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"THE ORIGINS OF THE SOVIET PRESS"

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I

THE PRE-REVOLUTIONARY PRESS

The Soviet press came into being in an historically unprecedented situation: it was created and protected by a one-party, revolutionary state. This fact essentially determined its character. Nonetheless it is evident that Bolshevik journalists were influenced by their prerevolutionary experiences. In those days the legal and illegal revolutionary papers were shaped not only by the goals and ideas of the party and of the struggles occurring within the movement itself, but also by the nature of contemporary Russian journalism.

During the last three or four decades of tsarism Russian publishing in general and journalism in particular developed remarkably quickly. The growth in both sheer size and also in quality and sophistication was impressive by any standards. In 1890 appeared 796 publications in the Russian empire. Ten years later, there were 1002 and in 1910, 2391.¹ Newspapers multiplied particularly rapidly. Their number between 1883 and 1913 grew from 80 to 1158.² Only the largest papers in the country in the 1880's appeared in 20,000 copies, but by the turn of the century there were several papers with circulations of over 100,000.³ Institutions of modern journalism, such as telegraph agencies, clubs and unions of journalists appeared in Russia for the first time.

The development of the press was a part of the process of the industrial transformation of the country and both a result and a precondition of the growth of educated public opinion.

In spite of this impressive growth, Russia remained backward according to Western European standards. A contemporary observer pointed out that while in Russia in 1899 there was one periodical published for every 167,000 inhabitants, in Germany there was one for every 8000, and in the State of Michigan one for every 2600.⁴ Russia had no Northcliffe to produce a mass paper for all inhabitants of the country. The newspaper distribution system remained elementary: most of the papers limited their distribution to the largest cities and even here a proper network was missing. In Kharkov, for example, there were only two newspaper vendors in 1903. In Moscow and in St. Petersburg papers were easily available in the centers of the towns, but the suburbs were not so well supplied. In 1902 papers could be bought from 227 vendors, kiosks and stores in Moscow.⁵

It is much harder to describe the nature of the prerevolutionary press than to show its quantitative growth. Both in intellectual sophistication and in political content the press was extremely heterogeneous. The difference between a paper aimed at the mass reader, such as Kopeika (Copeck), published between 1908-1917, and sold in hundreds of thousands of copies, and an organ catering to an educated audience, such as Rech' (Speech) published by the Kadets between 1906 and 1917, is noteworthy. Especially striking is the difference between newspapers published in the two capitals and the provincial papers, most of which constantly struggled for existence and were generally on a low intellectual level.

The political face of the press cannot be discussed without reference to censorship. This censorship not only determined the character of Russian journalism in general, but also influenced the future attitudes of the Bolsheviks, who operated in an environment where it was necessary to write in an aesopian language to struggle to evade the censor. The fact that Russia had only a very brief history of a free press presumably made it easier for the Bolsheviks to suppress it when they were in the position to do so.

Censorship is as old as articulate public opinion in Russia. The great reforms of the 1860's were accompanied by an amelioration of the harshness of censorship laws. The regulations of 1865, in use until 1905, were based on pre-censorship, from which certain categories were exempted. Books of a specified length had to be sent to the censors only after printing. Some newspapers and journals enjoyed the same privilege. The Ministry of the Interior, however, which had the power to make these exceptions, granted them only to the major press organs in Moscow and St. Petersburg.

The censorship was capricious, reactionary and silly on the one hand, and ineffective on the other. The Ministry of the Interior often sent out new instructions concerning subjects which the press could not discuss. Understandably, the situation became very complicated within a short time. V. M. Doroshevich, a well known journalist of the period, complained that his paper, Russkoe Slovo, (The Russian Word) had to hire a specialist in order to keep up with the over 13,000 circulars dealing with forbidden matters.⁶

Prohibitions dealt with the important issues of the day. The government forbade the mentioning of the famine in the 1890's, for example. (The Soviet government proved immensely more effective in enforcing a similar ban.) At the same time the government could not stop involving itself with trivia: it directed newspapers not to discuss matters which would cast aspersions on the honor of the wives of the Turkish Sultan.⁷

The government justified censorship by arguing that the simple people must be protected from subversive ideas. The consequence of this paternalistic attitude was that the government was far more vigilant in censoring material aimed at a mass audience.

It was easier to publish long and expensive books than cheap pamphlets. The ironic result was that writers padded their books, to make them more respectable looking. Marx' Capital could be published; the Communist Manifesto could not be--among other things, it was too short. For the same reasons of prophylactic protection provincial journalists suffered even more than their colleagues in the capitals. The Ministry of the Interior granted to only a handful of major reactionary papers freedom from pre-censorship. Provincial censors were zealous. On occasion they even forbade the publication of official government proclamations. Furthermore, journalists had to serve two masters: they had to satisfy both the censor and the local governor. They could not deal adequately with national and international news because of censorship (and lack of resources). At the same time they were harassed by the local administration, ever vigilant to protect itself from criticism.

Given these obstacles, the small readership, the lack of experienced and skilled journalists, the rapid development of the provincial press is all the more impressive. By the turn of the century almost all provincial cities had papers, and such cities as Odessa and Kiev had several. Some, but not all, of these papers received support from the local zemstvo.⁸ Many of the papers were hopelessly amateurish: for example we know of an incident when an editor simply combined two contradictory editorials into one⁹, arguing that some would like the first half and others the second. Undoubtedly, the country greatly benefitted from the work of these self-sacrificing half-intellectuals, the local journalists. They wanted to contribute and they did contribute to the education of their people, to the development of an articulate public opinion.

The 1905 revolution brought essential changes. The first change was a gradual disintegration of autocracy and with it the power of the censor. From January until the fall of 1905, it was possible to defy the censor increasingly openly. By October 1905 the censor was simply ignored in Moscow and St. Petersburg and its effectiveness was drastically limited in the provinces. For a few weeks illegal revolutionary papers were freely printed. Indeed, the only censorship which might have been said to exist during the fall of 1905, was exercised by the forces of the left. On occasion organized workers refused to print material which they considered reactionary.

Under these unpromising circumstances the new Premier, Sergei Witte, made his attempts at consolidation of which the press law, published on November 24, 1905, and modified on April 26, 1906, was a part. Although the law was promulgated as "temporary" it remained in effect until the revolution of 1917. Its main achievement was the abolition of preliminary censorship. The Ministry of the Interior could no longer forbid the discussion of specified subjects. Although new press organs were required to register, the Ministry no longer had the power to discriminate among them arbitrarily. In

theory, at least, censorship became a judicial rather than an administrative matter. How liberal the system was is shown by the fact that between 1912 and 1914 the Bolsheviks managed to publish a legal daily, Pravda.

This is not to say that censorship disappeared altogether. The publication of "subversive" material called for judicial and even administrative proceedings. Newspapers were closed down; editors were frequently jailed; and worst of all, from the point of view of the publisher, the offenders were frequently heavily fined. However, the papers quickly learned to operate in this environment: if they were closed down, they reopened under a new name; they hired dummy editors, who had no other task but on occasion to stay in jail for awhile; and they accumulated a fund for paying fines.¹⁰

Before the 1905 revolution, the interest of the government in affairs of the press had tended to be prophylactic in character: it wanted to prevent the spread of subversive ideas but had seldom made sustained efforts to get its point of view across to the Russian people. To the government any public concern with public affairs, unless specifically ordered by the tsar or his agents, was subversive. "Patriotic" Russians by definition did not involve themselves in politics.

The traumatic experiences of the 1905 revolution brought some slight changes in this attitude. For the first time since the days of Nicholas I, the government considered it necessary to spread pro-regime propaganda. It is not surprising in view of history and of the very half-heartedness of the affair, that the government's attempts were clumsy and ineffective. Officers, for example, who had been inculcated with contempt for "politics" were now instructed to educate their troops in the spirit of loyalty and to explain to them the "errors" in the program of the revolutionaries. Most of the officers simply ignored this order, and very few carried it out successfully.¹¹ In February 1906 Witte requested 10,000 rubles from the state budget for the publication of propaganda brochures, but Nicholas refused the request and said that the Ministry of the Interior should find the money from its allocation.¹² The government proceeded simply to subsidize the most reactionary segment of the press.

In spite of clumsy efforts at bribery and censorship, the overwhelming majority of the press during and after 1905 remained hostile to the existing political order. Grazhdanin (Citizen) (1882-1914) Russkoe znamia (Russian Banner) (1905-1917) and Zemshchina (The Land) (1909-1917) expressed the views of the extreme rightists.

Interestingly, even these papers did not refrain from attacking the government. By and large the journalistic efforts of the extremists failed; none of these papers attracted a mass audience. During

the World War the tsarist ministers became wiser. The Ministry of the Interior succeeded in bribing a "respectable" paper, Novoe-vremia, (New Times) published by A.S. Suvorin, one of the best known Russian publishers, which became increasingly conservative during this period. When the Provisional Government opened the archives of the Ministry of the Interior it came to light that this newspaper had received almost a million rubles.¹³

In the semi-constitutional system which was born in 1905, all the newly formed parties acquired their own papers. The limited freedom of the press reflected the limited extent of Russian constitutionalism. The most important paper of the moderate opposition was Russkoe slovo published by I.D. Sytin, which became a major and successful commercial enterprise. In 1916 it appeared in over 700,000 copies and had millions of rubles yearly in advertising revenues.¹⁴ The central organ of the Kadet party was Rech, which appeared in much smaller editions (approximately 40,000 copies during the war) but benefitted from the contribution of such important intellectual politicians as Miliukov, Struve Nabokov and Petrunkevich. Birzhevye vedomosti (The Stock Exchange News), not affiliated with any political group, also expressed a moderately liberal political point of view, in addition to commercial reports devoting its attention to general news.

The condition of the socialist press was far worse than that of the liberal. Between the revolutions the most important Menshevik paper was Luch (Ray) which appeared between 1912-1914 in approximately 10,000 copies daily. The Socialist Revolutionaries published Trudovoi golos (Workers' Voice). All the Socialist papers were harassed by the censors and had to change their titles several times in order to avoid suppression.

II

The Pre-Revolutionary Bolshevik Press

The history of Bolshevik journalism is inseparable from the history of the Party itself. The main tasks of the revolutionaries were agitation and organization and the press played a central role in both. Not merely the Party's efforts to win support, but also the internal struggles, twists and turns of programs and policies were reflected in both legal and illegal publications. Through a study of old newspapers one may reconstruct the history of the movement reasonably well.

All revolutionary socialist publications were basically similar. Socialist Revolutionaries, Mensheviks and Bolsheviks alike paid great attention to the press. They all had to operate in more or less similar circumstances, and, naturally, these circumstances produced similar results. Lenin stood out among his colleagues only by his unusually clear understanding of what newspapers could accomplish and therefore by his more self-conscious use of the press.

Lenin was an immensely practical man with a healthy common sense. In his writings he gave an impressive analysis of what a newspaper could do in helping the Party to organize and to spread its ideas among the people. In a short but important article published in 1901, "Where to Begin?" he argued that the most immediate task of the socialists was to establish a national newspaper. In the process of putting a newspaper together, the Party would develop. Similarly, the work of carrying out propaganda was an instrument of propaganda itself. His insight that propaganda and organization were the opposite sides of the same coin remained a major principle of Bolshevik policies even after the Revolution.

Soviet publicists made Lenin's sentence famous by quoting it endlessly:¹⁵ "A newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and a collective agitator, it is also a collective organizer." Lenin went on to explain:

The mere technical task of regularly supplying the newspaper with copy and of promoting regular distribution will necessitate a network of local agents of the united party, who will maintain constant contact with one another, know the general state of affairs, get accustomed to performing regularly their detailed functions in the all-Russian work and test their strength in the organization of various revolutionary actions.¹⁶

In his major and seminal work, published a year later, What is to be Done? Lenin returned to the same theme. It is characteristic of the down-to-earth quality of his thinking that in this study, in which he laid the theoretical foundations of Bolshevik ideology, he devoted an extraordinary amount of space to the mundane questions of organizing a single newspaper, which could give direction to the entire movement. He argued that putting out a newspaper would provide the party with those practical tasks around which the activists could organize. He rejected his critics' notions that it was not a newspaper which can organize a party, but vice versa . . . "17 and believed that a national newspaper would help the socialists to avoid the danger of falling into localism.¹⁸

Lenin's argument for the importance of an all-Russian socialist paper was not at all theoretical. His immediate practical concern was to strengthen the position of Iskra (Spark) within the socialist movement. Iskra, founded in 1900, had on its editorial board aside from Lenin, G. V. Plekhanov, Iu. O. Martov, P.B. Axelrod, A.N. Potresov and V.I. Zasulich. Iskra, the first national Marxist Russian paper did, indeed, play a crucial role in directing nascent Russian social democracy. The editorial board of Iskra formed the leadership of the Party, before the party was really established at its second congress in 1903.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that the history of the Bolshevik press begins with Iskra. Although, of course, Bolshevism did not yet exist, Lenin, who played a major role in publishing this paper, succeeded in putting his stamp on it. The paper was printed in a few thousand copies, sometimes as many as ten thousand.¹⁹ It moved its headquarters several times; first it was printed in Leipzig, then Munich, later in London, and finally in Geneva. The underground succeeded in smuggling the paper into Russia, where an embryonic network of agents distributed it among sympathetic workers and intellectuals. On occasion, the paper was reprinted within Russia on underground presses, thus enabling the socialists to increase its circulation.

