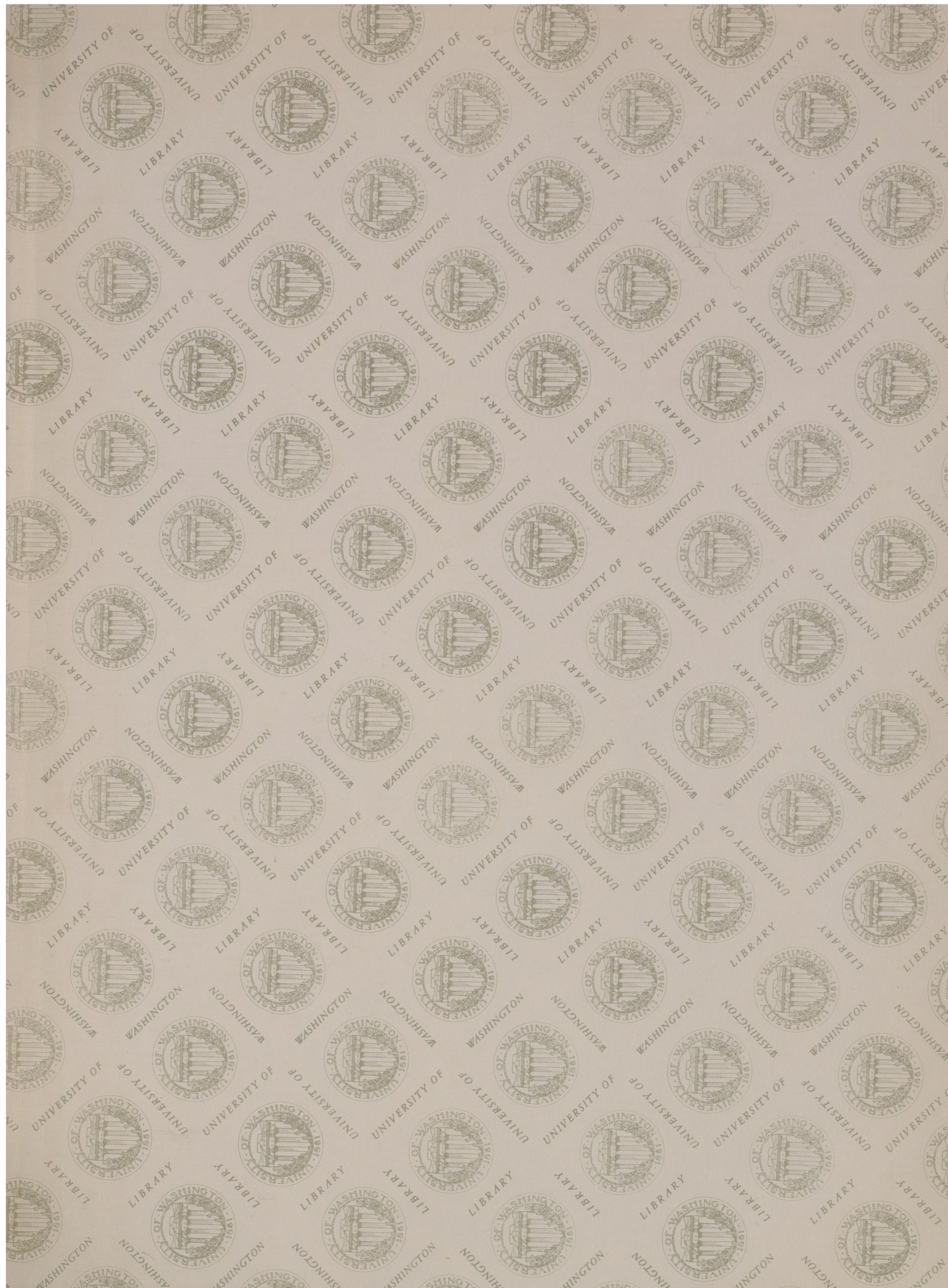


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BOLSHEVIK AGITATION IN THE RUSSIAN ARMY:

MARCH THROUGH NOVEMBER, 1917

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
Introduction	1
I. Spirit of the Russian Army Prior to March	2
II. Leninist Policy on the Russian Army	7
III. The Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies Policy on the Russian Army	10
IV. The Agitators: Non-Bolshevik Parties in the Soviet; The Bolshevik Party	15
V. The Army Accepts the Bolsheviks	22
Footnotes	36
Bibliography	39

INTRODUCTION

World War I ended a year earlier for Russia than for the other combatants: it had to, for by the end of 1917 the Russian Army no longer existed. The dissolution of this army during 1917 was inextricably bound-up with the degeneration which characterized Russian social and economic life during the same period. It is inaccurate to claim that V. I. Lenin and his Bolshevik faction of the Russian Social-Democratic Party played only a subsidiary role in the dissolution of the army and the degeneration of Russian society. To describe the Bolsheviks as mere manipulators would be fatal to a comprehensive understanding of what happened in 1917.

The position of Lenin and his party in Russia during the first part of 1917 was tenuous to say the least. Here stood a party which glorified the urban industrial worker to the exclusion of all other classes. On one side of the Bolsheviks stood a hostile peasantry to whom the Bolshevik tenet of land collectivization sounded like serfdom. On the other side stood the Russian Army whose sacrifices during World War I attested to its devotion to the Allied cause, a cause at which Lenin and his party scoffed with great vigor.

Lenin and his party ultimately had their way with both of these groups. In winning over the peasantry, the Bolsheviks had to obscure their program of collectivization from the peasant-soldier mind and appear to accept the peasants' land program which involved private cultivation of their lands which were to incorporate lands formerly belonging to the large landowners.

The exigencies of taking power also forced Lenin and the Bolsheviks to retreat from their initial theoretical position on the function of the army.. They obscured their theory that imperialist war ought to be turned into class

war and adopted the propaganda line of 'Immediate Peace'. The Bolsheviks found that this shift was essential, as it provided the only ground upon which they could come to an agreement with the army. This 'agreement' was that Bolshevik peace propaganda provided the soldier-peasant with sufficient rationalization for his self-demobilization.

This paper attempts to show the impact of Bolshevik agitation on the army from March to November, 1917, as well as the impact of the army on Bolshevik theory with regard to the function of the army and imperialist war during a proletarian revolution.

CHAPTER I.

Spirit of the Russian Army Prior to March, 1917.

