invited the troops of the indomitable Hohenzollerns—that as against the Turkish troops they had all the advantage of discipline. “It is a great question,” declares the official reporter to the Trans-Caucasian Seim, the Menshevik Oneashvilli, on April 28th,

1918, "as to which menace for us is the worst, the Bolshevik or the Turkish." That the Bolshevik menace was incomparably worse than the German there did not seem to be the slightest doubt. When they held the posts of Ministers in an All-Russian government, the Georgian Mensheviks accused us of being in alliance with the German General Staff, and through the Tsarist courts charged us with high treason. They declared that the Brest-Litovsk Peace, which opened "the gates of the revolution" to German imperialism, was a betrayal of Russia. It was precisely with this cry that they called for the overthrow of the Bolsheviks, and, when the revolution became too hot for them, split Trans-Caucasia away from Russia, and later Georgia from Trans-Caucasia, thereby really opening wide the gates of "democracy" for the troops of the Kaiser. After the defeat of Germany, as we shall see, they repeated the same speeches and the same gestures to the victorious Entente.

In this connection, as in all others, the policy of the Mensheviks was simply a reflection of the policy of the Russian bourgeoisie. The latter, represented by the Cadets (Miliukoff), entered into an agreement with the German occupational authorities in the Ukraine, and after the defeat of Germany it sent these very same Cadets to the bosom of the Entente as prodigal sons, who, in spite of the zig-zag nature of their path, did not lose sight of what was for them and for the Entente the main point: the struggle against the Bolsheviks.

It was for this reason that the Entente so easily opened its heart to them, and, what was more important, its coffers. It was for this reason that the war-time Minister Henderson, who had fraternised with the war-time Minister Tseretelli, in Petrograd, should again greet the latter as a comrade in arms after he had left the embraces of the Hohenzollern General Von Kress. Zig-zag, contradictions, treachery—but always against the revolution of the proletariat.

On September 25th, 1918, Jordania sent a written assurance to Von Kress saying: "It is not in our interests to lower the prestige of Germany in the Caucasus"—and within two months they had to open the gates to the British troops.

This was preceded by negotiations which had aimed chiefly at explaining to and convincing the British that the relation between the German General Von Kress and Georgian democracy was simply that of a marriage of convenience, and that the real nuptials had yet to be celebrated with none other than the British General Walker. On December 15th, the old Menshevik Topuridze, the representative of the Government in Batum, in a reply to the questions of the Entente Mission, said, according to his own report: "I assume that our Republic will co-operate with the Allied countries in their fight against the Bolsheviks, with all the means at its disposal. . . ." The same Topuridze reported to the British agent, Webster, that "in rendering aid to the British

in the Caucasus in the fight against the Bolsheviks, Georgia will be but performing her duty."

After the British Colonel Jordan explained that the landing of the Allied troops in Georgia was carried out "in accordance with the general plan for international peace and order," i.e., for the suppression of the Bolsheviks on an all-Russian scale, and for the subjection of all the peoples of Russia to Admiral Kolchak, Gegechkory informed Colonel Jordan that "the Georgian Government, imbued with the desire to work in harmony with the Allies for the realisation of their principles of right and justice, proclaimed by them, gives its consent to the landing of the troops." In a word, in transferring their allegiance from the Germans to the Entente, the leaders of the Georgian Mensheviks neglected the good old counsel of the Russian poet: "Flatterers, flatterers, learn to preserve a little nobility even in your baseness."

I remember too well the negotiation table at Brest-Litovsk. I remember too well those who sat round that table—Baron Kuhlman, General Hoffman, and Count Czernin. But I more distinctly and sharply remember the representatives of the Ukrainian petty-bourgeois democracy, who also called themselves Socialists, and whose political level was quite in keeping with that of the Georgian Mensheviks. At the negotiations they, behind our backs, entered into a bloc with the feudal representatives of Germany and Austria-Hungary. And it was a sight to see how they cringed before them, how they wagged their tails and looked up with admiration and love into the eyes of their new masters, and with what lofty solemnity they looked at us, the isolated representatives of the proletariat at the sessions at Brest-Litovsk. I know how these Mensheviks:—

“ . . . . Smooth every passion  
That in the natures of their lords rebel:  
Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods:  
Renege, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks  
With every gale, and vary of their masters,  
As knowing nought, like dogs, but following.”

The events of the last few years have been full of trials. But I do not remember a moment more difficult, more unbearable, than when we, burning with shame, were compelled to breathe in an atmosphere of dishonour, of lack of dignity, and degradation as exhibited by petty-bourgeois democracy, which, in its struggle against the proletariat, cringes on its knees before the representatives of the feudal capitalist world. And did not the Georgian Mensheviks, word for word, and letter for letter, do exactly the same thing?

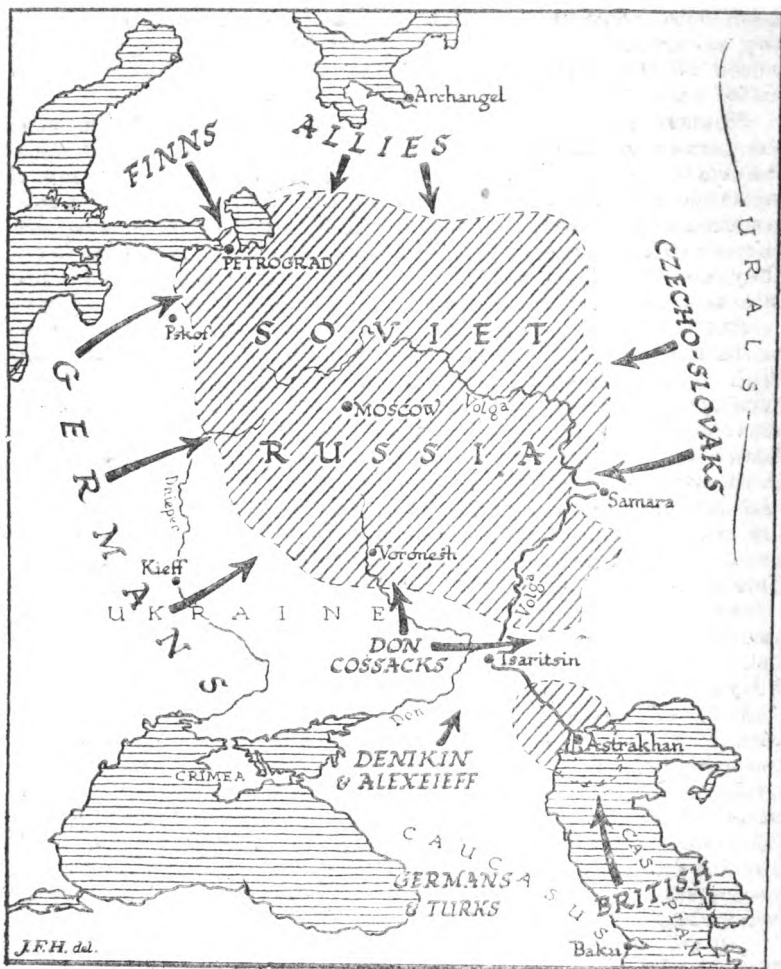
## CHAPTER II.

# “STRICT NEUTRALITY”

Kautsky, Vandervelde, Henderson, in a word, the international Mrs. Snowdens, are categorically denying the collaboration of Menshevik Georgia with the Russian and foreign counter-revolution. And yet this is the crux of the question. At the time of the fierce conflict of Soviet Russia with the White Guard forces supported by foreign imperialism, democratic Georgia, we are asked to believe, remained neutral. Not just ordinarily neutral, writes the pious Kautsky, but “strictly neutral.” It would be permissible to have one’s doubts about this, even if one were not acquainted with the facts. But we are acquainted with the facts. We know not only that the Georgian Mensheviks participated in all the intrigues against the Soviet Republic, but also that independent Georgia was established to serve as a weapon in the imperialist and civil wars against the Workers’ and Peasants’ Republic. This was already made clear in the previous statement. But the benighted Kautsky does not wish to hear anything about it. Mrs. Snowden is indignant, and Macdonald indignantly repudiates the “stupid accusations.” He actually wrote “stupid accusations,” because he was so very angry. And Macdonald, though not a Brutus, is yet an “honourable man.” However, there are facts, documents, and minutes which are more to be believed than so-called honourable people.

On September 25th, 1918, an official Conference was held, consisting of the representatives of the Georgian Republic, of the Kuban Government, and of the Volunteer Army. The latter was represented by the Generals Alexeiev, Denikin, Romanovsky, Dragomirov, Lukomsky, the well-known monarchist Shulghin, and others. These names speak for themselves. General Alexeiev opened the proceedings by saying: “On behalf of the Volunteer Army and the Kuban Government, I welcome the representatives of *friendly* Georgia in the persons of E. P. Gegechkory and General G. I. Mazniev.”

There were some misunderstandings between these friendly parties, the chief of which was the reference to the Sochinsk area. In clearing up the misunderstandings, Gegechkory said: “Was it not Georgia which, during the persecution of the officers in Russia, became a refuge for all of them? We received them all, and from our scanty means we paid their salaries, we fed them, and we did everything possible under the existing circumstances in order to help them. . .” These words alone might raise certain doubts about the “neutrality” of Georgia in the war of the workers with the Tsarist Generals. But Gegechkory himself has hastened to dispel any doubt on this matter: “I consider it my duty,” he went on saying to Alexeiev, Denikin and others, “to say that one must not forget the service we have rendered you in the struggle with Bolshevism, and also that you must take this support into



### RUSSIA IN 1918

This map shows the desperate state of the Soviet at the time dealt with.  
 Note that Georgia is safely under the thumb of Germans and Turks

account." "These words of Gegechkory, the Foreign Secretary of democratic Georgia, and one of the leaders of the Menshevik party, speak for themselves. Or it may be that Mr. MacDonald requires further proofs. If so, they were provided by another representative of Georgia, Mazniev, who there and then added: "The officers are continually joining you (Alexeiev and Denikin) from Tiflis, and I am helping them in their transit to the best of my ability. General Liakhov can bear this out. We are providing

them with money and food on the way, etc., and all this without any remuneration. In compliance with your request, I have collected all the officers in Sochi, Gagri and Sukhum, and I have called upon them to join your ranks."

Kautsky has vouched for the strictest neutrality, MacDonald has termed the enumeration of the services rendered by the Mensheviks to the Whites in their struggle with the Bolsheviks, "stupid accusations." But we must, nevertheless, say that the honourable gentleman is premature in his scoldings, for our accusations are borne out by facts. These facts give the lie to MacDonald, for they are proof that it is we who spoke the truth, and not the international Mrs. Snowdens.

But this is not all. In their endeavours to prove that, by temporarily handing over the Sochinsk area to Georgia, the Whites were not losing anything, as their chief task consisted in moving northwards against the Bolsheviks, Gegechkory said: "If, as I have no doubt, a new Russia will be re-constituted in the future, we shall be faced perhaps not only with the restoration of the Sochinsk district, but even with more important questions, and you must take this into account." This statement discloses the real meaning of Georgian independence: it is not "national self-determination," but a strategical move in the struggle with Bolshevism. When Alexeiev and Denikin have reconstructed the "New Russia"—of which Gegechkory "has no doubt"—the Georgian Mensheviks will be faced with the question of restoring not only the Sochinsk area, but the whole of Georgia to the Russian Empire. Such is the nature of this "strict neutrality."

But, as if afraid that some dense brains should still have any doubts left, Gegechkory added in conclusion: "As far as our relations with the Bolsheviks are concerned, I may state that *the struggle with Bolshevism within our frontiers is relentless*. We are using every means possible to stamp out Bolshevism, as an anti-State movement which is threatening the integrity of our republic, and I believe that, in this respect, *we have already given many proofs, which speak for themselves*." Surely these words do not require any comment!

But how could such intimate conversations have become known? They were put down in the minutes and published.

Perhaps these minutes are forgeries? No, they were published by the Georgian Government itself, as a blue book entitled "Documents and Materials on the Foreign Policy of Trans-Caucasia and Georgia." (Tiflis, 1919). The minutes from which we have quoted appear on pages 391-414. As Gegechkory was himself Foreign Minister, it was he who published his conversations with Alexeiev and Denekin. To do justice to Gegechkory, he could not then foresee that Kautsky and MacDonald would have to swear by the honour of the Second International to the neutrality of Menshevik Georgia. In this case, as in many others, the position of the honourable members of the Second International would have been less difficult if shorthand and printing did not exist.

In order that the political meaning of Gegechkory's statements in his conversation with Denikin should be quite clear to us, we must bear in mind the military and political situation of Soviet Russia in September, 1918. A study of the map will repay the reader for his trouble. Our western frontier ran between Pskov and Novgorod. Pskov, Minsk and Moghilev were in the hands of Prince Leopold of Bavaria, and at that time German Princes were somebodies. And the Germans, who had been called in to protect democracy from the Bolsheviki, occupied the whole of the Ukraine. The army of General von Kirbach was trampling Odessa and Sebastopol underfoot, while its head was pressing on Kursk and Voronezh. The Don Cossacks were threatening Voronezh from the south-east. In their rear, on the Kuban, the army of Alexeiev and Denikin was gathering. The Turks and Germans were in possession of the Caucasus. Soviet Astrakhan was in a precarious position towards the north, the Volga was cut in two places; by the Cossacks near Tsaritsin, and by the Czecho-Slovaks near Samara. The entire southern half of the Caspian Sea was already in the hands of the Whites, under the command of British naval officers. The northern half was taken away from us in the following year. In the east we were conducting a war with the Czecho-Slovaks and with the Whites, who had occupied part of the Volga region, the Urals and Siberia. The Entente had established itself in the north, and Archangel and the entire coast of the White Sea was in its hands. The northern section of the Murmansk railway had been seized by the Anglo-French forces. Mannerheim's Finland was a perpetual threat to Petrograd, which was surrounded by the enemy on three sides. Under these enormous difficulties our army was only in the process of formation.

Under such circumstances the official representatives of Menshevik Georgia were reporting to the organisers of the Volunteer Army that Georgia was protecting the White officers from Bolshevik persecution, was keeping them free of charge, was recruiting volunteers from among them whom they were despatching to Alexeiev and Denikin. Moreover, it was also stated that Georgia was carrying on a "relentless" struggle against Bolshevism, crushing it "with all its means at its disposal."

Gegechkory was not boasting, and was not exaggerating his services to the counter-revolution. He and his friends had really done everything they could. They could not, of course, be expected to put considerable armed forces at the disposal of the Whites, as they had themselves to make use of German troops in their struggle with "internal anarchy." Their resources were less than their goodwill towards the counter-revolution. Nevertheless, they rendered relatively enormous service to the White Guard military organisations.

The equipment and stores of the Caucasian Army in Georgia, which were worth many millions, were seized by the Mensheviks, and were to a great extent used in supporting the Whites—the Don, Kuban, and Ter Cossacks, the Czech officers,



the detachments of Heimann and Filimonov, the Volunteer Army of Alexeiev and Denikin, etc. This aid was all the more valuable at that moment for the bourgeois-landlord detachments in the Caucasus, as the latter were hardly receiving anything from outside.

As the co-operation of Menshevik Georgia with the counter-revolutionaries of every kind was carried on from day to day, and as no regular record was kept of it, it would be very difficult now to write a connected account of this co-operation, all the more so as the Mensheviks have removed the most valuable archives abroad. But even the casual and disconnected documents, which have remained in the Tiflis offices are sufficient to remove even the shadow of a doubt from the minds of the most ignorant of special pleaders concerning the so-called neutrality of Georgia. The negotiations and military co-operation with the organisers of the Volunteer Army began as early as June, 1918, if not from the first day of Georgian independence. Some of the purely military operations (for instance, the move towards the Govorischensk Cossack settlement), were undertaken by Georgia at the request of the Kuban Government, which was acting in conjunction with the "Volunteers." General Heimann, who was marching against the Bolsheviks from the Daghestan Cossack settlement, received from the already mentioned Georgian General Mazniev 600 rifles, two machine guns and ammunition. In Tuapse General Maslovsky, who, together with Heimann, was in the service of Alexeiev, and operating in conjunction with the Menshevik army command, received an armoured train from Georgia. Gegechkory had these facts too in his mind when he reminded Alexeiev and Denikin of the aid rendered by Georgia.

In October, 1918, i.e., soon after the Gegechkory-Denikin consultation previously mentioned, the Georgian Government delivered to the Don Government, which was then at war with the Soviet Government, a considerable quantity of stores.\* On November 3rd, 1918 the Georgian General Mazniev reported to his Government that he was fighting against the Bolsheviks in conjunction with the Cossacks of the Volunteer Army. "I have left the Cossacks in established positions, and I have taken the troops, entrusted to me, to the rest camp in Sochy, etc." On November 26th, the Georgian Government resolved to send to the representative of the Volunteer Army, Obiedov, the necessary quantity of medicines and bandages "and to co-operate in every way possible in this affair." This "affair" was civil war against Soviet Russia. Of course bandages and medicines are very humane, very neutral objects, but it was rather unfortunate that the Georgian Government had previously taken these humane objects away by force

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\* The exact list of these considerable stores is based on original documents mentioned in I. Shafir's book "Civil War in Russia and Menshevik Georgia." Moscow, 1921, page 39.

from the Caucasian troops "infected with Bolshevik anarchy," and subsequently gave them to the White Guards which were attacking Soviet Russia from the South.

All this is called "strict neutrality" by Kautsky, but not by Jordania. The latter wrote to the Chairman of the Imperial German Mission, on October 15th, 1918, that is, at the height of these events: "I have never looked on the international position of Georgia as on that of a neutral power, *as self-evident facts prove to us the contrary.*" Precisely! This letter was also published by the same Jordania in the blue book already mentioned, which was at the disposal of Kautsky when he wrote his pamphlet; but he preferred to be guided by apostolic inspirations. It is more than probable that Jordania, who could not ignore self-evident facts in his conversations with General von Kress, was, nevertheless prepared, during his soul-saving conversations with Kautsky, to lead this venerable old gentleman by the nose. Especially so as Kautsky had brought to Tiflis a nose which was particularly adapted to the purpose.

Georgia, in accordance with an agreement, put its railways at the disposal of Turkey for the transport of the latter's troops to Azerbaidjan. By this aid the Soviet power in Baku, which had been established by the Baku workers, who were almost entirely cut off from Russia was overthrown. This was fraught with grave consequences for us. Instead of being the source of the oil supply of Russia, Baku became a stronghold of our enemies. It may be said, of course, that, having separated from Russia, the Georgian Government was forced to co-operate with the Sultan's Army against the Baku proletariat. But quite apart from all this, there remains the fact that Jordania and other Georgian leaders had offered their congratulations to the reactionary-bourgeois Moslem (Musavat) Party, on the occasion of the taking of Baku by the Turkish troops. Thus, we see that Turkish militarism was quite in accordance with Menshevik policy, which fact was not concealed by the Mensheviks.

The revolution was not only temporarily deprived of Baku, but it also lost for ever many of its best sons. In September, 1918, almost at the very time when Gegechkory was negotiating with Denikin, 26 Bolsheviks, the leaders of the Baku proletariat, headed by Comrade Shaumian, a member of the Central Committee of our Party, and by Alexei Japaridze, were shot at a lonely Trans-Caspian station.

You can get full information on this matter, Mr. Henderson, from your own General Thompson, the Commander in the war of liberation: his agents acted as the executioners.

Thus, neither Shaumian nor Japaridze were in a position to hear about the jubulations of Jordania on the fall of Soviet Baku. But

nevertheless, they took with them into the grave a burning hatred towards the Menshevik abettors of the executioners\*

\* \* \*

The international Mrs. Snowdens have repudiated the co-operation of the Georgian Mensheviks with the counter-revolutionary organisations and armies, basing this on the two following circumstances. First that the Mensheviks themselves complained to the British Socialists about the Entente, which had, so to speak,

\* The manuscript of this book had been completed, when I received a new book (by Vadim Chaikin, Socialist Revolutionary and member of the Constituent Assembly, entitled: "A contribution to the History of the Russian Revolution: The Execution of 26 Baku Commissars," and published by Grzebin, Moscow. This book, consisting mostly of documents of which the more important ones are reproduced in facsimile, narrates the story of the murder of 26 Baku commissars by order of the British military authorities, without the least pretence of a public trial. The direct practical organiser of the massacre was the chief of the British Military Mission at Askhabad, Reginald Teague-Jones. General Thompson was cognisant of the whole case, and Teague-Jones, as the evidence shows, acted with the consent of the gallant general. After the consummation of the slaying of 26 unarmed men at an out-of-the-way station, whither they had been taken under the pretence of exiling them to India, General Thompson aided the escape of one of the leading perpetrators of the crime, the hired scoundrel Druzhkin. The appeals of Vadim Chaikin, by no means a Bolshevik, but a Socialist Revolutionary and a member of the Constituent Assembly, to the British General Malcolm and to the British General Milne were left unheeded. On the contrary, all these gentlemen demonstrated their solidarity in aiding and abetting the crime and the criminals and in the fabrication of false statements.