Between 1900 and 1903, 52 issues of Iskra appeared and they played a crucial role in the Russian socialist movement. It was under its auspices that the Second Congress of the party took place in 1903. Ironically, the moment of its greatest influence was also the beginning of its collapse. The "unification congress" divided not merely Russian Social Democracy between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, but also the Iskra group, which never again worked together. The initial victory belonged to Lenin: at his insistence the Congress reduced the number of editors to three: Lenin, Plekhanov and Martov. However, within a short time the victory turned out to be hollow. Plekhanov, who has sided with Lenin in the crucial conflict, abandoned him. Martov refused to participate in the newly constituted editorial board. When Plekhanov decided to co-opt the previous editors, Lenin resigned. As a consequence, shortly after his important victories

in the unification congress, Lenin found himself not only in political isolation, but also for the first time in his foreign exile, without a newspaper of his own. Iskra passed into the hands of the Mensheviks and the 52nd issue came out under the editorship of Plekhanov. The paper existed until October, 1905, when the last, 102nd issue appeared.²⁰

A year passed before Lenin once again had a press organ of his own. Slowly in the course of 1904 he gathered his followers, and this group became the real beginning of the Bolshevik movement. In December 1904 the Leninists finally succeeded in putting out a newspaper, Vpered (Forward). This paper, also published in Geneva, was distributed in Russia by a network of socialist underground workers. When Lenin convened the third congress of the party--in fact the first congress of the Bolsheviks--in London, in April-May 1905, Vpered was superseded by the now official central organ of the party, Proletarii. Published in Geneva by more or less the same group which produced Vpered, it existed until November 1905, when Lenin finally returned to Russia.

As tsarist authority disintegrated during the revolutionary year of 1905, illegal publications gradually transformed themselves into legal and revolutionary newspapers. These socialist papers played a decisive role in coordinating the strike movement and other aspects of the revolutionary struggle; without them a modern revolution would have been unthinkable. The newspapers appeared in different parts of the enormous country. Some of them were ephemeral, only two or three issues appearing in connection with an immediate task. They often reprinted articles from other revolutionary papers published in the capitals. Since many of the socialists working in Russia had no clear understanding of the nature and extent of the Bolshevik-Menshevik split, it is often difficult to categorize newspapers as Menshevik or Bolshevik. Lenin's paper, Novaia zhizn' (New Life), appeared in St. Petersburg in November and December 1905, at the height of the revolutionary movement. Under the circumstances Novaia zhizn' can be considered the first legal Bolshevik newspaper. As the revolutionary tide ebbed, Witte's government succeeded in closing it down.

The defeat of the revolution did not mean a return to the pre-1905 situation as far as the press was concerned. After the most prominent leaders had once again emigrated, they continued their quarrels and the publications of their newspapers. But in Russia itself, the liberalized censorship laws enabled the Social Democrats and Socialist Revolutionaries to take advantage of the situation.

After 1905 there were three types of revolutionary publications. First, the central, theoretical organs, published abroad, which were smuggled into the country. Lenin continued to publish Proletarii in Geneva until 1909, for example. Second, underground publications printed in Russia were irregular. By the very nature

of the situation these publications appeared in those parts of the country where the revolutionary movement was strong, such as the Urals, the Caucasus, the Baltic cities and the capitals. Mensheviks and Bolsheviks often cooperated in printing them. Third, there were the legal publications, most of which were just as ephemeral as the illegal ones. After one or two issues the police would close them down. The severity of police persecution varied from month to month and from town to town. The way censorship operated after 1905, however, even when a paper was closed down and an issue confiscated, almost the entire issue would have been distributed before the time the police had time to act.

For example the Bolsheviks attempted to put out a legal paper, Zrenie (View), in Petersburg in 1907, at the time of the elections to the Second Duma. Only two issues appeared. Out of the 25,000 copies printed, the police succeeded in capturing 178 copies of the first issue and 60 of the second--the rest had already been distributed. As a result, Lenin's inflammatory articles were widely read.²¹

The first reasonably stable social democratic legal publication in Russia was Zvezda (Star) which appeared between December 1910 and May 1912. First it came out once a week; then twice; and ultimately three times a week. In its year-and-a-half existence 69 copies appeared, of which 30 were confiscated. Zvezda began as a cooperative project of the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, but gradually the Bolsheviks managed to take it over completely.²² On eight occasions Zvezda was subjected to fines and altogether the paper had to pay over 3,500 rubles, a heavy burden for the financially poor labor movement.²³ The publication of Zvezda, like Pravda a short while later, became a cat and mouse game between the editors and the police. When the editors foresaw that the content of an issue would lead to confiscation, they would make certain that all the copies were distributed before the police arrived.²⁴

What prevented the publication of a revolutionary daily was not so much tsarist censorship as lack of funds. Finally, in connection with a general strengthening of the workers' strike movement, the Bolsheviks succeeded in organizing a daily, Pravda, which appeared first on May 5, 1912 (NS). Published in St. Petersburg in 20-40 thousand copies, Pravda became the center of the Bolshevik movement. All the leading Bolsheviks who worked in St. Petersburg participated in its work. A worker, M.E. Egorov, became its "editor," whose task it was to sit in jail periodically. N.G. Poletaev, a deputy of the duma, who enjoyed parliamentary immunity, became the paper's publisher. In its two year history Pravda was closed down nine times: eight times it reopened under a new title.²⁵

The authorities observed strict rules in fighting the revolutionary press. They knew full well, of course, who the real editors were; and yet they were satisfied to jail a dummy. They knew that

the paper which reopened the day after the previous one was closed, in the same editorial offices, with the same subscribers, with the same collaborators would pursue the same policies. The revolutionaries did nothing to hide these facts. Seven times out of eight, they chose titles which included the word "Pravda" (Rabochaia pravda, Severnaia pravda, Pravda truda, Za pravdu, Proletarskaia pravda, Put' pravdy, Trudovaia pravda and Rabochii) and yet the government tolerated this charade.²⁵ The editors went out of their way to emphasize continuity. The word "Pravda" was always printed with the same type on the masthead. They knew that the government felt obliged to observe its own laws. To be sure, in order to avoid unnecessary trouble, the journalists often used an aesopian language. Instead of Central Committee, they would write "the leading group of Marxists" and instead of demanding nationalization and a democratic republic--demands which were forbidden--they would write: "the full and uncurtailed demands of the year 1905."²⁴ Out of the 646 issues which appeared in the course of two years, 190 were suppressed.²⁸

Considering that Lenin did not set foot in Russia during Pravda's pre-revolutionary existence, it is remarkable how closely he was involved in its work. In the course of two years he published 265 articles in it.²⁹ One of the reasons he settled in Cracow at this time was to be as close as possible to the Russian capital, thus reducing the time it took for the mail to arrive from Russia. When the Austrian police questioned him about his profession, he could answer not untruthfully that he was a "correspondent of the Russian democratic paper, Pravda."³⁰

Lenin was ever watchful for the ideological purity of the paper. In September 1912 the Mensheviks started to publish their own daily in Petersburg, Luch. The socialist Duma deputies, numbering six Bolsheviks and seven Mensheviks, had the understandable desire to unite the two fledgling socialist papers. Indeed, four of the Bolshevik deputies' names appeared on the masthead of Luch and all seven Menshevik deputies' names appeared in Pravda. Lenin was furious. He used all his considerable powers of persuasion to make the newspaper change its position.³¹ He constantly sent letters to the editorial board to encourage them to take a hostile position to Menshevism.³²

Because the editorial board was tainted by collaboration, Lenin brought about a reorganization. The Cracow Conference, meeting in January 1913 (NS), reorganized the editorial board and criticized its policies.³³ The new de facto editor of Pravda became Ia. M. Sverdlov, with whom Lenin was less dissatisfied. Lenin, however, was not an easy man to please. He continued to criticize "ideological deviations" and to write angry letters to the editorial board. On occasion, embarrassed by Lenin's uncompromising policies concerning other socialists, the board would dare to omit his articles, or would print them only after some delay.³⁴ Lenin would write more angry letters.

By contrast, the Bolshevik press in Moscow was much less well developed. A legal daily, Nash put' (Our Path), appeared only in August 1913, and existed for less than a month. When the police closed down the paper after only sixteen issues, the Bolsheviks called on the workers to strike. Perhaps because of this gesture, the police response was more severe than in Petersburg and most of the leadership of the paper was arrested. The Bolsheviks were not able to publish a daily of their own again before the war. In June 1914 they attempted to bring out a weekly Rabochii trud (Workers' Labor), but it was closed down by the increased severity of censorship created by the war.³⁵

The outbreak of the first world war marked the end of an epoch. On the one hand the socialist movement suffered a temporary eclipse. The drafting of workers--temporarily imbued with patriotic fervor--greatly weakened the strike movement and other revolutionary undertakings. On the other hand, under conditions of war and national emergency, the tsarist police stifled voices of socialist opposition with a new severity. Pravda was closed down just before the outbreak of the war, and there could be no question of reopening it. The arrest of major Bolshevik figures, including Duma deputies, made organization much more difficult. The Party was in effect once more in the situation which had existed before the 1905 revolution. The focal point of Lenin's journalistic interest became Sotsial-Demokrat, a newspaper which was published in Switzerland, where Lenin moved at the outbreak of the war. In Russia itself, a few underground presses worked in very difficult circumstances. One cannot escape the conclusion that this time tsarism was effective in suppressing revolutionary radicalism. In various parts of the country a newspaper would appear illegally, but it could publish no more than one or two issues. For example, when in January 1916 an illegal student group in Moscow printed on an underground press a newsheet entitled Listok pravdy (Truth Sheet), containing a single article, the Okhrana, the secret police, arrested the leaders, and very few copies appeared in the streets. It was the end of this journalistic venture.³⁶

The only legal publication in Russia at the time which expressed a Bolshevik point of view was Voprosy strakhovaniia, (Problems of Insurance) a weekly. This journal came into being before the war, as an outgrowth of a department of Pravda. It was suppressed, together with other Bolshevik publications, but was allowed to publish once again in March 1915.³⁷ To assure its survival, however, the journal had to be extremely careful not to provoke the authorities and to remain more or less limited to issues within its sphere of competence. It managed to survive all through the war.

The Bolsheviks have always maintained that their prerevolutionary press was of a new type. A cursory comparison of Pravda and Luch for the same period does not bear out such far-reaching claims. In fact, the two papers were remarkably similar in style and content.

Lenin instructed his followers to write simply, for a worker audience. This was sensible advice, but hardly a revolutionary insight. Indeed, one would have had to be obtuse to do otherwise. The Bolshevik journalists were skillful in their appeal to their audience, but not more so than their revolutionary competitors.

Lenin was keenly aware of the competition with the Mensheviks. He instructed his followers to try to outsell the Menshevik Luch, in every factory,³⁸ and indeed they succeeded in doing so. According to admittedly unreliable Soviet figures, the Menshevik paper sold between 9-12 thousand copies daily (compared to 20-40 thousand for Pravda).³⁹ This superiority, however, was probably achieved by other than journalistic means. The Bolsheviks had more money and by and large were better organized.

It is only after the conquest of power that one can talk about the Bolshevik press as qualitatively different from that of the opponents.

III.

1917

In March 1917 the Bolshevik Party had approximately 25,000 members. Party organizations were in disarray; Bolshevik influence even among the workers was minimal. By November the Party had 115,000 members, it dominated the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets, and had acquired at least the temporary support of a majority of the workers in the capitals. How large a role did the press play in this remarkable success? On the one hand it is clear that the Leninists were skilled propagandists, and on the other that the soldiers increasingly craved peace and that the peasants increasingly insistently demanded land. But was there a causal relationship? To what extent did the Bolsheviks owe their success to the essence of their program and to what extent to the skills of the propagandists?

Historians have tended to exaggerate the significance of the Bolshevik press in 1917. A close examination of the newspapers in that year reveals that the Bolsheviks emerged victoriously from the the political struggle not because of the strength and influence of their newspapers, but in spite of the fact that their enemies dominated the media. A crucial segment of the Russian people, on the basis of painful experience of war and revolution, came to hold opinions which the Bolsheviks already advocated. The liberal order, born of the March revolution, was no more able than the Tsarist regime to provide Russia with a stable government. The regime disintegrated by itself and the Bolsheviks were there to pick up the pieces. They did not disorganize the Army; they did not make the peasants rebellious; but they were ready to take advantage of both developments.