The task which the Bolsheviks set themselves can be simply stated: destroy the Russian Army. It was a task of momentous proportions. The morale of the army throughout its fighting career was, on the whole, good. It was remarkably so when one considers the tremendous sacrifices which the army had been forced to make throughout the entire war. For instance, the munitions crisis was undeniably acute during most of the war, and the cost of this shortage was paid for in human blood. Unarmed soldiers were ordered to wait in the rear of battle until they were able to pick up guns from their dead comrades. The hysteria which this situation produced in the army command can be seen from an order received during August, 1915, by Lieutenant-General N. N. Golovine, who was at that time Quartermaster General of the Ninth Army. He was ordered by Headquarters of the southwestern front to supply some of the infantry companies with long-handled axes, which were supposed to be used for protection of the artillery. Needless to say, the order was overlooked.¹

The army also suffered from lack of food and equipment. This was due

to poor central planning and the inadequate development of transport. While supplies were stockpiling at depots and ports, transport remained congested, often with items of secondary importance. During the time that food shortages were experienced in many towns and at the front, newspapers carried stories of frozen food consignments in Siberia, which were doomed to rot with the coming of warmer weather.²

In spite of this demoralizing situation, the morale of the army maintained itself at a relatively high level. At the beginning of the war, there were patriotic outbursts of support for Russia and her government. Rodzianko, President of the Duma, recounts in his memoirs his astonishment at the deep fervor which the people of Petrograd expressed for Russia and for the Tsar as her symbol. This expression of approval for the government's war policy would seem to have reflected the attitude of the entire country as "ninety-six percent of those called out reported for duty."³ This response takes on added meaning when one considers the economic hardships which the mobilization of men and horses meant for the hard-pressed peasant household. If, because of the increase of economic and personal hardships among the peasantry, the popularity of the war was somewhat measured, financial relief was provided within the period of a few months, through subsidies to soldiers' families. Since in many instances the subsidies were much larger than token payments, hostility for the mobilization declined appreciably.⁴

Both mobilization and the movement of troops to the border regions were carried out quite smoothly. Disorders which did arise among new recruits were manifest not in anti-war demonstrations, but in breaking into wine-cellars. The men who sought exemptions and deferments, according to General Dobrorolsky, former head of the Mobilization Division, were almost entirely from the middle and upper classes.⁵ The great majority of people rallied to Russia's cause, and submitted themselves to military discipline.

The Russian Army marched into battle with great élan. It was the heart-felt opinion of the army that Russia's cause in this war was a just one (unlike the Russian role in the Russo-Japanese War) and that the Germans were the aggressors. By the end of the campaign of 1914, the eastern front was in better condition strategically than the front in France. The losses incurred in Russian Poland had been foreseen by campaign plans and evacuation was orderly. These losses were more than compensated by the advance in East Prussia and the occupation of Galicia. The cost of these gains, however, was very high. In killed and wounded, the army lost 1,000,000 men,⁶ a number equal to two-thirds of the standing army before the outbreak of the war. The campaign also used up large supplies of ammunition, an item which was at a premium until 1917.

In the campaign of 1915, the Germans had planned to deal Russia a decisive blow, eliminating her for good. The Russian Army responded well to the challenge, for it not only stopped the German offensive, but it advanced both in the Caucasus and in Poland. This Russian success was double-edged, however, for it used up the last supplies of ammunition. The Germans were soon informed of this ammunition crisis within the Russian ranks and capitalized upon their good fortune by systematically attacking the entire Russian front. This brought about the retreat of 1915. After much agonized soul-searching, General Headquarters, much to the horror of the Government, authorized withdrawal of the army into the interior.

The retreat of 1915 involved not only withdrawing the army, but evacuating the civilian population and laying-waste the countryside. Although many civilians retreated through fear of the Germans, the majority had been ordered to leave by the Russian military command. Since the order to evacuate often came at the last minute, many of the refugees had seen their own homes and food supplies burned. Bitter, hungry and often-times sick, hundreds of

thousands of these refugees struggled along the roads, blocking military transport. One can imagine the demoralizing effect their mental condition and physical presence had upon both the retreating armies and the rear.

Although the wholesale retreat of 1915, compounded by the lack of ammunition and supplies, shattered morale, it did not destroy it. Major-General Sir Alfred Knox, British Military Attache in Petrograd, stated that "the morale of the army had come through a severe trial, and one that would have been fatal to most armies."⁷ Although morale was somewhat rehabilitated by the beginning of 1916, due to the lack of operations along the Russian front, which gave the troops a much needed rest, General Golovine claims that alarming symptoms could have been observed: rumors concerning inefficiency abuses and treason in high places, became more and more persistent; and "the idea was taking root that the war had been forced on Russia by the Allies, who wanted to weaken Germany by using Russia....Often heard/from/ the soldiers /was/ 'England and France have made up their minds to carry on the war until the Russian soldier has shed his last drop of blood.' The idea that Russia had been lured into the war against the interests of her people was readily given credence by the backward masses which had completely lost confidence in their government."⁸

And yet, alarming as this attitude of the troops must have seemed, it is important for the argument of this paper to note that the troops' hostility was projected beyond the officers and the military command to the civilian rear. Constant complaints were directed against the rear which was accused of not caring about the front or at any rate forgetting about it. These complaints came from officers as often as from the soldiers.

It is extremely interesting to place General Golovine's dismal summation of the soldiers' attitudes alongside reports of the censors of the Twelfth

Army, who read and classified all letters according to their general spirit. During the early months of 1916, 80 percent of the letters from each unit definitely reflected good spirit, and in some units it reached 100 percent.⁹ The fact that this report comes from the Twelfth Army is significant not only because the Twelfth Army was on one of the fronts that had had the longest retreat during 1915, but also because during 1917, it became one of the more revolutionary and undisciplined armies on the Eastern front.

Yet in 1916, the Twelfth Army was in better spirits than the army in which General Golovine served, on the Roumanian front in the extreme southwest. The Twelfth Army, it should be noted, was in the extreme northwest, in the vicinity of Riga and Petrograd. During 1917, these two towns became the center for the propagandists and agitators which besieged the armies on behalf of the Left political parties.

Morale remained at a tenable level throughout 1916. The failure of the Russian Army to break through German positions on the northern and western fronts was somewhat relieved by the brilliant but ultimately shallow 'Brusilov Offensive' along the southwestern front. Although the gains made during this offensive were relatively spectacular, there were no replacements to back up and capitalize upon these gains. Again losses were painfully high. But by March, 1917, the supply situation had altered for the better. Stocks of arms, ammunition and technical equipment were sizably larger than on the outbreak of the war. Also, artillery experts, airplanes and supplies were arriving in appreciable quantities from England and France.¹⁰ The railway to the ice-free port of Murmansk was completed. While Russia's technical gains were not comparable to the gains of either her allies or enemies, who by 1917 were producing new military inventions, she did succeed in sizably

increasing the production of her regular equipment. While this increase was negligible in terms of the over-all military situation in the European theatre, it was bound to have a beneficial effect on the Russian infantryman who at last received a gun and ammunition. The frustrations which had built up in the army during three years of war, frustrations borne with unequalled patience, were mollified by the fact that for the first time since the war had begun, the Russian Army was adequately armed and equipped.

CHAPTER II.

Leninist Policy on the Russian Army

If, in looking over the record of the Russian Army during World War I, weaknesses become apparent, they in no way reflect upon the deep and sustained devotion to the Russian cause which both men and officers maintained throughout the most trying circumstances. It was this devotion and discipline which Bolshevik policy sought to destroy. Lenin had outlined the policies which he felt ought to be followed by his party in regard to the army and the revolution. These policies had clearly stated ends, and merely to sum up and describe the Bolsheviks' role as sensing the mood of the troops and insuring "the benevolent neutrality of the front at the time when the decisive struggle for power was taking place in Petrograd and Moscow"¹¹ overlooks Lenin's long established policy for the army which the Bolsheviks attempted to implement, and disregards the effective help which was unintentionally given to Bolshevik policies by non-Bolshevik elements.