This book shows by documentary evidence that Gegechkory, the Georgian Minister for the Interior, at the insistence of Chaikin, promised to prevent the escape of the criminal scoundrel Druzhkin from Georgia. Yet; in collusion with the British General Thompson, he gave Druzhkin every facility to escape from trial and justice. While the committees of Russian and Georgian Socialist Revolutionaries and of the Russian Transcaucasian Mensheviks, after an investigation of all the facts of the case, signed a declaration testifying to the criminal manner in which the British military authorities had acted, the committee of the Georgian Mensheviks, although in common with the other committees arriving at the same conclusion, refused to sign the document for fear of displeasing the British authorities. The telegraph officer of the Menshevik Georgian government refused to accept for transmission the telegrams of Vadim Chaikin which exposed the murderous activities of the British authorities. If nothing more were known about the Georgian Mensheviks except what is established by indisputable and irrefutable documents in Chaikin's book, it would be quite sufficient to imprint for all time the brand of shame and dishonour upon these gentlemen, upon their "democracy," their protectors and apologists.

We do not entertain the least hope that after the direct, exact and irrefutable evidence furnished by Chaikin's book, either Mr. Henderson, or Mr. Macdonald, or Mr. J. R. Clynes, Mr. Jimmy Sexton, or Mr. William Adamson, Mr. John Hodge, Mr. Frank Rose, Mr. C. W. Bowerman, Mr. Robert Young, or Mr. Benjamin Spoor—as Labour M.P.'s—will deem it now their duty to investigate the case frankly and honestly and make these representatives of Great Britain, who in Transcaucasia were so gloriously defending democracy, civilisation, justice, religion and morality against Bolshevik barbarism, answerable for their conduct.

forced them to support the counter-revolution; secondly, that there was friction between Georgia and the Whites, which at that time assumed the character of armed conflicts.

The British general Walker shook his fist in the face of the premier Jordania, and threatened to close down immediately the central Menshevik organ, if it dared to publish a paragraph which might give umbrage to the Entente. A British lieutenant violently struck the table of the Georgian Attorney General with his sword and demanded the immediate release of all those arrested people whom he, lieutenant by the grace of God, designated. Generally speaking, the British military authorities, according to the documents, conducted themselves even more insolently than the German. Of course, in such cases, Jordania most respectfully mentioned Georgia's semi-independence, and complained to Macdonald about the violation of Georgia's semi-neutrality. This was necessitated by ordinary caution. When Denikin was robbing Georgia of the Sukhum area, the Mensheviks complained about Denikin to General Walker. Now they complained about General Walker to Henderson—in both instances with the same success.

If these complaints and frictions had not occurred it would have simply meant that the Mensheviks did not differ in the least from Denikin. But this would be as erroneous as to say that Henderson did not differ in the least from Churchill. The range of petty-bourgeois vacillations during the revolutionary period extends from supporting the proletariat to a formal union with the landlords' counter-revolution. The less the petty-bourgeois politicians are independent, the louder they talk of their complete independence and of their absolute neutrality. From this view-point it is very difficult to follow the history of the Mensheviks and the Right and the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in the course of the Revolution. They have never been neutral or independent. Their "neutrality" has always been a critical dead stop in the movement from the Right to the Left, or from the Left to the Right. In supporting the Bolsheviks (as did the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Anarchists), or in supporting the Tsarist generals (as did the Right Socialist-Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks), the petty bourgeois parties frequently took fright at the decisive moment of the impending victory of their ally, and even more frequently deserted him in the moment of his greatest peril. One must certainly admit that if, during the revolutionary period, the petty-bourgeois parties bear their share of all the drawbacks of defeat, they seldom benefit by the advantages of victory. After having consolidated its power with the help of "democracy," the monarchist counter-revolution in the East (in the person of Kolchak), in the North and West (in the person of Yudenich, Miller and the British generals), and in the South (in the person of Denikin) always treated its aiders and abettors with the utmost arrogance and severity.

After all, the European social-democrats have received a lesson in this respect, in the shape of more kicks than ha'pence, not perhaps in the period of revolution, but during the period of war. The social patriots, who had been helping their respective bourgeoisie in the latter's most difficult moments during the war, had been reckoning, if not on the participation of the proletariat in the fruits of victory, at least on the enhanced influence of Socialism and of themselves on the fate of their respective countries. They were mistaken.

Swindled, Henderson, Sembat and others denounced their bourgeoisie, threatened it, and complained about it to the International. But this does not mean that they did not serve it. They served—and brought forward certain demands of their own. They served, but were bilked, and then they complained. No one says that they were simply hired servants. No, they were petty-bourgeois opportunists, i.e., they were political, ambitious, verbose servants, who were always vacillating, always unreliable—but they are servants to the marrow of their bones.

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Having adopted, as previously stated, the methods of the French academicians, Kautsky did not ask for any explanations or causes, neither was he astonished at any contradictions and incongruities. If Georgia severed herself from revolutionary Russia, the Bolsheviks were to blame. If Georgia called in the German troops, it was because the latter were better than the Turkish troops. The Hohenzollern armies entered Georgia "not as robbers and plunderers"—stammered and lisped Kautsky—"but as organisers of its productive forces." But even under the Hohenzollern armies, which were "enthusiastically greeted in the streets of Tiflis" (by whom?) Georgia retained all her democratic virtues. Thompson and Walker had also benefitted Georgia. And after her charms had been enjoyed first by the German lieutenant (whom Georgia had herself invited), and subsequently by the British lieutenant, no one could have any doubt that at the time of the arrival of the delegation of the Second International, Georgia's virtue was of the purest. Hence, Kautsky's prophetic deduction: "Russia will be saved by the spirit of Menshevism, which is embodied in Menshevik Georgia." (page 72).

The moment arrived for the "spirit of Menshevism" to become articulate. Towards the end of 1918 (on December 27th), a Party conference of the R.S.D.R.P. (Mensheviks), took place in Moscow. At this conference a discussion took place on the policy of those sections of the Party which had joined the White Guard governments, or had openly allied themselves with foreign imperialism. These discussions particularly centred round the Georgian Mensheviks. The official report of the Menshevik Executive Committee of this conference contained the following statement: "The Party cannot tolerate, *and does not intend to tolerate* in its midst, the allies of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and of Anglo-American imperialism, regardless of the motives which

prompted many of them to make such an alliance." In the resolution of the Conference it was stated quite plainly: "The Conference is convinced that the policy of the Georgian social-democrats, who have been endeavouring to save the democratic form of government and the independence of Georgia by means of an orientation based on foreign help and on severance from Russia, has placed them in opposition to the tasks which the Party, as a whole, is pursuing."

This enlightening episode throws light not only on the ability of Kautsky to judge properly the events of the Revolution, but also on his conscientiousness in explaining them. Without even going for information to his friends the Mensheviks, and without taking the most elementary precautionary measures, Kautsky has presented the Jordania-Tseretelli policy as the true Menshevik policy, which could therefore serve as a model for the international social-democrats. The official judgment of the policy by the "truly Menshevik" Party, proclaimed through the mouths of Martov and Dan, was that the Jordania-Tseretelli policy had a "disintegrating influence" on the Party, "the prestige of which it was lowering, nay destroying, in the eyes of the proletarian masses." (See the above mentioned publication of the Menshevik Central Committee, page 6). At a time when Kautsky was bestowing a Marxist blessing on the Georgian policy of "strict neutrality," Martov and Dan were using very threatening language about this policy: "The Party," they stated, "cannot, without becoming the laughing stock of the world, tolerate such political acts of its various sections, which, in open or secret alliance with its class enemies, are directed against the very essence of its revolutionary policy." (See same, page 6).

This should be conclusive evidence. The dressing gown of the learned Kautsky has been tightly caught in by the two halves of the Menshevik door, and it looks as if he cannot extricate himself. But perhaps Kautsky will now make a rather belated appeal for help to Martov. If he does, help will be forthcoming. In order to lessen the shock which Kautsky has received at the hands of the Mensheviks, we, ourselves, may make some explanatory remarks. It was a very revolutionary period. The Bolsheviki were defeating Kolchak. Revolution had broken out in Germany and in Austria-Hungary. The Menshevik leaders had to throw overboard some of the most compromising cargoes, in order not to sink themselves. At the workers' meetings in Moscow and Petrograd they indignantly repudiated all solidarity with the treacherous policy of Georgia. They threatened to expel Jordania and others if they continued to make the Party a "laughing stock." It was a very critical period: Hilferding himself wanted to introduce Soviets into the Constitution, and this was certainly a proof that matters had reached a high pitch.

The official Mensheviks threatened to exclude the Georgians; but were they actually excluded? Most certainly not, and, what is more, there had never been any intention of excluding them.

They would not be Mensheviks if they turned words into deeds. The entire international Menshevism is nothing but a conditional threat which is never carried out, a symbolic gesture which is never followed by a blow.

But this does not alter the fact that on the fundamental question of the policy of the Georgian Mensheviks, Kautsky has been shamefully deceiving his readers. This deception has been revealed by the Mensheviks themselves. Kautsky will find it impossible to extricate himself, for his dressing gown is too tightly caught.

And MacDonald? Oh! MacDonald "is an honourable man." But he has one defect—he knows nothing about Socialism, absolutely nothing!

## CHAPTER III.

# THE INTERNAL REGIME

In foreign policy—strict neutrality, and in home policy, of course, the fullest freedom. How could it be otherwise? "The relations between the workers and peasants in Georgia," says Kautsky, "up to the present are the best possible." (Page 54). From the Rhine to the Pacific Ocean bloody upheavals rage, while "Georgia is the only country which like German-Austria has avoided violent actions." (ibidem). The Communists? Why, "even with the fullest liberty of action they failed to acquire any influence." (Page 65). The Social-Democrats obtain overwhelming majorities at all elections. Indeed, it is the only country of its kind—from the Pacific to the Rhine. And even beyond the Rhine there will hardly be found a country of this kind, except, perhaps, Monaco, as depicted by superannuated French academicians.

For the moment one gazes with stupefaction upon such political daubing as upon a crude oleograph, where each colour shrieks a lie, and all together blend into a still more outrageous insult to the eye. Everything that we know about the origin of Georgian independence and foreign policy *a priori* gives the lie to this picture of universal peace which Kautsky observed from the railway carriage between Batoum and Tiflis. The connection between home and foreign policy was bound to manifest itself all the stronger in Georgia, since her formation took place in such a way that the home questions of yesterday became the foreign affairs of to-day. Furthermore, under the pretence of solving their internal problems, the Mensheviks invited into the country foreign armed forces, first of Germany and then of England, and here again one may assume *a priori* that General Von Kress and General Walker played by no means a small part in the internal life of the country.

Since, according to Kautsky, whose triteness at times becomes startling, the Hohenzollern generals in Georgia fulfilled the highest function of "organisers of the productive forces" (Page 57), without attempting to interfere with the clock-work mechanism of democracy, it would not be superfluous here to recall the severe reprimand administered by Von Kress in connection with the arrest of a group of black-hundred noblemen who started the organisation of pogrom-bands. "The Government"—was the lesson read by Von Kress to Minister Ramishvilli—"cannot consider the policy of this group of citizens seditious merely because it is directed against the present regime. As long as this policy is not directed against the very policy of the State, it cannot be treated as treason." In reply to this classical lesson, Ramishvilli humbly reports among other things: "I have proposed to the leaders of this association (of landowners), to submit their plans for the amelioration of the condition of the former nobility, which is now being carried out."





### TRANSCAUCASIA

A map showing Georgia and its surroundings specially drawn by J.F.H.

To find any difference in the merits of the organiser of productive forces, Von Kress, and the democrat Ramishvilli, would be a different matter. That the British officers interfered in the internal life even more arrogantly than the Germans, we have mentioned already. Yet, leaving out of consideration military bluntness and excessive frankness, the interference of both the Germans and the British on the whole went along the same lines of social and political conservatism as the policy of the Mensheviks since the very beginning of the Revolution.

The chief lesson derived by Tseretelli from the experience of the Russian Revolution was that "the timidity and hesitancy of democracy in the struggle against anarchy" ruined democracy, the Revolution, and the country, and as the chief inspirer of the Government, he demanded from the Trans-Caucasian Diet "to make it the duty of the government to resort to the severest measures in the struggle against the manifestations of anarchy." (March 18th, 1918). Even earlier than this Jordania had told the Diet (on February 15th): "Anarchy is on the increase

in our country . . . . the working class are in a Bolshevik mood; even the Menshevik workers are contaminated with Bolshevism."

The first national Georgian regiments were equally permeated with this spirit. The demobilised soldiers were spreading the revolutionary contagion through the villages. "What is now taking place in our villages," says Jordania, "is not new; the same thing has happened during all revolutions: everywhere the peasant masses arose against democracy. It is time for us to put an end to the reign of the popular peasant illusions of the Social-Democratic Party. It is time to return to Marx, and firmly guard the revolution against the peasant reaction." The reference to Marx is nothing but deceit added to folly. During the Menshevik period in question, the Trans-Caucasian peasantry rose, not against the democratic revolution, but against its slowness and hesitation, against its cowardice, particularly upon the agrarian question. It was only after the real victory of the agrarian-democratic revolution that the ground was opened for counter-revolutionary peasant movements directed against the material demands of the city, against the Socialist tendencies of economic policy, and finally, against the dictatorship of the party of the working class. While during the first stages of the revolution the dynamic force of the agrarian upheavals were the lower strata of the village, the most oppressed and dispossessed elements, in the second the leading role in the peasant upheavals passed to the upper strata of the village, to the more well-to do and exploiting elements. But there is no need to dwell upon the point that the Georgian Mensheviks, like the Mensheviks who are not Georgian, do not understand the revolutionary A.B.C. of Marxism. We are content with the admission of the fact that the peasant masses, comprising the overwhelming majority of the population, acted in a Bolshevik fashion against the Menshevik "democracy." True to the programme outlined by the Diet, the Georgian government, relying upon the support of the petty-bourgeois democracy of cities and upon the upper strata of the working class, which was far from numerous on the whole, waged a merciless struggle against the toiling masses that were contaminated with Bolshevism.

The whole history of Menshevik Georgia is one of peasant risings. They took place in all parts of the little country without any exception, and were frequently marked by extreme stubbornness. In some districts the Soviet regime persisted for months. The risings were liquidated by means of punitive expeditions and disposed of by military courts-martial, composed of officers and landowning princes.

The way in which the Georgian government disposed of the revolutionary peasants is best described in the words of the report of the Abkhasian Mensheviks on the activity of Mazniev's detachments in Abkhasia:

"This detachment, by its cruelty and inhumanity," reads the report submitted to the Georgian Government, "has surpassed the infamous Tsarist General Alikhanov. Thus, for instance, the Cossacks of this regiment broke into peaceful Abkhasian villages, carrying off anything that was of any value and violating the women. Another part of this detachment, under the personal supervision of Citizen Tukharely, indulged in bombing the houses of those persons who were pointed out by informers. Analogous deeds of violence were perpetrated in the Gudaut district. The chief of the Georgian detachment, Lieutenant Kupuni—a former police captain at Poti—severely ill-treated the entire rural council of the village of Azy. He compelled all the members to lie down under the fire of machine guns, and then proceeded to walk over their bodies, striking at them with the flat of his sabre; he then ordered the council together into a group, and, galloping on horseback at full speed, he dashed through the crowd, dealing out whip blows right and left. Abukhva and Dzukuya, former members of the Abkhasian National Council, for protesting against such brutality and violence, were arrested and thrown into a dungeon. The Assistant Commissioner of Gudaut district, Lieutenant Grigoriadi, resorted to the flogging of rural councils, and appointed village Commissioners chosen by him and hated by the people, from among the former Tsarist village elders. . . ."

Does not this corroborate the statement of Kautsky, that the relations between the Mensheviks and the peasants were always "the best possible. . . ."? The Abkhasian suppression resulted in the all but complete desertion of the Social-Democratic party by the Abkhasian Mensheviks (Tarnova, Bazba, Chukbar, Zvizhba, Barzyz and Dzukuya).

Djugelli acted no better in suppressing the Ossetian revolt. Since we have made it our task, for educational reasons, to characterise the policy of the Georgian Mensheviks as much as possible by their own declaration and documents, we will have to quote, while overcoming our literary fastidiousness, from a book published by the prominent "knightly" Menshevik leader, Valiko Djugelli, the former chief of the National Guard. We will quote some passages dealing with the actions of Djugelli in the peasant rising in Ossetia.

"The enemy everywhere is fleeing in disorder, offering almost no resistance. These traitors must be punished severely."

On the same day he makes the following entry in his diary. (The book is published in the form of a diary).

"Night has fallen. There are fires visible everywhere. They are the houses of the insurgents burning. But I am already used to this, and I can watch the scene almost calmly."

- In the following day we read this entry:

"Ossetian villages are burning all round us. . . . In the interests of the struggling working class, in the interests of the future Socialism, we will be cruel. Yes, we will. I can look on

with imperturbed soul and clear conscience at the fire and smoke of the burning houses. . . I am quite calm, quite calm indeed."

On the following morning Djugelli writes again in his diary:  
 "Fires are growing. . . Houses are burning. . . .  
 With fire and sword. . . ."

A few hours afterwards he writes again:

"And the flames are still glowing, glowing. . . ."

On the evening of the same day he writes:

"Now the fires are everywhere. . . . They keep on burning. . . . Ominous fires; some morbid, cruel, eerie beauty . . . and gazing upon these bright flames burning in the night an old comrade said to me sadly: 'I begin to understand Nero and the great fire of Rome.'

"And the fires are burning, burning everywhere." These ugly mannerisms at any rate enable us to become more convinced that the relations between the Georgian Mensheviks and the peasant remained invariably "the best possible."

After the evacuation of Adjara (the region of Batoum), by the English in 1920, the Georgian government had to enter into possession of the region by the aid of artillery. In a word, Djugelli had continuous opportunities for displaying his Neronic mannerisms in all corners of Georgia.

Jordania was succeeded by Ramishvili as Minister for Home Affairs. This was the same Ramishvili who was pre-occupied with the question of improving the condition of the former nobles, and who also quoted Marx to justify the White terror against the rebellious peasantry.

One can, however, state quite confidently that in spite of the White terror, supplemented by paper flowers of rhetoric, the Menshevik dictatorship would have been swept away, without leaving a trace, by the rapid current of the revolutionary movement, had it not been for the presence of foreign troops in the country. It was not the German Marx that helped the Mensheviks to maintain themselves through that period, but the German Von Kress.\*

Particularly, incongruous is the assertion of Kautsky about the "complete liberty of action" of the Georgian Communist Party. It would have been sufficient had he said that it had *some* liberty. But, as we already know, if he speaks of neutrality, then it is the strictest, if of liberty, it is the fullest; he does not speak merely of good relations, but "the very best possible."

It is amazing, above all, that neither Kautsky nor Vandervelde, nor Mrs. Snowden herself, nor the foreign diplomats, nor the journalists of the bourgeois press, nor the faithful guardians of liberty—*The Times*, nor the most upright *Temps*, in a word, none

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\* We will not enumerate here all the peasant risings that took place in Georgia. A brief summary of the movement is given in an article by Comrade Misha Tskhakaia ("Communist International," No. 18, pp. 571, etc.).

of those who bestowed their benedictions upon the democracy of Georgia ever noticed there the presence of . . . the Special Detachments. Yet such did exist. The Special Detachments, if you please, is the Menshevik Cheka. The Special Detachment seized and imprisoned and shot all those that were active against the Menshevik democracy. The Special Detachment in its methods of terror in no way differed from the Extraordinary Commission of Soviet Russia. Where it did differ was in aim. The Extraordinary Commission protected the Socialist dictatorship against the agents of capital; the Special Detachment protected the bourgeois regime against the Bolshevik "anarchy." But it was for this very reason that the respectable people who cursed the Cheka, did not notice the Georgian Special Detachment.