One of the first acts of the newly formed liberal government was to abolish on March 4th (OS) the Central Administration for Press Affairs, which, in effect, abolished all forms of censorship.⁴⁰ The government clarified the legal position of the press by a law of April 27th. This law explicitly declared the press to be free not merely from preliminary censorship, but also from administrative penalties. It merely required editors of new publications to register their product.⁴¹

The legal situation of the press changed considerably as a result of the confusion of the July days. The government, feeling threatened from the left, and attacked by the right for its "lack of firmness", decided to reimpose military censorship. The General

Staff had demanded even before the July demonstrations that some form of censorship be reinstituted.⁴² Now this request was granted. Bolshevik publications were closed down.⁴³ The Kerensky government's inability to prevent the publication of subversive materials resulted not from lack of legal remedies, but from its own internal weakness.

From the first moment of the democratic revolution Russia lived under dual power: the Provisional Government passed laws and carried the burden of responsibility; on the other hand, the Petrograd Soviet of Workers and Soldiers' Deputies enjoyed decisive power through its ability to call on the workers and soldiers to strike and demonstrate. Ironically, the commitment of this socialist organization to the principle of the freedom of the press was less unequivocal than that of the "bourgeois" government. Since the Soviet could call on the printers of a newspaper to strike, it was in the position to close down any paper it chose. On March 7th the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet carried out a passionate debate; the Right stood for unlimited freedom of the press and the Left and Center were determined to prevent the publication of papers which they considered reactionary. Although on this occasion the Left prevailed, within three days the Soviet had changed its position. Apparently the leaders of the Executive Committee realized that the extreme right for the time being posed no political threat.⁴⁴ The Moscow Soviet, to its credit, never considered censorship.⁴⁵

As a result of the lifting of censorship and even more as a result of the passionate politics of the country in 1917, the press flourished as never before. Understandably, the non-socialist papers continued to dominate: they had an established reputation and they possessed great financial strength, which enabled them to hire the most experienced journalists with the exception of the extreme right which withered away in the radically changed political climate. Almost every conceivable political point of view found a journalistic outlet.

Just as before the war, Kopeika (Kopeck), Malen'kaia gazeta (Little Gazette) and Russkoe slovo were the most popular papers, appearing in hundreds of thousands of copies. Appealing to the educated, papers such as Rech', Den' (Day) Novoe vremia, Birzhevye vedomosti, Utro Rossii (Russian Morning) also retained their readers. As Lenin pointed out, although Socialists got 75-80% of the votes in the municipal elections,⁴⁶ the combined circulation of their papers was less than 1/4 of the total.

The Socialist press could not compete in number of copies printed and in distribution with the "bourgeois" press, but it nonetheless experienced a period of remarkable growth. The non-Bolshevik socialists were publishing approximately 150 newspapers in the country by the end of 1917.⁴⁷ Considering that before the March Revolution the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Mensheviks were repressed as severely as the Bolsheviks and that at the time of the revolution they hardly possessed any newspapers at all, this

was a phenomenal development. Indeed, a weakness of the socialist press was that it reflected the fragmentation of socialist politics: every group published a paper of its own. The central paper of the Socialist Revolutionaries was Delo naroda (The People's Cause), but the party also published volia naroda (The People's Will), Trud (Labor), Narodnoe slovo (The People's Word) etc., each expressing a somewhat different point of view. The central paper of the Left Socialist Revolutionaries was Znamia truda (The Banner of Labor).

The Mensheviks, among other papers, published Edinstvo (Unity), edited by Plekhanov, and Rabochaia gazeta. Two other socialist papers deserve special attention. Izvestiia petrogradskogo soveta rabochich i soldatskikh deputatov, (or simply, Izvestiia) (News), as its title indicates, was the organ of the Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik majority of the Petrograd Soviet. The paper, with a circulation of 100,000, became a major force in the politics of the country. Although the paper was safely in the hands of moderate socialists, during the spring it sometimes published articles written by Bolsheviks, including Lenin. V.D. Bonch-Bruевич was on the editorial board until the middle of May, when he was removed.⁴⁸ (After November, Izvestiia fell into the hands of the Bolsheviks.) The other socialist paper deserving special attention was Novaia zhizn', not because of its large circulation but because of its high quality. The most important figures among its editors were Maxim Gorkii and N.N. Sukhanov. Novaia zhizn' expressed an internationalist, leftist Menshevik position in 1917. The series of articles "Untimely thoughts" published by Gorkii in this journal are among the most thoughtful commentaries on the revolution from a leftist perspective.⁴⁹

It is remarkable how well the organized socialist movement survived the period of war-time suppression. The Petrograd Soviet started to function simultaneously with the creation of the Provisional Government and immediately, on February 28 (OS), started to publish Izvestiia. The central organ of the Mensheviks, Rabochaia gazeta appeared first on March 7th, and the Socialist Revolutionary Delo naroda on March 15. However, among the socialist factions, the Bolsheviks were the quickest: the first issue of Pravda appeared on March 5.⁵⁰

Pravda was created as a joint venture between the Russian Bureau of the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks and the Petrograd Committee. There was considerable ideological difference between the two bodies at this point: the Petrograd Bolsheviks took a more friendly stance toward the newly formed Provisional Government. The first editorial board consisted of Kalinin, representing the Petrograd Committee and V.M. Molotov and K.S. Ereemeev of the Russian Bureau. It was some time before a suitable press could be found. The Bolsheviks, with the permission of the Petrograd Soviet, took over the printing establishment of Sel'skii vestnik, (Agricultural-Herald) which, before the revolution, had been the publication of the Ministry of Agriculture. The finances of the paper were tenuous to say the least. The editors had at their disposal the ridiculously

small sum of 100 rubles by way of working capital. Pravda did not pay for the use of the press, however, the printers gave their services, and the editors acquired paper on credit. The first issue appeared in 100,000 copies⁵² and it was distributed free.

The shifting political position of Pravda during the first weeks of the February revolution obviously reflected the ideological confusion of the Bolshevik leadership, which was caught off balance by the revolutionary events. In this early period the accident of personalities determined Party policy. Since the representatives of the Russian Bureau, Molotov, A.G. Shliapnikov and P.A. Zalutskii were the most prominent Bolshevik leaders in the capital, it was their political point of view which dominated Pravda. As a result during the first days of its existence, Pravda took an uncompromising position against the Provisional Government and denounced the war in terms similar to Lenin's. But the Bolshevik position abruptly changed only ten days after the appearance of the newspaper: M.K. Muranov, an ex-Bolshevik Duma deputy, Stalin and Kamenev returned from exile, and since they outranked the relatively junior leadership in Petrograd at the time of the revolution, they immediately took control of Pravda. These leaders' policy did not differ a great deal from the tactic advocated by the majority of the Petrograd Soviet: defensism, as far as the war was concerned, and conditional support of the Provisional Government. Naturally, the shift did not please all Bolsheviks. However, the moderates for the time being controlled the central organ of the Party, Pravda. Lenin was furious. It is reported that on his return to Russia on April 3rd, the first thing which he said to Kamenev, who came to meet him at the Finnish border was: "What is this that is being written in Pravda? We saw several issues and really cursed you out."⁵³ Lenin quickly took command of the newspaper, which from that point on became an exponent of his policies and an instrument in the struggle for his April Theses.

Lenin devoted a considerable portion of his time to Pravda. Between February and October he published 180 articles in it.⁵⁴ Pravda once again became a truly radical newspaper, expressing a point of view different from that of the other socialists and bitterly hostile to the Provisional Government and to the idea of continuing the war.

In March and April Pravda appeared in 80,000 copies daily.⁵⁵ The Bolsheviks considered this circulation inadequate, but did not have the means to expand it. The Party did not have its own printing press, which was a very great handicap. Furthermore, there was never enough money. The paper repeatedly turned to its readers for help. It initiated the first campaign on April 13, aiming to collect 75,000 rubles for buying a printing press and starting another daily, Rabochii i soldat (Worker and Soldier).⁵⁶ The readers responded generously and the Bolsheviks reached their goal, but it turned out that the money was not nearly enough and therefore it was necessary to start other campaigns.

The financial history of the Bolshevik party has never been satisfactorily clarified. It is clear that the Bolsheviks were poorer than their political enemies, in spite of the self-sacrificing contributions from a small group of enthusiastic followers. It is also evident that the Leninists received financial help from the enemies of their country, the Germans. This German money helped in financing the newspapers. But it would be wrong to overestimate the importance of foreign support. Possibly without it Pravda's circulation would have been somewhat less and some of the secondary publications would not have appeared, but the political fortunes of the revolutionaries would not have been fundamentally different.⁵⁷

Pravda was the flagship of the Bolshevik fleet of newspapers. Its special place followed from the role of Petrograd in the political life of the country. The leading figures of the Party worked in the capital and it was here that the Party was the strongest. It was only natural that the other Bolshevik papers which were organized in considerable numbers in the first months of the revolution carefully followed the line set by Pravda. Local papers reprinted a great deal of the material from the central organ of the Party. It was this way that Bolshevik ideas were disseminated in the country. Of the 80,000-100,000 daily copies of Pravda about one half were distributed in the capital and the rest sent to the front and to the provinces.⁵⁸ The distribution system in the capital worked reasonably well, but the material which was sent out of Petrograd often did not arrive, partly because of the general confusion and partly because of the hostility of the employees of the postal system and of the leadership of the Army. As a result, the direct influence of Pravda remained limited largely to the capital.

The party command, aware of this problem, aimed to help the provincial press. Pravda criticized the local newspapers, on occasion it sent experienced journalists to help in the work and it printed summaries of developments around the country based on the provincial Bolshevik press.⁵⁹

The second most important Bolshevik paper in the country was Sotsial-Demokrat, published by the Moscow organization. It first appeared on March 7th, which shows that the Moscow Bolsheviks were well organized and therefore quickly able to take advantage of the changed conditions. The local Bolsheviks occupied a private press to print their paper, and the Soviet sanctioned the occupation ex post facto. The editor of the paper was M.S. Ol'minskii, who frequently travelled between Petrograd and Moscow. Sotsial-Demokrat had an impressive circulation of 60,000,⁶⁰ despite the fact it was published under even more difficult conditions than Pravda. The greatest problem was a shortage of paper, which meant that on occasion Sotsial-Demokrat came out in reduced editions or could not appear at all.⁶¹ The printing facilities were very poor and there were no means to reproduce pictures or cartoons. The very existence of the paper was threatened by the lack of a suitable printing shop. The Party occupied the Levenson firm, which then

was obliged by the Moscow Soviet to do the printing job. But this firm obviously was unhappy about the arrangement and therefore sold out to the city-zemstvo union, which then was able to demand more money from the Bolsheviks. Interestingly, Moskovskie vedomosti (The Moscow News), an extreme rightist paper, was printed on the same presses, and in cases of conflict, the rightist paper had priority.⁶²

By the end of March, 1917, the Bolsheviks had papers in Kharkov, Kiev, Samara, Saratov, Kazan, Tbilisi, Reval and Riga. In April and May more papers appeared elsewhere and the network grew.⁶³ The Bolsheviks experienced the same problems everywhere: there was never enough paper, there was a shortage of money, they did not own presses and found it difficult to get the services of private firms.

To put the problems of the Bolsheviks in perspective, it is necessary to point out that the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries were not much better off: they, too, had no printing presses and had trouble buying enough paper. The advantage which they enjoyed over the Bolsheviks was the support of local Soviets, which, on occasion could help out. But the circulation of the socialist press remained far behind that of their "bourgeois" competitors.

Naturally, the Bolsheviks particularly wanted to penetrate the military. The Kronstadt Bolsheviks were the first to publish their own daily, Volna (Wave) on March 30th.⁶⁴ It soon became a source of strength for the Bolsheviks among the sailors of the Black Sea fleet. From April 15th in Petrograd Soldatskaia pravda appeared as an organ of the Military-Revolutionary Organization of the Petrograd Committee. In the middle of May the paper was taken over by the Military organization of the Central Committee.⁶⁵ It had a circulation of 50,000, of which about half went to the front. Later other front organizations succeeded in putting out Bolshevik oriented papers.

In spite of their efforts, the Bolsheviks were outgunned. For the approximately seven million soldiers of the army, it is unlikely that the Bolsheviks ever succeeded in distributing more than 100,000 copies daily. Even if we assume that each copy was read by several men, it is clear that the revolutionaries reached only a minority. The officers did everything within their power to prevent the circulation of subversive, anti-war literature. The military postal service frequently confiscated papers sent by the mail unit.⁶⁶ Although the officers never completely succeeded, they made the task of Bolshevik agitators difficult. Furthermore, the Bolsheviks faced stiff competition. In May and June there were approximately 150 Soviet papers supporting the war and the Provisional Government.⁶⁷ In June, the government set up a special committee on the military press, under E.K. Breshko-Breshkovskaia, which had the task of improving the morale of the soldiers. The socialists did not lack skillful agitators, who knew how to address an audience of soldiers, workers or peasants. No amount of propaganda effort, however, could overcome the ever increasing distaste of the soldiers for the war. The

soldiers came over to the Bolsheviks' side in spite of the relative weakness of their propaganda.

