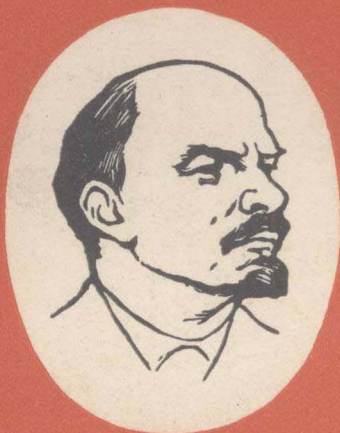


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IN COMMEMORATION OF
THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE BIRTH OF LENIN

LENIN
ON
THE REVOLUTIONARY
PROLETARIAN PARTY
OF A NEW TYPE

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PROLETARIAN PARTY
OF A NEW TYPE

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WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

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I. THE COMMUNIST PARTY IS A POLITICAL PARTY GUIDED BY THE THEORY OF MARXISM; IT MUST HAVE A MARXIST PROGRAMME OF REVOLUTION

ONLY A PARTY GUIDED BY MARXIST THEORY CAN FULFIL THE ROLE OF THE VANGUARD

We stand wholly on the basis of the theory of Marx: this theory was the first to transform socialism from a utopia into a science, to lay down a firm foundation for this science and to indicate the path that must be followed in further developing this science and elaborating it in all its parts.

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There cannot be a strong Socialist Party without a revolutionary theory which unites all Socialists, from which they draw all their convictions, and which they apply in their methods of struggle and means of action. To defend such a

theory, which to the best of your knowledge you consider to be true, against unfounded attacks and attempts to vitiate it, does not imply that you are an enemy of *all* criticism. We do not regard Marx's theory as something final and inviolable; on the contrary, we are convinced that it has only laid the cornerstones of the science which Socialists *must* advance in all directions if they do not want to lag behind the march of life.

From "Our Programme"
(latter half of 1899).

The only banner the class movement of the workers can have is the theory of revolutionary Marxism. Russian Social-Democracy must see that it is further developed and put into practice, and at the same time protect it against those distortions and vulgarizations to which "fashionable theories" are often subjected (and the successes of revolutionary Social-Democracy in Russia have already made Marxism a "fashionable" theory).

From "A Protest by Russian Social-Democrats" (end of August and beginning of September 1899).

Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement. This cannot be insisted upon too strongly at a time when the fashionable preaching of opportunism is combined with absorption in the narrowest forms of practical activity. The importance of theory for Russian Social-Democrats is still greater for three reasons, which are often forgotten:

The first is that our Party is only in the process of formation, its features are but just becoming outlined, and it has not yet completely settled its accounts with other tendencies in revolutionary thought which threaten to divert the movement from the proper path. Indeed, in very recent times we have observed (as Axelrod long ago warned the Economists would happen) a revival of non-Social-Democratic revolutionary tendencies. Under such circumstances, what at first sight appears to be an "unimportant" mistake may give rise to most deplorable consequences, and only the short-sighted would consider factional disputes and strict distinction of shades to be inopportune and superfluous. The fate of Russian Social-Democracy for many, many years to come may be determined by the strengthening of one or the other "shade."

The second reason is that the Social-Democratic movement is essentially an international movement. This does not merely mean that we must combat national chauvinism. It also means that a movement that is starting in a young country can be successful only on the condition that it assimilates the experience of other countries. In order to assimilate this experience, it is not sufficient merely to be acquainted with it, or simply to transcribe the latest resolutions. A critical attitude is required towards this experience, and ability to subject it to independent tests. Only those who realize how much the modern labour movement has grown in strength will understand what a reserve of theoretical forces and political (as well as revolutionary) experience is required to fulfil this task.