The Georgian Bolsheviks could not help noticing it, because it existed mainly for their coercion. Is it necessary to quote the story of the martyrdom of Georgian Communists? Arrests, deportations, handing over to the White Guards, imprisonment, hunger strikes, summary executions. Is it necessary to enumerate all this? Is it not enough to recall the respectful report of Gegetchkory to Denikin. "With regard to the question of the attitude towards the Bolsheviks. I may state that the struggle against Bolshevism is *ruthless* on our part. We are *crushing* Bolshevism by all available means . . . and in this respect we have already given a number of proofs which speak for themselves." This quotation ought to have been inscribed upon Kautsky's nightcap if it had not been already covered with a medley of unflattering inscriptions from all directions. When Gegetchkory says "we crush by all means," "we ruthlessly suppress," Kautsky explains it as meaning fullest liberty. Is it not time to establish a mild and truly democratic guardianship over Kautsky?

As early as February 8th, 1918, all the Bolshevik newspapers were suppressed. At that time the Menshevik press in Soviet Russia continued to be published quite openly. On February 10th a peaceful meeting was dispersed by gunfire in the Alexander Gardens, at Tiflis, on the very day of the opening of the Trans-Caucasian Diet. On February 15th, Jordania thundered in the Diet about the Bolshevik mood of the masses of people, including even the Menshevik working men. Finally, Tseretelli, who, jointly with Kerensky, had charged our party with high treason, in March complained before the Diet of the extreme "timidity and hesitancy" of the Kerensky government in dealing with the Bolsheviks. The German troops were brought into Georgia as into Finland, the Baltic countries and the Ukraine, chiefly against the Bolsheviks. In reply to a question of the American representative concerning the Bolsheviks, the Georgian diplomatic representative Topuridze replied: "We have successfully suppressed them. The proofs are self-evident: out of the former territory of Russia, Georgia alone is free from Bolshevism." As regards the future, Topuridze gives an equally firm under-

taking: "by all powers and means our Republic will co-operate with the Entente Powers in the fight against the Bolsheviki."

The commander of the British troops in Western Trans-Caucasia, General Forester Walker, on January 4th, 1919, explained to Jordania, both orally and in writing, that the enemy of the Entente in the Caucasus is "Bolshevism, which the Great Powers have resolved to destroy wherever and whenever it should make its appearance." In connection with this, a fortnight afterwards, Jordania declared to the British General Milne: "General Walker . . . proved to be the first person that understood the state of things in our country." General Milne himself summarised his agreement with Jordania in the following manner: "You and we have common foes—they are the Germans and the Bolsheviki." All these circumstances together furnished of course, the most favourable conditions for the "fullest liberty of action" for the Bolsheviki.

On February 18th, General Walker gives the following order, No. 99/8 to the Georgian government: "All Bolsheviki entering Georgia must be imprisoned only in the Mskhet (the jail of Tiflis), and put under a strong guard." The reference is to those Bolsheviki who sought refuge from Denikin. But, already, on February 25th, in order No. 99/9, Walker wrote: "Arising out of the conversation I had on the 20th inst., with his Excellency M. Jordania, I have come to the conclusion that it will be necessary in the future to prevent the entrance of Bolsheviki into Georgia by the main road." The imprisonment of the Bolsheviki refugees in the Mskhet at least for a time preserved their lives. Walker had "come to the conclusion" that it was best to bar their way of escape, thus throwing them back into the hands of Denikin's executioners. If Arthur Henderson has a few moments to spare from his labours in exposing the cruelties of the Soviet Government, and from his Brotherhood services, he should have an exchange of views with Forester Walker upon this subject.

The matter did not stop at conversations and correspondence between their Excellencies. Already on April 8th, 42 people, including Soviet Commissaries of the Terek Republic, their wives and children, Red soldiers, and other refugees, were held up by the Georgian guards at the Daryal Fortress, and after being subjected to insults, assaults, and blows under the direction of Colonel Tseretelli, were driven back into Denikin territory. Jordania afterwards tried to put the blame for this harmless incident upon Colonel Tseretelli; yet the latter only fulfilled the secret agreement between Jordania and Walker. It is true that order No. 99/9 makes no mention of beating with rifle butts and with sticks over the chest and head, but in what other way could one chase away exhausted and fear-stricken people, driven to madness by despair, and seeking refuge from certain death? Colonel Tseretelli no doubt had learned the lesson taught him by

his more famous namesake, that "timidity and hesitancy of democracy" in the struggle against Bolshevism may lead to the ruin of the State and the nation.

Thus from the very outset sworn war against Communism was placed at the very foundations of the Georgian Republic. The party leaders and the members of the government made "the ruthless suppression of Bolshevism" an essential plank of their programme. To this task were subordinated the most important organs of the State: the Special Detachment, the National Guard and the Militia. The German and then the British officers—the real rulers of Georgia during that period—fully agreed with this part of the Social-Democratic programme. Communist newspapers were suppressed, meetings dispersed by gunfire, revolutionary villages led by Bolsheviks were burnt down. The Special Detachment conducted wholesale shootings of leaders. The Mskhet was crowded with imprisoned Communists, Bolshevik refugees were handed back into the power of Denikin. During one month, October, 1919, in Georgia, according to a statement by the then Minister for the Interior, over 30 Communists were shot. In every other respect, as we learn from the lips of the pious Kautsky, the Communist Party in Georgia enjoyed "the fullest liberty of action."

It is true that, at the time of Kautsky's visit to Tiflis, the Georgian Communists had their legal publications, and enjoyed a sort of liberty of action which could by no means be termed "the fullest." But here it must be added that this temporary regime was instituted after our having defeated Denikin, and as a result of the Soviet ultimatum which led to the conclusion of the peace treaty between Soviet Russia and Georgia on May 3rd, 1920. During the entire period between February, 1918 and June, 1920, the Georgian Communist Party had to remain underground.

Hence it follows that the Soviets in 1920 intervened in the internal affairs of a "democracy," and a "neutral" one at that? Alas and alack, this cannot be denied. General Von Kress demanded that the Georgian nobles be given the liberty of counter-revolutionary activity. General Walker demanded that the Communists be imprisoned in the Mskhet or beaten by the rifle-butts and handed back to Denikin. We, on our part, having smashed Denikin, approached the boundaries of Georgia, and demanded that the Communists be given liberty of action in so far as it was not directed towards an armed rebellion.

This is a very imperfect world, on the whole, Mr. Henderson! The Menshevik government felt itself constrained to acquiesce in our demand, and, according to their own official statement, at once liberated from their prisons over 900 Bolsheviks.\*

Not a very imposing figure, after all. Yet one has to take into consideration the number of the population. If for the

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\* Note by Georgian Minister for Foreign Affairs of June 30th, 1920. No. 5171.

purposes of justice—even our hearts are not deaf to justice, O, Mrs. Snowden—one were to apply the Georgian proportion (900 imprisoned out of a population of 2½ millions) to the Soviet Federation, it would mean that we have the right to put into prisons of the Soviet Republic somewhere about 45,000 Mensheviks. I think that at the most acute and trying moments for the revolution, which were always accompanied by intensified hostile activities on the part of the Mensheviks, we never attained even a tenth part of this very imposing number. And since within the Soviet boundaries one could not collect as many as 45,000 Mensheviks, we can safely guarantee that our practice will never exceed the rate of repression which has been established by Jordania and Tseretelli and approved by the luminaries of the Second International.

Well, in May—by methods of civil war—we forced the Georgian government to legalise the Communist Party. Those that were shot could not be resurrected, but the imprisoned ones were released. If democracy became slightly more democratic, it happened, as we see, only beneath the fist of the Proletarian Dictatorship. “The revolutionary fist as a democratic weapon”—here is a fine theme for a Sunday address, Mr. Henderson.

Does this mean that the Georgian policy after the middle of 1920 made a new departure, in the sense of a rapprochement with the Bolsheviks? Not a bit. The Menshevik Government passed through a period of acute fear in the spring of 1920, and it gave way. But when it became convinced, not without surprise, that the raised fist was not going to descend upon its head, it came to the conclusion that it had over-estimated its danger, and it began to withdraw all along the line.

First of all there was a renewal of repressions against the Communists. Our diplomatic representative, by a series of notes, which make tiresomely monotonous reading, protested against the suppression of newspapers, the arrests and seizures of Party property, etc. But these protests were now unavailing: the Georgian government had become exceedingly stubborn, cooperating with Wrangel, building hopes on Poland, and thereby accelerating the end. . . .

To sum up: wherein did the Menshevik “democracy” differ from the Bolshevik dictatorship? First, the Menshevik terrorist regime, while copying many of the Bolshevik methods, aimed at preserving the institution of private property and the alliance with imperialism. The Soviet dictatorship was and remains the organised struggle for the Socialist reconstruction of society in alliance with the revolutionary proletariat. Secondly, the Soviet dictatorship of the Bolsheviks will find its vindication in its historic mission and in the condition of its existence, and is acting openly; whereas the Menshevik regime of terrorism and democracy is the unholy fruit of cruelty wedded to hypocrisy.



## CHAPTER IV.

# THE PERIOD OF CAUTION

The overthrow of the militarism of the Central Empires and the revolution in Germany brought about a great change in the world situation. The Tiflis politicians were looking for a new orientation. They adopted cringing before the Allies as its simplest form. Nevertheless they were uneasy about the future. The vassal alliance with Germany had for a time provided safe guarantees for Georgian integrity, in view of the fact that Germany was throttling Soviet Russia by means of the Brest-Litovsk noose, and that the latter's downfall seemed inevitable. But such a vassal subjection to Great Britain did not promise any such guarantees; Soviet Russia was in a state of war with the latter, and, independently of the final result of the struggle, Georgia might easily receive its death blow at one of the sharp turning points. An Entente victory meant a Denikin victory, and consequently the liquidation of the Menshevik rule. In the meantime, in 1919, the Denikin campaign was making great progress. The victory of the Soviet Power was also fraught with peril; but in 1919 the Soviet forces were driven out of the Caucasus. The Tiflis politicians became more cautious and more anxious to conceal their connections with the counter-revolution, but not more far-sighted nor more honest. Moreover, the trend of the whole Labour movement in Europe could not but be somewhat disgusting to Menshevik minds. 1919 was a year of stormy revolutionary outbursts. The thrones of the Hohenzollerns and the Hapsburgs had been overthrown, and the much more powerful throne of the bourgeoisie was tottering to its fall. The parties of the Second International were cracking at their seams. The Russian Mensheviks, while not ceasing to denounce and to lecture the Communists, began to talk of "the period of social revolution," renounced under some plausible pretext the watchword of the Constituent Assembly, and condemned their Georgian followers for their political alliance with Anglo-American imperialism. These alarming symptoms also demanded greater caution.

Except in the beginning of that year, the Georgian Mensheviks in 1919, did not hasten to Denikin's support on their own initiative, nor indeed did he stand in need of their help as much as before. Neither did they boast of their support to the Whites. On the contrary, they deliberately made it appear that this support was given under the great pressure of the British officers. This, however, did not give their co-operation with the Entente the character of a business compromise between two hostile parties. It completely retained its character of spiritual and political bondage and dependence. They translated the liberating rhetoric of the "Western democracies" and the stale Wilsonian commonplaces into the language of Georgian Menshevism, and bowed down

before the grandeur of the idea of the League of Nations. In practice they became more cautious, but not more honest.

We have a strong suspicion that Mrs. Snowden is burning with curiosity to know what we, who deny God and His commandments, understand by "honesty." We even suspect that Mr. Henderson puts this question to us not without irony, that is if irony can be at all compatible with piety.

We confess that we are not acquainted with the Absolute Morality of the Popes, either of the Church or of the University, of the Vatican or of the P.S.A. The Categorical Imperative of Kant, the Transubstantiation of Christ, and the artistic virtues of a religious myth, are as unknown to us as the old hard and cunning Moses who found the treasure of eternal morality on Mount Sinai. Morality is a function of living human society. There is nothing absolute in its character, for it changes with the progress of that society, and serves as an expression of the interests of its classes, and chiefly of the governing classes. Official morality is a bridle to restrain the oppressed. In the course of the struggle the working class has elaborated its own revolutionary morality, which began by dethroning God and all absolute standards. But we understand by honesty *a conformity of words and deeds before the working class*, checked by the supreme end of the movement and of our struggle: the liberation of humanity through the social revolution. For instance, we do not say that one must not deceive and be cunning, that one must love one's enemies, etc., for such exalted morality is evidently only accessible to such deeply religious statesmen as Lord Curzon, Lord Northcliffe, and Mr. Henderson. We hate or despise our enemies, according to their deserts; we beat them and deceive according to circumstances, and, even when we come to an understanding with them, we are not swept off our feet by a wave of forgiving love. But we firmly believe that one must not lie to the masses and that one must not deceive them with regard to the aims and methods of their own struggle. The social revolution is entirely based upon the growth of proletarian consciousness and on the faith of the proletariat in its own strength and in the Party which is leading it. One may play a double game with the enemies of the proletariat, but not with the proletariat itself. Our Party has made mistakes, together with the masses which it was leading. We have always quite openly acknowledged these mistakes to the masses, and, together with them we have made the necessary changes. What the devotees of legality are pleased to call demagoguery is merely truth, too plainly and too loudly expressed. This, Mrs. Snowden, is our conception of honesty.

The entire policy of the Georgian Mensheviks has been a series of roguish tricks, petty cunning devices and sharp practice, which were not only intended to deceive the enemy, but also to dope the masses. Bolshevik tendencies were prevalent among the workers

and peasants, and even among the Menshevik workers. They were forcibly suppressed. At the same time the masses were being demoralised, by making them believe that their enemies were their friends. Von Kress was represented to them as their friend, and General Walker as an upholder of democracy. Accommodation with the Russian White Guards was arrived at, now quite openly to please the Entente, and now secretly in order not to alarm the masses.

1919 was for the Georgian Mensheviks a year of extreme caution and secrecy, but for all that their policy was not any the more honest.

## CHAPTER V.

# GEORGIA AND WRANGEL

During the last month of 1919, a radical change took place in the military situation of the Soviet Federation. Yudenich had been annihilated, and Denikin had been first driven back to the South, and then completely defeated. Towards the end of the year Denikin's forces had been broken up into several demoralised groups. The Entente seemed to have cooled down towards the Whites. The extreme wing of the Anglo-French interventionists had transferred its attention to the border States. Poland was to be given first place in the periodical attacks on Soviet Russia. This new plan allowed Anglo-French diplomacy to steer clear of the imperialist pretensions of the Russian White Guards, and enabled it to recognise the independence of Georgia.

Under these circumstances, the Soviet Government proposed to Georgia an alliance against Denikin. There was a two-fold reason for this proposal: firstly, to make the Georgian Government understand that, in the event of altering its international orientation, it need not depend on the military support of Von Kress and General Walker, but would have the support of Budenny. Secondly, to hasten, with the help of Georgia, the liquidation of the remnants of Denikin's forces, in order to prevent them forming a new front.

This proposal was categorically rejected by the Georgian Government. After all we have learned about the relations of Georgia with the Germans, Turks, Denikin, and the British, it is hardly necessary for us to pay too much attention to the too-ardent Kautsky, who explains this refusal of Georgia by her concern for neutrality. All the more so as Jordania himself, who in those days was by the sweat of his brow obtaining recognition by the Entente, and sufficiently divulged the main springs of Menshevik policy.

On Jan. 14th, he declared in the Constituent Assembly: "You know that Soviet Russia has proposed a military alliance with us. We have *point blank* declined. Our answer must be known to you. What would this alliance mean? It would mean that we severed our connections with Europe. . . . Here the ways of Georgia and Russia part. Our way leads to Europe. Russia's way to Asia. I know that our enemies will say that we are on the side of the imperialists. Therefore I must say here most emphatically: *that I prefer the imperialists of the West to the fanatics of the East.*" These words from the lips of the head of the government certainly cannot be considered ambiguous. It means that Jordania was delighted with the opportunity of not only stating, but shouting at the top of his voice, that in the new military campaign of the "imperialists of the West," Georgia would be whole-heartedly on the side of Pilsudsky, Take Jonsescu, Millerand, and the rest of them. No

one can deny Jordania the right to "prefer" imperialist Europe which attacks, to Soviet Russia, which is defending itself. But in that case, we, the fanatics of the East, must also not be denied the right to smash, when necessary, the counter-revolutionary heads of the petty bourgeois lackeys of imperialism. For we too can most "emphatically state" that we prefer an enemy with a broken head to an enemy who is able to attack us and do us harm.

The least disorganised remnants of Denikin's army had taken refuge in the Crimea. But what is the Crimea? It is not a fortress, but a trap. In 1919 we ourselves escaped from the trap in which Denikin, from the Ukraine, was endeavouring to bottle us up there. Nevertheless, Wrangel established himself in the Crimea and began to build a new army and a new government. He was only enabled to do so because the Anglo-French fleet was entirely at the disposal of Wrangel. But the Entente warships, as such, did not solve the question. They supplied Wrangel with clothes, arms, and a certain amount of food, but it was men he needed most. And of course, he got them in sufficient numbers—from Georgia. Even if there was no other sin to the account of Georgia than this, its fate should have been considered *sealed*. It is no use referring to the pressure of the Entente, as Georgia did not resist the pressure, but met it half way. But, from the political point of view, the question is much simpler and clearer. If the independence of Georgia consists only in the fact that at the demand of the Turks, Germans, Englishmen and Frenchmen, it is compelled to set fire to the house of Soviet Russia, we certainly cannot expect to become reconciled to such independence.

Wrangel had entered the Crimea with not much more than from 15 to 20 thousand soldiers. The mobilisation of the local population was not very effective, for the mobilised did not feel inclined to fight, and many of them went into the mountains, forming detachments of "greens" (peasant brigands). Owing to the limited character of the *place d'armes* and his resources, Wrangel stood in need of first-rate fighting elements. These were the White officers, the Volunteers and the rich Cossacks, all of them irreconcilable enemies of the Soviet power, who had already gone through the school of civil war under the command of Kolchak, Denikin, and Yudenich. The ships of the Entente were bringing them from every direction, but their chief nest turned out to be Georgia. The right wing of Denikin's defeated army fled into the Caucasus, pursued by our cavalry, and sought refuge within the frontiers of the Menshevik Republic. This, of course, did not take place without the inevitable performance of some rites of so-called international law. As a "neutral" country, it received the retreating White forces, and naturally, interned them in "concentration camps." But in its capacity of a country which claimed greater kinship to the Western imperialists than to the fanatics of the East, it arranged the "camps" in such a way that the Whites could reach the Crimea without any loss of time.

According to a preliminary agreement with the agents of the Entente (the documents proving this are in our possession), the Menshevik Government carefully seized the healthy members of Denikin's forces who were capable of bearing arms, and concentrated them in Poti on the sea coast, where the ships of the Entente fetched them. And, in order not to do any damage to the reputation of "neutrality" of Pontius Jordania, the agents of this government demanded from the captains of the British and French steamers written statements to the effect that they were taking the refugees to Constantinople. And so, if they were taken to Sebastopol (in the Crimea) this was entirely due to a breach of faith on the part of the captains of those steamers.

Not less than 10,000 such picked Denikin men were transferred to Poti. Among the documents found in Georgia are some very illuminating minutes of the Government committee on military refugees. The Governor of the Concentration Camp, General Arzhavanidze reported: "The camp is at present unoccupied, in consequence of the departure of the Volunteers from Poti." It was resolved "to accept the report."

Several months later, 6,000 Cossacks were brought back, under similar conditions, from Gagry to the Crimea, after an unsuccessful military occupation. The chief of the Gagry district militia, the Menshevik Osidze, and a minor official who was not initiated into the secret of the Tiflis Government, reported with some amazement to his chiefs: "We have allowed Wrangel's agents a free hand by arresting the Bolsheviks in Gagry." These two important events happened in June and October, but already, at the beginning of the year, the liberation of the interned soldiers of Denikin's army and their despatch to Batoum was in full swing. This was borne out by Tiflis documents dated January, 1920. Wrangel's recruiting agents were acting quite openly, and there was a large influx into Georgia of White officers, eager for engagement. Here they found a well-organised White agency, and were transferred to the Crimea with the greatest ease. Whenever necessary, the Georgian Government lent financial aid.

The Socialist Revolutionary Chaikin, the chairman of the Black Sea Liberation Committee (an organisation which organised the rising of the local peasants against Denikin), described the policy of Denikin in an official communication, addressed to the Georgian Government, in the following terms: "It is self-evident that such facts as General Erdeli's free departure from Georgia, the arrival from the Crimea of Denikin's recruiting generals, who were not interned on their arrival in Georgia, and finally the propaganda and recruiting campaign in Poti of General Nevadovsky, and others, most certainly constituted an infringement of Georgian neutrality in favour of the Volunteer Army (Denikin's forces), and was a hostile act towards those forces which were in a state of war with the Volunteer Army." This was written on April 23rd, 1920, and consequently before the mass transference of the picked followers of Wrangel from Poti to the Crimea. On

September 6th, the Georgian General Midivani reported to the chief of the French Mission that the Georgian authorities did not only not hamper the removal of Denikin's men, but were even giving the "widest possible assistance, including financial aid to the refugees at the rate of 1,000 to 15,000 roubles per head." There were on the whole from 25,000 to 30,000 Cossacks and about 4,000 Denikin Volunteers in Georgia. A considerable number of them were transferred to the Crimea.