The years preceding the outbreak of World War I were filled with localized conflicts and incidents, each of which tended to further unsettle the precarious balance maintained among the major powers. As the underlying conflicts that worked against this balance became more evident, the leaders of

the major socialist parties of Europe became correspondingly alarmed. In various meetings of their organization, the Second International, they proclaimed their ideological hostility for war, and their intention to use war for the overthrow of capitalist rule.

In July of 1914, when Lenin heard that these same socialist leaders had joined the war efforts of their respective countries, he would not believe it. When he finally realized that it was so, he was deeply shocked. Although he had taken no part in the Second International's fulminations against war, (being absorbed with the reorganization of his Bolshevik faction,) his policies with regard to war were a logical concurrent of his peacetime policies, and in no case involved working with Tsarist-Monarchist or bourgeois elements.

Lenin formulated his position on World War I in Seven Theses Against War, published on the fifth or sixth of September, 1914. "The European and World War", he declared, "has the sharp and definite character of a bourgeois, imperialist and dynastic war.../and is characterized by/ the struggle for markets and the looting of countries.../the purpose being to/ kill-off the proletarians of all countries by instigating the hired slaves of one nation against the hired slaves of the other for the benefit of the bourgeoisie."¹² He went on to say that "the slogans of Social-democracy at the present time should be: first, a thorough propaganda (to be spread also in the army and the areas of military activity) for a socialist revolution and for the necessity of turning the weapons not against brothers, hired slaves of other countries, but against the...bourgeois governments and parties of all countries—to carry on such propaganda in all languages it is absolutely necessary to organize illegal cells and groups in the armies of all nations—/in order to carry out/ a merciless struggle against chauvinism and the patriotism of petty towns-

men and against the bourgeoisie of all countries without exception." 13

But Social-Democrats, even including the anti-militarists, were not listening to him. This was made clear at a conference of anti-militarist socialists held in Zimmerwald, Switzerland, in September, 1915. The one principle on which all the delegates agreed was opposition to the capitalist war. The majority of Zimmerwaldians, however, refused to go along with Lenin when he insisted that the imperialists' war should be turned into a class war, and that the Second International should be replaced by a Third International which would form the organizational nucleus to perpetrate this policy. Lenin and his minority faction, the so-called Zimmerwald Left, remained in the minority, for the majority opposed the war on pacifist rather than on revolutionary grounds.

Lenin believed pacifism to be naive and sentimental, and as dangerous to the international socialist movement as chauvinism. The essence of this program was to develop civil-war, in the sense of class-war, out of both peace and war. Thus in wartime, he accorded top priority to "a revolutionary war of the proletarians of all countries against the bourgeoisie of all countries" who were, after all, the real enemy of the workers; the workers, according to the categories of international socialism, have no country. However, Lenin felt that as Russian revolutionary, he was compelled to maintain that the lesser evil with regard to the outcome of World War I would be the defeat of the Tsarist Monarchy and its army. 14

Lenin knew that transforming the national war into class-war would require stubborn and systematic work. Even when he felt this transformation could not be obtained in the foreseeable future, its achievement was held to be the primary task of Bolshevism. He directed the Bolsheviks to unite the proletariat, the rural proletariat and village poor, and the enlisted men of the army, who were then to be pitted against the bourgeoisie in class-war.

The role of the army in the transformation of the national war into class-war was obviously of paramount concern to Bolshevik theory. Marxist-Leninist doctrine teaches that the assumption of power by the proletariat is bound to be met with force and violence from the bourgeoisie. If the bourgeoisie remained in control of the army, they would use it against the relatively unarmed and untrained proletariat with disastrous results. Since Lenin conceived the first step in the class-war to be the expropriation from the bourgeoisie of their economic holdings, such as banks, factories, railways, large agricultural estates, etc., it was obvious that the army had to be stripped of all bourgeois controls. In order to do this, he declared, "it is imperative to introduce the election by the people of all... the army officers."¹⁵ In other words, bolsheviks must replace the bourgeoisie in positions of control in the army. The Russian Army as an instrument of a Tsarist or bourgeois government must be destroyed and replaced by a proletarian army which would battle for international proletarian dictatorship.

Thus, Leninist policy with regard to the army at the beginning of 1917 can be divided into two parts: one was to get the troops to reject 'Imperialist' war, turning simultaneously towards class-war, and the other was to destroy the disciplinary bond between officers and enlisted men along with a concurrent assumption of leadership by Bolsheviks or Bolshevik sympathizers.

CHAPTER III

The Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies Policy on the Russian Army

The March (n.s.) Revolution of 1917 replaced the Tsarist Government with a democratic Provisional Government which was to rule until a Constituent Assembly could create a permanent democratic form of government. The Provi-

sional Government was dominated by political moderates and liberals. This revolution was dubbed, in the socialist nomenclature, as the bourgeois revolution. Most socialists felt that this was the inevitable historical sequence to the feudal (i. e. Tsarist) regime which had preceded it. Since it was considered a necessary step on the road to a proletarian revolution, the vast majority of socialists accepted the Provisional Government. Lenin in rejecting it, was again in the minority.

The socialists hailed the Provisional Government as the fruition of the bourgeois epoch. Even though they recognized it as a legally constituted government, they understood their own new position as that of an Opposition. They prepared to organize the proletarian masses by developing their class-consciousness, thus preparing for the proletarian revolution which they believed to be the next step in the inevitable sequence of History. As the so-called 'vanguard of the proletariat', the socialists considered themselves, rather than the Provisional Government, to be the spokesmen of the workers and the peasants.

The organization within which they acted as spokesmen was the Soviet of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies. There were two parties which dominated the Soviet until the Bolsheviks gained a majority in September of 1917. The Menshevik Party was the second and by far the larger faction of the Russian Social-Democratic Party. The Mensheviks assumed the role of spokesmen for the workers. The other major group in the Soviet was the Socialist Revolutionary Party, which as spokesmen for the peasants, tried to adapt Marxist ideology to peasant needs and interests.

One of the first acts of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' Deputies was to incorporate the phrase 'and Soldiers' into its title. The Soviet, in taking de facto control of the Revolution, sought to control the rebellious

Petrograd garrison. It had been the appearance of armed soldiers which had changed the disturbances of the workers in Petrograd from a street demonstration into a revolution. The soldiers from the training detachment of the Volinsky regiment which on March 11th had fired on the crowds, on the 12th, refused. Instead, they streamed into the streets and together with troops from the Preobrazhensky and Litovsky regiments, joined the workers in the Viborg district, whom they helped to secure arms, by breaking into the arsenals.¹⁶

The Soviet gladly embodied the wishes of the revolutionary and unsettled Petrograd garrison in its 'Order Number One', published March 15, 1917.¹⁷ This Order gave to the Petrograd Soviet, which was a private, non-official body, a veto over all orders issued by the military commission of the Duma, a public and official organ of government. It called for the election of regimental and battalion committees which were to control arms and ammunition. Military discipline, while a soldier was off-duty, was not required. The Order, which had been intended only for the garrison of the Petrograd Military District, was printed up in great numbers and distributed at the front. In response to its declaration, committees of soldiers' deputies sprang up in military units along the entire front, which took the supervision of all arms away from the officers. These newly formed committees looked to the Soviet rather than the Provisional Government for leadership as well as justification for their existence. The fact that officers were now responsible to the committee, and ultimately the Soviet, snapped the necessary disciplinary ties of the men to the officers.