The Bolsheviks were also conspicuously unsuccessful in spreading party literature among the peasants. The leadership, above all Lenin, was well aware of the importance of winning peasant support; however, given wide-spread illiteracy, and the disrupted communications, the obstacles were formidable. The 6th congress of the party, in July 1917, recognized the weakness of propaganda efforts among the peasantry and called for increased work on this front. Only in October, however, did the Moscow and Petrograd organizations start to publish papers designed specifically for a peasant audience. The Moscow paper, Derevenskaia pravda, (Rural Pravda) (which had on its masthead "Proletarians of the World Unite") came out only three times a week and had a circulation of 20,000.⁶⁸ Derevenskaia bednota (Rural Poor, published in Petrograd had a somewhat larger circulation. It is self-evident that the few copies which did reach the peasants of a paper which existed only for a few days before the Bolshevik revolution could not possibly have measurable political impact. The peasants wanted to take landlord property not because the Bolsheviks persuaded them to do so.

The violent demonstrations which occurred in the beginning of July in Petrograd changed the political atmosphere in the country. It was increasingly clear that the Provisional Government was losing control over the situation. Whether or not the Bolsheviks were responsible for the demonstrations, their political opponents took advantage of their failures and initiated a new series of attacks on them. For a short time it seemed that the Bolsheviks would suffer a political eclipse. This did not happen, largely because the Provisional Government could not provide the country with stable government. The government could not recreate the political consensus which had existed in February for a short time. When, a few weeks later, the right, in the form of the Kornilov mutiny, attempted to change the status quo, it was the left which benefitted from the failure. Counterrevolution once again seemed to be a more immediate danger than leftist extremism.

From early July political struggle became more violent. From the very beginning of the revolution the Bolshevik press had suffered more than just criticism of its ideas. On May 12th for example, unidentified elements burned down the editorial offices of Soldatskaia pravda.⁶⁹ The Bolshevik press also suffered from petty harassment. In Moscow, for example, newspaper boys were allowed to travel free of charge on streetcars. But the streetcar workers union, which was controlled by the Socialist Revolutionaries, on occasion expelled the newsboys trying to sell Sotsial-Demokrat.⁷⁰ After the failure of the July days harassment took a much more radical form.

First of all, the Bolsheviks were subjected to a passionate press campaign. Almost the entire press was united against them, from the socialist Edinstvo to the rightist Zhivoe slovo (Living Word). The most hostile accused Lenin of being a German agent. Others maintained that the Bolsheviks by encouraging demonstrations and disorder played into the hands of the enemies of their country.⁷¹ (The facts are that although the actual charges were false, the Bolsheviks did receive support from Germany. It is also true that this support did not influence their policies in any way. Nevertheless German and Bolshevik interests coincided, and by accepting support from the enemies of Russia in a time of war, the Bolsheviks were technically traitors.)

The press campaign was effective. In July 1917 a political party could still be hurt by being described as a German tool. The virulence and success of this campaign obviously had a considerable impact on Lenin. Without doubt it contributed to his decision, taken a short time later, that all hostile papers must be closed down after the victory of the Bolshevik revolution. The enemy proved that in a struggle of words it could deal effective blows.

The attack was not limited to a press campaign. At 6 o'clock in the morning of July 5 a detachment of Cossacks and military school students (junkers) appeared at the editorial offices of Pravda, disarmed the guard, arrested the Bolsheviks who were there and destroyed the offices.⁷² On the following day a hostile crowd destroyed the press on which both Pravda and Soldatskaia pravda had been printed. The loss was approximately 150,000 rubles, which was a considerable blow to the Party.⁷³

The government, under the pressure of events, decided to close down subversive papers. It was through this order for the reimposition of military censorship that Pravda and Okopnaia pravda (French Pravda) were closed officially on July 15th. These repressive moves put the Bolsheviks in a position somewhat similar to that which prevailed before 1914. Once again they were forced to change the name of their paper. In the intervening period Sotsial-Demokrat became the central paper of the Party which was distributed in the capital. Rabochii i soldat, the successor of Pravda, reappeared in Petrograd only on July 23, with a circulation of 20,000. The circulation figures gradually increased, but it is unlikely that it ever again reached the pre-July level. Anti-Bolshevik measures were taken elsewhere in the country also. The army and navy command was especially anxious to take advantage of the opportunity to close down papers which they had long considered subversive. At least temporarily, the Bolsheviks suffered a serious set-back. Eight papers were closed down.

In this period of repression the Bolsheviks returned to their old tactic. When, on August 10th the government closed down Rabochii i soldat, the Bolsheviks, almost immediately brought out Proletarii.

This paper existed for two weeks and on August 24th it was superseded by Rabochii, which lasted for nine days and was succeeded in turn by Rababochii put'.⁷⁹ At the end of August, the circulation of the central Bolshevik paper was only 50,000.⁷⁵

The new revolutionary wave and general turn to the left, which followed the Kornilov mutiny, were accompanied by a growth of the revolutionary press. Circulation figures once again started to climb, and Bolshevik organizations in various parts of the country began publishing newspapers. By the time of the October revolution the party had 75 publications, of which 25 were dailies.⁷⁶ It is estimated that the combined circulation of these publications was 600,000 daily.

Only to a very limited extent is it possible to correlate Bolshevik strength and success with the circulation of their newspapers. It is true that following the July days, which was a period of weakness for the party, distribution figures declined and as the party gained strength, the number of publications started to climb again. It is further correct to say that the Bolsheviks were strongest in the cities where their papers had the best distribution. However it is much more difficult to establish a causal relationship. It seems evident that Pravda and other papers contributed to the strength of the party in the cities; it is equally possible to argue that Pravda was circulated among the workers, precisely because the Bolsheviks were strongest here. The great change in the mood of the army in the course of 1917 was not accompanied by a corresponding spread of Bolshevik publications among the soldiers. The change occurred for reasons independent of the revolutionaries, who were simply there to take advantage of it.

How are we to evaluate the effectiveness of Bolshevik propaganda efforts through the use of the press? The Bolsheviks well understood the significance of getting across their political message and did everything in their power to win over the uncommitted. They showed considerable skill in printing and distributing their papers. It would be an exaggeration, however, to maintain that the Bolsheviks introduced a new element into the art of persuasion. Lenin and his colleagues did not disdain demagoguery. To cite one example: in the fall of 1917 the Bolsheviks maintained that the Kerensky government planned to give Petrograd to the Germans in order to undermine the strength of the revolutionaries. But in the heat of the battle the enemies of the Bolsheviks also did not eschew such demagoguery. It is hard to accept that anti-Bolshevik journalists in July truly believed that Lenin got his instructions in Berlin.

We must attribute the collapse of the Provisional Government to causes other than the skill of Bolshevik propagandists.

The Suppression of the Non-Bolshevik Press

The conquest of power by the Bolsheviks in October was a turning point in the history of the Bolshevik press. It is readily understandable that Bolshevik newspapers, once relieved of the pressure of competition, developed characteristics which were unique at the time. The decisive development was the immediate suppression of the free press.

Ideologically Lenin was prepared for this crucial move. It is not that he had advocated censorship before. The Bolsheviks, as a revolutionary underground party, had to battle censorship and it was natural that in their writings the revolutionaries should denounce tsarism for the limitations on the freedom of the press. Nor did Lenin advocate the institution of censorship after the victory of the socialist revolution. Neither Lenin nor anyone else ever envisaged the circumstances in which the Bolsheviks would emerge victorious. The revolutionaries' tacit assumption was that the revolution would be carried out by the great majority of the people and consequently the question of repression of ideas simply would not arise. However, it is impossible to consider Lenin a liberal. He placed little value on "formal" freedoms, such as freedom of the press, and it was clear from his writing and actions that he would not hesitate to take steps, however brutal, when he felt the success of his movement was at stake.

As we consider the matter retrospectively, the first warning signal was contained in his major work, What is to be Done? After his famous denunciation of spontaneity, Lenin wrote:

Since there can be no talk of an independent ideology formulated by the working masses themselves in the process of their movement, the only choice is--either bourgeois or socialist ideology. There is no middle course (for mankind has not created a "third" ideology, and, moreover, in a society torn by class antagonisms there can be never be a non-class or an above - class ideology) Hence, to belittle the socialist ideology in any way, to turn aside from it in the slightest degree means to strengthen bourgeois ideology. There is much talk of spontaneity. But the spontaneous development of the working-class movement leads to its subordination to bourgeois ideology,...⁷⁷

A few paragraphs later he went on:

But why, the reader will ask, does does the spontaneous movement, the movement along the line of least resistance, lead

to the domination of bourgeois ideology? For the simple reason that bourgeois ideology is far older in origin than socialist ideology, that is more fully developed, and that it has at its disposal immeasurably more means of dissemination.⁷⁸

It is a peculiar notion that bourgeois ideology is more effective because it is older, and it is somewhat surprising to find Lenin, the defender of Marxist orthodoxy, arguing that socialism was insufficiently well developed, but he was unquestionably correct in maintaining that the bourgeoisie possessed far better means for spreading its ideas. Lenin would return to this point again and again, and it ultimately came to be a justification for censorship. But the main significance of these passages is in showing that even in this early period Lenin did not accept the principle that one fights ideas with ideas and that he did not trust the workers to arrive at the "correct" conclusions if two sides in a debate were presented. Although perhaps it would be an exaggeration to say that the ideas advanced in What is to be Done? implied approval of censorship, there is certainly nothing surprising in finding its author attacking freedom of the press almost two decades later.

It was during the 1905 revolution that Lenin first explicitly discussed freedom of the press. His important article, "Party organization and Party literature" appeared in November 1905. The issue of freedom of the press arose because of the destruction of the machinery of tsarist censorship. Lenin argued that legal literature should be party literature and that the literature of the proletariat should be under the control of the organization of the workers, the Russian Social Democratic Workers Party. Publishing houses, book-stores and libraries should be controlled by parties. Literature should be an instrument in class struggle.⁷⁹ To those who objected that such developments would result in control by the masses of literary creativity, Lenin responded by saying: first, that while individuals have the right to say anything they desire, organizations have the right to exclude those who do not agree with their fundamental principles; second, talk about absolute freedom of the press is hypocrisy. In bourgeois society the writer depends on those who finance him.

Then Lenin went on to say that the purpose of unmasking the hypocrisy of the advocates of freedom of expression was not to create a literature independent of classes, which is impossible in a class society. His purpose was to contrast bourgeois literature with socialist literature which was free, being explicitly connected with the interests of the proletariat.⁸⁰

In 1905 Lenin did not foresee that his Party soon would be in a position to suppress the bourgeois opposition. He was preparing for a period in which the workers would struggle against the bourgeoisie and began to organize for a socialist revolution. Under the circumstances suppressing non-socialist papers was not an issue, because it was not a realistic possibility. Once again, however,

Lenin made it clear how little regard he had for the "bourgeois" notion of free expression. When discussing the freedom of the press he failed to draw a sharp line between literature and journalism which concerned everyday political struggle. Present advocates of artistic freedom in the Soviet Union cannot find much encouragement in this article.

The victory of the February revolution made freedom of the press a practical issue. The Bolsheviks supported the efforts of the Petrograd Soviet to close down reactionary monarchist papers. Lenin had only scorn for the March 10th decision of the Soviet (?) _____ which reversed itself and allowed papers to appear without previous permission.

The traumatic events in early July in Petrograd and the new opportunities presented by the failure of the Kornilov mutiny changed Lenin's tactics in the revolutionary struggle in general and his attitude to the press in particular. In his article "How to Assure the Success of the Constituent Assembly?" published in the central Bolshevik paper on September 15th, he once again and even more bitterly attacked the notion of freedom of the press.

The capitalists (and following them either because of misunderstanding or because of inertness many SRs and Mensheviks) call freedom of the press that situation in which censorship is abolished and all parties freely publish any paper they please. In reality this is not freedom of the press but freedom for the rich, for the bourgeoisie to mislead the oppressed and exploited masses.⁸⁶

How did Lenin propose to remedy this situation? He suggested that the Soviets declare a monopoly on printing advertisements. In his opinion this simple move would undermine the financial strength of the large bourgeois papers on the one hand and strengthen the socialist publications on the other. That he attributed great significance to this tactical move is evident from the fact that after taking power the young Soviet state declared such a monopoly.

Lenin went further. He realized that in the short run what mattered most was the availability of paper and printing facilities. Therefore he suggested the expropriation of all paper and all printing establishments. Then he would have them distributed according to these principles: (1) for the use of the state, (in the form of the Soviets) for the benefit of the great majority of the people, the poor; (2) for the major political parties, which would receive allocations according to the number of votes they had received in the two capitals; (3) for other political parties; and (4) for any group of citizens whose organization had a certain number of members or was able to collect a given number of signatures.