Georgia's support to Wrangel was not limited to men, but also included providing him with the necessary war materials. From the beginning of 1919, and right up to the defeat of Wrangel, Georgia provided him from her own stores with coal, oil, aviation benzine, kerosine, and lubricating oil. Even the treaty with Soviet Russia in May 1920 did not put a stop to these activities. They were only conducted more secretly, through the medium of so-called "private individuals." On July 8th, Batoum, which was to all intents and purposes in British hands, was transferred to Menshevik Georgia. But even after that the Port of Batoum continued to be at the disposal of Wrangel.

Our Mission reported at that time in full detail on all these events, and its report is now before us.\* The documents which were subsequently found in Batoum, in Tiflis, and in the Crimea, fully bear out this report, giving the names of the steamers, the nature of the cargoes, and the names of the agents (for instance the well-known Cadet Paramonov). The most important extracts of these documents have already been published, and more of it will be published in the near future.

One might endeavour to reply to the above that Georgia did not aid Wrangel with its own army. But it could not have done this in any case, as the purely Menshevik National Guard was not numerous enough, being hardly sufficient to maintain even public order. As to the National Army, it was to the very last a fictitious unit, as its badly organised detachments were politically unsound and not in fighting trim. For this reason the Menshevik Government did not do for Wrangel what, as became known later, it could do for its own defence, viz., put an armed force into the field. But evidently Georgia did everything for Wrangel that it could possibly do. One can say without exaggeration, that *Menshevik Georgia created the Wrangel army*. Those 30,000 picked officers, non-commissioned officers, and fighting Cossacks, who were transferred from Georgia to the Crimea, burned their boats and sold their lives dearly. Without them Wrangel would have been obliged to evacuate the Crimea as early as the

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\* As an example we quote from one of these reports, dated July 14th: "At the beginning of last week the following vessels, laden with war material, left for the Crimea: "Vozroshdenie," "Donetz," and "Kiev." On the 7th the "Margarita" left with ammunition and motor cars, the "Zharki" with cartridges, and a submarine "Utka." These vessels had on board over 2,000 volunteers and the official representatives of the Volunteer Army, headed by General Dratsenko, etc."

summer months. With them he carried on a stubborn fight until the end of the year, and at times dealt us very heavy blows. The liquidation of Wrangel exacted heavy sacrifices. How many thousands of workers and peasant youths fell in the wider sector which runs out from the narrow Isthmus of Perekop?

If there had been no Georgia, there would not have been a Wrangel army. Without Wrangel, Poland would not have perhaps taken the field, and, even if it had done so, we should not have had to split our forces, and the Riga Treaty would have borne a different aspect. In any case it would not have given millions of Ukrainian and White Russian peasants to the Polish landlords.

The Crimea for the Georgian Mensheviks was a connecting link with the imperialists of the West—against the fanatics of the East. This link cost us many thousands of lives. It was at that price that the Jordania Government bought recognition *de jure* of the independence of its Republic. We consider that they gave too high a price for such shoddy goods. During 1920 the Soviet Federation, with its face to the South-West, was striking with the right fist at the West at its chief enemy—bourgeois Poland—and with its left fist at the South—at Wrangel. Being fully aware of the above-mentioned facts, was not Soviet Russia justified in kicking the Menshevik head of Georgia? Was not that a legitimate act of revolutionary self-defence? Is the right of national self-determination equivalent to the right of doing mischief with impunity? If Soviet Russia refrained from dealing a blow at Menshevik Georgia in 1920, it was not because it had any doubts about its “right” to strike at the malicious irreconcilable and treacherous foe, but because of political expediency. We did not want to make it easier for Millerand, Churchill and Pilsudsky, who were endeavouring to drag the border states into war against us. On the contrary, we were endeavouring to show to these latter that under certain conditions they could live in peace side by side with the Soviet Republic. In order to win over the small republics, governed by petty bourgeoisie with thick skulls, we were prepared more than once during these years to make enormous concessions, and show very great leniency. To take a recent example, has not the Karelian adventure of the Finnish bourgeoisie given us every right for an armed invasion of Finland? If we did not proceed with it, it was not because we did not have a perfect right to do so, but because, by the very nature of our policy, we only resort to armed force when there is no other way.



## CHAPTER VI.

# DENOUEMENT

While supplying Wrangel with men and war material during 1920, Georgia was at the same time a conspiracy centre for the various Russian, and especially Caucasian, White Guard groups. It served as an intermediary between Petlura, the Ukraine, Kuban, Daghestan and the counter-revolutionary mountain tribes. After their defeat all these people took refuge with the Mensheviks, and there established their general staffs from which they conducted their operations. From Georgia they directed the counter-revolutionary divisions to the territories of the Russian Soviet Republic by the following routes: (1), Sukhum-Kale-Marukh, and then into the Upper Kuban and the River Laba. (2), Sukhum-Kale—Gagry—Adler—Krasnaia Poliana, via Aishkha—the upper reaches of the River Laba. (3), Kutais—oni—Nalchik.

They acted more or less secretly, but only to the extent necessary for preserving a certain amount of diplomatic decorum, while all their movements were perfectly well-known to the Georgian Special Detachment. "My presence in Georgia," wrote a White Guard lieutenant to the Special Detachment on November 12th, 1920, "will not create any difficulties whatever with the Soviet Mission, as my work will be carried on with still greater secrecy. If any guarantors for my reliability should be required, a sufficient number of prominent Georgians will be ready to come forward." This document was found among others in the Menshevik archives by the committee appointed by the Communist International. The secret White organisations were closely connected with the Entente Missions, and especially with their Intelligence Departments. Should Henderson have any doubts on this matter, he could find full information in the archives of the British Intelligence Department. We sincerely hope that his reputation for patriotism may prove an Open Sesame to this holy of holies.

At that period Batoum was the most important centre for the intrigues and conspiracies of the Entente and its vassals. In July, 1920, Great Britain handed over Batoum to Menshevik Georgia, which at once found itself compelled to find the way to the hearts of the Adjarian population with the aid of artillery. In evacuating Batoum, after first destroying its naval defences, the British command proved its complete confidence in the good-will of Georgia as far as Wrangel was concerned.

The annihilation of the Wrangel army brought about a complete change, for the Entente generals and diplomats were too well aware of the true character of the relations between Georgia, Wrangel, and the Soviet Republic, to have any doubts concerning the desperate position in which the liquidation of Wrangel had placed the Georgian Mensheviks. One may also take it for

granted that the Georgians themselves did not remain silent, but demanded "guarantees." The British governing circles raised the question of a renewed occupation of Batoum, under the guise of "lease," "free port," or some such label, of which the diplomats have as many as a cracksman has skeleton keys. The leading Georgian press mentioned this occupation with demonstrative satisfaction, rather than with alarm. It was self-evident that the creation of a new front against us was contemplated, and we declared that we should consider the occupation of Batoum by the British as an act of war.

About that time the fate of independent Georgia began to awaken the interest of the acknowledged protectress of the weak, M. Millerand's France. On his arrival, "the Trans-Caucasian High Commissioner," M. Abel Chevalier, hastened to send the following message through the Georgian Telegraph Agency: "The French have a fraternal affection for Georgia, and I am very glad to be able widely to proclaim this. The interests of France are absolutely identical with the interests of Georgia. . . ." The interests of that France which encircled Russia by a hunger blockade and let loose a number of Tsarist generals against her, were "absolutely identical" with the interests of democratic Georgia. It is true that after a few lyrical and rather silly speeches about the ardent love of the French for the Georgians, M. Chevalier, as fitted a representative of the Third Republic, explained that "all the world powers at the present time were craving for raw materials and manufactured goods, and Georgia was an important and natural route between the East and the West." In other words, the sentimental friends of M. Millerand were attracted to the Georgians not as much by love as by the smell of the Baku oil.

Almost on the heels of Chevalier there arrived in Georgia the French Admiral Dumesnil. The man of the seas was as emphatic as the dry land diplomat in his declarations of ardent love for the fellow-countrymen of Noah Jordania. At the same time the Admiral declared that, as France "did not countenance the seizure of other people's property" (who would have thought it?), he, Dumesnil, being on the territory of "independent" Georgia, would not allow the Soviet Government to seize the Russian ships which were then in the Georgian port, and which were destined for Wrangel or his successors. The path of justice is indeed strange and devious!

The co-operation of the representatives of French democracy with the Georgian democrats assumed vast dimensions. The French torpedo-boat "Sakiar" fired on and burned the Russian schooner "Zeinab." The French Intelligence Department, in conjunction with the agents of the Georgian Special Detachment, attacked the Soviet diplomatic courier, and robbed him. The French torpedo-boats screened the removal to Constantinople of the Russian steamer "Printsip," which was stationed in the Georgian port. The organisation of insurrections in the adjacent

Soviet Republic's territory was carried on energetically. The importation of arms into Russia from Georgia increased enormously. The hunger blockade of Armenia, which by that time had become a Soviet Republic, was continued, but Batoum was not occupied. Perhaps at that time Lloyd George had given up the idea of a new front, and perhaps also the ardent love of the French for Georgia deterred the British from manifesting similar feelings. Our declaration concerning Batoum did not remain without effect. Having at the last moment paid Georgia for all its past services by an ephemeral recognition *de jure*, the Entente resolved not to build anything on the hopeless foundation of Menshevik Georgia.

After the relentless struggle which the Georgian Mensheviks had conducted against us, they, even in the spring of 1920, had no doubts whatever but that our forces, having beaten Denikin, would march on Tiflis, and Batoum, and sweep the Menshevik democracy into the sea. We, on our side, not expecting any important revolutionary results from the Soviet revolution in Georgia, were quite prepared to tolerate by our side the Menshevik "democracy" provided it formed a united front against the Russian counter-revolution and European Imperialism.

But it was just this accommodating spirit, dictated by political expediency, which was interpreted in Tiflis as a sign of our weakness. Our friends in Tiflis wrote to us that from the beginning the ruling Mensheviks refused point blank to understand the motives of our pacific attitude. They, the Mensheviks, perfectly understood that we could occupy Georgia without a battle. They soon brought forward the fantastic explanation that Great Britain insisted on our pacific relations with Georgia as a preliminary condition of any negotiations with us. Be that as it may, their original nervousness was turned into insolence, and provocative acts followed each other in rapid succession. During the period of our military failure on the Polish front, and of our difficulties on the Wrangel front, Georgia quite openly joined the ranks of our enemies. This miserable petty-bourgeois democracy, without any broad political and revolutionary outlook and perspective—one day cringing to the Hohenzollerns, and the next day ready to go on all fours before Wilson—supporting Wrangel, but ready to desert him when it suited it—entering into an agreement with Soviet Russia with the hope of deceiving her—this cowardly "Menshevik democracy" got itself into a hopeless tangle, and sealed its own fate.

As we have already stated, we did not consider the military liquidation of Menshevik Georgia politically expedient, although such an act would have been perfectly justifiable. We were, of course, aware that the Menshevik politicians would raise a hue and cry in all the languages of democratic civilisation, if we were to tread on their corns. For they were not mere Rostov, Novocherkassk or Ekaterinodar workers whom Denikin's followers, aided by the friendly neutrality and practical co-operation of the Georgian Mensheviks, murdered in hundreds and in thousands,

and who fell uncomplainingly and uncelebrated by Europe. Was it not clear from the first that the Georgian Menshevik politicians, being all intellectuals, ex-students at various European universities, and hospitable hosts of Renaudel, Vandervelde, and Kautsky, were bound to wring the hearts of all the organs of social democracy, liberalism and reaction? Was it not perfectly clear that all the politicians who had disgraced themselves by supporting the imperialist slaughter, all the worn-out deserters of official socialism, would answer the complaints of their injured Georgian brothers by indignant howls, in order to show how ready they were to listen to the voice of Justice, and to show their devotion to the ideals of democracy, all the more so as they could do this without any cost to themselves? We knew them too well not to have known that they would not let pass such a splendid opportunity for resolutions, manifestoes, declarations, appeals, memoranda, articles, and speeches, all delivered with the most pathetic tremolo in their voices. Even for this reason alone, only from the desire not to give any occasion for international "democratic" hysteria, we were prepared to leave the Menshevik leaders of the counter-revolution severely alone in their Georgian refuge.

We would have acted thus even if we did not have other more weighty reasons. We wanted to come to an agreement. We proposed to the Mensheviks joint action against Denikin, but they refused this proposal. We made an agreement with them, which interfered much less with their independence than the protectorate of the Entente. We insisted on the carrying out of the agreement, and we denounced the hostile attitude of the Georgian Mensheviks in a long series of notes and protests. Through pressure by the Georgian working masses, we were endeavouring to secure in Georgia a neighbour who could even be a useful intermediary for us between the Soviet Federation and the capitalist West. Such was our political orientation with relation to Georgia. But there was no longer any turning back for the Mensheviks. In studying to-day the documentary evidence of our relations with the Menshevik Government, I have often wondered at our patience, and at the same time I could not help paying a tribute of recognition to the gigantic bourgeois machine of falsifications and lies, by which the inevitable Soviet revolution in Georgia was represented as a sudden unprovoked military attack, as a descent of the Soviet wolf on the innocent Red Riding Hood of Menshevism. Ah! you poets of the Stock Exchange, you romancers of diplomacy, you mythologists of the big press—you lackeys of the boss!

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Kautsky, with the penetration peculiar to him, has exposed the devilish mechanism of the Bolshevik revolution in Georgia, as follows: The rising did not have its beginning in Tiflis, as would have been the case if it had come from the working masses. It took place on the borders of the country, and in proximity to the Soviet forces. It developed from the periphery to the centre. Was

not this a conclusive proof that the Menshevik regime fell a victim to military violence from outside? Such reasoning would do credit to a newly selected J.P., but it is not an explanation of historical events.

The Soviet revolution at the beginning spread from the Petrograd and Moscow centres throughout the former Tsarist Empire. At that time the revolution had no army. Its pioneers were the detachments of hastily armed workers, who, without any opposition, entered the most backward provinces, and who built up the Soviet power with the sympathy and support of the working masses. In those parts where the bourgeois and landowners had taken possession of the centre, as for instance on the Don or the Kuban, the revolution moved from the periphery to the centre, often with the collaboration of agitators and fighters from the capitals.

However, the counter-revolution, with help from outside, succeeded in regaining possession of the more backward border provinces, and firmly established itself there, as happened on the Don and in the Kuban, in the Caucasus, in the Volga regions, in Siberia, on the White Sea, and even in the Ukraine. The revolutionary and counter-revolutionary armies were being built up simultaneously. The question of the limits of the Soviet revolution was beginning to be decided by means of regular battles and military campaigns. The armies were not introduced from "outside," but were created by those classes which were conducting a life and death struggle throughout the whole length and breadth of the former Tsarist Empire. This revolutionary class struggle, that is to say, began to express itself in regular military campaigns. It is true, that the counter-revolution was to a great extent supported by military forces from *outside*. But this fact makes our deductions all the more convincing. Without Petrograd, Moscow, Ivanovo-Voznesensk, the Donetz Basin, and the Urals, there would have been no Revolution. The Donetz region itself would have never established the Soviet Power. Neither would it have been established by the rural districts of the Moscow province. But as the Moscow villages, the Kuban Cossack Settlements, and the Volga Steppes had always formed one State and one economic whole, they were drawn with the first into the whirlpool of revolution, and the revolutionary leadership of the towns and the industrial proletariat was established over all of them. The spread and the victory of the revolution was not guaranteed by plebiscite in every part of the country, but by the incontestable hegemony of the proletarian vanguard throughout the country. Some of the border provinces in the West succeeded, with the aid of armed forces from outside, not only in getting temporarily out of the whirlpool of revolution, but even in maintaining a bourgeois regime for a considerable length of time. The "democracies" of Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and even of Poland, owe their existence to the fact that, at the critical moment of their creation, foreign military forces

were supporting the bourgeoisie and oppressing the proletariat. It is just in those countries adjoining the capitalist West that the inter-relation and the co-operation of the revolutionary forces were prevented by the massacre, the incarceration and the deportation of the best proletarian elements by the military forces which had been brought in from outside. It is only in this way that in these countries a temporary equilibrium of a democracy on a bourgeois basis was established. By the by, is there any reason why the righteous members of the Second International should not bring forward the following programme: the evacuation of Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, etc. by the bourgeois armies which have been formed with the aid of forces from outside the liberation of all those who have been arrested and the return of all exiles (since it is not possible to resurrect those who have been killed); and a referendum?

The position of Trans-Caucasia was different, in that it was separated from the centre of revolution by the Cossack Vendee. Without Soviet Russia the petty-bourgeois Trans-Caucasian democracy would have been immediately crushed by Denikin. Without the White Guards on the Don and in the Kuban it would have been at once dissolved in the Soviet Revolution, for it was kept in existence by the strenuous civil war in Russia and by foreign military aid in Trans-Caucasia itself. As soon as the civil war was ended by a victory for the Soviet Republic, the overthrow of the petty-bourgeois regime in Trans-Caucasia became inevitable.

As early as February, 1918, Jordania was complaining that the Bolshevik spirit had taken hold of the rural as well as the town population, and even of the Menshevik workers. There were perpetual peasant risings in Georgia. While in Soviet Russia the legal Menshevik newspapers were not interfered with until the rising of the Czecho-Slovaks and the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks in May, 1918, in Georgia the Communist Party was driven underground as early as the beginning of February. Notwithstanding the fact that Soviet Russia was entirely cut off, and that the continuous presence of foreign armies were terrorising the workers of Trans-Caucasia, there were many more Red risings in Georgia than White risings on Soviet territory. Repression was practised to a much greater degree by the Georgian Government than by the Russian Soviet Government.

Our victory over Denikin, which was at the same time a victory over the all-powerful Entente, made an enormous impression on the Trans-Caucasian masses. At the approach of the Soviet armies to the frontiers of Azerbaidjan and Georgia, the working masses of these Republics, who had never ceased to be at one with the Russian working masses, were caught up on the wave of the revolution. Their temper may be compared to that which had seized the masses of East Prussia and to a great extent of the whole of Germany, at the time of our advance on Warsaw, and of the approach of the left wing of the Red Army to the German

frontiers. In Germany, however, it was only a passing phase, while the annihilation of the Denikin armies in the sight of the Entente was decisive, and imbued the working masses of Azerbaidjan, Armenia, and Georgia with the conviction that the Soviet Government to the north of them was henceforth firmly established.

In Azerbaidjan the Soviet Revolution took place almost automatically at the approach of our armies to the frontiers of the Republic. The ruling bourgeois-landowner, "Mussavat" party did not have the traditions and the influence of the Georgian Mensheviks. Baku, which plays a much more important part in Azerbaidjan than Tiflis does in Georgia, was an old stronghold of Bolshevism. The "Mussavatists" ran away, leaving the power in the hands of the Bolsheviks without a fight. The part played by the Armenian "Dashnaks" (the corresponding Armenian party), was not more dignified. In Georgia events developed in a more orderly fashion. The repressed Bolshevik tendencies began to assert themselves. The Communist Party, as an organisation, grew rapidly, and still more rapidly attracted to itself the sympathies of the working masses. The journal of the Georgian Socialist-Federalist "Sakastvelo," on December 7th, 1920, contained the following statement: "To-day the power of the Communists in Georgia is something quite different from what it was a few months ago. At that time there were no Bolsheviks near Georgia, and we were surrounded by independent nationalist republics. Our economic and financial position was comparatively much better than to-day. To-day, however, we have a different picture, and the change is all in favour of the Bolsheviks. In Georgia, the Bolsheviks have now party organisations, and in some working class circles, for instance, in the printers' trade union, they have a majority. Generally, Bolshevik activity is assuming large dimensions. Inside we witness the growth of the Bolshevik forces, and outside we see their complete domination. Such is the present situation in Georgia."

These complaints of a hostile paper, which reflect real facts, are of great importance to us, for they categorically refute Kautsky, who not only testified to the "complete freedom" for Communists but also to their complete impotence, and, basing himself on this, represented the Soviet revolution in Georgia as a result of violence from outside. At the same time the statement of the Nationalist paper: "Inside—the growth of Bolshevik forces; outside—their complete domination," constitutes a clear expression of the impending Soviet revolution. The hopelessness of their position drove the Georgian Mensheviks to the path of open reaction. The brusque and provocative refusal by the Jordania Government of an alliance against Denikin had already shaken the position of the Mensheviks with the masses. The continuous infringements of the agreement with Soviet Russia, to which of course we gave the greatest publicity, operated in the same way.