Delegations from these committees poured into Petrograd to pay their respects to the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet, and to discover what was happening. Their arrival became so regular and insistent that their

reception became an important activity of the Soviet. These delegates probably constituted the more politically-conscious elements of the military units. When they arrived they were found by members of the Soviet to be victims of "habitual prejudice, artificially induced chauvinism, and the strongly corrosive spirit of bogus 'military honour'." However, after lectures and private conversations with members of the Soviet, "The delegations left completely different from what they had been upon arrival... A psychological if not ideological contact was always established."¹⁸ From that point on, even though the operation of the dialectic remained unclear to them, these soldiers knew that they no longer had to obey the officers, and in a certain sense, it would be wrong for them to do so.

The members of the Soviet, in their dealings with the soldiers, stressed two points. The first was that the officer was not to be trusted. The second point which the members of the Soviet tried to impress in the minds of the soldiers, was that now they were fighting for different reasons than they had been fighting for under the Tsarist government. Under the newly arrived liberal-socialist era, the soldier could expect land and freedom. This, it was pointed out, was worth defending. One of the major virtues of this new aim, the Soviet maintained, was that the soldiers no longer had to carry on offensive war, as the revolution absolved him from carrying out the imperialist designs of the Tsarist regime. The Soviet adopted the slogan 'No Annexations and No Indemnities', and 'Self-determination of Peoples', and 'Separate Peace'.

The Bolshevik Party, although some of its members were in the Soviet, remained at loggerheads with it on several important issues. Lenin considered the recognition of the Provisional Government to be treasonable to the cause of proletarian revolution. In his estimation, recognizing the Provisional Government fostered class harmony, which he considered an anachronism in Marxian politics. "All Power to the Soviets" became one of the primary slogans

of the Bolsheviks. In arguing their claim, they pointed to the fact that the Soviet had de facto control of the army and the 'revolutionary masses'. This de facto control, they argued, provided ample justification for the assumption of power by the Soviets. In any case, while the Bolsheviks remained in the minority, the Soviet continued to recognize the Provisional Government and refused to take power into its own hands.

A second area of disagreement between Bolsheviks and the majority of the Soviet concerned the war. The center and right parties of the Soviet found themselves in an awkward position. These parties, like the Bolsheviks, scoffed at the war aims of the Tsarist Government and the Allied cause. However, they felt that it was important to protect the Russian Revolution from the invading, imperialist German Armies. Their formulation of no annexations and no indemnities and self-determination of peoples allowed the Soviet to protect themselves from imperialist German invasions (in effect continuing the war) and at the same time salvaged their socialist self-respect by underlining their repudiation of what they considered to be the imperialist basis of World War I.

The Mensheviks and SR's could not accept Lenin's policy of turning the imperialist war into class war. They viewed this policy as forced and premature. They believed that the next revolution would automatically develop out of the economic and social milieu of the bourgeois epoch. Since this epoch had only begun in March of 1917, they felt Lenin's impatience was un-Marxian.

But Lenin also found himself in an awkward position. The Mensheviks and SR's were right in recognizing that Russia was not ripe for a 'proletarian' revolution. And yet Lenin had repeatedly enunciated his conviction that imperialist war ought to be turned into class war. Lenin solved this dilemma

by tactically ignoring his previous formulation. He substituted in its place the propaganda line of 'Immediate Peace'. Through this formulation he hoped to destroy the army as an effective instrument of control for non-Bolshevik parties and governments. By destroying the army he hoped to make more feasible the assumption of power by the Bolsheviks.

CHAPTER IV.

The Agitators

Starting in March and April, agitators from all parties of the Soviet besieged the troops at the front and at the rear. They came not only under their own means, but in army replacements sent from the rear. Those who arrived by their own means often had the approval of the government. One man was stopped by the Committee of the Twelfth Army even though he had a pass signed by the Minister of War, because he was going to agitate for 'Not a step in advance under any circumstances'.¹⁹ The influx of agitators must have been tremendous for in mid-June the military High Command on the Northern Front asked the Petrograd Soviet and the Provisional Government to counteract the Leninist agitators who had practically absorbed the Fifth Army.²⁰ Mensheviks, Socialist Revolutionaries, anyone would do so long as he was in favor of carrying on the war. The fact that the request was for additional agitators rather than for having the influx stopped would tend to corroborate the testimony of one general on the Northern Front, who claimed that agitators ruled the day. Morale rose and fell according to their exhortations, rather than the officers'.²¹

The position of the officers had been compromised from the very beginning. As army officers, they were trained to a highly developed sense of duty and thus even those who hailed the March Revolution hesitated to declare themselves

for it, as they considered themselves to be, and were in fact, officers in the Tsar's Army. This hesitation became in the eyes of the soldiers proof that all officers were against the revolution. General A.A. Brussilov, in his capacity as commander of the Southwest Front noted that "The officer at this period presented a pitiable spectacle. In this tornado of passions he lost his bearings and had no idea what to do. At extempore meetings he was beaten by any sort of speaker who had read a Socialist pamphlet or two and had the gift of the gab. He knew nothing of politics and was quite helpless. He could not possibly start any counter-propaganda, for no one would listen to him."²²

If the men refused to listen to the officers, it was not due to apathy. One of the most interesting developments of 1917 in the army was the growth of political interests on the part of huge numbers of soldiers. Many factors undoubtedly contributed to this development: the revolution in Petrograd, the inciting harangues of the agitators and propagandists, the momentous fact in itself that the Tsar was no more. All of these factors and more devolved upon the men who were sufficiently provoked to continually ask 'why?'. If the soldier sometimes acted as a child who has just learned how to ask 'why?', he again reverted to the role of the crafty mouzhik. From an eye-witness account:

"The soldiers shouted 'hurrah!' the band played louder, and the men prepared to leave; as they fell into line they asked puzzled questions.

'They talk of president and president, and who will be Tzar?' queried one.

"A student pushed a piece of paper towards him.

'Read this, it explains all about the republic.'

"The soldier marveled at the man's stupidity,

'I can't read!'"²³

In any event, if the mouzhik couldn't read, there was always someone there to explain it to him.

The non-Bolshevik Soviet agitators at the front and in the garrisons conducted propaganda in line with Soviet policy. They agitated for defensive war and for taking military control from the officers and placing it in the hands of the soldiers' committees. The Soviet agitators maintained that this was of prime importance as the officer was an untrustworthy creature who most likely opposed the Revolution and, if given a chance, would deprive the soldier of his new found freedom.