The third reason is that the national tasks of Russian Social-Democracy are such as have never confronted any other socialist party in the world. Further on we shall deal with the political and organizational duties which the task of emancipating the whole people from the yoke of autocracy imposes upon us. At the moment, we merely wish to state that *the role of vanguard can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by an advanced theory.*

From "What Is To Be Done?" (from autumn 1901 to February 1902).

Our programme is entirely based on the scientific, that is, the materialist world outlook.

From "Socialism and Religion" (published in *Novaya Zhizn*, No. 28, December 3, 1905).

IT IS ONLY WHEN THE PARTY HAS A REVOLUTIONARY POLITICAL PROGRAMME THAT IT CAN HOLD TO ITS LINE THROUGH EACH AND EVERY TURN OF EVENTS, CONSOLIDATE THE LINKS BETWEEN THE REVOLUTIONARIES AND ATTRACT THE MASSES TO THE REVOLUTION

In order to build the party, it is not enough to be able to shout: "Unity," it is necessary, in addition, to have some sort of *political* programme, a programme of political action. The bloc of liquidators, of Trotsky, the Vperyodists, the Poles, Bolshevik(?)—party members, Paris Mensheviks, etc., etc., etc., was foredoomed to a scandalous downfall because it was built on a lack of principles, on hypocrisy and empty phrases. It wouldn't be a bad thing if these sighers finally got down to solving for themselves the most complex and difficult question: whom do they want unity with? If it is with the liquidators, then why not say so without grimac-

ing; if they are against uniting with the liquidators, then what sort of unity are they sighing for?

From "Liquidators Against the Party"
(published in *Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 26,
May 8, 1912).

Without a programme, it is impossible for the party to be a more or less integral political organism, able always to hold to a line through each and every turn of events. Without a tactical line, based on an evaluation of the current political moment and giving exact answers to the "accursed problems" of the present, it is possible to have a small group of theoreticians, but not an operative political unit. Without an evaluation of the "active," topical or "fashionable" ideological-political trends, a programme and tactics can degenerate into dead "points," which it is unthinkable to realize in life, and to apply to thousands of detailed, concrete and most concrete questions of practice, with an understanding of the essence of things, an understanding of "what it is all about."

From "On the Election Campaign and the Election Platform" (published in *Sotsial-Demokrat*, No. 24, October 18, 1911).

. . . The programme must formulate our basic views, exactly establish our immediate political tasks, point out those immediate demands which must mark out the range of agitational activity, give it unity, broaden and deepen it, raising agitation from the particular, from fragmentary agitation for small, separate demands to agitation for the whole body of Social-Democratic demands. Now, when Social-Democratic activity has already roused a considerably wide circle of socialist-intellectuals and conscious workers, it is urgently necessary to consolidate the links between them with a programme and thus give them all a firm basis for further and wider activity.

From "Draft Programme for
Our Party" (end of 1899).

But revolution consolidates and educates rapidly. Every step in the development of the revolution rouses the masses and attracts them with uncontrollable force precisely to the side of the revolutionary programme as the only programme that consistently and logically expresses their real, vital interests.

From "Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in
the Democratic Revolution" (June-July 1905).

THE ESSENCE OF THE PARTY'S PROGRAMME CONSISTS IN ORGANIZING AND LEADING THE CLASS STRUGGLE OF THE PROLETARIAT, IN THE CONQUEST OF POLITICAL POWER BY THE PROLETARIAT AND THE REALIZATION OF SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM

We have already said that the essence of this programme consists in the organization of the class struggle of the proletariat and in leading this struggle, the ultimate aim of which is the conquest of political power by the proletariat and the organization of a socialist society.

From "Our Programme"
(latter half of 1899).

As we see it, the task of Social-Democracy is to organize and help to carry on the class struggle, to point out its essential ultimate aims, and to analyse the conditions which determine the methods by which this struggle should be conducted. "The emancipation of the working classes must be conquered by the working classes themselves." But while we do not separate Social-Democracy from the labour movement, we must not forget that the task of the former is to represent the interests of this movement in all countries as a whole, that it