Realising that after the victory of the Soviet power in the remaining south-eastern parts of the former Tsarist Empire, an independent existence would be impossible, the Mensheviks made desperate attempts to aid Wrangel, and to obtain the military co-operation of the Entente. In vain! For the Crimea campaign decided not only the fate of Wrangel but the fate of Menshevik Georgia as well.

Our Caucasian army received some reinforcements in the autumn of 1920, at the time of the Wrangel descent on the Kuban, and of the persistent rumours of the occupation of Batum. The concentration of our forces had a purely defensive character. The liquidation of Wrangel and the armistice with Poland caused a revival of Soviet opinion in Georgia, but the presence of Red regiments on the frontiers was nothing but a safeguard against foreign intervention in the event of a Soviet revolution. The Red forces were not required for the overthrow of the Georgian Mensheviks, but for the prevention of the possibility of a British, French, or Wrangel descent from Constantinople against the Soviet revolution. The Mensheviks themselves with their praetorian National Guards and their fictitious National Army, made only a feeble resistance. Having begun in the middle of February, the Soviet revolution was towards the middle of March already completed in all parts of the country.

We have no occasion to conceal or minimise the role which the Soviet Army played in the Soviet victory in the Caucasus. In February, 1921, it did great service to the Revolution, although this service was not as great as that received by the Mensheviks in the course of three years from the Turkish, German and British armies, not to mention the Russian White Guards. The fact that the revolutionary committee, which directed the rising, began its activity not from Tiflis, the centre of the Menshevik National Guard, but from the borders, with the Red Army at its back—is only proof that the revolutionary committee possessed political sense, which can certainly not be said of Kautsky, who, rather late in the day, is endeavouring to dictate to the Georgian revolution an entirely different strategy. With all due respect, we refuse to accept these lessons. We wish to learn and to teach how to beat our enemies, while the apostles of the Second International are propounding the art of being beaten.

What took place was the result of long preparation. It was what, owing to the logic of events, could not but take place. The history of the relations between Georgia and Soviet Russia is only a chapter in the book of the blockade of Russia, of military interventions, of French gold, of British ships, and of the four fronts on which the best elements of the working class have been sacrificed. This chapter cannot be eliminated from the book. The Georgia which is being described to-day by the beaten Menshevik commanders of the civil war never existed. There has never been either a democratic,



or a peaceful, or an independent, or a neutral Georgia. There was a Georgian fortress in the all-Russian class struggle. That fortress is to-day in the hands of the victorious proletariat.

And after the Menshevik leaders in Georgia had helped to massacre, to freeze to death, and to hang tens of thousands of Red soldiers and thousands of Communists (and to inflict wounds on us which it will take years to heal), after we had come victoriously out of the struggle, notwithstanding our losses and sacrifices, and after the workers of Georgia had kicked them into Batum harbour, they ask us to consider the game lost, and to begin again from the beginning. Their democratic chastity, which had been violated by Russian, Turkish, Prussian, and British officers, is to be rehabilitated by Macdonald, Kautsky, Mrs. Snowden, and other learned accoucheurs and midwives of the Second International. After this, Menshevik Georgia, the most democratic, most free, and most neutral country in the world, will be resuscitated in all its glory, under the protection of the British fleet, with the help of subsidies from the British oil magnates and the Italian manganese dealers, with the approval of *The Times*, and even with the blessing of the new Pope of Rome.

## CHAPTER VII.

# THE GEORGIAN GIRONDE AS A POLITICAL TYPE

Georgia played a most important part in the history of Russian Menshevism. It was in Georgia that Menshevism became the most potent and obvious form of the adaptation of Marxism to the requirements of the *intelligentsia* of a backward and eminently precapitalist people. The absence of industry meant the absence of a native bourgeoisie. Commercial capital was mainly in the hands of Armenians. Spiritual culture was represented by the *intelligentsia*, mostly small landed proprietors. Capitalism, which was beginning to work its way into the life of the people, had not yet created any new culture, but had already given rise to new requirements, which the Georgian nobles could not satisfy from their vine-yards and goat-herds. The discontent with Russian officialdom and Tsarism became associated with the resentment against capitalism, personified by the Armenian merchant and usurer. Concern for the future and the search for an outlet made the young generation of the noble and petty bourgeois *intelligentsia* susceptible to the ideas of democracy and anxious for the support of the toiling masses. Yet at that time—towards the end of the last century—the programme of political democracy, in its old Jacobin or Manchester Liberal shape, had long since been compromised by the march of historical development, and had surrendered its power over the consciousness of the oppressed masses of Europe to various Socialistic theories, which, in their turn, gave way to Marxism. The aspirations of the rising generation of the cities and villages towards wider literary, political and other activities, coloured by envy and hatred of capitalism; the first manifestations of the movement among the artisans and the small numbers of industrial workers; the muffled discontent of a slave-driven peasantry—all these found its expression in the Menshevik version of Marxism, which, at one and the same time, persistently inculcated the recognition of the inevitability of the capitalist development, gave new sanction to the ideas of political democracy that had long since been discredited in the West, and prognosticated for the dim distant future the predominance of the working class as an organic and painless outcome of democracy.

Small nobles by extraction, petty bourgeois by their mode of life and psychological make-up, the Georgian Menshevik leaders entered upon their revolutionary political career with false Marxian passports in their pockets. Southern emotionalism and adaptable versatility made them the leaders of the students and the general democratic movement; imprisonment, exile, and the

platform of the Imperial Duma intensified their political authority and established a certain tradition for Menshevism in Georgia.

The vapid and petty-bourgeois nature of Menshevism, particularly of its Georgian wing, became all the more evident as the revolutionary wave grew in volume and internal and international problems became increasingly more complex. Political cowardice is a very important feature of Menshevism, and revolution does not tolerate cowardice. During periods when great events are taking place, the Menshevik represents a very sad figure. One perceives, in this peculiarity of the Menshevik, the social awe of the petty bourgeois before the big bourgeois; of the civilian intellectual before the military Generals; of the petty attorney before the "real" diplomat; of the sensitive and vain provincial before the Frenchman or the Britisher. Their cowardice in cringing before the authorised representatives of capital is the counterpart of their proud condescension towards the workers. Tseretelli's hatred of Soviet Russia is nothing but indignation against the daring attempt of the worker to take power into his own hands, a thing which at best should have been tackled only by himself—the educated middle class man—and with the permission of the big capitalist at that.

When Chkhenkeli or Gegechkori speak of Bolshevism, they gather their epithets from the fishwives, not only of Tiflis, but also of the whole of Europe. When they "converse" with the Tsarist General Alexeiev, or the German Von Kress, or the British Walker, they do their best to maintain the high-toned manner of a Swiss head waiter. They are particularly afraid of Generals. They plead with them, they endeavour to convince them and explain to them politely that Georgian Socialism is altogether different from the other varieties of Socialism: the latter cause destruction and disorder, but theirs is a guarantee of order. Political experience can make the middle class more cynical, but it cannot teach them anything.

In a previous chapter we opened the diary of Djugelli, and beheld one of the "knightly" Mensheviks in his own description of himself. He burns Ossetian villages, and in the manner of a corrupted schoolboy describes in his diary his elation at the beauty of the conflagration and his kinship with Nero. This repulsive mountebank was obviously impressed by the Bolsheviks, who do not hush up the facts of civil war and the severe measures which they are compelled to adopt in retaliation against their enemies. Djugelli, in common with his teachers, absolutely fails to see that behind this frank and fearless policy of revolutionary violence there lives the consciousness of their historic vindication and their revolutionary mission, which has nothing in common with the unbridled cynicism of the "democratic" provincial satrap, who burns peasant villages and at the same time examines himself in the mirror to confirm his likeness to the enthroned degenerate of Rome.

Djugelli is no exception, and this is best illustrated by the fact that a very flattering preface to his book was written by the former Minister of the Interior, Gegechkori. Ramishvili, the successor of Jordania as Minister of the Interior, with feigned solemnity, proclaimed the right of democracy to the use of ruthless terror, quoting Marx as authority. From Nero to Marx . . . ! The quick-change mimicry of these provincial bourgeois, their superficial and purely ape-like imitativeness, are a loud testimony to their emptiness and vapidity.

When the complete helplessness of "independent" Georgia became increasingly evident even to the Mensheviks themselves, and when, after the defeat of Germany, they were compelled to seek the protection of the Entente, they more carefully concealed the instruments of their Special Detachment, and instead of the shoddy Djugelli-Nero mask, they put on the no less shoddy Jordania-Tseretelli-Gladstone mask, thus associating themselves with the great herald of Liberal platitudes.

A counterfeit of Marxism was a psychological necessity to the Georgian Mensheviks, particularly in their young days, as this reconciled them to their essentially bourgeois position. But their political cowardice, their democratic rhetoric—the pathos of platitudes—their instinctive aversion from everything exact, finished and well-defined in the domain of ideas, their envious cringing before the outward forms of bourgeois civilisation, all combined to produce a psychological type which is the direct opposite to the Marxian. When Tseretelli speaks of "international democracy" (at Petrograd, Tiflis, or Paris) one never knows whether he means the mythical "family of nations," the International, or the Entente. In the last resort he always addresses himself to the latter, but speaks in such a manner as though at the same time embracing the world's proletariat. The confusion of his ideas, the haziness of his conceptions, are excellent means for this sleight-of-hand trick. When Jordania, the leader of the clan, speaks of international solidarity, he at the same time makes allusion to the hospitality of the Georgian Tsars. The "future of the International and (!) the League of Nations is assured," announces Chkhenkelli upon his return from Europe. National prejudices and scraps of Socialism, Marx and Wilson, flights of rhetoric and middle-class narrow-mindedness, pathos and buffoonery, International and League of Nations, a small dose of sincerity and a large dose of chicanery, put together with the smugness of a provincial apothecary—this mixture, "well shaken before use" by the tossing of events, is the soul of Georgian Menshevism.

The Georgian Mensheviks hailed with glee the 14 points of Wilson. They welcomed the League of Nations. First they had welcomed the entry of the Kaiser's troops into Georgia, then they welcomed their departure. They welcomed the entry of the British troops. They welcomed the friendly assurance of the French Admiral. It goes without saying that they welcomed

Kautsky, Vandervelde, Mrs. Snowden. They are ready at any time to welcome the Archbishop of Canterbury, if the latter is willing to hurl a few extra curses at the Bolsheviki. By this conduct these gentry hope to prove that they are "part and parcel of European civilisation."

Menshevism reveals its true character in the Memorandum presented by the Georgian delegation to the League of Nations at Geneva.

"Having rallied to the banner of Western democracy" (reads the concluding part of the Memorandum), "the Georgian people naturally views with exceptional sympathy the idea of establishing such a political system as, being the direct outcome of war, would at the same time serve as a means for paralysing the possibility of future wars. The 'League of Nations' . . . embodying such a system, represents the *most fruitful achievement of mankind* on the road to the future unity of the race. In asking for admission into the 'League of Nations' . . . the Georgian Government thinks that the very principles which are to regulate international life, *henceforth* directed towards solidarity and collaboration, demand the acceptance into the family of free European nations of an *ancient people*, once the *vanguard of Christianity* in the East, now become the vanguard of democracy, a people which only strives to freedom and persevering labour in its home, which is its legitimate and indisputable heirloom."

Nothing should be added or detracted. It is a classical document of shallowness. This can be safely adopted as a criterion: the Socialist who does not vomit on reading this Memorandum should be ignominiously and finally expelled from the Labour movement.

The main lesson drawn by Kautsky from his study of Georgia is this, that, unlike the whole of Russia, with its factions, schisms and inward strife, unlike too, this whole sinful world, which in this respect is no better than Russia—only in the mountains of Georgia do you see the undivided sway of genuine, undiluted Marxism. At the same time Kautsky does not conceal the fact that in Georgia there was no big or medium sized industry, and consequently no modern proletariat. The majority of the Menshevik deputies to the Constituent Assembly was made up of schoolmasters, physicians, and officials. The bulk of the electors were peasants. Kautsky, however, does not go to the trouble of explaining this striking historical miracle. He who, with the rest of the Mensheviks, accuses us of parading Russia's backwardness as her supreme virtue, finds the ideal specimen of Social-Democracy in the most backward corner of old Russia. Indeed, the fact that for some time Georgian "Marxism" was free from that schism and factional strife experienced by other less fortunate countries, furnishes the very proof of a most primitive social environment and a belated process of differentiation between the bourgeois and the proletarian democracies, which, consequently,

means that Georgian Menshevism had nothing whatever to do with Marxism.

Instead of answering these fundamental questions, Kautsky haughtily declares that he had already learnt the truths of Marxism when many of us were still in our cradles. I make no attempt to dispute this assertion. The wise Nestor (of Shakespeare, not of Homer), boasted of his advantage over his enemy in the fact that his sweetheart had once been more beautiful than the grandmother of his enemy. And everyone is welcome to find his solace in his own way. Yet it is possible that, just because Kautsky learnt the A.B.C. of Marxism so very long ago, he is unable to apply its very first letters to Georgia. He interprets the more stable and prolonged sway of Georgian Menshevism as the result of higher tactical wisdom, and not as a result of the fact that the era of revolutionary Socialism had begun much later in backward Georgia than in the other parts of old Russia. Disgruntled by the march of historical events, Karl Kautsky arrived at Tiflis to quench his spiritual thirst in the last days of the Menshevik era, three quarters of a century after Marx and Engels had written their manifesto. Also Mrs. Snowden arrived at this pleasure resort to air her spiritual wardrobe. The common sense of the truly Fabian gospel according to Jordania, which clasped in its wide embrace both the Georgian Tsar and M. Huysmans, was destined by Heaven to please the high ideal of the official leaders of British Socialism.

How stubbornly stupidity survives when it has social roots!

## CHAPTER VIII.

# DEMOCRACY AND THE SOVIET SYSTEM

Now, having disposed of the historical review of the case, we may dwell upon some generalisations.

It happens that the history of Trans-Caucasia during the last five years provides a very instructive course of lessons on the subject of democracy during a revolutionary epoch. At the elections to the All-Russian Constituent Assembly not one of the Caucasian Parties came forward with a programme of secession from Russia. Some four or five months afterwards, in April, 1918, the Trans-Caucasian Diet, composed of the very same delegates that participated in the Constituent Assembly, resolved to secede and to form an independent State. Thus, upon the fundamental question of national existence—with Soviet Russia, or apart from and against her—nobody thought of consulting the wishes of the Trans-Caucasian population; there was no mention made of referendum, plebiscite, or new elections. The secession of Trans-Caucasia from Russia was resolved upon by the very same deputies that had been elected for the purpose of representing Trans-Caucasia at Petrograd, on the basis of the formless, vaguely democratic platforms of the first period of the Revolution.

At first the Trans-Caucasian Republic was proclaimed as a union of all the nationalities. But the situation that was created by the very fact of secession from Russia, and by the search for a new international orientation, led to the breaking up of Trans-Caucasia into three national parts: Azerbaïdjan, Armenia, and Georgia. As early as May 26th, 1918, five weeks after the secession, the very same Diet, composed of members of the All-Russian Constituent Assembly, which created the Trans-Caucasian Republic, declared it dissolved. Again nobody consulted the masses of the people. No new elections, no other forms of consultation. First, without consulting the people it seceded from Russia—in the name of a closer union of the Tartars, Armenians and Georgians, as the leaders of the Diet explained. Next, at the first impetus from outside, the Tartars, Armenians and Georgians, were split up into three states, again without being consulted.

On the very same day the Georgian section of the Diet proclaimed the independence of the Georgian Republic. Nobody consulted the workers and peasants of Georgia; they were confronted with an accomplished fact.

In the course of the subsequent nine months, the Mensheviks were busy enforcing the "accomplished fact": the Communists were driven underground, relations were opened with the Turks and Germans, peace treaties were negotiated, the Germans were replaced by the English and Americans, the Mensheviks carried

out their fundamental reforms, and, above all, created their prætorian armed force in the shape of the National Guards. And only after this did they venture to convene the Constituent Assembly (in May, 1919), placing before the masses the necessity of electing representatives to the parliament of an independent Georgian Republic, of which they had previously neither heard nor dreamed.

But what does it all mean? If, let us say, Macdonald were guilty of historical thinking, if, behind an historical movement, he were capable of seeing its living forces and interests, of distinguishing their real appearance from their disguise, their real motives from their pretexts, he would have first of all realised that the Menshevik politicians, these democrats *par excellence*, aimed at, and carried out, the most far-reaching measures in contravention of the methods of political democracy. It is true that they made use of the Trans-Caucasian fragment of the All-Russian Constituent Assembly. But they used it for purposes that were directly opposite to those for which it has been elected. Then they artificially bolstered up this remnant of the Yesterday of the Revolution, in order to counteract its Tomorrow. They convened the Georgian Constituent Assembly only after they had deliberately driven Georgia into a situation where the people had no choice: Trans-Caucasia was torn away from Russia, Georgia from Trans-Caucasia, the British were in occupation of Batoum, unreliable White Guard friends were at the borders of the Republic, the Georgian Bolsheviks were outlawed. The Menshevik Party remained the only possible intermediary between Georgia and the Entente, upon whom its bread supply depended. Under these circumstances "democratic" elections could mean nothing but the inevitable sanctioning of the whole chain of facts achieved by counter-revolutionary violence both by the Mensheviks themselves and by their foreign associates and protectors.

Compare this with the October Revolution, which we prepared openly, gathering the masses around the programme of "All Power to the Soviets," building up the Soviets, struggling for the Soviets, and everywhere winning the majority of them against the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, through persistent and uncompromising effort. On which side then was the real revolutionary democracy?

Here we must once more revert to some questions of the mechanics of revolution as we know it from the whole experience of modern history.

Up to the present experience had shown that a revolution was possible only when the interests of the majority of the people, and consequently of different classes, came into conflict with the existing system of property and State relations. The revolution, therefore, commenced with elementary "national" demands which expressed the self interest of the propertied classes, the shortsightedness of the middle-class and the political backwardness of



the proletariat. It was only in the process of the actual realisation of this programme that the clashing interests manifested themselves in the camp of the revolution. Its properties, conservative elements were gradually or at one blow thrown into the counter-revolutionary camp, while ever-increasing numbers from among the oppressed masses came out into the fray. Demands became more decisive, methods more implacable. The revolution here reached its culminating point. For further upward march it lacked either material pre-requisites (the conditions of production) or a conscious political force (a Party). The revolution then took a downward trend, for a short period or for a long historical epoch. The extreme party of the revolution was either driven from power, or it voluntarily curtailed its programme of action, pending a more favourable turn of events.

[We are giving here an algebraic formula of revolution without exact class outlines; but it suffices for our present purpose, since we are dealing with the co-relation between the struggle of the living forces and the forms of democracy].

A representative institution inherited from the past (the States General in France, the Imperial Duma in Russia), can at a certain moment give an impetus to the revolution and at the next moment become an obstacle.

A representative institution elected during the first period of the revolution inevitably reflects all its political primitiveness, naivete, benevolence and indecision. It is for this very reason that it soon becomes a brake on revolutionary development. If no revolutionary force that can overcome this obstacle is forthcoming, the revolution comes to a standstill and then recedes. The Constituent Assembly is swept away by a counter-revolution. Thus it happened in the revolution of 1848. General Wrangel\* liquidated the Prussian Constituent Assembly, which proved unable to liquidate General Wrangel, and had not been itself liquidated in time by the revolutionary party. We also had our General Wrangel, of identical and obviously inherited, proclivities. Yet we have liquidated *him*. We could do this because we had liquidated the Constituent Assembly in time. The Samara Constituent Assembly, for instance, repeated the Prussian experiment, finding its grave-digger in the person of Kolchak.

The French Revolution could for a time afford to operate by the side of unwieldy and laggard representative institutions, only because Germany at that time was a nonentity, while England, then as now, could hardly tackle a Continental country. Thus, the French Revolution, unlike our own, from the very outset enjoyed a prolonged external "respite," which for a time allowed it to go on experimenting and adapting successive democratic representative forms to the requirements of the revolution. But, when the situation grew menacing, the leading revolutionary party did not squeeze itself into the mould of formal democracy, but, with

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\* A Prussian general of 1848, not the more famous living general.

the aid of the guillotine, hastily shaped the democracy to suit its political requirements. The Jacobins exterminated the right-wing members of the Convention and intimidated the centrists. The course of the revolution flowed not along the channel of democracy, but through the defiles and rapids of terrorist dictatorship.