In explaining the relevance of defensive war both to the army and to the Revolution, it was pointed out that before the Revolution the soldier had been fighting an offensive war for the aggrandizement of the Tsar and his entourage. Since it had been the Tsar's rather than the Russian people's war, the Russian people really had had nothing to fight for. Even though they had suffered great sacrifices under the Tsar, they would only have been rewarded with continuing Tsarist oppression. But now, since the Revolution, everything was different, the troops now had a stake in the war: land and freedom. It was both their right and their duty to defend the Revolution from the imperialist German military machine.

When the Bolshevik Party came from underground following the March Revolution, it had no unified policy, no militant leadership and a weak and conflict-torn organization. Lenin was still in Switzerland. In mid-March the Bolshevik Party members, Kamenev and Stalin, arrived in Petrograd and took over the editorship of the Bolshevik newspaper Pravda. One can imagine Lenin's rage upon reading the first issues published under their auspices.

Alongside articles which equivocally, if somewhat sullenly, seemed to tolerate the Provisional Government, were articles which justified Russia's continued participation in the war! Needless to say, Lenin left Switzerland posthaste for Russia at the end of March. It was not until the end of April that he was able to unify the Party under his leadership. This event occurred at the All-Russian Bolshevik Conference, when resolutions embodying Lenin's Seven Theses Against War were passed.

But even though Lenin and his immediate supporters, during the first months of the revolution, had to devote the main part of their energies towards reorganizing the Bolshevik Party, they still found time to organize the basis for establishing relations with the army. According to the minutes of the first 'legal' meeting of the Bolshevik Party in Petrograd after the March Revolution, the urgent necessity was indicated "of organizing the soldiers, to provide them with connections, and to try to have influence over them with the help of agitators."²⁴

In order to carry out these tasks, the Bolshevik Party created a military organization within its ranks.²⁵ Much of the work of this military organization was led by M. M. Lashevich, an old Bolshevik, a soldier who had risen through the ranks and a popular orator. Not the least of his Bolshevik virtues was his organizational abilities. He is accredited with organizing the vigorous Bolshevik cells in many units of the Petrograd garrison. He became the leader of the Bolshevik faction in the Petrograd Soviet and later was a prominent and active member of the Military Revolutionary Committee of the Petrograd Soviet, which was the prime organ of the Bolshevik insurrection in October.²⁶

The military organization of the Party called for the creation of Bolshevik cells in all regiments in the garrisons and at the front, to con-

duct propaganda and organize the troops. On one of the first days of the Revolution, one of the three members of the Bureau of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, Shlyapnikov—an undeviating supporter Lenin—recalled the grounds on which he opposed the workers who wanted to expropriate arms from isolated bourgeoisie: "I decisively refused to search for arms at all and demanded that the soldiers should be drawn into the uprising, so as to get arms for all the workers. This was more difficult than to get a few dozen revolvers: but in this was the whole program of action."²⁷

Bolshevik agitation against the war and against the officers was apparent along all sections of the front. The troops were approached through three media: the printed word, the infiltration of committees, and agitator-provocateurs. The Bolsheviks printed papers such as Pravda, Soldatskaya Pravda, Okopnaya Pravda as well as numerous leaflets. Soldatskaya Pravda exhorted the soldiers to organize themselves into associations for distributing and selling newspapers. Instructions were given as to 'how to write in a newspaper'.²⁸

Apart from the newspapers, the military organization of the Bolshevik Party prepared and released a huge number of brochures under the specific name of 'Leaflets'. The 'Leaflets' were generally concerned with so-called 'current interest items', and were written in a very simple language.²⁹

Apparently there was enough Bolshevik literature to be passed around. A regiment in the far southwest which subscribed for 10 copies of Pravda received 40 additional copies free of charge.³⁰ By June, company commanders were reporting that their men were not interested in reading any papers but Pravda.³¹

The cells which the Bolsheviks attempted to set up in the army were

under the control of the party's military organization. An All-Russian Conference of Bolshevik Military Organizations was convened in June. It was estimated that 26,000 soldier-Bolsheviks were represented at this conference, by means of 43 front and 17 rear organizations. Their main task, the conferees were told, was to agitate against the imperialist war and instruct the soldier masses in the main ideas of revolutionary Marxism.³²

Members of the Bolshevik Military Organization attempted to infiltrate the soldiers' committee of all army units. By June some regiments openly acknowledged Lenin as their leader. The Bolshevik influence can be seen in resolutions passed by various military units. One such typical resolution was adopted at a general meeting of company committees. In it the soldiers expressed the usual demands for their deputies to join with the workers' and peasants' deputies in taking power into their own hands, and that they should not have to fight under agreement drawn up by Tsarist and other imperialistic governments of the Allies. However, this resolution deemed that the most important task for the army was the completion of its organization, i.e. democratization along Bolshevik lines, in order to keep it from counter-revolutionary elements, elements which would automatically take over if the army were to go on the offensive again.³³ This in effect called for the total annihilation of the officers. The emphasis on organization was a typically Leninist lesson.

Bolshevik propaganda was broken down into four particular emphases. The most important and all-inclusive point was the 'democratization' of the army. This involved the Bolshevikization of army leadership by making Bolsheviks the leaders of the committees. The second point was the killing of officers, who were pictured as unbending counter-revolutionaries and landlords interested only in restoring the worst aspects of the old regime, which included serfdom. The third point of Bolshevik propaganda centered around

fraternization. The idea was stressed that fraternization was a good thing as the German soldier was as much a dupe as the Russian, and that as poor, oppressed workers and peasants, they had more in common with the German soldiers than the oppressive, bourgeois government of Russia. Although Pravda was advocating fraternization by the end of March, it didn't become popular until after the collapse of the summer offensive.

The shrewddest and ultimately the most successful aspect of Bolshevik agitation among the soldiers concerned the land question. Bolshevik papers carried articles such as "The Peasant Revolutionary Movement", "Soldier and Peasant Masses and the Constituent Assembly", "Who Prevents the Peasants from Taking the Land", and "Cossacks and the Suppression of the Peasants".³⁴ The soldier-peasant at the front as well as the peasants in the villages were waiting for the Constituent Assembly to solve the land question by giving the land to the peasants, and as the convocation of the Assembly continued to be postponed, they became increasingly nervous. The Bolsheviks attempted to prove that the bourgeois Provisional Government would refuse to solve the land question to the satisfaction of the peasants and that the Provisional Government kept the war going only so that the soldiers would have to stay at the front and could not go home to solve the land question in their own way, i.e. confiscate it. For this reason, the Bolsheviks maintained, power must be put in the hands of the soldiers' Soviets.

It was this kind of reasoning which gave substance to the Bolshevik plea to refuse to fight. Those who fought were described as lackeys of the imperialist-bourgeoisie who were only out for material gains for themselves, which they would purchase with the blood of the common soldier. It was also pointed out that while the soldiers were sitting around rotting in the trenches, the boys back home were helping themselves to the landowners' land.

