

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

**HISTORY
OF THE
COMMUNIST PARTY
OF THE
SOVIET UNION
/ BOLSHEVIKS /**

S H O R T C O U R S E



EDITED BY
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INTRODUCTION

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) has traversed a long and glorious road, leading from the first tiny Marxist circles and groups that appeared in Russia in the eighties of the past century to the great Party of the Bolsheviks, which now directs the first Socialist State of Workers and Peasants in the world.

The C.P.S.U.(B.) grew up on the basis of the working-class movement in pre-revolutionary Russia; it sprang from the Marxist circles and groups which had established connection with the working-class movement and imparted to it a Socialist consciousness. The C.P.S.U.(B.) has always been guided by the revolutionary teachings of Marxism-Leninism. In the new conditions of the era of imperialism, imperialist wars and proletarian revolutions, its leaders further developed the teachings of Marx and Engels and raised them to a new level.

The C.P.S.U.(B.) grew and gained strength in a fight over fundamental principles waged against the petty-bourgeois parties within the working-class movement—the Socialist-Revolutionaries (and earlier still against their predecessors, the Narodniks), the Mensheviks, Anarchists and bourgeois nationalists of all shades—and, within the Party itself, against the Menshevik, opportunist trends—the Trotskyites, Bukharinites, nationalist deviators and other anti-Leninist groups.

The C.P.S.U.(B.) gained strength and became tempered in the revolutionary struggle against all enemies

of the working class and of all working people—against landlords, capitalists, kulaks, wreckers, spies, against all the hirelings of the surrounding capitalist states.

The history of the C.P.S.U.(B.) is the history of three revolutions: the bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1905, the bourgeois-democratic revolution of February 1917, and the Socialist revolution of October 1917.

The history of the C.P.S.U.(B.) is the history of the overthrow of tsardom, of the overthrow of the power of the landlords and capitalists; it is the history of the rout of the armed foreign intervention during the Civil War; it is the history of the building of the Soviet state and of Socialist society in our country.

The study of the history of the C.P.S.U.(B.) enriches us with the experience of the fight for Socialism waged by the workers and peasants of our country.

The study of the history of the C.P.S.U.(B.), the history of the struggle of our Party against all enemies of Marxism-Leninism, against all enemies of the working people, helps us to *master Bolshevism* and sharpens our political vigilance.

The study of the heroic history of the Bolshevik Party arms us with a knowledge of the laws of social development and of the political struggle, with a knowledge of the motive forces of revolution.

The study of the history of the C.P.S.U.(B.) strengthens our certainty of the ultimate victory of the great cause of the Party of Lenin-Stalin, the victory of Communism throughout the world.

This book sets forth briefly the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks).

CHAPTER ONE

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE CREATION OF A SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY IN RUSSIA

(1883-1901)

1. ABOLITION OF SERFDOM AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRIAL CAPITALISM IN RUSSIA. RISE OF THE MODERN INDUSTRIAL PROLETARIAT. FIRST STEPS OF THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT

Tsarist Russia entered the path of capitalist development later than other countries. Prior to the sixties of the past century there were very few mills and factories in Russia. Manorial estates based on serfdom constituted the prevailing form of economy. There could be no real development of industry under serfdom. The involuntary labour of the serfs in agriculture was of low productivity. The whole course of economic development made the abolition of serfdom imperative. In 1861, the tsarist government, weakened by defeat in the Crimean War, and frightened by the peasant revolts against the landlords, was compelled to abolish serfdom.

But even after serfdom had been abolished the landlords continued to oppress the peasants. In the process of "emancipation" they robbed the peasants by inclosing, cutting off, considerable portions of the land previously used by the peasants. These cut-off portions of land were called by the peasants *otrezki* (cuts). The peasants were compelled to pay about 2,000,000,000 rubles to the landlords as the redemption price for their "emancipation."

After serfdom had been abolished the peasants were obliged to rent land from the landlords on most onerous terms. In addition to paying money rent, the peasants were often compelled by the landlord to cultivate without remuneration a definite portion of his land with their own implements and horses. This was called *otrabotki* or *barshchina* (labour rent, corvée). In most cases the peasants were obliged to pay the landlords rent in kind in the amount of one-half of their harvests. This was known as *ispolu* (half and half system).

Thus the situation remained almost the same as it had been under serfdom, the only difference being that the peasant was now personally free, could not be bought and sold like a chattel.

The landlords bled the backward peasant farms white by various methods of extortion (rent, fines). Owing to the oppression of the landlords the bulk of the peasantry were unable to improve their farms. Hence the extreme backwardness of agriculture in pre-revolutionary Russia, which led to frequent crop failures and famines.

The survivals of serfdom, crushing taxation and the redemption payments to the landlords, which not infrequently exceeded the income of the peasant household, ruined the peasants, reduced them to pauperism and forced them to quit their villages in search of a livelihood. They went to work in the mills and factories. This was a source of cheap labour power for the manufacturers.

Over the workers and peasants stood a veritable army of sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, gendarmes, constables, rural police, who protected the tsar, the capitalists and the landlords from the toiling and exploited people. Corporal punishment existed right up to 1903. Although serfdom had been abolished the peasants were flogged for the

slightest offence and for the non-payment of taxes. Workers were manhandled by the police and the Cossacks, especially during strikes, when the workers downed tools because their lives had been made intolerable by the manufacturers. Under the tsars the workers and peasants had no political rights whatever. The tsarist autocracy was the worst enemy of the people.

Tsarist Russia was a prison of nations. The numerous non-Russian nationalities were entirely devoid of rights and were subjected to constant insult and humiliation of every kind. The tsarist government taught the Russian population to look down upon the native peoples of the national regions as an inferior race, officially referred to them as *inorodtsi* (aliens), and fostered contempt and hatred of them. The tsarist government deliberately fanned national discord, instigated one nation against another, engineered Jewish pogroms and, in Transcaucasia, incited Tatars and Armenians to massacre each other.

Nearly all, if not all, government posts in the national regions were held by Russian officials. All business in government institutions and in the courts was conducted in the Russian language. It was forbidden to publish newspapers and books in the languages of the non-Russian nationalities or to teach in the schools in the native tongue. The tsarist government strove to extinguish every spark of national culture and pursued a policy of forcible "Russification" of the non-Russian nationalities. Tsardom was a hangman and torturer of the non-Russian peoples.

After the abolition of serfdom, the development of industrial capitalism in Russia proceeded at a fairly rapid pace in spite of the fact that it was still hampered by survivals of serfdom. During the 25 years, 1865-90, the number of workers employed in large mills and factories