This article shows that Lenin in September 1917 did not yet envisage a one-party regime in which only a single voice could be heard. Although Lenin stacked the deck--after all why should paper

be distributed according to votes in the capitals, rather than in the country as a whole?--his utopian suggestions would in fact have enabled the people to hear a multiplicity of views. This was not the policy which the Bolsheviks followed after they seized power.

Simultaneously, in another article, Lenin advocated closing down the major bourgeois papers such as Rech' and Russkoe slovo.⁸² He did not make clear how his two sets of suggestions could be reconciled. After all the Kadets did have substantial voting strength in Petrograd.

Lenin throughout the years was remarkably consistent concerning the freedom of the press. It is true that in the fall of 1917 he did not renew his call for party-mindedness, as developed in his article "Party Organization and Party Literature," but the reason was not a newly found liberalism. His article "How to Assure the Success of Constituent Assembly?", was addressed to the socialists in the Petrograd Soviet. It is unlikely that Lenin expected them to adopt his ideas, but he certainly hoped to score debating points. Clearly, to advocate party control over literature in September 1917 would not have helped in the immediate political task, the conquest of power.

On October 25th the Bolsheviks struck, seizing the Winter Palace, the ministries, post and telegraph buildings, and the printing press of Russkaia volia (Russian Liberty) for immediate use. The next day the Military Revolutionary Committee issued a resolution, temporarily forbidding the publication of bourgeois papers and counterrevolutionary proclamations, and ordering that the orders of the Military Revolutionary Committee be printed.⁸³

On taking power, the Military Revolutionary Committee at once named a commissar for press matters. The first person to hold this office in Petrograd was a Bolshevik printer, N.I. Derbyshev. From the middle of November this post was held by A.F. Minkin, who reported directly to the Council of People's Commissars (Sovnarkom). First in Petrograd in December, then in other major cities, the local Soviets formed press departments.⁸⁴

In the first two days of its existence the new regime attempted to close down hostile newspapers. Since all the major papers took a negative attitude toward what they regarded as a coup d'etat and many of them published or intended to publish Kerensky's last manifesto the Bolsheviks faced a very difficult task. The Military Revolutionary Committee sent soldiers to occupy the major newspapers of the country. "Bourgeois" and "socialist" papers suffered alike. The MRC attempted to close down twenty newspapers. However, at a time of great confusion the new authorities did not yet have the power to enforce their decisions even in Petrograd, and some papers continued to be printed and distributed.⁸⁵

It is not necessary to search for ideological reasons for preventing the publication of hostile declarations and manifestos. It is perfectly understandable that during this period of transition extraordinary measures had to be taken. Another and far more important question was what attitude the new authorities would take toward freedom of expression, once their rule was established.

On October 27th Sovnarkom published its decree on the press. This decree, after repeating Lenin's views on the bourgeois notion of the free press, gave the right to the Sovnarkom to close down newspapers which advocated resistance to the new authorities or attempted to "sow disorder by the publication of clearly slanderous misstatements of facts." The last paragraph asserted that the decree was temporary and after the return of normal order complete freedom of the press would be assured.⁸⁶

The press decree was one of the most important acts of the new regime. It did as much to define the nature of the Bolshevik order as the better-known peace and land decrees. The debate which erupted on November 4th in the Executive Committee of the Soviet by implication went further than concerns over press freedom. The issue was what kind of regime would follow the revolution? It is self-evident that neither Lenin nor anyone else foresaw the circumstances in which the revolution would take place or what the postrevolutionary order would be. The Bolshevik leaders' response to the immediate political problems presented by the confusion created through the revolution was determined by the ideas and character of the individuals involved. Further, these very first acts of the regime, played a disproportionate role in determining the future.

First, in the aftermath of October 25th, it was unclear whether the regime would survive even for a few days. It was still quite possible that the deposed Premier, Kerensky, might reorganize his forces, or, that the leaders of the army, with or without Kerensky, might persuade their soldiers to remove the newly installed revolutionaries. Second, it was unclear that the first, exclusively Bolshevik Council of Commissars could retain power, or that the Bolsheviks would accept a compromise and bring Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks into the new government. The majority of the supporters of the October rising hoped for a regime based on more than the Bolshevik party alone. The idea of a coalition was also attractive to a substantial part of the party leadership. It was demanded in most forceful terms by such an organization as the trade union of railroad workers, who possessed considerable political power through their ability to call their members to strike. That the coalition did not come into being was the result of Lenin's and Trotskii's single-mindedness, political skill and vision, and of the ineptness of the moderate socialists, who did not appreciate the true weakness of their position.

The question of coalition government was so important that because of it such major figures of Bolshevism (as L.B. Kamenev, G.E. Zinoviev, A.I. Rykov, V.P. Nogin, and V.P. Miliutin) resigned, and this vital matter soon became to be connected with freedom of the press, an issue of even greater appeal than that of coalition. Furthermore, it was obviously not possible to want simultaneously to suppress the publications of moderate socialists and to induce them to participate in the government. It was fitting that the first crucial and bitter debate within the Soviet leadership after the conquest of power concerned free expression. Those for whom free expression was a value in itself lost in the political struggle.

The Central Executive Committee of the Congress of Soviets (CEC) had 67 Bolshevik, 29 Left SR and 20 other socialist members.⁸⁷ When the Sovnarkom issued its decree on the press, the CEC did not object. The revolutionaries understood that the exceptional circumstances necessitated exceptional measures. Ten days later, however, when the issue was thoroughly discussed, circumstances had changed. The question now became what kind of system would the revolution create? The dispute was remarkable not because of the profundity of the views expressed but because the two points of view, both expressed with great passion, represented real and irreconcilable differences. Rarely did the basic differences surface with such clarity. This was the first time they could do so.

Those who argued against repression based their case on the argument that the Revolution was fought for the liberation of mankind and that goal could not, even temporarily, be compromised. They argued that if the revolutionaries really represented the masses they had nothing to fear from the bourgeois press, and that if they did not, the revolution did not deserve to survive.

B.F. Malkin, a Left SR, the editor of Izvestia, said:

We firmly repudiate the notion that socialism can be introduced by armed force. In our view socialism is a struggle not merely for material advantages but for supreme human moral values. The revolution's appeal lies in the fact that we are striving not just to fill our hungry bellies, but for a higher truth, the liberation of the individual. We shall win not by closing down bourgeois newspapers but because our programme and tactics express the interests of the broad toiling masses, because we can build up a solid coalition of soldiers, workers, and peasants.⁸⁸

On another occasion he said to his opponent: "You are dishonouring the socialist movement by depriving it of its moral force."⁸⁹

V.A. Karelin, another Left SR, argued in terms of political expediency. In his opinion suppression of views would only make those

more attractive. Prominent Bolsheviks, such as Iu. Larin and D.B. Riazanov also spoke up in defense of freedom of expression.

The Leninists, by contrast, were willing to subordinate all values to the immediate interests of the Revolution. In their position one can sense a certain ambivalence. They defended suppression by pointing to immediate and presumably temporary needs, but at the same time they made it clear that in case they had little respect for "formal" and "bourgeois" notions of freedom.

V.A. Avanesov said:

We defend freedom of the press, but this concept must be divorced from old petty bourgeois or bourgeois notions of liberty. If the the new government has had the strength to abolish private landed property, thereby infringing the rights of the landlords, it would be ridiculous for Soviet power to stand up for antiquated notions about the liberty of the press.

His resolution included these sentences:

The restoration of so-called "freedom of the press" i.e., the return of the printing presses and newsprint to the capitalists, poisoners of the people's consciousness, would be an impermissible capitulation to the will of capital, a surrender of one of the most important strongpoints of the workers' and peasants' revolution, and thus indubitably counterrevolutionary.⁹⁰

In his speech, Trotskii distinguished between the existing circumstances and a more distant future. For the moment, he saw no problem: "During the civil war it is legitimate to suppress newspapers that support the other side."⁹¹ As far as the future was concerned he promised a new regime in press matters, without specifying its character. All he had to say about it was that press matters would be in the hands of Soviet power.

Lenin based his argument both on expediency and on principles. He put it picturesquely: "If we want to progress toward social revolution, we cannot allow the addition of bombs of lies to the bombs of Kaledin."⁹² He went so far as to say that allowing "bourgeois" papers to exist was the same as ceasing to be socialists.

The Leninist position prevailed. Iu. Larin's resolution which would have repealed Lenin's press decree was defeated by a vote of 22 to 31 and Avanesov's resolution was adopted by a vote of 34 to 24 (and one abstention).⁹³ It included these sentences:

. . . the CEC repudiates categorically any proposals leading to a restoration of the old regime in press matters and supports the Sovnarkom unconditionally against pretensions and intrigues dictated either by petty-bourgeois prejudices or by outright servility to the counterrevolutionary bourgeoisie.⁹⁴

The resolution not only affirmed the press decree but advocated further action:

The next measure should be to confiscate private printing presses and stocks of newsprint, and to transfer their ownership to organs of Soviet power in the center and in the provinces, so that parties and groups may have technical means to publish in proportion to the number of their adherents.

It is hardly necessary to add that in spite of this act of the CEC, no party aside from the Bolsheviks and the Left SRs ever received any of the confiscated goods.

It was at this point that V. Nogin announced the resignation of a number of People's commissars (V. Nogin, A. Rykov, V. Miliutin, I. Teodorovich). Although in his resignation statement Nogin did not explicitly mention the press issue, but talked about the need for a coalition government, it was clear that the two matters were closely connected.⁹⁵

The November 4th meeting of the Central Executive Committee was a turning point in this history of the Revolution. One can well imagine that had Lenin's opponents possessed more political acumen the outcome of the vote would have been different. The concept of the future, inherent in the thinking of the defenders of freedom of expression, was obviously profoundly different from Lenin's ideas. On the other hand, the likelihood is that if the revolutionaries had repudiated Leninist methods, the regime would not have lasted very long. The events which took place between February and October 1917 proved that Russia could not be administered in accordance with liberal principles. Those who refused to learn this lesson were condemned to defeat. Lenin, after all, was correct: the new regime could not tolerate freedom of criticism nor repudiate terrorist methods.

The defeat of the defenders of freedom on November 4th did not immediately result in Bolshevik monopoly of the press. First of all, Lenin and his followers did not yet desire such a monopoly. It was one thing to advocate the suppression of forces hostile to his revolution and it was quite another to claim that there could be one and only one interpretation of all political events. Time had to pass before the Bolsheviks came to this view.

Second, even if the Bolsheviks did desire to do away with all all vestiges of free expression it was good politics to proceed gradually. Prematurely frightening the uncommitted might have had dangerous political consequences.

But third, and most important, the Bolsheviks lacked the means to suppress all enemies, real and potential. The control of the new regime over the workers of Moscow and Petrograd was weak, and

control over the rest of the enormous country was minimal. As a consequence, the first eight months of the Bolshevik regime represented a twilight period for the Russian press. It was a period in which liberal and socialist journalists tried to defend themselves by rallying public support and by attempting to circumvent the regulations of the new authorities, while at the same time the Bolsheviks were making increasingly successful efforts to impose order on the country, to undermine the strength of their enemies, and when needed, and when they considered themselves strong enough, by carrying out frontal attacks.

The first obstacle to carrying out Leninist press policy was the Union of Printers, which was dominated by Mensheviks. To overcome the opposition of the printers was just as important for the Bolsheviks as to gain the support of the majority of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets. The printers had a powerful weapon: the strike. With it, they could deprive the revolutionary government of the use of the printed word. In view of Menshevik strength within the union it was not surprising that opposition to the press decree surfaced among the printers even before the Central Executive Committee debate. In addition to ideological commitment to the Menshevik view of the revolution, the printers feared for their jobs if "bourgeois" newspapers were closed down. On November 1, the Union notified the Military Revolutionary Committee that if the press decree were not rescinded "the Union would use all available means for pressure."⁹⁶

On November 6 the Union passed a resolution, 171 to 69, threatening a strike if the press decree were not rescinded.⁹⁷ The Bolsheviks were forced to handle this challenge delicately. The Military Revolutionary Committee engaged in discussions with the representatives of the printers union. Arguments for and against restrictions which had been heard in the meeting of the Central Executive Committee were repeated. The representatives of the printers proved themselves just as eloquent as the politicians.⁹⁸ But the threat of a strike proved to be empty. The weakness of the printers was that although the Bolsheviks were a minority in the union, there were enough of them to shatter solidarity. Relative Bolshevik strength could be seen from the elections to the Second all-Russian Congress of the printers in December, 1917. Of the 75 delegates, the Bolsheviks had only 15 representatives. They could perhaps count on 5 Left Socialist Revolutionaries but the rest of the congress was hostile.⁹⁹ Nevertheless at a time of extremely high unemployment the Bolsheviks were strong enough to prevent a strike although the Mensheviks lost their hold on the printers union only at the end of 1919.