This realization undoubtedly spurred the peasant army's self-demobilization, which reached such large proportions by November. In fact by September uniformed men became increasingly apparent in the leadership of the agrarian disturbances in rural Russia.³⁵

CHAPTER V.

The Army Accepts the Bolsheviks

An intelligible picture of the interaction between Bolshevik agitation and the Russian Army between March and November of 1917, can be centered around the changes of attitude of the troops during this period. During March and April of 1917, the morale of the army improved and its interests in carrying on the war increased. This was primarily the result of two factors. The first was the improved material condition of military supply and transport. For the first time since the outbreak of World War I it had reached an adequate level. The second factor which contributed to the improved spirit of the army was the success of the February (March) Revolution. The Army, including both enlisted men and officers, had come to feel more and more that the Tsarist government through inefficiency and/or treason was bungling the conduct of the war. As far as the troops were concerned, the Revolution meant the defeat of corruption and negligence on the home front and heralded a new era, the era of land and freedom, which as far back as the troops could remember, was the stock-in-trade of the revolutionaries.

However, if the spirit of the troops can be said to have generally improved during the first two months following the March Revolution, a subtle change was developing at the same time within the ranks which did not bode well for the health of the army. This change manifested itself in the increasingly overt hostility of the men for their officers. Several factors contributed to this change. One was the hesitation of officers who were sympa-

thetic to the Revolution to come vigorously out in its favor. This failure bred distrust among the troops who zealously wished to preserve their new found 'freedom' from the oppression they experienced under the Tsar. A second factor was a deep and longstanding sense of frustration felt by the troops because of the war itself along with its mismanagement for which they had suffered. In the early days of the war, troops attributed their misfortunes to the inexorable workings of fate, unpleasant but unavoidable and therefore to be accepted. They then began to complain about the 'rear'. As the months turned into years, the troops asked time and time again, 'Why does the rear forget us?' Receiving no answer they began to attack the government and the Military High Command. The government was cursed for not adequately supplying the troops, the High Command was berated for conducting trench warfare when the ground was so frozen one could not drive a pitchfork in the soil, let alone dig a trench. As the war dragged on, the troops' frustrations were directed at objects more and more close at hand, till by 1917, the officers themselves came in the line of fire.

Socialist agitators attempted to develop this feeling of frustration into overt hostility. The more irresponsible of the agitators encouraged aggression against officers, and with the Bolsheviks it was a matter of Party policy. The growth of hostility against the officers had been given terrific impetus through Order Number One, which more or less legalized stripping the officers of their authority. At this point, however, it should be kept in mind that these changes in the attitude of the soldier pertained to the organization and administration of the army. The challenge of the officers' authority was not identified with any challenge of the urgency and desirability of continuing the war.

The army continued to support the war through August. The Petrograd

garrison supported the war through June. During these months, however, the concept of the war which the troops were willing to support, changed. This change can be traced to the agitation conducted by the non-Bolshevik elements in the Soviet. This agitation centered around the idea that offensive war was bad and defensive war was good. The term 'defensive war' was understood by the soldiers in its most literal sense. For instance, they would not counter-attack for defensive purposes, Counter-attack to better the position of the defending trenches was considered offensive war. The most the soldiers would do was to keep the Germans from coming any farther. When asked why he would not attack, the soldier would reply in the slogans of the non-Bolshevik parties in the Soviet. 'Since there were going to be no annexations and no indemnities there wasn't much point in advancing, and since there was to be self-determination of peoples, even if the Germans did advance a little, it would all be made right in the end.'

Nevertheless, the army knew and accepted the fact that it could not leave the trenches undefended against German advances. It vigorously denounced any suggestion to the contrary. In April, when the anti-war propaganda of the Bolsheviks became more and more insistent, they were more intensely attacked by the Provisional Government and a majority of the Soviet. The Petrograd garrison responded to these denunciations to the extent that it seemed to be shouting 'Arrest Lenin' and 'Down with the Bolsheviks' at every street corner.³⁶ Even the crew of the ever-radical Baltic Fleet, who had acted as Lenin's 'guard of honor' upon his return to Russia, passed a resolution which declared: "Having learned that Comrade Lenin came back to us in Russia with the consent of his Majesty the German Emperor and King of Prussia, we express our profound regret at our participation in his triumphal welcome to Petersburg.. If we had known by what paths he had returned to us, then instead of the

enthusiastic cries of 'Hurrah', exclamations of indignation would have resounded: Away with you, back to the country you passed through to us!"³⁷ On April 17th in Petrograd there was a tremendous demonstration of war wounded. Those who could not walk were carried. The slogans on their banners read: 'Our Wounds Demand Victory', 'War to the End', 'Total Annihilation of German Militarism'.³⁸

The lessons of this tremendous surge of hostility against Bolshevik anti-war propaganda was not lost upon Lenin. In a report on the political situation which he made at the All-Russian April (o.s.) Conference of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (Bolshevik)³⁹ Lenin pointed out that the great majority of peasants, or the petty-bourgeoisie as he called them, were defencists. He declared that the main task of the Bolshevik was to transform the elemental revulsion against war into a political, class conscious rejection of imperialist war. He understood that the troops felt they had something to fight for. But the Revolution which they wanted to protect, argued Lenin, was a bourgeois revolution which had the same imperialist basis as the Tsar's government. Thus, it was imperative to explain to the troops, that the only way to end war was for the proletarians and semi-proletarians, classes which were not interested in imperialism, to take over power. Taking over power was defined by two steps: The first was the assumption of state power by the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, and the second step was the confiscation of land by Soviets of Agricultural Workers.

Lenin stressed the importance to Bolshevik tactics of repudiating their former slogan of developing class war in a resolution of the Central Committee published two days before the April Conference.⁴⁰ During the April Conference, Lenin defended this change in slogan. He pointed out that the masses were genuine, honest defencists. Their defencism was the result of political ignorance. The masses did not understand that wars were waged by governments

in the interest of a class, and that as long as the bourgeoisie remained at the helm of the Provisional Government, the war would remain an imperialist war, no matter what 'defencist' proclamations the bourgeois-imperialist government and its Soviet supporters issued.

Thus the Bolshevik Party began to take shape as the party of peace. In order to make this acceptable to the 'defencist' masses, it was the duty of the Bolsheviks to show that a defencist war was impossible as long as the present bourgeois leaders remained in power, and that the establishment of a government truly representative of the masses could be accomplished without violence, by means of the Soviets taking over government from the bourgeoisie, the workers taking the factories from the manufacturers and the peasants taking the land from the landowners. This was the only basis on which the war could be equitably ended.

This assumption of power by organs of the masses was still not the civil or class war for which Lenin had previously argued. "We are for civil war, but for civil war waged by a class-conscious proletariat."⁴¹ Lenin knew that the majority of the masses was composed of peasants whose mentality was that of "petty-proprietors who cannot even conceive of Socialism."⁴² With such a mentality governing the majority of the masses, a government of Soviets could not institute Socialism; it could only preach Socialism and introduce certain basic economic reforms to which the peasants could not possibly object, such as establishing a state-controlled bank in each village.⁴³ This could hardly be construed as proletarian class war.

