

**IS THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION
A BOURGEOIS REVOLUTION?
A KEEN ANALYSIS OF
SITUATION IN SOVIET RUSSIA**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649752775

Is the Russian Revolution a Bourgeois Revolution? A Keen Analysis of Situation in Soviet Russia by Karl Radek

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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Rader, Karl.

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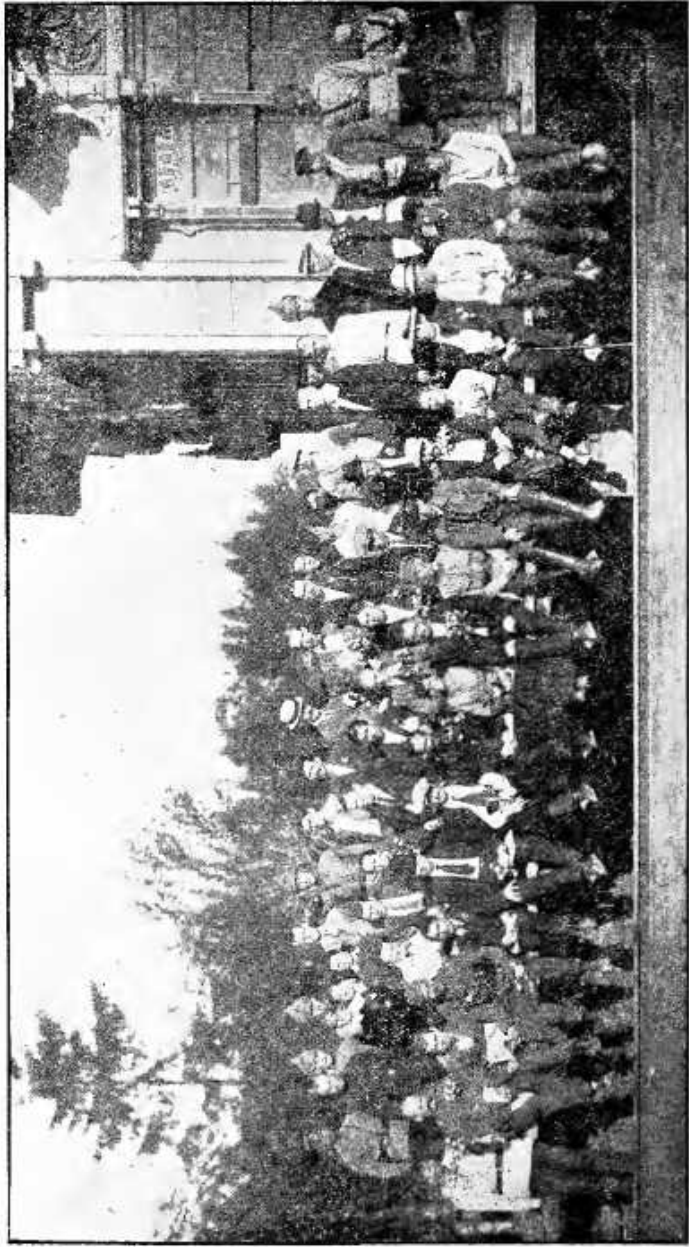
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Delegates to the Third Congress in company with students and officers of the Red Army.

Is The Russian Revolution A Bourgeois Revolution?

In 1905-1906, after the first Russian Revolution, the question as to the social character and the part to be played by the next Russian Revolution was of great importance in the process of self-determination of the labor movement. The questions asked were: "Will it be a bourgeois or a proletarian revolution? Which class will lead it if it is to be a bourgeois revolution? What will be the relations of this class to the other classes?"