History on the whole knows of no revolution that was accomplished in a democratic way. For revolution is a very serious contest, which is always settled, not according to form, but according to substance. It happens quite frequently that individuals lose their fortunes and even their "honour" when playing cards according to the rules of the game; but classes never consent to lose possessions, power and "honour" by observing the rules of the game of "democratic" parliamentarism. They always decide this question in grim earnest, i.e., in accordance with the real co-relation of the material forces, and not with the phantom shadows of these forces.

No doubt even in countries like Britain with an absolute majority of proletarians, the representative institution called into being by a working class revolution will reflect, not only the first needs of the revolution, but also the monstrous conservative traditions of this country. The mentality of a present-day British trade union leader is a mixture of the religious and social prejudices of the period of the restoration of St. Paul's Cathedral, the practical skill of a trade union official at the height of capitalist development, the snobbishness of a petty bourgeois fighting to be respectable, and the uneasy conscience of a labour politician who has repeatedly betrayed the workers. To this must be added the influences of intellectuals, of professors and Fabians; of the Socialist moralising of Sunday preachers, the rationalist schemes of pacifists, the dilettantism of "Guild Socialists," and the stubborn and haughty Fabian narrow-mindedness. Although the present social relations in Britain are quite revolutionary, yet her mighty historic past has deposited a conservative crust on the consciousness of not only the labour bureaucracy but also the upper strata of the more skilled mechanics. The obstacles to social revolution in Russia are *objective*: the predominance of petty peasant farming, and technical backwardness in industry; in England these obstacles are *subjective*: the ossified consciousness of a collective Henderson and a hydra-headed Mrs. Snowden. The proletarian revolution will dispose of these obstacles by methods of elimination and self-purification. But it cannot hope to dispose of them in a democratic way. Mr. Macdonald himself will prevent such a consummation, not by his programme but by the mere fact of his conservative existence.

If the Russian Revolution—with the unsettled social relations existing within, and the ever present menace from without—had tied itself with the bonds of bourgeois democracy, it long since would have been found lying prostrate upon the highway with a knife in its throat. Kautsky has replied that the collapse of the

Soviet Republic would not be a serious blow to the international revolution. But this has nothing to do with the case. We have no doubt whatever that the fall of the Republic of the Russian proletariat would lift a heavy stone from many a burdened heart. Everyone of them would triumphantly say: "I told you so!" Kautsky could write his pamphlet No. 1,001, wherein he would not explain why he himself is doomed to become a nonentity. We over here continue to think that the very fact that the Soviet Republic has not fallen during the most difficult years serves as the best testimony in favour of the Soviet system. Of course, it contains no miraculous power. But it proved sufficiently flexible to bring about the closest union between the Communist Party and the masses, and at the same time it enabled the Party to conduct the necessary manœuvring, to retain the initiative and prevent the jeopardising of the fundamental tasks of the revolution by yielding to the second-rate and third-rate chances of the parliamentary game. As regards the opposite danger—of becoming detached from the changes in the moods and the co-relations of forces—the Soviet system has also demonstrated the highest vitality during the past year. The Mensheviks of the whole world have seized upon the phrase of the "Thermidor stage"\* of the Russian Revolution. Yet it was not they, but we ourselves, who formulated this diagnosis. And, what is more important, the concessions to the Thermidor mood and tendencies of the petty-bourgeois, necessary for the purpose of maintaining the power of the proletariat, were made by the Communist Party without effecting a break in the system and without quitting the helm. A thinking Russian professor, whom the revolution has taught something, has wittily described our new economic policy as "going down the hill with the brakes on." It is quite likely that this professor, in common with many others, considers this descent, of which we do not care to minimise the extent or significance, as something final and decisive. He will have to learn again, that however important the incidental deviations may be, our policy always regains and maintains its main course. In order to understand this it is necessary to measure our tactics, not with the measure of newspaper sensation-mongers, but on the scale of an epoch. At any rate, "going down the hill with the brakes on," from the point of view of the proletariat in power, has the same advantages as those which the bourgeois regime obtains by granting modern reforms which weaken the force of the revolutionary onslaught—a comparison which should appeal very much to Henderson, for the whole of his Party is merely a safety brake for bourgeois society.

But what about the "decay" of the Soviet system, so much spoken and written about by the Mensheviks of all nations for months and even years? Well, what they call "decay" is closely

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\* From the date of 9th Thermidor when the Jacobin dictatorship was overturned in the great French Revolution.

associated with what has been described above as going down with the brakes on. The international revolution is passing through a process of molecular concentration of forces under the outward appearance of stagnation and even retreat. One phase of this process is our new economic policy. This difficult period of international relapse naturally effects the conditions and needs of the Russian toiling masses, and consequently the work of the Soviet system. Its administrative and economic apparatus has registered big successes during this period. But as mass representative institutions the Soviets could not, of course, maintain that high tension which characterised them during the first period of internal struggles or at moments of acute danger from outside. The humdrum activities of parliamentary parties, their combinations and intrigues, may achieve the highest "drama" even amid the greatest oppression of the masses. The Soviet is not so independent of time and space. It reflects much more directly the life and sentiments of the masses. It is therefore monstrous to put down as a *defect* that which is its main *virtue*. Only the development of the revolution in Europe will again give a mighty impetus to the Soviet system.

Or perhaps one can "raise the spirits" of the masses by means of the Menshevik opposition and the rest of the mysteries of parliamentarism? There is no lack of countries possessing parliamentary democracy. And yet, what do we see? It would take the dullest-witted professor of constitutional law or the most brazen renegade from Socialism to deny the fact that the Russian toiling masses right now, even amidst the so-called "decay" of the Soviet system, participate in directing all aspects of social life in a manner which is a hundred times more active, more direct, continuous and decisive than is the case in any parliamentary republic.

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In all the countries that maintain the old parliamentary culture, quite a number of intricate mechanical contrivances have been evolved whereby the will of Capital is transmitted through a parliament based upon universal suffrage. In young and culturally more backward countries, democracy, reposing upon a peasant foundation, assumes a much more frank, and therefore instructive character. Just as one begins the study of animal organisms from the *amaba*, so the study of the intricacies of British parliamentarism must be commenced by examining the practices of the Balkan constitutions.

The parties which have been dominant in Bulgaria, and have ruled the country ever since the commencement of its independent existence, were all the time engaged in a relentless struggle against each other, although their programmes were indistinguishable from each other. Every party, whether Russophile or Germanophile, on being called to power by the Prince, immediately dissolved the National Assembly and held new elections, which invariably gave the ruling party the overwhelming majority,

leaving to the rival parties two or three seats. One of the parties that had been rendered almost extinct by the democratic elections was invited by the Prince two or three years afterwards to take office; it dissolved the National Assembly and held new elections which gave it, this time, the majority of the seats. The Bulgarian peasantry, who, by their cultural standard, and political experience, cannot be placed lower than the Georgians, invariably expressed their political will by voting for the party in power. And in a revolution, the peasantry support only that party which shows in practice that it can or does hold the power. This was the case with the Socialist-Revolutionaries after the March revolution of 1917. This was the case with the Bolsheviks after October. The "democratic" domination of the Mensheviks in Georgia was substantially of a "Balkan" character, although cloaked in the garb of a revolutionary epoch: that is, it relied upon the historically demonstrated inability of the peasantry, under the bourgeois system, to form their own party to guide the destinies of the State. Throughout modern history the programme and the lead were always given by the cities. The decisive character of a revolution depended upon the extent to which the peasant masses threw in their lot with the extreme Left parties of the cities. Thus it happened at Munster in Germany at the close of the Reformation. Thus it happened in the great French revolution, where the Jacobin clubs of the city could rely upon the village. The revolution of 1848 was defeated at its very beginning for the very reason that its weak left wing could not gain the support of the village, and the peasantry, in the person of the army, remained on the side of law and order. The present Russian revolution owes its success mainly to the fact that the workers managed politically to capture the peasantry by demonstrating to the latter their ability to govern.

In Georgia, the small numbers and the backwardness of the proletariat, coupled with its isolation from the centres of the revolution, allowed an incomparably longer lease of power to the political alliance of the middle class intelligentsia and the more conservative groups among the workers. The Georgian peasants tried by unrest and rebellions to force their radical demands upon the government, but, as always, proved themselves incapable of taking power into their own hands. Their isolated rebellions were crushed. In the meantime, the parliamentary swindle went on.

The relative stability of the Menshevik regime was due to the political impotence of the unorganised peasant masses, which the Mensheviks artfully maintained. In this they succeeded, particularly by solving the question of actual authority, independently of the principle of government by the people, by organising an independent armed force owing absolutely no allegiance to the democratic institutions. We mean the National Guard, of whom we have so far spoken only *en passant*. Yet this is the most important clue to the mysteries of a Menshevik democracy. The

National Guard was under the direct authority of the President of the Republic, and was composed of carefully picked and well-armed adherents of the regime. Kautsky knows it: "only tried organised comrades could obtain arms" (page 61). As a tried and organised Menshevik, Kautsky himself was enlisted as an honorary soldier of the Georgian National Guard. This is very touching, but National Guards do not go very well with democracy. Attacking the Bolsheviks, Kautsky writes in the same pamphlet: "If the proletariat or the proletarian army does not possess the monopoly of arms, it can retain power, in an agrarian country, only by winning the sympathy of the peasantry." (page 48). But what is the National Guard if not a monopoly of arms in the hands of the Menshevik Party? To be sure, along with the National Guard of the Menshevik dictatorship there sprang up in Georgia a regular army based on conscription. But the significance of this army amounted to almost nil. At the time of the overthrow of the Mensheviks, in February-March, 1921, the National Army took almost no part in the fighting, and, as a general rule, either went over to the Bolsheviks or surrendered without fighting. Perhaps Kautsky has different information upon this score? Let him divulge it. But first of all let him explain why was there need for a strictly picked and purely praetorian armed force if Georgian "democracy" was maintained by the sympathy of the toiling masses? On this Kautsky utters not a word. Macdonald, as we know, does not deem it necessary to "bother over questions of revolution," especially since in Great Britain he has become accustomed to the sight of mercenary reactionary troops preserving "democracy."

Yet, upon that little matter of the armed force of the regime, the apologists of Menshevik democracy keep silent. But in the hands of the National Guard was concentrated practically the entire authority of the State. Hand in hand with the Special Detachment, they dealt out executions and pardons, arrests, shootings and exiles. Without asking the Constituent talking-shop, they imposed conscription of labour by their own decree. Ferdinand Lassalle explained quite lucidly that cannon is the essential part of any constitution. The Georgian "Constitution," as we see, was crowned by a National Guard armed to the teeth (according to Kautsky of 30,000\* Mensheviks), equipped, not with the programmes of the Second International, but with rifles and cannon, this most serious part of the constitution.

We remember, moreover, that in Georgia there were always foreign troops, invited by the Mensheviks for the express purpose of preserving the regime.

The Entente intelligence services, together with those of Denikin and Wrangel and the Menshevik Special Detachment, were active on a wide front, being always ready to oblige the

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\* This figure is much exaggerated. The Mensheviks even here did not miss an opportunity to deceive the esteemed admirer of the National Guard.

National Guard or the troops of occupation in the "struggle with anarchy," and thereby representing the most carefully worked out section of the Georgian Menshevik "Constitution."

Under these circumstances the 82 per cent. majority of Mensheviks in the Constituent Assembly was merely the parliamentary reflection of the cannon of the National Guard, the Special Detachment, the British military expedition, and the Tiflis solitary confinement prison. Such are the mysteries of democracy.

"And what about yourselves?" we hear the angry rejoinder of Mrs. Snowden.

About ourselves, Madam? First of all, Madam, comparing the number of institutions with the area of the country and the vastness of the population, the means adopted by the dictatorship of Georgian Menshevism were several times in excess of the governmental machinery of the Soviets. If you know the four rules of arithmetic, you can easily convince yourself of this. Furthermore, Madam, against us all the time was arrayed the entire capitalist world, whereas Georgia invariably enjoyed the protection of the same victorious imperialist countries that fought against us. And finally, Madam—and this is not unimportant—we have never and nowhere denied that our regime is one of class revolutionary dictatorship, and not a democracy, standing above class, relying upon itself for stability. We did not lie like the Georgian Mensheviks and their apologists. We are accustomed to call a spade a spade. When we take away political rights from the bourgeoisie and its political servants, we do not resort to democratic disguises, we act openly. We enforce the revolutionary right of the victorious proletariat. When we shoot our enemies we do not say it is the sound of the Aeolian harps of democracy. An honest revolutionary policy above all avoids throwing dust into the eyes of the masses.

## CHAPTER IX.

# SELF-DETERMINATION AND THE REVOLUTION

"The Allied powers do not intend to recede from the great principle of the self-determination of small nations. They will only repudiate this principle when they are faced with the fact that some of the temporarily independent nations prove themselves to be a peril to universal peace by their incapacity to maintain order, by their bellicose and aggressive acts, and even by constant, childish and unnecessary insistence on their own dignity. The Great Powers will not tolerate such nations, as they are determined to preserve universal peace."

With these energetic words the British General Walker impressed on the Georgian Mensheviks' minds the conception of the *relativity* of national right to self-determination. Politically, Henderson stood, and still stands, behind his general. But "on principle," he is willing to turn national self-determination into an absolute principle, and to direct it against the Soviet Republic.

National self-determination is the fundamental democratic formula for oppressed nations. Wherever class oppression is complicated by national subjection, democratic demands take first of all the form of demands for national equality of rights—for autonomy or for independence.

The programme of bourgeois democracy included the right of national self-determination, but this democratic principle came into violent and open conflict with the interests of the bourgeoisie of the most powerful nations. The Republican form of Government seemed to be quite compatible with the domination of the Stock Exchange. Capitalism with the greatest ease established a dictatorship over the machinery of universal suffrage. However, the right of national self-determination has assumed and is still assuming in many instances the character of an acute and immediate peril of the dismemberment of the bourgeois states, or of the secession of their colonies.

The most powerful democracies have been transferred into imperialist autocracies. The financial oligarchy, the City, reigns supreme over the disfranchised human ocean of Asia and Africa through the medium of the "democratically" enslaved people of the home country.

The French Republic, with a population of 38 millions, is only a part of the colonial empire, which at the present time numbers 60 million coloured slaves. The black population of the French colonies will have to supplement, to an ever increasing degree, the army which is serving for the maintenance of the capitalist rule over the workers in France itself. The tendency to extend the markets at the expense of neighbouring nations, the struggle for colonial expansion and for sea power—imperialism—has come



more and more into irreconcilable conflict with the separatist national tendencies of the oppressed peoples. And as the middle class democrats, including the social-democrats, became completely subject to the imperialists, the programme of national self-determination was reduced practically to nothing.

The great imperialist slaughter brought acute changes into this question: all the bourgeois and social-patriotic parties seized hold of national self-determination, but at the wrong end. The warring governments were doing their utmost to adopt this watchword, first in the war with each other, and afterwards in the war against Soviet Russia. German imperialism flirted with the national independence of the Poles, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Letts, Estonians, Finns, and the Causican peoples, and used the watchwords at first against Tsarism, and subsequently, on a wider scale, against us. At first the Entente, in conjunction with Tsarism, claimed the "liberation" of the peoples of Austria-Hungary, Germany and Turkey. Subsequently, having been deprived of the co-operation of Tsarism, they took up the line of the "liberation" of the border states of Russia.

The Soviet Republic, having inherited the Tsarist Empire, which had been created by violence and oppression, quite openly proclaimed the right of national self-determination and of national independence. Though realising the enormous significance of this watchword during the transition period to Socialism, our party did not for a minute turn the democratic principle of self-determination into a dominating factor over all other historic requirements and tasks.

The economic development of present day society has a strongly centralist character. Capitalism has laid down the preliminary foundations for a well-regulated economy on a world scale. Imperialism is only the predatory capitalist expression of this desire to have the leading role in the management of the world's economy. All the powerful imperialist countries find that they have not enough scope within the narrow limits of national economy, and they are all seeking for wider markets. Their aim (to give it the most idealistic interpretation), is—the monopoly of the world's economy. In the phraseology of capitalist greed and piracy, the fundamental task of our epoch consists in the establishment of close relationships between the economic systems of the various parts of the world, and in the building up, in the interests of the whole of humanity, co-ordinated world production, based on the most economic use of all forces and resources. This is precisely the task of Socialism.

It is self-evident that the principle of self-determination does not in any case supersede the unifying tendencies of Socialist economic construction. In this respect, self-determination occupies, in the process of historic development, the subordinate position allotted to democracy in general. Socialist-centralism, however, cannot replace imperialist centralism without a

transition, and oppressed nationalities must be given the opportunity to stretch out their limbs—which have become stiff under the chains of capitalist coercion.

The period necessary for the satisfactory settlement of the national independence of Finland, Czecho-Slovakia, Poland, etc., will be determined by the general trend of the social revolution. The economic dependence of the various small nationalities, which were parts of the former Russian Empire, made itself felt very acutely almost immediately after their inception as independent entities, owing to their isolation from each other.

The task and the methods of the proletarian revolution do not by any means consist in the mechanical elimination of national characteristics or in the introduction of forcible amalgamation. Interference with the language, the education, the literature and the culture of various nationalities, is certainly alien to the proletarian revolution. That is concerned with other things than the professional interests of the intellectuals and the "national" interests of the working class. The victorious social revolution will give full freedom to all the national groups to settle for themselves all the questions of national culture, while bringing under one head (for the common good and with the consent of the workers) the economic tasks, which require handling in a manner well-considered and commensurate with natural, historical and technical conditions; not by any means with national groupings. The Soviet Federation represents the most adaptable and flexible State form for the co-ordination of national and economic requirements.

The Soviet Government has taken up its position between the West and the East, armed with two watchwords: "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat" and "National Self-determination." In some cases these two phases might be separated from each other by only a few years, or even a few months. In the case of the great empires of the East, this interval might probably last decades.

Under the then existing revolutionary conditions, the nine months of the democratic Kerensky-Tseretelli regime, proved sufficient for creating the conditions for a proletarian victory. Compared with the regime of Nicholas and Rasputin, the Kerensky-Tseretelli regime was a step forward, which we were always ready to acknowledge. This acknowledgment puts a revolutionary, historic, and materialistic valuation upon the real meaning of democracy, in the place of the valuation put on it by the professors, the priests and the Macdonalds. Nine months of revolution were sufficient to show the extent of its independent progressive significance. This does not mean, of course, that it was possible in October, 1917, to receive by means of a referendum, a definite answer from the majority of the workers and peasants to the question as to whether they considered the preparatory democratic course sufficient for them. But it certainly means that, after nine months of the democratic regime, the conquest of power by the proletarian vanguard ran no risk of opposition from

the workers, based on ignorance and prejudices. It was at once enabled to extend and fortify its positions, awakening the consciousness and the adherence of the ever growing masses of workers. In this, then, consists the great significance of the Soviet system, which fact is even admitted by the dull pedants of democracy.

The national separation of the former border countries of the Tsarist Empire, and their transformation into independent, petty-bourgeois republics, had approximately the same progressive significance as democracy on the whole. It is only imperialists and semi-imperialists who can refuse the right of self-determination to the oppressed peoples. It is only fanatics and charlatans of nationalism who can see in it self-seeking designs. To us, national self-determination has always appeared and will always appear as in many cases inevitable step towards the dictatorship of the working class—which, in accordance with the rules of revolutionary strategy, and in the process of civil war, develops strong centralist tendencies, acting as a counterpoise to national separation; thus completely conforming to the requirements of a well regulated Socialist economic system.

How soon resistance (beginning on a small scale) to the illusions of "independent" State existence will render possible the conquest of power by the working class, depends upon the trend of revolutionary development (as already stated), as well as upon the particular internal and external conditions of the given country. In Georgia a fictitious national independence was maintained for three years.

It is impossible to give an academic answer to the questions—did the working masses of Georgia really require three years to wear down their national illusions: or, were more than three years required for this process? The referendum and the plebiscite, amidst fierce imperialist and revolutionary struggles in every part of the world, are nothing but fiction. How these can be engineered may be easily ascertained from Messrs. Korfanty and Zeligowsky, or from the corresponding Entente commissions. For us this question can be settled, not by the methods of formal democratic statics, but by the methods of revolutionary dynamics. The crux of the matter consists in the fact that the Soviet revolution in Georgia (which was indeed brought about with the active participation of the Red Army, for we would have betrayed the workers and peasants of Georgia, if we had not assisted them by our armed forces, since we had such), took place after the political experiment of three years of Georgian "independence" and under conditions which guaranteed not merely a temporary military success, but also further political development for the revolution—that is, the extension and strengthening of the Soviet system in Georgia itself. And in this (if the thick-headed pedants of democracy will allow me to say so), our revolutionary task consists.