This newly formulated attack on 'defencism' appealed to the Petrograd garrison before it interested the army at the front. The garrison was composed almost entirely of reservists who simply did not want to be sent to the front. They claimed it was they who had made the Revolution and that they

had to stay and defend it from counter-revolution. When the front accepted this viewpoint, it was with serious reservations. One can understand the hostility of the front for the garrison when units which desperately needed replacements submitted requests for these replacements through their committees (which were duly-constituted arms of the Soviet) and were refused. If the garrison refused to send replacements there was nothing much the troops at the front could do about it but they angrily denied that the Petrograd garrison had any right to assume the role of spokesmen for the entire army. When, in June, it was discovered that the Bolsheviks were planning an armed demonstration for the end of June, using the Petrograd garrison, it was the Soviet delegates from the front who vigorously supported the protest against this demonstration which was made by the non-Bolshevik parties in the Soviet.⁴⁴

When the majority parties in the Soviet discovered the plans for the armed demonstration of the garrison, they sent delegations to all units of the garrison to talk against it. They were horrified to find that they were, for all practical purposes, out of touch with them. They found that some units had recently passed resolutions demanding the Bolshevik program of 'All Power to the Soviets'. The majority of the garrison was unaware that the majority of the Soviet opposed this slogan.⁴⁵

These Soviet delegations arrived too late. Even if they had been able to reestablish a measure of rapport with the garrison on the issue of 'All Power to the Soviets', they could not hope to come to an agreement on the issue of the war itself. Whereas the garrison was becoming increasingly disaffected with continuing the war, the Soviet leaders were becoming increasingly suspicious of their previous formulation of seeking a 'Separate Peace'. They became increasingly cognizant of the fact that if Russia concluded a separate

peace, this might enable the Germans to defeat France and England, which in turn would allow the Germans to renew their attack on Russia. For this reason, the Soviet leaders began to swing towards the idea of Russia's resuming the offensive in the war. As talk about an offensive became more and more prevalent in Petrograd, the garrison became more and more fearful of being sent to the front.

When the center and right parties in the Soviet began to see the logic of conducting offensive war, they provided the necessary framework for entering into a coalition with the democratic parties of the Provisional Government. The Socialist Revolutionary, A.F. Kerensky, took over the Ministry of War. Kerensky immediately set himself the task of restoring to the army the will and the capacity to conduct offensive war. His most difficult task was to reimpose a measure of discipline. Toward this end he modified the Declaration of the Rights of Soldiers (a declaration made by the Soviet in March which was composed in the same spirit as Order Number One). He gave commanders the right to punish disobedience using armed force if necessary, and the right of appointment and recall of officers of lower rank without consulting the army committees.⁴⁶ Needless to say, the Bolsheviks carried on ceaseless agitation against these two 'concessions'.

Kerensky also made innumerable trips to the front where he made impassioned speeches. Here are some examples of his exhortations: "You are the freest soldiers in the world. Must you not show the world that the system on which the army is now based is the best system?...Our army under the monarchy accomplished heroic deeds; will it be a flock of sheep under the republic?...I summon you forward, to the struggle for freedom, not to a feast, but to death. We, revolutionaries, have the right to death."⁴⁷ In spite of his enunciation of this peculiar 'right to death', Kerensky was generally well-received. Even though the wild enthusiasm which followed his speeches

disappeared after he left, the units he visited were somewhat improved.

Even though the more conservative army officers were scornful of his attempts to raise morale, (they contemptuously referred to him as the 'persuader-in-chief'),⁴⁸ the Ministry of War was so pleased with the improvement in the southern divisions along the Austro-Hungarian frontier, it decided to plan for an offensive in July. The plan for the offensive was as follows: local, small-scale engagements would be conducted in the north to keep the Germans occupied, while the full force of the offensive would be directed in the south against the Austro-Hungarian Army, whose morale had disintegrated more than the Russians'. This plan, however, was reported to the German General von Hindenburg by deserters, and he was able to send German troops to back up the Austrians.⁴⁹ Von Hindenburg was so worried over the offensive, that he felt compelled to withdraw six badly-needed divisions from the western front, and send them against the Russians.⁵⁰ The German reinforcements were able to hold the Russian offensive and even to initiate a counter-attack towards Tarnopol. The Russians, although unable to rally, did manage to withdraw, and so seriously did they damage the lines of communications, the German advance was stopped.⁵¹

The German High Command decided that now was the time to attack. They launched their offensive against the front in the vicinity of Riga, the most demoralized area of the entire Russian front. The utter collapse of the front of Riga caused profound panic in Petrograd. Recriminations for this collapse resounded from every side. The center socialist parties as well as all others politically to their right blamed the break-through at Riga and Tarnopol on the anti-war agitation of the Bolsheviks, while the Bolsheviks said that the forces of counter-revolution had deliberately opened the front to the Germans in hopes that they could crush the rising revolutionary tide in Russia. The Bolsheviks later pointed to the exceedingly impolitic remark of



Rodzianko that he would regard with pleasure Germans reimposing order on Petrograd.⁵²

The fact that the Kerensky Offensive was even possible demonstrates that through July the army was a long way from being controlled by the Bolsheviks or subscribing to its anti-war policy, even though the Petrograd garrison seems to have been persuaded by it during May. However, as early as May at the front, isolated instances of Bolshevik influence became apparent. Cries of 'Peace' which a month earlier had provoked violent denunciations, began to be received among a few units with signs of equanimity if not interest. Kerensky's trips to the front did not uniformly elicit good reactions. His visits were occasionally marred by instances of argument and resistance.⁵³ By the end of May, isolated military units solidly supported the Bolsheviks.

The July Offensive had a demoralizing effect on the troops. The bogey of German invincibility reasserted its head. Again cases of mass desertion and surrender began to be reported. Particularly along the northern front, troops loyal to the principle of defensive war would advance to new positions only to return the next day to their former positions of defense. A more dissolute condition manifested itself in Russian soldiers' going over to the German artillery and pointing out Russian artillery positions. On the other hand, Russian soldiers attacked their own artillerymen for firing.

During July and August, even though there was serious evidence of panic and disintegration, Russia's line of defence was still maintained. In Lenin's statement of why the street demonstrations of the July days were insufficient justification for initiating a Bolshevik coup, he said, "Before the Kornilov adventure, the army and the Provinces could and would have marched against Petrograd."⁵⁴ General Kornilov had succeeded General Brussilov as Commander-in-Chief at the end of July, and was generally regarded as one of the more

conservative personalities in the army. At the end of August, he organized a coup against Kerensky and the Provisional Government. The coup was thwarted without a shot being fired. The General Staff, which supported Kornilov, had seriously misjudged the spirit of the masses. They projected onto the masses their own antipathy for the Provisional Government and the Soviet in particular. They evinced no understanding whatsoever of the determination of the masses to protect the Revolution.