It is difficult to establish the success of the Bolsheviks in destroying the press of their enemies during the first few weeks of their rule. It often happened that when the Military Revolutionary Committee or Sovnarkom ordered the closing of a newspaper, that newspaper simply changed its title and continued to appear. For example

after the closing of the Trudovik paper, Slovo naroda, (People's Word) it came out as Trudovoe slovo (Laborer's Word), then Slovo v tsepiakh (Word in Chains), Zapretnoe Slovo (Forbidden Word) and finally Narodnoe slovo. The kadet paper, Rech', in the course of a few weeks appeared under the following titles: Luch, Zaria (Dawn), Plamia (Flame), and Fakel (Torch). The SR paper, Volia naroda had these titles: Volia, Volia vol'naia, Volia narodnaia, Volia svobodnaia and Volia strany.¹⁰⁰

To summarize the situation of the press in the weeks following the revolution: The Bolsheviks dealt severe blows to hostile publications, "bourgeois" and socialist alike. The soldiers on occasion arrested editors and journalists (although almost all of those arrested were freed within a few days). The Bolsheviks confiscated some presses for their own purposes and, perhaps most important, confiscated paper supplies. However, they did not succeed in suppressing the expression of hostile opinion. Soviet sources quote different figures about the number of papers closed down in the capital. But these numbers are not very meaningful, since most of the papers continued to publish under a different title.

Repression in Moscow was far less severe than in Petrograd. The Moscow MRC went on record in support of a free press exactly when the CEC in Petrograd was reaffirming Lenin's position. As soon as the armed struggle was over, the Moscow Bolshevik leadership united in their determination to allow freedom of expression. The decree issued on November 6th allowed all papers to publish and forbade only the printing of proclamations calling for rising against the Soviets.¹⁰¹ Moderate socialist publications continued to appear in Moscow relatively undisturbed until the government moved into the city. Only in March 1918 did the situation change radically.

In the rest of the country the situation varied from city to city, depending on the views and power of the leading Bolsheviks. Local leaders attempted to follow instructions from the capital. As a result some hundreds of papers were closed down, at least for a time, in the months following the Revolution.

During the transition period the Bolsheviks did not feel strong enough to carry out a frontal attack on the press of their enemies and turned instead to indirect means. They considered it intolerable that the non-socialist papers had the best, most modern and largest printing facilities. In the early days of power they confiscated the presses of such major papers such as Rech', Novoe vremia, Birzhevye vedomosti, Zhivoe slovo, and Kopeika. These presses were taken over by Soviet and pro-Soviet publications. There were, however, constraints on the ability of the new regime to nationalize the printing industry. The Bolsheviks feared that the resistance of the printers would add to the existing confusion, create greater disruptions and worsen the unemployment of printers. Thus the process of nationalization was gradual and was not completed until the very end of the Civil War.¹⁰⁵

The confiscation of their printing facilities was, of course, a heavy blow to the "bourgeois" newspapers. They were forced to find smaller presses and to contract their work. As a result, the newspapers which managed to survive, did so with a greatly reduced circulation.

The worst problem was the shortage of paper. Newspapers tried to protect themselves by hiding their supplies. Already on October 26th the Military Revolutionary Committee ordered a complete inventory of paper.¹⁰⁴ A few days later it forbade removing paper from Petrograd.¹⁰⁸ In the confusion it was relatively easy to disobey the Military Revolutionary Committee; indeed, it was necessary to do so to stay in business. But when the Bolsheviks did succeed in confiscating the scarce material from a hostile newspaper, that often had the effect of closing it down.

As compared to the confiscation of presses and paper, the regulation which outlawed the printing of advertisement was only a petty harassment. The idea was Lenin's, and he introduced it during the period of the Provisional Government.¹⁰⁶ He clung to his notion with a lack of realism which was uncharacteristic of the great revolutionary leader. On his initiative Sovnarkom passed a regulation on November 15th according to which only government publications after November 22nd were allowed to print advertisements.¹⁰⁷

The newspapers resisted. The socialist press, which by and large had not carried advertisements, following the publication of this decree started to do so. For awhile newspapers attempted to avoid compliance by various means, such as printing advertisements on a separate page. In many localities the Soviets failed to take steps to carry out this particular decree. A.I. Minkin, the Commissar for Press Affairs, who foresaw the difficulties, asked and was assigned a hundred sailors from the Military Revolutionary Committee to overcome resistance.¹⁰⁸

After the end of the Civil War Lenin himself realized that outlawing advertisements had been a mistake.¹⁰⁹ It created a great deal of resistance and focused hostility toward the Soviet regime, while at the same time exhibiting the powerlessness of the new government. But worst of all, the idea was trivial, for at a time when the economy of the nation was in ruins, advertisements were no longer an important source of financial strength for the bourgeois newspapers.

The relative impunity with which Soviet power could be defied showed the weakness of Bolshevik rule. The country was close to anarchy. During the difficult winter of 1917-1918 the Bolsheviks tried in vain to impose their will on the Russian people and tried to take possession of the state machinery, to the collapse of which they had contributed. A few Left SRs joined the Sovnarkom (from mid-November to mid-March) which temporarily somewhat broadened the base of power, but could not resolve the problems the country faced.¹¹⁰

In the atmosphere of constant crisis, the new rulers regarded continued journalistic attacks as dangerous, but they did not always have the means to repress them. Their policy was inconsistent. They closed down newspapers for small violation of laws while allowing others to print truly subversive material. In order to bring order into the confused situation, the Commissariat of Justice on December 18th decided to set up revolutionary tribunals for press matters. The Commissar of Justice, I.Z. Shteinberg, a Left SR, issued regulations for the operation of the tribunals which appeared to the Bolsheviks to be much too lenient. For publishing falsehoods, these regulations demanded only a printed retraction and the payment of a fine. Only in extreme cases and after repeated offenses were the tribunals allowed to confiscate the presses.¹¹¹

The Bolsheviks circumvented Shteinberg's leniency by the use of the Cheka, which remained safely in their hands. The jurisdictional struggle which erupted between the Commissariat, which wanted a monopoly in press matters, and the Cheka had obvious political meaning and consequences. Shteinberg took the matter to the Sovnarkom, but there the Bolsheviks had a firm majority.¹¹⁸ On January 24 the Sovnarkom decided that while revolutionary tribunals would deal with newspapers as collective entities, the Cheka could continue to arrest and punish editors as "counterrevolutionaries."

Four days later Sovnarkom issued a decree on the operation of revolutionary tribunals, which went much further than Shteinberg's. While the revolutionary tribunals had previously intended to punish those who printed falsehoods, the new regulations aimed against those who published "anti-Soviet material," obviously a much broader and vaguer category. The punishments mandated by the Sovnarkom were also more severe: jail or exile.¹¹³

The work of press tribunals in Petrograd started at the end of January and they were gradually introduced in the rest of the country. Although setting up these institutions and meting out punishments to their enemies turned out to be one more instrument in the hands of the Bolsheviks in the struggle against the opposition, the tribunals themselves could not solve the basic problem, which was the weakness of the new government and its inability to impose order. Although repression gradually became harsher, the decisions of the tribunals remained inconsistent. Such anti-Soviet articles as, for example, Gorkii's bitter, explicit and profound pieces continued to be published.

A study of the material of the revolutionary tribunals gives remarkable glimpses of these confused days. One of the first to suffer was the major Menshevik paper, *Den'*, which was charged among other things with having changed its title several times to escape repression, with having written that the Bolsheviks had intended to hand over Petrograd to the Germans, with having described Bolshevik rule as unstable, with having reported conflict between workers and

the government. We will never know, but it seems likely that none of the leading Bolsheviks appreciated the irony of the situation. Pravda not so long ago had changed its titles just as frequently as Den' had; the Bolsheviks had accused the Provisional Government, with no justification whatever, of wanting to hand over the capital to the enemy, in order to lessen the danger of revolution. The Bolsheviks genuinely, if self-servingly, believed that morality did not exist aside from the standpoint of class. The same act had different meaning depending on whether it was committed by the Mensheviks or the Bolsheviks because the Mensheviks were, objectively, the enemies of the socialist revolution and of the genuine interests of the working classes.

The signing of the Brest-Litovsk treaty caused further dissension, the withdrawal of the Left SRs from the government, and a new series of repressive measures. The tribunal accused Novy iverchennii chas (New Evening Times) of frightening the public with the danger of Japanese intervention. Volodarskii, the new press commissar and chief prosecutor, accused socialist and liberal newspapers of crimes no greater than creating the impression that Soviet rule was weak.¹¹⁵ In order to close down a paper it was clearly not necessary to prove that it wrote something untrue.

The final attack on the non-Bolshevik press occurred in June-August, 1918. After that time in Bolshevik Russia only one point of view could be expressed in the newspapers. Why did Bolshevik "tolerance" come to an end at this particular moment?

To some extent the Leninists simply responded to the moves of their opponents. The abortive Left Socialist Revolutionary rising in early July finished all possible hopes for cooperating with other socialists. During late Spring and early Summer the Civil War in the East and in the South assumed even more serious proportions. Red terror and White terror obviously reinforced one another.

It would be naive, however, to see the Bolsheviks as merely responding and see the repressive regime which emerged from the revolution as entirely the result of the bitterness of the Civil War. The existence of Lenin's regime was threatened more seriously during the first half of 1918 than during the second. In the winter of 1918 the regime was almost destroyed by sheer anarchy: by the inability of the Bolsheviks to feed the cities and to make the state machinery function. In the second half of 1918 Bolshevik rule became more repressive at least partly because now the Bolsheviks had more strength to suppress.

It is best to regard Bolshevik press policy during the first year of the regime as one of ever increasing repressiveness. The final act of complete suppression was a natural culmination.

V.

The Bolshevik Press

I. Vardin, a prominent Bolshevik leader and journalist wrote in 1923:

Naturally, under the conditions of underground work, the Party could not develop a significant number of journalist-litterateur cadres. The leaders of the Party were publicists, scholars, writers, but not journalists in the generally accepted meaning of the word, and they could not have been. Almost no one knew the practical matters of the newspaper business. Many of them could write, but almost no one could put together a newspaper. And so, if you look at the Bolshevik press in the pre-October period, it is easy to see that from a purely journalistic point of view, this press occupied a very modest place.¹¹⁶

Vardin evaluated the Bolshevik press in the Civil War no more positively.¹¹⁷ Indeed, there was general agreement at the time among the revolutionaries who concerned themselves with journalism that the press functioned poorly and could not carry out its assigned tasks. Observers criticized the content and format of the press, and also recognized its technical poverty. But, perhaps worst of all from the point of view of the Soviet leadership, the circulation remained low.

Immediately after the November revolution the Bolsheviks enjoyed the fruits of victory. They confiscated the paper supply, machinery and buildings of the "bourgeois" papers as spoils of war. Nor did the Left Socialist Revolutionaries, as coalition partners, hesitate to share in the easily acquired wealth. On October 27th Pravda took over the presses of Novoe vremia. On the same day the Military Revolutionary Committee of Petrograd gave the presses of Den' to Derevenskaia bednota and those of Rech to Soldatskaia Pravda.¹¹⁸ The practice of confiscating presses spread to the entire country in the following months. According to a Soviet historian the Bolsheviks alone had confiscated approximately 30 presses by the end of 1917, 70 by July 1918 and 90 by the end of 1918.¹¹⁹

The facilities which the revolutionaries took from their enemies allowed them to expand the circulation of their papers and to establish new ones. Indeed, it is fair to say, that the Soviet press was based on these confiscated goods. The official publication of the Sovnarkom Gazeta vremennogo rabocheho i krestianskogo pravitelstva (The Gazette of the Provisional Government of Workers and Peasants), started to appear on November 10th. The paper was printed until March 1918, when the government moved to Moscow. There Izvestiia

was published as the paper of the government. Izvestiia was printed on machines which had belonged to Russkos slovo.¹²⁰ In the post-revolutionary weeks a number of new publications appeared: Bednota, Ekonomicheskaiia zhizn', Zhizn' nationalnostei (Life of Nationalities), Kommunar (Communard) Kommunistka (Woman Communist), Rabotnitsa (Woman Worker), Voennoe delo, (Military Affairs), etc.¹²¹ At the end of 1918 Soviet Russia had 563 newspapers and 753 journals. During the year following their victory the circulation of papers published by the Bolsheviks increased approximately tenfold. Considering, however, the weakness of the Party press in 1917 this increase was not enormous.

The most difficult technical problem continued to be the lack of paper and newsprint. In 1914 the Russian Empire produced 33 million puds of paper (1 pud = 16.38 kg). During the war production fell and in the years of the Civil War the decline was catastrophic. In 1920, the worst year, Russia produced only a little over 2 million puds. The loss of Finland, a major producer of paper was a partial explanation for this decline. The paper shortage in 1920 was so great that Sovnarkom was willing to use its precious supply of foreign currency to buy 400,000 puds of paper from Estonia.¹²³ The paper which was available was very poor in quality, often hardly better than wrapping paper. The situation was almost as bad in matters of newsprint, the quality of which was so poor that on occasion entire columns were completely unreadable.