The politicians of the Second International, in unison with their mentors from their bourgeois diplomatic chancelleries, smile sardonically at our recognition of the rights of national self-determination. This they designate as a trap for simpletons—a bait held out by Russian imperialism. In reality, it is history itself which is holding out these baits, instead of settling the questions in a straightforward way. In any case, we cannot be accused of turning the zig-zags of historical development into traps, for, while actually recognising the right of national self-determination, we take care to explain to the masses its limited historic significance, and we never put it above the interests of the proletarian revolution.

A workers' state, in recognising the right of self-determination, thereby recognises that revolutionary coercion is not an all-powerful historical factor. Soviet Russia does not by any means intend to make its military power take the place of the revolutionary efforts of the proletariats of other countries. The conquest of proletarian power must be an outcome of proletarian political experience. This does not mean that the revolutionary efforts of the workers of Georgia or any other country, must not receive any military support from outside. It is only essential that this support should come at a moment when the need for it has been created by the political development of the workers, and recognised by the class-conscious revolutionary vanguard, who have won the sympathy of the majority of the workers. These are questions of revolutionary strategy, and not a formal democratic ritual.

The "Realpolitik" of to-day necessitates the conformity of the interests of the workers' State with the conditions created by the fact of its being surrounded by large and small bourgeois nationalist-democratic States. We were actuated by such considerations based on an accurate valuation of existing facts, when we maintained our attitude of patience and toleration towards Georgia. But when this attitude, after a long period of trial, did not give us even the most elementary guarantees of safety—when the principle of self-determination became, in the hands of General Walker and Admiral Dumesnil, a juridical guarantee for counter-revolution which was preparing a new attack upon us—we did not and could not see any moral obstacle in introducing, at the call of the revolutionary vanguard of Georgia, our Red Army, in order to help the workers and poorest peasants with the least possible delay and sacrifice to overthrow that pitiful democracy which had destroyed itself by its own policy.

We do not only recognise, but we also give full support to the principle of self-determination, wherever it is directed against feudal, capitalist and imperialist states. But wherever the fiction of self-determination, in the hands of the bourgeoisie, becomes a weapon directed against the proletarian revolution, we have no occasion to treat this fiction differently from the other "principles" of democracy perverted by capitalism,

That the Soviet policy in the Caucasus has also been correct from the point of view of nationalism, is best proved by the relations existing to-day between the Trans-Caucasian peoples.

The epoch of Tsarism was characterised by barbarous nationalist pogroms in the Caucasus, where the Armenian-Tartar butcheries were periodical events. Those sanguinary outbursts under the iron rule of Tsarism were the expression of centuries of internecine struggles of the Trans-Caucasian peoples.

The epoch of so-called democracy gave to the nationalist struggle a much more pronounced and organised character. In the beginning nationalist armies were formed, which were hostile to each other, and which often attacked each other. The attempt to create a bourgeois federal democratic Trans-Caucasian Republic proved a dismal failure. The Federation fell to pieces five weeks after its inception. A few months later the "democratic" neighbours were quite openly at war with each other. This fact alone settles the question: for if democracy was as incapable as Tsarism of creating conditions for a peaceful cohabitation of the Trans-Caucasian peoples, it was evidently imperative to adopt other methods.

The Soviet power alone has established peace and national intercourse between them. At the elections to the Soviets, the Baku and Tiflis workers elect a Tartar, an Armenian, or a Georgian, irrespective of their nationality. In Trans-Caucasia, the Moslem, Armenian, Georgian, and Russian Red regiments live side by side. They are imbued with the conviction that they are one army, and no power on earth will make them move against one another. On the other hand, they will defend Soviet Trans-Caucasia against any and every external foe.

The national pacification of Trans-Caucasia, which has been achieved by the Soviet revolution, is in itself a fact of enormous political and cultural significance. In it is expressed a real live internationalism, which we can safely put against the empty pacifist discourses of the heroes of the Second International, which are but a supplement to the chauvinist practices of its national sections.

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The demand for the withdrawal of the Soviet armies from Georgia and for a referendum "under the control of mixed commissions of Socialists and Communists," constitutes a most despicable imperialist trap, masquerading as national self-determination.

Let us put aside a number of cardinal questions, such as:—On what plea do the democrats want to impose upon us the democratic form of referendum in lieu of the Soviet form, which in our opinion is far superior? Why is the referendum to be applied only to Georgia? Why is such a demand only put to the Soviet Republic? Why do the social-democrats want to apply the referendum to our country, while they do nothing of the kind at home?

Let us put ourselves in the position of our opponents (that is to say, if they have any position). Let us single out the question

of Georgia and let us consider it carefully. It is proposed to create conditions for a free (democratic and not Soviet) expression of the opinion of the Georgian population.

1. Who are the negotiating parties? Who is to guarantee the actual fulfilment of the conditions, fixed by the negotiators? On the one side, evidently the allied Soviet Republics, but what about the other side? Is this to be—the Second International? If so, where is its material strength which would guarantee the carrying out of the conditions?

2. Even if we assume that the workers' Republic is to negotiate with Henderson and Vandervelde, and that, in accordance with this, the controlling commissions will consist of Communists and Social-Democrats, what about the "third" party—the imperialist governments? Will they not interfere? Or will the social-democratic servants be guarantors for their masters, and if so, where are the material guarantees?

3. It has been said that the Soviet forces must evacuate Georgia, but the Georgian coasts are washed by the Black Sea, in which the Entente warships reign supreme. The invasions of the White Guard troops which were disembarked from the British and French ships are well remembered by the population of the Caucasus. The Soviet troops are to go, but the imperialist fleet will remain. This means that the people of Georgia will have to come to an agreement at any price with the real master of the situation—the Entente. The Georgian peasant will have to say to himself that, although he prefers the Soviet power, he will have to look for some mediator between himself and imperialism, because the former is obliged for some reason (probably because of some weakness), to evacuate the territory, notwithstanding the continuous peril from that very imperialism. Is not this your plan for violating the right of self-determination of the Georgian people and for forcing the Mensheviks on them?

4. Or are we to be offered the withdrawal of the Entente ships from the Black Sea? Who will propose this—the Entente Government, or Mrs. Snowden? This question (see point 2), is rather important, and we ask for an explanation!

5. And where are the warships to be taken? Is it to the Red Sea or the Mediterranean? If so this distance is insignificant in the view of the British domination over the Straits. Which then is the way out?

6. Maybe the Straits could be locked up, and the keys handed over to Turkey? For, after all, the principle of self-determination does not imply Great Britain's domination over the Turkish Straits, over Constantinople and the Black Sea, and consequently over the coasts of Turkey. This is all the more important because our Black Sea Fleet has been carried off by the White Guard bandits, and is in the hands of the Entente.

We have consented to put the question as our opponents are endeavouring to put it, viz., on the basis of democratic principles and guarantees. But it appears that endeavours are being made

to cheat us in the most unceremonious way, for we are asked to consent to the material disarmament of Soviet territory, while we are offered as guarantees against imperialist and white guard annexations and revolutions—a resolution of the Second International.

Or are we to assume that there is no imperialist menace to Caucasia? Because Mrs. Snowden never heard anything about Baku oil? Perhaps she has not. May we inform her (with reference to this question) that the road to Baku is via Batoum—Tiflis? This last point is a strategical Trans-Caucasian fact, of which the British and French generals cannot plead ignorance. There are even now secret White Guard organisations under the high-sounding title of "Liberation Committees" (a title which does not prevent them from receiving money subsidies from British and Russian oil magnates, Italian manganese magnates, etc.). The White Guard bands are supplied with arms by sea. All this struggle is for oil and manganese. It is all the same to the oil magnates if they get at the oil via Denikin, the Mussulman Mussavat Party, or via the gate of natural self-determination with its doorkeepers from the Second International. If Denikin has not succeeded in defeating the Red Army, perhaps Macdonald will succeed in removing it by peaceful means. Anyhow, the result will be the same.

But Macdonald will not succeed. Such questions cannot be settled by resolutions of the Second International, even if those resolutions were not as paltry, contradictory, dishonest and indefinite as is the resolution on Georgia.

## CHAPTER X.

# “PUBLIC OPINION,” SOCIAL DEMOCRACY, COMMUNISM

One more question must be cleared up: on what does the Second International base its demand that we, the Soviet Federation, the Communist Party, should evacuate Georgia! Even if we were to admit that Georgia has been forcibly occupied, and that this fact is the expression of our Soviet imperialism, what right has Henderson, a member of the Second International, a former British Cabinet Minister, to demand that the proletariat organised in a State, that the Third International, that revolutionary Communism, should disarm Soviet Georgia “merely for the sake of his pious eyes.” When Mr. Churchill makes these demands, he makes as well a significant gesture in the direction of the long barrels of the naval guns and the barbed wire of the blockade. Upon what does Henderson rely? Is it the Holy Scriptures, or a party programme, or his own record? But the Holy Scriptures are nothing but a naive myth, Mr. Henderson’s programme is a myth, if not a naive one, and as to his record, it is a severe indictment against him.

Not so long ago, Henderson was a Minister in one of the democracies, viz., of his own—the British democracy. Why then has he not insisted that his own democracy, for the defence of which he was ready to make all sacrifices, including the acceptance of a Ministerial portfolio from the Liberal-Conservative Lloyd George, should begin to put into practice not our principles (heaven forbid) but his own—Mr. Henderson’s? Why has he not demanded the evacuation of India and Egypt? Why did he not, at the right time, support the demands of the Irish for their complete liberation from the yoke of Great Britain?

We are aware that Henderson, as well as Macdonald, does protest, on certain appointed days, by means of mournful resolutions against the excesses of British Imperialism. But these feeble and irresolute protests have never imperilled, and do not now imperil, the interests of British capitalism, and have never led, nor are they leading, to courageous and decisive action. They are only intended to salve the conscience of the “Socialist” citizens of the ruling nation, and to serve as an outlet for the dissatisfaction of the British workers. They will not help to break the chains of the colonial slaves. The Hendersons regard British domination over the colonies not as political questions, but as a fact in natural history. They have never declared that Hîndus, Egyptians, and other enslaved peoples have the right (nay, that it is their duty) to rise in armed revolt against British domination. Neither have they undertaken as “Socialists” to render armed assistance to the colonies in their struggle for



liberation. On this point there can certainly be no doubt whatever, that this is a question of the most elementary, ultra-democratic duty, and that for two reasons: *first*, because the colonial slaves certainly constitute an overwhelming majority, as compared with the infinitesimal ruling British minority; *secondly*, because this same minority, and especially its official Socialist section, recognises the principles of democracy as the guiding principle of its existence. There is India. Why does not Henderson organise a rising in favour of the evacuation of British troops from India? For there can be no more evident, monstrous and shameless violation of the laws of democracy than the domination of all the consolidated forces of British capitalism over the prostrate body of this unhappy and enslaved country! It seems to us that Henderson, Macdonald and the rest of them ought unceasingly to beat the tocsin, demand, appeal, denounce and preach revolution to the Indians and to all British workers against this inhuman trampling upon all the principles of democracy. But they remain silent, or worse still, they from time to time, with obvious boredom, sign a reasonable resolution, which is as stale and meaningless as an English sermon, and has for its aim to prove that, while supporting colonial domination, they would like its roses without the thorns, and that, in any case, they are not willing to allow these thorns to prick the fingers of loyal British Socialists. For "democratic and patriotic" considerations, Henderson ensconced himself with the greatest equanimity in a Ministerial armchair, and it did not appear to strike him that his armchair was resting on the most anti-democratic pedestal in the world:—the domination of a numerically insignificant capitalistic clique, through the medium of some tens of millions of Britishers, over several hundred millions of coloured Asiatic and African slaves. And, what is worse still, on the plea of defending this monstrous domination concealed under the cloak of democratic forms, Henderson allied himself with the unashamed military and police dictatorship of Russian Tsarism. In so far as you were a member of the British War Cabinet, Mr. Henderson, you were a Minister of Russian Tsarism. Do not forget that.

Henderson, of course would not even dream of asking the Tsar, his patron and ally, to remove the Russian forces from Georgia, or from the other territories which he had enslaved. At that time he would have described such a demand as rendering a service to German militarism. He looked upon every revolutionary movement in Georgia directed against the Tsar in the same light as upon a rising in Ireland, viz., as the result of German intrigue and German gold.

In the end one's brain reels from all these monstrous crying contradictions and inconsistencies! Nevertheless, they are in the order of things, for British domination, or rather the domination of its ruling upper ten thousand over one quarter of the human race, is looked upon by the Hendersons not as a question of politics, but as a fact in natural history. These democrats

who, with all their Fabian, emasculated and feeble Socialism, have always been and always will be the slaves of public opinion. They are thoroughly imbued with the anti-democratic exploiter, planter, and parasite views on races which are distinguished by the colour of their skins, by the fact that they do not read Shakespeare, or wear stiff collars.

Thus, although having Tsarist Georgia, Ireland, Egypt and India on their consciences, they dare to demand from us their opponents, and not their allies, the evacuation of Soviet Georgia. But, strange as it may seem, this ridiculous and thoroughly inconsistent demand is an unconscious expression of the respect of petty-bourgeois democracy for the proletarian dictatorship. Unconsciously, or half consciously, Henderson and Co. are saying: "Of course one cannot expect bourgeois democracy (whose Ministers we become when invited), to take the democratic principle of self-determination seriously. One cannot expect the Socialists of this democracy, or the respectable citizens of the ruling nation who conceal our slave ownership with democratic fictions, to aid the colonial slaves against their slave owners. But you, the revolution, personified in the proletarian State, are obliged to do that we, owing to our cowardice, mendacity and hypocrisy, are unable to do."

In other words, while formally placing democracy above all else, they recognise, willingly or unwillingly, that one can put demands to the proletarian State which would seem ridiculous and even silly, if they were put to bourgeois democracy, whose ministers or loyal representatives they are.

However, they express this unwilling respect for the proletarian dictatorship, which they reject, in a way which is in keeping with their political vagaries. They demand that the dictatorship should maintain and defend its power, not by its own methods, but by the methods which (in words, but not in deeds) they consider obligatory for democracy, but which they never apply themselves. We have already dealt with this in the first manifesto of the Communist International. Our enemies demand that we defend our lives in no other way than according to the rules of French duelling—that is to say, by the rules laid down by our enemies—but they do not consider such rules binding for themselves in their struggle against us.

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In order to refresh one's memory and to get a clear idea of the policy of the "Western Democracies" with regard to backward nationalities, and also the role which the members of the Second International are playing in the policy, one should read the memoirs of M. Paleologue, the former French Ambassador to the Court of the Tsar. If there were no such book, it would have been necessary to write one like it. We would also have had to invent Paleologue himself, if he had not spared us this trouble by his timely appearance on the arena of literature. Paleologue is a true representative of the Third Republic, with a Byzantine name, as

well as a Byzantine soul. In November, 1914, during the first period of the war, one of our Court ladies, at a command from "above" (evidently the Tsarina), gave him a pious autograph message from Rasputin. M. Paleologue, the representative of the Republic, replied to Rasputin's impressive message as follows:—

"The French people, which is very sensitive, understands perfectly well that the Russian people's love for its country finds its incarnation in the person of the Tsar."

This letter of the Republican diplomat, which was intended to come to the knowledge of the Tsar, was written ten years after January 9th, 1905,\* and 122 years after the French Republic had executed Louis Capet, who was, in the words of the Paleologues of that day, the incarnation of the French people's love for its country. What is strange in this is not that M. Paleologue, in keeping with the malpractices of secret diplomacy, willingly soiled his hands with these dirty Court intrigues, but that he himself brought this shameful fact to the notice of that same democracy which he so inadequately represented at the Court of Rasputin. And this has not prevented him from remaining up to the present time a prominent political worker of the "democratic republic," and to fill important posts! It is this which would be astounding if we did not know the trend of development of bourgeois democracy, which rose as high as Robespierre to end in Paleologue.

This frankness of the former ambassador in all probability is only a cloak for his Byzantine cunning. He tells us so much in order not to tell us all. Perhaps he is only putting our suspicions and curiosity to rest. We know what demands were put to him by the capricious and all-powerful Rasputin. Who knows what means Paleologue had to devise in order to protect the interests of France and civilisation?

At least one thing is certain: M. Paleologue belongs to-day to that French political group which is prepared to swear that the Soviet Power does not represent the true will of the Russian people, and which is persistently asserting that a resumption of relations with Russia will only be possible when regularly functioning democratic institutions hand over the government of Russia to the Russian Paleologues.

The ambassador of the French democracy did not stand alone. Side by side with him was Buchanan. On November 13th, 1914, Sir George Buchanan (according to Paleologue) declared to Sazonov: "The Government of his Britannic Majesty has recognised that the question of the Straits and Constantinople must be settled according to Russian aspirations. It gives me pleasure to announce this to you." Thus was laid down the programme of the war of right, justice, and national self-determination. Four days later Buchanan declared to Sazonov: "The British Government will be compelled to annex Egypt. It trusts that the Russian

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\*When the Tsar's army massacred a peaceful mass deputation of Petrograd workers.

Government will not offer any opposition to this." Sazonov was not slow in giving his consent. Three days after that Paleologue "reminded" Nicholas II. that Syria and Palestine were bound to France by a wealth of historic recollections and also by *moral* and material interests. He, Paleologue, hoped that his Majesty would approve of the measures which the Government of the Republic (the same democratic republic), deemed it necessary to take, in order to safeguard these interests.

"*Oui, certes,*" ("Yes, certainly"), was His Majesty's reply. Finally, on March 12th, 1915, Buchanan demanded that in return for Constantinople and the Straits, Russia should cede to Great Britain the neutral part of Persia (that part as yet unpartitioned). Sazonov answered "*C'est entendu*" ("That is understood.").

So two democracies in conjunction with Tsarism, which at that period shone with the reflected democratic light emanating from the Entente, settled the fate of Constantinople, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Persia. Sir George Buchanan was as worthy a representative of the British democracy as Paleologue of the French. Buchanan remained at his post after the downfall of Nicholas II. Henderson, a Minister of His Majesty and, if we are not mistaken, a British Socialist, came to Petrograd during the Kerensky regime, in order to take Buchanan's place (should this be necessary), because someone in the British Government had imagined that they should speak in a different tone to Kerensky than to Rasputin. After Henderson had taken a survey of Petrograd, he found that Buchanan was the right man in the right place as the representative of British democracy. Buchanan undoubtedly held the same opinion of Henderson, the Socialist.

Paleologue, exhibited "his" Socialists as an example to the restive Tsarist dignatories. In connection with the Court "agitation" of Count Witte for the speedy conclusion of the war, Paleologue declared to Sazonov: "Look at our Socialists and their correct attitude." (page 189). This summing up of Paleologue of Messrs. Renaudel, Longuet, Vandervelde, and all their followers, is rather startling even now, after all we have gone through. Paleologue, having received and respectfully acknowledged Rasputin's admonitions, in his turn expressed to the Tsarist Minister his patronising appreciation of the French socialists, and recognised the correctness of their attitude. These words: "*voyez mes socialistes—ils sont impeccables*" ("Look at my socialists—they are beyond reproach") should form a device for the banner of the Second International, from which the words: "Workers of the world unite" should have been removed long ago. This latter device suits Henderson as much as the Phrygian cap\* suits Paleologue.

The Hendersons consider the domination of the Anglo-Saxon race over the other races as a natural fact ensuring the spread of civilisation. For them the question of national self-determina-

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\* The symbol of the French Revolution.

tion begins only beyond the confines of the British Empire. This national arrogance is the chief link between the western social-patriots and their bourgeoisie, viz., it makes them the slaves of their bourgeoisie.

At the beginning of the war a French Socialist (a professor of a Swiss University), gave the following answer to a very natural query, as to how an alliance with Tsarism could be reconciled with the defence of democracy: "It is a question of France and not of Russia. In this struggle France is the moral force while Russia is the physical force." He said this as something quite natural, and without the slightest compunction for the shameless jingoism of his remark. A month or two later during a discussion on the same subject in the offices of "L'Humanite," in Paris, I quoted the words of the French professor in Geneva.

"He is quite right," answered the then editor of the paper.

This recalls to my mind the words of young Renan—that the death of a Frenchman is a moral event, while the death of a Cossack (Renan means a Russian), is a physical fact. This monstrous national arrogance has its causes. The French bourgeoisie already had a glorious historical past at a time when the other peoples were still in a semi-medieval barbaric state. The British bourgeoisie was ahead even of the French in opening up the paths of the new civilisation. Hence the contemptuous attitude towards the rest of humanity, which they treated as historical manure. With its self-assurance, its wealth of experience, with the diversity of its cultural achievements, the British bourgeoisie prevented the free moral and spiritual development of its own working class, and poisoned its mind with the psychology of the ruling class.