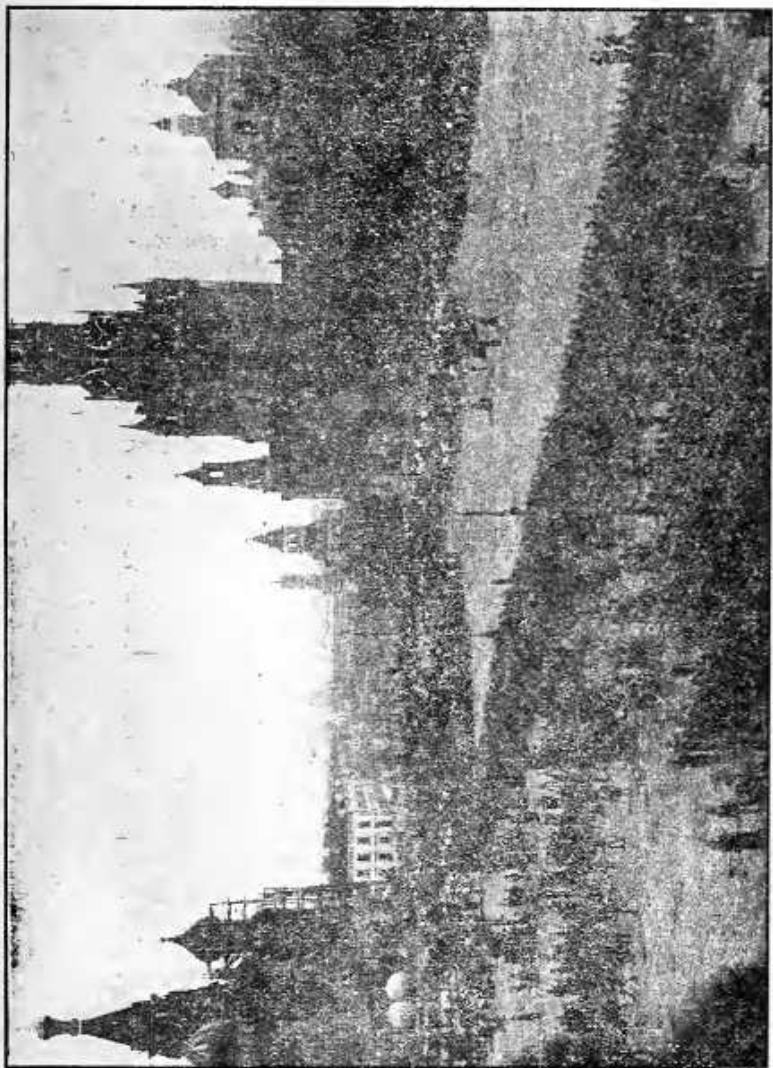
Even the first revolution had settled many disputes in spite of the fact that it had not reached its goal. Although it was suppressed before it could decide upon vital questions, the questions of power, it became absolutely clear that the bourgeoisie was a counter-revolutionary class which sought to enter into an agreement with the old Czarist regime for the perpetuation of the condition of half serfdom in order to subdue the proletariat. Two classes proved to be revolutionary, the workers and the peasants. The workers were the leaders, the main driving force of the revolution.

During the decade between the first revolution and that of 1917, the disputes over the character of the revolution gave place to definite questions dealing with the conditions for organizing the working class after the revolution, the question of social changes as a result of the first revolution, and particularly the question dealing with the changes within the working class and with Stolypin's agrarian policy. The March and October revolutions, four

years of Soviet rule and finally our new economic policy have restored the question of the character of our revolution to the order of the day. The Mensheviks and their international friends, the Social-Democrats and Centrists, are madly howling over the new economic policy of the Soviet government, and are putting the following question to us: "Why was all that necessary? Does not the fact that you Bolsheviki are compelled to restore the very capitalism you have destroyed, prove that it was a bourgeois revolution?"

It is necessary to answer this question if we ourselves wish to grasp the meaning of this four years' fight, and the significance of our new policy. Are we actually renouncing the past four years? Is the Russian Revolution a proletarian one or is it a bourgeois revolution?

First of all we must establish certain facts. We designate all the revolutions from the Dutch uprising against Spanish tyranny up to the English and French revolutions, or more strictly speaking, up to the three French revolutions, as bourgeois revolutions, because their result was bourgeois rule, which meant a step towards its universal triumph, and to the bourgeoisie's acquisition of power in all civilized countries. Not one of these revolutions was purely bourgeois; we must take into consideration the classes that participated in them and the goals aimed at by these classes. The large landowning class played a considerable part in the Netherlands and even in the English revolution. Cromwell himself was a large landowner; he was backed by a considerable part of the big English landowners. At the same time, beginning with the English revolution we see that not only did the craftsman, the industrial worker and the young proletarian class which was just coming into existence, participate in the revolutions, but we even notice a strong tendency to exceed the bounds set by the growing capitalist system. The movements of Leweers, Digors and Chiliasten were proletarian democratic movements which



Demonstration in the Red Square in celebration of the opening of the Third Congress of the Communist International.

strove towards instituting the Socialist order and that of collective ownership; they sought the abolition of private property and capitalist competition. Considerable masses participated in these movements. To them Socialism was a religion. Even at that time Socialism represented a danger to the young capitalist order, and the bourgeoisie suppressed it with all the cruelty of which it is capable in defending its interests. Cromwell well understood the conflict between capitalism and this religious Socialism. In his speeches he fought against the latter with the same arguments which the bourgeoisie used against revolutionary Socialism in the 19th century.

During the French revolution and parallel with its development, the Socialist current gained strength in the depths of society; it was then represented by the party of the "Enrages", whose history has not yet been written, but which played a very important part in the events of 1793 (the literature on this party is very poor). Robespierre was an avowed and convinced opponent of this movement. In the pamphlets of the Girondist, Brissot, the representative of the commercial bourgeoisie of southern France, we find not only all the arguments with which the bourgeoisie later fought Socialism, but we also find the mad, raging hatred which is due to the recognition of the power of the Communists in the French revolution. These were backed by a considerable part of those who saved France in 1793.

One of the reasons why the petty-bourgeois democrat Robespierre was overthrown, was that he had lost the working masses of Paris through his campaign against the "Enrages" and their defenders in the Paris Commune, like Chaumette. For the heads of Chaumette and Leroux, Robespierre paid with his own head. After he had lost connection with the working masses he could no longer instil fear into, nor be of any use to the Thermidorists of the young bourgeoisie of the French Revolution, which was gaining ground in the war against the feudal world. When the head of Robespierre fell amid joyous cheers of