Kornilov had rallied his troops around the claim that the Bolsheviks were causing riots in Petrograd. This was not the case, however; for the first time the Bolsheviks joined whole-heartedly with other parties in the Soviet in order to fight against Kornilov. Soviet agitators went out to meet Kornilov's troops and pointed out that the disorder in Petrograd was not due to the Bolsheviks, but to Kornilov. It was Kornilov who was attempting to overthrow the 'new revolutionary order'. The agitators pointed out that Kerensky had brought freedom and hope to the soldier, but that Kornilov meant repression and the death penalty. The troops, by the time they had reached Petrograd no longer wanted to fight and Kornilov's coup fizzled out.

The failure of the Kornilov coup proved conclusively to every element in Russian society that the masses solidly supported the Soviet of Soldiers' and Workers' Deputies. Whereas the masses had risen to protect the Soviet, they remained relatively hostile to the Provisional Government. Actually, the Petrograd Soviet had never trusted the Provisional Government even while supporting it. The Soviet continually hinted about the potential counter-revolutionary leanings of its leaders. But while the Soviet continued to support the Provisional Government and cast aspersions on it from behind its back, the left members of the Soviet joined with the Bolsheviks in identifying the Provisional Government with Counter-Revolution.

The identification of anti-Bolshevik with counter-revolution took place

in the minds of the soldiers in September, following the Kornilov adventure, in the last part of August, As far as the troops' public opinion was concerned, the Kornilov adventure had come at the worst possible time. During March and April the troops' morale had increased due to their enthusiasm for the Revolution, and from May to the collapse of the summer offensive they were grimly resolved to protect that Revolution. The period from the collapse of the summer offensive up to the Kornilov adventure marked a low point in demoralization for the troops due to Russian losses at the front, the increasing tempo of agrarian disturbances in the country, and the failure of the government and the Soviets to solve the land question. The impact of Kornilov and Counter-Revolution on the troops in this demoralized condition was horrendous.

Throughout the revolution, the masses had joined with the Soviet in believing that the moderate elements of the Provisional Government were potential agents of counter-revolution. It was for this reason that they looked to the Soviet instead of the Provisional Government for leadership. The most important result of the Kornilov adventure was to change the attitude of the masses, including the soldiers, concerning the Provisional Government. Their leaders were no longer viewed as potential agents of counter-revolution; they had become actual agents of counter-revolution. The Soviet, by refusing to take power into its own hands, also became implicated as far as the masses were concerned. It was against this political background, compounded by increasing administrative and social chaos that the identification of anti-Bolshevik with counter-revolution took place in the mind of the troops.

On September 14th, the Petrograd Soviet passed a Bolshevik resolution by a majority of 279 to 115. It contained the following provisions: the Cadets and middle classes were to be excluded from power; a Democratic Republic was to be proclaimed; all landowners' land was to be immediately handed over

to committees of the peasants; industry was to be nationalized; all past treaties were declared null and void; the offer of a general peace was to be made immediately; at the front, the death penalty was abolished and absolute liberty of propaganda was permitted; the Duma and Council of Empire was dissolved and the Constituent Assembly was to be immediately convened.⁵⁵ Thus did the Petrograd Soviet express its approval of the Bolshevik program.

At this period, fear of counter-revolution consumed the Petrograd Soviet and on October 22nd, a Military Revolutionary Committee was created in order to deal with it. The resolution creating this body was proffered by a Menshevik. An 18 year old Left Socialist Revolutionary was appointed its chairman. The Bolsheviks gave the Committee their whole-hearted support, and in fact dominated it from its inception. Their military organization worked in unison with it.

On October 23rd, at a secret meeting of the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks, Lenin declared that the time for an insurrection had arrived; his plan was adopted. It was determined that the Military Revolutionary Committee should be used for leading the insurrection. The Military Revolutionary Committee set itself two tasks: to secure the cooperation of the garrison and to arm the workers. The first task was completed when the garrison passed a resolution which endorsed and offered its support to the Military Revolutionary Committee. Commissioners were appointed to all sections of the garrison including all stores of arms and munitions. The arming of the workers was effected when Trotsky, who was by this time Chairman of the Soviet and the Military Revolutionary Committee, issued an order to the arsenals that 5,000 rifles were to be given to the civilian Red Guard.⁵⁶ Thus were Bolshevik workers armed.

It was through the Soviet organ that the Bolsheviks organized and set in

motion masses of soldiers and workers. The Bolsheviks, with the help of the Soviet, rose from the position of 'traitors' to 'leaders' in the eyes of the soldiers. With their new status the Bolsheviks' anti-war policy became compelling as well as appealing. However, as late as October and November there was a sense of conflict still pervading the front. The army never accepted the logical conclusions of Bolshevik policy, that the front could be opened to the Germans. Still for many, the front ceased to be the issue that concerned them. The agrarian disturbances in the rear became all important. The soldiers remembered he was a peasant and went home to join in the confiscation of the landowners' lands. When doubts about leaving the front to the Germans entered his mind, he was reassured by the exhortations of the Bolshevik leaders in the Soviet who seemed to define 'Peace' as Bolsheviks being in power and having the will to bring it about. Those who remained at the front remained only to keep out the Germans. When the Bolshevik insurrection was completed, the troops at the front had no intention of marching against them. As far as the troops were concerned, the Bolshevik Revolution meant the legalization of peasants taking the land from the landowners, and the conclusion of peace with Germany. Their expectations were temporarily gratified by the Bolshevik declarations on Land and Peace, published in November immediately following the Bolshevik coup.

As can be seen, the Bolshevik Party with its peace propaganda, was the only party which provided the peasant-soldier with the justification for going home to get land. That there was no restraining authority left at the front was due to the breakdown of all military discipline which had been brought about and sanctioned by the Soviet agitators and Order Number One. The Soviet, in this respect, gave the Bolsheviks all the help they could want.

The Bolsheviks had to work much harder, however, to rid the army of its

patriotism. They were able to do this only by placing before the troops an issue of greater appeal: the land. That the agitation against war was slow in gaining a foothold is actually remarkable when one considers how ill-equipped and ill-armed the Russian Army actually was. An army which responded so consistently and devotedly for three years does not change in two months without substantial prodding. This prodding was provided by systematic Bolshevik agitation through the printed word and word of mouth, and was significantly helped by the obtuseness of the leaders of the Soviet who saw in Miliukov and Kerensky a greater threat of dictatorship than in Lenin.

FOOTNOTES

1. Nicholas N. Golovine, The Russian Army in the World War (New Haven, 1931) pp. 127-128.
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6. P. 217.
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9. Knox, I, p. 389.
10. Knox, II, pp. 551-552.
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20. P. 88.
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26. P. 216.
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28. Akhun and Petrov, p. 222.
29. P. 272.
30. Knox, II, p. 620.
31. "Bolshevization of the Front", p. 87.
32. Akhun and Petrov, pp. 252-253.
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37. P. 298.
38. P. 299.
39. V. I. Lenin, XXIV, pp. 198-213.
40. Pp. 172-174.
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42. P. 212.
43. P. 212.
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45. Pp. 89-90.
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56. Deutscher, p. 300.

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