In the mouth of Renan the phrase about the Frenchman and the Cossack was the cynical expression of the pride of a class, both materially and spiritually powerful. The same phrase, turned inside out by a French Socialist, signified the humility of French Socialism, its spiritual exhaustion, its purely flunkeyish dependence upon the spiritual crumbs off the rich table of the bourgeoisie.

If Paleologue, mincing the phrase of Renan, says that the death of a Frenchman is an incomparably greater loss to culture than the death of a Russian, the same Paleologue says (or at least implies), that the death of a French stock-broker millionaire, professor, lawyer, diplomat, or journalist, on the battle-front represents an incomparably greater loss to culture than the death of a French turner, textile worker, chauffeur or peasant. The one is the logical sequence of the other. National aristocratic sentiment is at bottom a contradiction to Socialism—not in the levelling milk-and-water Christian sense that all nations, all men are equal upon the scales of culture, but in the sense that national aristocratic sentiment, closely linked with bourgeois conservatism, is completely and entirely directed against the social revolution, which alone can create the conditions for a higher culture. National

aristocracy assesses the cultural value of a human being from the standpoint of the past. Socialism considers the cultural value of human beings from the standpoint of the future. It cannot be gainsaid that the French diplomat Paleologue radiates more imbibed cultural blessings than, say, a peasant of the Tambov province. Yet, on the other hand, it cannot be denied that the Tambov peasant, who with his cudgel has chased out the landlords and the diplomats, has laid the foundation for new and higher culture. The French working man and the French peasant, thanks to their higher culture, will achieve this better, and progress forward more rapidly.

We Russian Marxists, owing to the belated development of Russia, were not weighed down by a powerful bourgeois culture. We became allied to European spiritual culture not through the medium of our miserable national bourgeoisie, but independently: we assimilated the most revolutionary conclusions of European experience and European thought, and developed them to their highest pitch. This has given some advantages to our generation. Let us declare frankly: the sincere and profound enthusiasm with which we contemplate the products of the British genius in the most varied spheres of human creative endeavour, only the more sharply and pitilessly accentuates the sincere and profound contempt with which we regard the spiritual narrowmindedness, the theoretical banality and the lack of revolutionary dignity, which characterise the authorised leaders of British Socialism. They are not the heralds of a new world; they are but the surviving relics of an old culture, which in their person expresses anxiety for its further fate. And the spiritual barrenness of these relics seems to be a sort of retribution for the profligate lavish past of bourgeois culture.

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The bourgeois mind has imbibed some of the great cultural achievements of mankind. Yet at the present time it is the chief obstacle to the development of human culture.

One of the leading virtues of our party, which makes it the mightiest lever of development of the epoch, consists of its complete and absolute independence of bourgeois public opinion. These words signify much more than they at first sight seem. They need to be explained. Particularly if we bear in mind such a thankless section of the audience as the Second International. Every revolutionary thought, even the simplest truth, must be nailed down here with extreme care.

Bourgeois public opinion is a close psychological web which envelopes on all sides the tools and instruments of bourgeois violence, protecting them against any incidental shocks, as well as against the fatal revolutionary shock, which, however, in the last resort is inevitable. Active bourgeois public opinion is composed of two parts: first, of inherited views, actions, and prejudices which represent the fossilised experience of the past, a

thick layer of irrational banality and useful stupidity; and second, of the intricate machinery and clever management necessary for the mobilisation of patriotic feeling and moral indignation, of national enthusiasm, altruist sentiment, and other kinds of lies and deceptions.

Such is the general formula. But some explanatory examples are necessary. When in famine-stricken Russia, a Cadet lawyer, who with funds supplied by England or by France, helped in making a noose for the neck of the working class, dies of typhus in a prison, the wireless and the cables of bourgeois public opinion produce a sufficiently great number of vibrations to arouse a wave of indignation in the receptive conscience of the collective Mrs. Snowdens. It is quite obvious that all the devilish work of the capitalistic wireless and cables would have been useless, if the skull of the petty bourgeois did not serve as a gramophone box.

Let us take another instance: the famine on the Volga. In its present form of unprecedented calamity, this famine, at least half of it, is a result of the civil war raised on the Volga by the Czecho-Slovaks and Kolchak, that is, by the Anglo-American and French capital which organised and sustained it. This drought fell upon a soil that had been already exhausted and ruined, denuded of working cattle, machinery and other stock. We, on the other hand, have cast into gaol some officers and lawyers (which we by no means hold up as an example of humanitarianism), and bourgeois Europe and America attempted then to picture the whole of Russia, with its hundred million inhabitants, as a vast hunger-prison. They encircled us with a wall of blockade, while their hired White Guard agents applied the bomb and torch to the destruction of our scanty supplies. If there is anyone who handles the scales of pure morality, let him weigh up the severe measures that we are compelled to adopt in our life and death struggle against the whole world, against the calamities which world capitalism, in quest of unpaid interests on loans, showered upon the heads of the Volga mothers. Yet the machine of bourgeois public opinion works so systematically, and with such arrogant self-righteousness, the cretinism of the middle-class represents such a valuable gramophone box, that as a result, Mrs. Snowden pours her surplus human pity out upon . . . the poor down-trodden Mensheviks in our land.

Reverence of bourgeois public opinion is a more impassable barrier to the activity of the social reformers than even the bourgeois laws. It may be put down as a law of modern capitalist governments, that the more "democratic" the more "liberal" and "free" is their regime, the more respectable are their national Socialists, and the more stupid the obeisance of the National Labour Party before the public opinion of the bourgeoisie. Why have an outward policeman over Mr. Macdonald when there is an inward one within his soul?

Here we must not shirk the question, the very mention of which is a menace to respectability. I speak of religion. It was not so very long ago that Lloyd George called the Church the central power station of all parties and currents, i.e., of bourgeois public opinion as a whole. This is particularly true in reference to England. Not in the sense of course, that Lloyd George derives the real inspiration for his politics from religion, or that the hatred of Churchill for Soviet Russia is due to his burning desire to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, or that the Notes of Lord Curzon are copied directly from the Sermon of the Mount. Oh no! The driving force of their politics are the very mundane interests of the bourgeoisie which put them in power. But that "public opinion" which alone makes possible the smooth working of the mechanism of governmental compulsion, finds its chief resources in religion. The legal restraint that has been put over men, over classes, and over society as a whole, as a sort of ideological whip, is merely the unadorned application of religious restraint—that heavenly whip which is held over the head of exploited humanity. After all is said and done, it is a hopeless matter to impose upon an unemployed docker a faith in the sacredness of democratic legality by the force of formal arguments. The first essential thing here is material argument—a policeman with a heavy club on earth, and above him—the Supreme Policeman, armed with the thunder in Heaven. But when even in the minds of "Socialists" the fetishism of bourgeois legality is coupled with the fetishism of the epoch of the Druids, we get as a result that ideal inward policeman, with whose aid the bourgeoisie (at least for a time) can allow itself the luxury of approximate observance of democratic ritual.

When speaking of the treasons and betrayals of the social-reformers, we by no means desire to assert that they are all, or a majority of them, merely bought. If so, they would never do for the serious part set to them by bourgeois society. It is even unimportant to guess the extent to which the vanity of a middle-class man might feel flattered by becoming an M.P. in a loyal opposition, or even a member of the Imperial Cabinet, although there is a good deal of that sentiment, of course.

Suffice it to say that the same bourgeois public opinion which in days of quietude permits them to be in the Opposition, at a decisive moment, when the life or death of bourgeois society is at stake, or at least its most important interests—in a war, a rebellion in Ireland or in India, the great coal lock-out, or the Soviet Republic in Russia—proved capable of forcing them to take the political position which was necessary to the capitalist order. Without wishing in any way to attribute to the personality of Mr. Henderson any titanic features that it does not possess, we may confidently assume that Mr. Henderson as the head of the "Labour Party" is a supremely important asset to bourgeois society in England. For in the heads of the Hendersons the fundamental elements of bourgeois education and the fragmentary



scraps of Socialism are welded into one by the traditional cement of religion. The question of the economic emancipation of the English proletariat cannot be seriously put as long as the labour movement is not purged of such leaders, organisations, and moods, which are the embodiment of the timid, cringing, cowardly and base submission of the exploited to the public opinion of the exploiters. The inward policeman must be cast out before the outward policeman can be overthrown.

The Communist International teaches the workers to treat the public opinion of the bourgeoisie with contempt, and above all, to scorn these "Socialists" who crawl upon their bellies before the commandments of the bourgeoisie. It is not a question of ostentatious contempt, nor of lyrical tirades and curses. The poets of the bourgeoisie itself more than once made the nerves of the latter tingle by their daring challenges, particularly on the questions of religion, marriage, and the family. It is a question of the profound inner freedom of the proletarian vanguard from the spiritual snares and pitfalls of the bourgeoisie, of the new revolutionary public opinion which should allow the proletariat not merely in words but in deeds, not in tirades, but where necessary by kicks, to smash all the bourgeois commandments, and march freely to that revolutionary goal it has set itself, which is at the same time the objective demand of history.

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# APPENDIX

## MANIFESTO

### Of the Congress of the Georgian Soviets to Workers of the World

We, the representatives of the toiling masses assembled at the First Congress of the Georgian Soviets, send our fraternal greetings to all the oppressed workers struggling against the exploiters of the whole world, and we protest indignantly against the oppressors and their servants who, under false pretence of sympathising with "Independent Georgia," are even to-day preparing a fresh attack against the workers' and peasants' power which we have secured. Georgia was a part of the Tsar's Empire—chained to it by the bonds of violence and oppression. In complete accord with the working class of the whole of Russia, the toiling masses of Georgia have for a series of years struggled relentlessly against Tsarist autocracy, the big landlords, and bourgeois exploitation. Owing to a lack of political experience on the part of the toiling masses, the leadership in the struggle for a number of years had passed into the hands of the Georgian petty bourgeois intellectuals. These, under the banner of Menshevism, weakened the struggle of the working masses by trying to compromise and negotiate with the autocracy and landlords, and especially with the bourgeoisie.

During the imperialist war, the ruling Menshevik party in Georgia poured into the conscience of the toiling masses the poison of bourgeois patriotism, in this way acting in agreement with the traitor leaders of the Second International.

When Tsarism was overthrown by the March revolution in 1917, the middle class Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary parties came to power for a while in the whole of Russia. An important role among them was played by the leaders of Georgian Menshevism, Chkheidze, Tseretelli and others.

In the sphere of international politics the watchwords of the Mensheviks, as well as all the rest of the petty bourgeois parties, was *to continue the war* on the side of the imperialist nations of the Entente.

In the social domain the Mensheviks strove to *uphold the bourgeois order*.

Politically they deemed it necessary to mask the bourgeois rule under the name of "democratic republic," which world experience has shown to be nothing but a tool in the hands of the ruling capitalist clique.

In their national policy the Mensheviks were at one with all the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties in fighting decisively against the national demands of the Finns, the Ukrainians, and other nationalities that were shut up in the Tsarist prisons.

In Georgia herself they hampered with all possible means the struggle of the toiling masses against their oppressors, hindered the solution of the agrarian question, kept at their service officials who had been employed by the Tsar's government, etc.

In full accord with the avowed bourgeois press, Menshevik papers centred all their efforts on a campaign of calumny against the Bolsheviks, misrepresenting them in the eyes of the workers and peasants as enemies of the revolution and Tsarist agents. Never in the history of political struggles has there been a campaign of lies more base, more spiteful, than this.

After the almost bloodless Petrograd October revolution, which overthrew the decayed government of Kerensky and Tseretelli, the Mensheviks took the lead in the civil war that united into one common camp against the workers' and peasants' Soviets, all the Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries, Cadets, and the "Black Hundred" in the country. When all obstacles had been overcome and the workers were victorious in almost the whole of Russia, the Georgian Mensheviks severed the whole of Trans-Caucasia from the Soviet Republic and tried to make it an independent bourgeois state. Having broken off their ties with the Russian working class, they went hand in hand with the bourgeois and landlord clique as represented by the Georgian Nationalism, the Armenian "Dashnaks," and the Azerbaïdjan Mussavatists. Under Menshevik leadership all Transcausia was converted into counter-revolutionary trenches to crush the growing workers' and peasants' revolution.

Thus under the Menshevik leadership a dictatorship of the exploiters over the workers was set up in Transcausia, which was separated from Russia not on a national but a class ground. The Mensheviks seized the administrative and police apparatus, they set the tone to all Transcausia, and their control of Georgia was unchallenged.

The intervention of the Turks and Germans in Trans-Caucasia sharpened the struggle between the different national factions of the bourgeois and middle class front. The Mensheviks deemed this moment favourable for dismembering Trans-Caucasia and proclaiming the apparent independence of Georgia. Seeing that they were well protected against the northern danger by the Kaiser's and the Sultan's troops, the Mensheviks ruthlessly suppressed the workers' strikes and peasant revolts which were continually breaking out in different parts of the country. Just as the Georgian Mensheviks—in the persons of Chkheidze and Tseretelli—previously attempted to suppress the autonomy of the Finnish and Ukrainian peoples, they fought now with sword and fire in Georgia against the national tendencies of the Abkhasians, the Adjarians, and the Ossetians.

With the collapse of German militarism, Menshevik Georgia changed her masters, but not her international or home policy. This time the Mensheviks became a tool in the hands of the Entente imperialists. They maintained constant relations with all the counter-revolutionary forces in the South of Russia. They did not refrain from employing a single measure which could prejudice Russia and do her harm. Naturally the Communist Party was definitely driven underground, while the secret police worked to the great glory of the bourgeois Republic.

During the occupation of Batoum by the British troops, the Georgian Mensheviks' policy towards Soviet Russia was especially insolent and provoking, and "democratic Georgia" was certainly the best neighbour Denikin could have wished for his campaign.

His defeat at the hand of the Red Armies and the approach of the latter troops to the Trans-Caucasian frontier, at the beginning of 1920, shook the fictitious rule of the Nationalist Party. A strong revolutionary spirit swept over the toiling masses. The Red Army might already at that time have entered Georgia as long wished liberators from the yoke of the Mensheviks and the Entente. The class-conscious workers and peasants looked forward to the Red troops and called loudly to the Soviet Government for their help. But, unwilling to shed the blood of the workers and peasants, and acting upon their desire to establish a solid peace between the workers and peasants of Georgia and Russia, the Russian Soviet Government stopped the march of the Red Army on Georgia, and in May, 1920, signed a treaty of peace.

But from the very first day of signing the treaty the Mensheviks began to violate it systematically. They began openly and secretly to assist all the

enemies of Soviet Russia with the hope that the Soviet Government would soon fall and that the workers' and peasants' revolution in Russia would be finally crushed. These gentlemen, however, were cruelly mistaken.

The end of the Polish war and the defeat of Wrangel in the autumn of 1920 caused the inevitable collapse of the Georgian wing of the counter-revolutionary front. Taught by the experience of the agreement with the Georgian Mensheviks—which they had so perfidiously and with unprecedented treachery broken—the Russian Soviet Republic could not, of course, stand aside from this struggle which the Georgian toiling masses conducted against the Georgian Menshevik Government, and it was only natural that the workers and peasants of the Soviet Federation should come to the help of the Georgian masses who had revolted against the bourgeois and the landlords.

The Red troops came as liberators into a country in the throes of revolution. The great majority of the National Georgian Army created by the Mensheviks refused to fight against the Red troops, and instead fraternised with them. Branded by their betrayal of the revolution, the Menshevik Government was overthrown and fled to the Entente ships, carrying away with them the funds of the Georgian people.

This money is now being used to pay for the lies directed against the federated Soviet Republics and the Red Army.

The leaders of the Second International, Kautsky, Henderson, MacDonald, Huysmans, and many others, and all the chorus of the leading imperialist politicians and the press of the international Stock Exchange, express their ardent sympathy with the Georgian "democracy" crushed—as they allege—by Soviet imperialism. But we, who represent the genuine toiling masses of Georgia, we, the Georgian workers and peasants who have met at this Congress of the Soviets—we nail to the pillar of infamy this shameful international comedy of untruth. We reject the hypocritical sympathy of Henderson and Vandervelde with the same scornful indignation as we reject the compassion of their lords and masters—the British and French bankers.

The capitalist and social democratic protectors of the Georgian Mensheviks propose to go to the population and organise in Georgia a referendum of the same type as the Entente organised or was going to do in Silesia, Eastern Galicia, Lithuania, Armenia, etc. There is no need to say that the result of such a referendum would be a foregone conclusion to those who deem it necessary to organise a democratic travesty of the people's will. The toiling masses of Georgia have long ago voiced their true feeling—first by a series of uninterrupted revolts against the Mensheviks, then at elections to the urban and rural Soviets, and now at the All-Georgian Congress of the Soviets of the toiling masses. This is the most correct and true expression of the political experience, feelings and wishes of the toiling people of Georgia.

We need the Red Army so long as the existence of the Soviet Republic is threatened, and until the workers of the world overthrow the power of the rapacious imperialists and create real guarantees for a peaceful and fraternal co-operation of all the peoples. We—the Georgian workers and peasants—together with the workers and peasants of all the Soviet Republics, and with the Red Army itself eagerly look forward to the day when the final defeat of imperialism will allow us to demobilise the Red Army and let our brothers return to their peaceful labour in the fields and workshops.

Working men and women, peasants, workers of Europe and all the world! Do not believe the lies and calumnies of our—and also your—enemies. Hear the voice of your brothers, the workers and peasants of Georgia. The Red Army is not the tool of foreign oppression but our own instrument in the struggle for the emancipation of the toilers. The regiments that comprise it include representatives of all the people of the great Soviet Federation, and are animated by the spirit of brotherhood and solidarity. The Red

Army knows no national divisions, or national struggle. It defends equally the interests of the toilers of all countries. By their campaign of lies, paid for with the funds stolen by them from the people, the bankrupt Mensheviks and agents of the Entente—Messrs. Jordania, Tseretelli, Chkheidze—are trying to create favourable conditions for a new military intervention of foreign imperialists in Trans-Caucasia. Jordania at the same time appeals to the imperialist Supreme Council and the Yellow Social Democratic International. As for us, we call to the toiling masses of Europe and the whole world to put up a revolutionary resistance against the new attempts of the imperialists and their flunkies of all kinds and descriptions.

Advanced workers! Tell the workers all the world over that for the first time in Georgian history the power in the country belongs to the workers and peasants. This power we hold firmly, and we surrender it to none. Before all the workers and peasants of the world we declare that, during their three and a half years' rule, the Mensheviks did nothing for the Georgian workers. Nor had the Georgian peasant received the land promised him by the Mensheviks. The Mensheviks during all the time they held power were unable to restore international or internal peace in the country. Owing to their policy they made enemies not only of Soviet Russia, but also of the neighbouring Republics. And—worst of all—they rendered extremely acute the relations between the different nationalities in their own country. Many a bloody conflict inside Georgia was due to their nationalist and jingo policy.

The Soviet power on the contrary has already in a very brief space of time solved the most crucial questions. The toilers have already received the land, there is no more exploitation in the sphere of agriculture, national peace between all nationalities has been restored at home, and peaceful brotherly relations have been established with the Soviet and non-Soviet states surrounding Georgia. During the one year that the Soviets have held power in Georgia, external peace and calm within the country have not been disturbed for a single moment.

We wish to live in peace and fraternal co-operation with all peoples. We are reconstructing our economic life which was destroyed by long years of imperialist and civil war, and declare without hesitation that we shall soon triumph on the economic front just as we have already triumphed on the civil war fronts.

Intelligent and honest soldiers and sailors of all countries! Tell and explain to your brothers that the road to the restoration of bourgeois Georgia cannot be beaten out in any other way than across the corpses of the Georgian workers and peasants. We shall rise as one man with the cry of "Liberty or Death" against any attempt at restoring the miserable and odious rule of Menshevik pseudo-democracy. Our alliance with Soviet Armenia, Soviet Azerbaidjan, and the whole Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic has been consolidated, and shall never be shaken.

Workers, men and women, and labouring peasants of Europe and all other countries! We send this fraternal appeal to you, calling upon the feeling of solidarity and fraternal unity of the labouring masses of all countries.

Long live the Power of the Soviets! Long live the world proletarian revolution!

The Presidium of the Congress:—Makharadze, Mdivani, Dumbadze, Orakhelashvili, Toroshelidze, Gegechkori, Todria, Gagloev, Lakoba, Glonti, Okuashvili, Papiashvili, Varvara, Ohudzhava, Mamulia, Sturua, Khimshishvili, Varamishvili, Nazaretian.

St. Petersburg, February 21st, 1922.

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