The shortage of paper in 1919 and 1920 inevitably resulted in a fall in circulation. Many papers closed down, the publication schedule of provincial papers became erratic, and such major papers as Pravda and Izvestiia appeared during the second half of the Civil War in editions of only two pages. Izvestiia had the largest circulation in 1919, appearing in 300-400 copies, depending on the availability of paper. The average figure for Pravda was 130,000.¹²⁴ Such popular papers as Krasnaia gazeta (Red Gazette), published in Petrograd as an evening daily, had so little paper that it did not accept individual subscriptions. The paper was delivered only to institutions, in the hope of reaching a larger audience.¹²⁵

The newspapers suffered from a lack of trained technical personnel. The printers union, dominated by the Mensheviks, was hostile. There was a great need for typesetters and for people capable of operating the machinery. As a result the appearance of the newspapers was poor. Trotskii addressed the printers with these words:

Comrade printers, our printing technique is terrible. Whole series are so blurred that you cannot make out a single line. The number of misprints, jumbled lines are innumerable. To the person who for ten years has become accustomed to reading papers and understands a phrase from two words, it is difficult, often times impossible, to decipher the idea of our newspaper articles. Under the circumstances, how much more difficult it is for the young Red Army soldiers, often semi-illiterate?¹²⁶

Looking at issues of Pravda, Izvestiia, Petrogradskaia Pravda, just to mention the best papers of the time, one is struck by the dullness of the format. The Bolsheviks had learned nothing of the techniques of the yellow press. The central papers did possess technical means to reproduce drawings and caricatures, but photographs never appeared.

A major problem was difficulties in distribution. The postal service did not function satisfactorily, and, at least during the beginning stages of the conflict, it was in the hands of enemies. Since postal workers often refused to deliver Bolshevik newspapers, papers had to be sent surreptitiously in parcels and practically smuggled here or there by travelling soldiers or activists, just as before the October Revolution. The local party organizations constantly complained that newspapers and other propaganda material did not arrive from the center. Pravda, for example, wrote on October 27, 1918 that the Vitebsk party committee had received only two or three copies per month of Izvestiia.¹²⁷ In 1957 Soviet historians published the correspondence between the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee and the local party organizations in 1917 and 1918. The complaint about the unavailability of newspapers was universal, appearing in the letters as a refrain.

A major difficulty in the development of the press was the lack of qualified journalists. The Soviet regime faced the problem of not having enough trained people in almost every area of national reconstruction. The shortage of journalists was an especially complicated problem. Administrators, engineers, even army officers could be bribed, coerced or cajoled into service. These methods could not work with journalists: political reliability was more important than technical skills. The regime could hardly entrust to potential political enemies the sensitive matter of conveying its point of view.

Journalism did not attract party activists. Newly converted but uneducated soldiers and workers were capable of carrying out oral agitation among workers and peasants, but these people, of course, could not write effectively. Among the top leaders, journalism did not have as much prestige as work on the front, organizing industry, or creating an administration. Lenin repeatedly admonished his colleagues to write more often for the newspapers. Naturally, there were even fewer skilled journalists in the provinces than in Petrograd and Moscow. The state of local journalism was indeed pitiful.

Allocations of paper and machines were determined behind the scenes. Every army unit, every local Soviet and party organization wanted to have its own newspaper, even though most of them were incapable of publishing effective propaganda. The ensuing struggle had the unintended and unfortunate result of proliferating

publications at a time when a few strong newspapers would have been more beneficial. At the end of the Civil War there were more periodicals in Russia than in peace time. Soviet historians in retrospect use these figures to show how quickly the press developed after the Revolution. At the time, however, the leadership regarded proliferation more realistically as both a sign and a cause of weakness.

The party stressed the need to improve agitation among the peasantry. This policy was used to justify the struggle for paper on the part of local organizations. However, it was one thing to publish a newspaper, and another to carry out successful agitation in the villages. The provincial papers failed to make contact with village life. Instead they reprinted articles from Pravda and Izvestiia and filled their pages with the texts of laws and regulations. Without village correspondents, their information on village life came from hearsay. They appeared irregularly and their "original" articles were even duller than the ones they printed from the central press.¹²⁸

It might have been a more effective use of scarce resources to print larger editions of the central press for distribution in the countryside than to entrust the task of putting together newspapers to inexperienced and not always reliable local journalists. Indeed, a substantial number of the city papers was sent outside Moscow and Petrograd. In 1920 for example, out of the 350,000 copies of Izvestiia, 279,000 were sent outside Moscow. Of the 250,000 copies of Pravda, only 41,000 remained in the capital. The newspaper, Bednota, aimed at poor peasants was, of course, distributed almost entirely outside Moscow. All in all, 65% of the papers printed were sent to the provinces.

The Red Army was politically a most powerful organization. During the second half of the Civil War when the number of civilian papers declined for lack of resources, the military press continued to expand. At the end of 1918 there were 90 newspapers published by various military units, and in the course of 1919 the number grew to 170.¹³⁰ For the army, distribution was, of course, no problem. The central papers regularly printed columns directed to the soldiers. Obviously at a time of military struggle, all newspapers devoted much attention to military news. Investment in indoctrination among soldiers definitely paid off.

The Bolsheviks published newspapers not only for their own soldiers but also for the enemy. They were particularly interested in infiltrating the interventionist armies. Narkomindel established a section for foreign propaganda as early as December 1918. The section printed Call, an English language weekly in 15-20,000 copies.¹³¹ When the Comintern was formed in 1919, this organization gradually took responsibility for propaganda among foreign soldiers.¹³² That this propaganda was highly effective is beyond dispute. The demoralized soldiers, who did not want to be in Russia to begin with and had only the vaguest understanding

of the political circumstances of these confusing times, were willing listeners. The resounding fiasco of French intervention in South Russia during the winter and spring of 1919 could be attributed at least partially to a complete collapse of morale among the interventionists.

Agitation among a handful of foreign soldiers was a relatively easy task compared to creating a newspaper network for the entire enormous country. Journalists and party leaders alike were aware of the technical and ideological weaknesses of the press and discussed these problems repeatedly at their congresses and conferences. L.S. Sosnovskii reported to the 8th Party Congress (March 1919) on the situation of the press. He talked about the confusion in the provinces concerning financing of newspapers. Further, he complained about the ideological unreliability and lack of education of provincial editors and newspapermen.¹³³ Then he submitted the resolutions, which the Congress accepted. This was the first paragraph:

1. The general weakening of party work at the time of the civil war badly damaged our party and Soviet press. A general weakness of almost all party and Soviet periodic publications is a remoteness from local and often from general political life. The provincial party and Soviet press almost completely ignores local life and chooses its material on general issues extremely unsuccessfully. They print long, uninteresting articles instead of responding with short, simply written articles to the main issues of national and local life. On occasion entire pages are filled with decrees, instead of explaining in a simple and understandable language the most important points of the decree. Newspapers print rules and regulations of different offices and departments instead of making from this material a lively chronicle of local life.¹³⁹

The resolution blamed the failures of the press on the fact that most experienced party leaders paid too little attention to newspapers. In view of the importance of propaganda, the Congress directed local party organizations to assign their most experienced and talented people to press work. It assigned the tasks of supervising the local press and commenting on questions of party construction to the central press. The task of local papers were exclusively to appeal to a mass audience, to discuss their problems in a simple language.

The resolution had little effect, as can be seen from the fact that the 11th Congress found it necessary in 1922 to repeat the main points of the earlier resolution.

The two congresses of journalists at the time of the Civil War, in November 1918 and in May 1919, also looked for a way to improve the press. The deliberations show that the Soviet press was still in a formative stage and that journalists still held a large variety of opinions about shaping its character.

The first congress was called by the Moscow committee of journalists, which invited all who were willing to cooperate with the new authorities, communists and non-communists alike.¹³⁵ The top leadership of the Party paid great attention to this conference, and such important figures as Kamenev, Radek, Lunacharskii and Kollontai gave addresses. All participants agreed that the press should pay more attention to life in the villages and factories. They also agreed that the press should be an instrument for criticizing failures of administration. Different people had different ideas about the proper function and extent of this criticism, however, though at this point they had not become explicit.

An interesting disagreement arose over the question of audience. L.S. Sosnovskii, the editor of Pravda, argued that all papers should be written for the simple people. The resolution of the congress supported Steklöv's position: it talked about "leading" papers and "mass" papers. In fact, however, the future Soviet press was closer to Sosnovskii's conception. The intellectual level of such "leading" papers as Pravda and Izvestiia was not appreciably higher than that of the local papers, even if those in the capitals were more professionally produced.

The journalists devoted considerable attention to the organizational aspect of their work. A resolution called for the establishment of a Central Council of Journalists with far reaching powers. The Council would not merely protect the professional interests of journalists, but would also be responsible for such matters as distribution of paper and information. Nothing came of these plans. Tsentrosoviet was an organization of little power or influence and within a few months it ceased to exist. The party was not about to give control over crucial matters to an outside authority. The newspapermen were simply disregarded.

Such a centralization of press matters under the prevailing conditions was not possible. Issues concerning the political-ideological orientation of newspapers, naming leading cadres, and others of the most important issues, continued to be resolved by the Central Committee of the Party; distribution of paper, newsprint and printing machines was handled by the VSNKh, the Central Economic Council. Sovnarkom also set up a Russian Telegraph Agency, Rosta, for the distribution of information. Established in September 1918, it soon grew into a powerful publishing and propaganda agency.¹³⁶ Its newspapers, pamphlets and especially its posters became widely known in the country.

The mood and character of the next congress of journalists, in May 1919, was altogether different. The organizers were more realistic about their role. They understood that in the developing system there was no such profession as journalism, simply a Party function for writing of newspapers. The second congress dissolved the institutions established by its predecessor and recommended the establishment of communist local unions, coordinated with the work

of relevant party organizations. In this new conception, the press would have no other task than to spread and advertise the policies and decisions of the Party.¹³⁷

The resolutions of this congress had no more effect than those of the first one. The Party sent members of the newly elected Central Committee to different parts of the country to carry out a variety of tasks and the Committee fell apart. The Party leadership had no interest in supporting an organization of journalists in any form and wanted no mediators between its policies and the publicizing of these policies. The Party's unwillingness to tolerate even the slightest professional independence contributed to the problems of the Soviet press.

The years of the Civil War were the formative period of the Soviet press. The Bolsheviks repudiated the principles governing the "bourgeois" press but they did not have clear ideas on the kind of newspapers that would be appropriate in the new age. There were no models to follow and many questions. What subject matter should the communist press emphasize? What should be the style? On what level should the journalists address their readers? Lenin made a major contribution to the discussions in his article in Pravda in September, 1918.¹³⁸

Lenin's article "About the Character of our Newspapers" started out with the practical statement that it was necessary to write simply and concisely for the masses. He recommended that, in order to be effective, journalists should deal with concrete situations. But he went much further. He argued that Soviet newspapers should devote less attention to the discussion of politics.

Instead of 200-400 lines, why don't we talk in 20-10 [sic] about such matters as the treachery of the Mensheviks, who are the lackeys of the bourgeoisie, or such as the Anglo-Japanese attack for the sake of reestablishing the sacred rule of capital, or such as how the American billionaires gnash their teeth about Germany. These matters are simple, well-known and to a considerable extent already well understood by the masses.

What should the press write about then? In Lenin's opinion more attention should be given to economics. He did not have in mind, however, the discussion of such issues as war communism, the effects of outlawing free trade in grain, or the consequences of workers' control of the factories. He wanted detailed reports of which factories did their work well and which ones did not; how successes were achieved; and, above all, he wanted to unmask the guilty--those who did not do their work. They were class enemies. The press should be an instrument of the dictatorship of the proletariat exposing those who through their poor work in fact helped the enemy. These were the last lines of the article:

Less political noise. Less intelligent-like discussions. Closer to life. More attention to how the masses of workers and peasants in fact build something new in their everyday work. More documentation just how communist this new is.

Lenin was implying that there was no point in discussing the political and economic issues of the day, for those had been decided. It is significant that this article was written exactly at the time when the last vestiges of a critical, non-Bolshevik press had disappeared. There remained no one to polemicise against. Politics as a conflict of opinion, as presentation of alternatives no longer existed. The public sphere of discussion was drastically narrowed and remained so for decades to come.

It would be naive to think that the Soviet press developed as it did because editors followed the advice of the founder of the system. But Lenin's article was prophetic. Today's Pravda should please him: the journalists admonish workers to do their job well, they single out "concrete" factories and they most certainly waste no space on the discussion of large political issues in terms of alternatives.

FOOTNOTES

¹Russkaia periodicheskaiia pechat' (1895 - Okt. 1917) Sbornik. Moscow, 1957. pp. 8-9. (Abbreviated as Rpp.)

²J. Walkin, The Rise of Democracy in Pre-revolutionary Russia. Political and Social Institutions Under the Last Three Tsars. New York, 1962. p. 119.

³B.I. Esin, ed. Iz istorii russkoi zhurnalistiki. kontsa xix nachala xx v. Moscow, 1973. pp. 7-8.

⁴Ibid., p. 10.

⁵Ibid., p. 11.

⁶Ibid., p. 14.

⁷Entsiklopedicheskii slovar'. Published by F.A. Brokgauz and I.A. Efron, vol. 74, p. 962.

⁸Esin, p. 9.

⁹I.P. Belokonskii, V gody bezpraviia. Moscow, 1930, pp. 18-19. Belokonskii's description of this incident is marvelously vivid. "In connection with some sort of trial which was taking place in Zhitomir court, my wife wrote an editorial. On the same theme, concerning the same issues someone else wrote an editorial expressing completely contradictory views. The old man (the editor) somewhat confused, mechanically united the two articles in which the second half was not distinguished from the first, but simply appeared to be its continuation of the article of my wife. She was amazed when she read it next morning and went to protest and demand that the newspaper print a note about this misunderstanding. But the editor did not agree.--Nonsense!--He smiled good-heartedly, consoling my wife:--there are different views. Some will like the first half, some will like the second.--But people will think that this is from the same author!. . . . --Nonsense! Who is there here to think!"

¹⁰Walkin, pp. 116-120.

¹¹A.I. Denikin, Staraia armia. 2 vols. Paris, 1929-31. vol. 1., p. 115.

¹²Krasnyi arkhiv. vol. 105, pp. 149-150.

¹³Krasnyi arkhiv, 1927. pp. 226-229. After the February Revolution the Provisional Government demanded the return of this money.

¹⁴Rpp, pp. 17-18.

¹⁵V.I. Lenin, Polnoe sobranie sochinenii. 5th ed. Moscow, 1967-70. vol. 5, p. 11. In his article Lenin anticipated the argument later developed in What is to be Done?

¹⁶Ibid, pp. 11-12.

¹⁷Ibid., vol. 6, p. 155.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 160-171.

¹⁹Rpp., p. 38.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid., 145.

²²Ibid., pp. 177-180.

²³Krasnyi arkhiv. vol. 81, p. 36. "'Zvezda" i Pravda' i tsarskaia tsenzura."

²⁴Ibid., p. 42.

²⁵Of the many books on the pre-revolutionary history of Pravda the best is S.A. Andronov, Bol'shevistskaia pechat' v trekh revoliutsiiakh. Moscow, 1978.

²⁶Rpp., 199.

²⁷B. Wolfe, Three Who Made a Revolution. Boston, 1955, p. 564.

²⁸Rpp., 199.

²⁹Rpp.

³⁰Andronov., p. 138.

³¹Wolfe., p. 562.

³²See for example Lenin, PSS., vol. 48, pp. 94-95, pp. 97-99.

³³Lenin, PSS. vol. 22, pp. 258-270.

³⁴N.K. Krupskaya, Memories of Lenin (1893-1917). London, 1942, p. 179 and 195-6.

³⁵A. Usagin, "Bol'shevistskaia pechat' v Moskve v epokhu 'Zvezdy' i 'Pravdy'" Proletarskaia revoliutsiia. 1923, No. 14, pp. 400-417.

³⁶I. Kuznetsov and A. Shumakov. Bol'shevistskaia pechat' Moskvyy. Moscow, 1968, pp. 276-77.

³⁷Rpp. p. 204.

³⁸Lenin, PSS. vol. 48, pp. 173-174.

³⁹Rpp. p. 195.

⁴⁰Robert Browder and Alexander Kerensky, The Russian Provisional Government. 1917. Documents. 3 vols., Stanford, 1961.

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 228-230.

⁴²Ibid., vol. 2, p. 97.

⁴³Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 978-79.

⁴⁵Sukhanov, p. 208.

⁴⁶Lenin, PSS, vol. 34. pp. 209-10.

⁴⁷A.Z. Okorokov, Oktiabr' i krakh russkoi burzhuaznoi pressy. Moscow, 1970, p. 40.

⁴⁸Lenin i "Izvestiia" Dokumenty i materialy 1917-1922, Moscow, 1975, p. 5.

⁴⁹G. Ermolaev edited and reprinted Gorkii's articles in Nesvoevremennye mysli Stat'ia 1917-1918 gg. Paris, 1971.

⁵⁰Rpp. p. 261, p. 251, p. 242, p. 269.

⁵¹V.N. Zalezhskii, "Pervyi legalnyi Peka" Proletarskaia revoliutsiia 1923, vol. 1.

⁵²P. Frank and B.C. Kirkham, "The Revival of Pravda in 1917" in Soviet Studies 1969, pp. 366-368. A Soviet source writes about 200,000 rather than 100,000 copies for the first issues V.P. Budnikov, Bol'shevistskaia partiinaia pechat' v 1917 godu. Kharkov, 1959, p. 13.

⁵³F. Raskol'nikov, Priezd tov. Lenina v Rossiiu "Proletarskaia revoliutsiia", 1923, p. 221.

⁵⁴Budnikov, p. 53.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 68.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 69.

⁵⁷There is a large literature on the role of German money in the Russian Revolution. See George Katkov, Russia, 1917: The February Revolution, N.Y. 1967 and S.P. Mel'gunov, Zolotoi nemetskii kliuch k bol'shevistskoi revoliutii, Paris, 1940.

⁵⁸Budnikov, p. 88.

⁵⁹Kh. M. Astrakhan and I.S. Sazonov, "Sozdanie massovoi bol'shevistskoi pechati v 1917 godu" Voprosy istorii 1957, No. 1, p. 91.

⁶⁰Kuznetsov and Shumakov, pp. 294-95.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 323

⁶²Ibid., pp. 326-27.

⁶³Astrakhan and Sazonov, p. 89.

⁶⁴Rpp., p. 237.

⁶⁵Astrakhan-Sazonov, p. 90. Budnikov, p. 94. Okorov, p. 48.

⁶⁶Budnikov, p. 106.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 107, Kuznetsov-Shumakov, p. 333.

⁶⁸Kuznetsov-Shumakov, pp. 386-87.

⁶⁹Astrakhan-Sazonov, p. 92.

⁷⁰Kuznetsov-Shumakov, p. 361.

⁷¹Alexander Rabinowitch, The Bolsheviks Come to Power. The Revolution of 1917 in Petrograd, N.Y., 1976, pp. 18-20.

⁷²Budnikov, p. 131.

⁷³Ibid., p. 133.

⁷⁴Astrakhan-Sazonov, p. 95.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 96.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 98.

⁷⁷Lenin, PSS, vol. 5, pp. 39-40.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 41.

⁷⁹Lenin, PSS, vol. 12, p. 101.

⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 99-105. See also the discussions by Soviet scholars of this article. E.P. Prokhorov, Leninskaia kontsepsiia svobody pechati" Voprosy teorii i praktiki massovykh sredstv propagandy Moscow, 1971, vol. 4, pp. 5-40. According to Prokhorov Lenin regarded freedom as an understanding of the laws of history and the recognition of necessity. Also, G. Kunitsyn, V.I. Lenin o partiinosti i svobode pechati, Moscow, 1971, pp. 92-101.

⁸¹Lenin, PSS, vol. 34, pp. 208-213.

⁸²Lenin, PSS., vol., pp. 236-37.

⁸³Okorov, p. 168.

⁸⁴Ibid., pp. 168-70.

⁸⁵Ibid., 172.

⁸⁶The press decree was printed in Pravda on October 28th.

⁸⁷L. Schapiro, The Origin of Communist Autocracy, 2nd ed. London, 1977, p. 69.

⁸⁸John Keep, ed., The Debate on Soviet Power. Minutes of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of Soviets. Second Convocation, October 1917-January 1918. Oxford, 1979, p. 75.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 76.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 70.

⁹¹Ibid., p. 71.

⁹²Unfortunately this crucial sentence is mistranslated in Keep. In his version: "If we are moving toward social (ist) revolution, we cannot reply to Kaledin's bombs with bombs of falsehood," p. 75. Lenin, PSS, vol. 35, p. 54.

⁹³Keep, 76.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 70.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 78. D. Riazanov, N. Derbyshev, Commissar of Press Affairs, I. Arbusov, Commissar of State Printing works, K. Iurenev, Commissar of Red Guards, G. Fedorov, head of the labor conflict department in the Commissariat of Labor, Iu. Larin also associated themselves with Nogin's statement and resigned. A. Shliapnikov expressed his agreement without resigning.

⁹⁶The document is reprinted in Petrogradskii Voenno-Revoliutsionnii Komitet. Dokumenty i materialy Moscow, 1966-1967. 3 vols. vol. 1, p. 530. See also discussion in Okorokov, p. 193.

⁹⁸In that meeting Dzerzhinskii, Sverdlov, Ioffe, Lashevich and Skrypnik badgered the delegation of printers. They accused them of trying to break the unity of the proletariat. The majority of the delegation was unmoved and threatened to strike, but the minority indicated that they would not go along. Ibid., pp. 144-146.

⁹⁹A.I. Nazarov, Oktiabr' i kniga, 1917-1923. Moscow, 1968, pp. 66-67.

¹⁰⁰A.A. Goncharov, "Bor'ba Sovetskoi vlasti s kontrrevoliutsionnoi burzhuznoi i melkoburzhuznoi pechatiu. 925 Okt. iul' 1918 g)" Vestnik MGU, Zhurnalistika. 1969, No. 4, p. 16.

¹⁰¹Okorokov, p. 271.

¹⁰²Goncharov, p. 14.

¹⁰³Nazarov, pp. 171-173.

¹⁰⁴PVRK. Documents. vol. 1, p. 130.

¹⁰⁵Okorokov, p. 212.

¹⁰⁶Lenin, PSS, vol. 34, pp. 208-213.

¹⁰⁷Okorokov, pp. 222-29.

¹⁰⁸PVRK Documents, vol. 3, p. 232.

¹⁰⁹Lenin, PSS, vol. 44, p. 200.

¹¹⁰T.H. Rigby, Lenin's Government: Sovnarkom 1917-1922, Cambridge, 1979, pp. 25-39.

¹¹¹Okorokov, pp. 251-52.

¹¹²Rigby, pp. 27-28.

¹¹³Okorokov, pp. 253-55.

¹¹⁴Ibid., pp. 258-59.

¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 261.

¹¹⁶I.V. Vardin (Mgeladze) Sovetskaia pechat' Sbornik statei, Moscow, 1924, p. 15.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 26.

¹¹⁸PVRK, vol 1, pp. 162-63.

- ¹¹⁹Okorokv, p. 325.
- ¹²⁰A.L. Mishuris, Pechat' rozhdenaia Oktiabrem, Moscow, 1968, p. 17.
- ¹²¹Ibid., p. 18.
- ¹²²Okorokov, p. 327.
- ¹²³N. Meschcheriakov, "O rabote gosudarstvennogo izdatelstva," Pechat' i Revoliutsiia, 1921, No. 1, p. 9.
- ¹²⁴D. Lebedev, Shest' let moskovskoi pechaty 1917-1923, Moscow, 1924, p. 22 and p. 27.
- ¹²⁵C.S. Sampson, "The Formative Years of the Soviet Press: An Institutional History 1917-1924." Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation. University of Massachusetts, 1970, 126.
- ¹²⁶I. Trotskii, Sochineniia, vol. 21, p. 243. Also in Sampson, p. 96.
- ¹²⁷Pravda, October 27, 1918.
- ¹²⁸M. Zernitskii, "Belorusskaia gazeta Zvezda v 1918 godu" Voprosy zhurnalistiki, vypusk II, kniga 1. Leningrad, 1960, pp. 45-47.
- ¹²⁹Lebedev, p. 79.
- ¹³⁰A. Berezhnoi, K istorii partiino-sovetskoi pechaty, Leningrad, 1956, p. 6, note.
- ¹³¹A.S. Iakushevskii, Propagandistskaia rabota bol'shevikov sredi voisk interventov v 1918-1920 gg, Moscow, 1974, p. 68.
- ¹³²Ibid., p. 71.
- ¹³³Vos'moi s"ezd RKP(b) Mart 1919 goda Protokoly, Moscow, 1959, pp. 295-96.
- ¹³⁴Ibid., pp. 436-37.
- ¹³⁵Vardin, pp. 126-130. Vardin gives a detailed description of the conference and reprints the resolutions.
- ¹³⁶N.A. Bryliakov, Rossiskoe telegrafnoe . . ., Moscow, 1976, 1976, pp. 8-9.
- ¹³⁷Vardin, pp. 130-32.
- ¹³⁸Lenin, PSS, vol. 37, pp. 89-91.