INTERNATIONALISM FROM BELOW

Reclaiming a hidden communist tradition to challenge the nation-state and capitalist empire

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VOLUME 4
unfinished

COMMUNISTS, NATIONS-STATES AND NATIONALISM DURING THE 1916-21 INTERNATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY WAVE

INTRODUCTION

i) **The four waves of twentieth century international revolution**
ii) **The effects of the ebbing revolutionary tides**
iii) **Political 'memory loss' after the end of the International Revolutionary Wave of 1916-21**

1. THE FIRST ATTEMPT TO SET UP A POST-NATIONAL WORLD ORDER

A. DIFFERENT TIMELINES OF REVOLUTION

i) **April 1916 to March 1921 or 'October' 1917 to August 1991?**
ii) **Past and current attempts to create a 'post-national' world order**
iii) **Old challenges re-emerge in new guises**
iv) **Timelines in the 1916-21 International Revolutionary Wave**

B. OTHER CENTRES, OTHER TIMELINES – LATVIA

i) **Latvia**
ii) **The LSDP and the 'National Question' in Latvia**
iii) **The revolutionary timeline in Latvia**

C. OTHER CENTRES, OTHER TIMELINES - FINLAND

i) **The revolutionary timeline in Finland**
ii) **From February to August 1917 - rapid progress along the Finnish revolutionary timeline**
iii) **An 'internationalism from below' alternative?**
iv) **From August 1917 to May 1918 - the Finnish revolutionary timeline is broken**

D. OTHER CENTRES, OTHER TIMELINES – UKRAINE

i) The two revolutionary timelines in Ukraine
ii) Timeline 1 - the Russian revolution in Ukraine
iii) The Ukrainian Left after the February Revolution
iv) Timeline 2 - the Ukrainian revolution up to July 4th, 1917 and the missed 'internationalism from below' opportunity
v) Two timelines collide - towards the October Revolution
vi) From October 25th (OS) to February 7th (NS) - Ukrainian revolutionary timeline fractured as Russian social imperialism turns to 'Bayonet Bolshevism'

2. 1918 – THE LOST YEAR OF THE REVOLUTION?

A. THE FIRST WAVE OF REVOLT BEYOND THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

i) The longer-term implications of the Treaty of Brest Litovsk

INTRODUCTION

i) The four waves of twentieth century international revolution

Volume Four takes up the impact of the three trends found within the Internationalist Left – the Leninist wing of the Bolsheviks, the Radical Left and the 'Internationalism from Below' advocates – when dealing with the 'National Question' during the International Revolutionary Wave of 1916-21/3. These trends had developed in the period of 'High Imperialism' up to and during the the First World War. Volume Three showed how these originally arose in response to a growing awareness of the significance of Imperialism and to the experience of the 1904-7 International Revolutionary Wave.

The twentieth century witnessed four major international revolutionary waves between 1904-7, 1916-21/3, 1943-7 and 1968-75. The most recent of these waves saw the defeat of the mighty US military machine in Vietnam, and the ending of discriminatory legislation against black Americans. In the major industrial countries, wages and the social wage attained their highest levels as a proportion of GDP. The women's, youth and gay movements also brought about major advances in personal freedoms. This was the period when the most advanced economic and social legislation was achieved in the liberal democracies.

Another international revolutionary wave occurred from 1943 until about 1947. This began with the Resistance movements in Nazi German-occupied Europe and Japanese-occupied Eastern Asia and the Pacific. It was a time of rising expectations for the millions drawn into the war - including black Americans, Indians, Vietnamese and Filipinos, as well as for workers determined not to return to the hardships of the Depression.

However, the biggest upheaval of the twentieth century occurred between the Dublin Rising of 1916 and the suppression of the Kronstadt Revolt in Russia in 1921. In retrospect, the 1904-7

International Revolutionary Wave, already addressed in Volume Three, has been seen as a precedent for that which occurred between 1916-21. But the geographical extent and depth of the 1916-21 International Revolutionary Wave was considerably greater.

Furthermore, as the revolutionary movement gained confidence, it openly proclaimed its opposition to the whole basis of the existing economic, social and political order - capitalism and imperialism, whilst its leading proponents came out in favour of a communist alternative. This was a counter to the one-time revolutionary Social Democracy of the Second International, whose leaders had discredited themselves in the First World War. As soviets appeared in the 'Russian' epicentre of the International Revolutionary Wave, Communists saw these as the modern form of the 1871 Paris Commune. This was outlined in Lenin's *State and Revolution*, written just before the October Revolution (1). In March 1919 a new specifically Communist International, the Third International, was declared. (2)

The 1916-21 International Revolutionary Wave had a major impact, not only upon the century's later two social upheavals, but also on all movements and thought over the following seventy years. However, this wave was rolled back internationally and contained within the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) and the infant Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), formed in November 1922. This particular revolutionary wave left behind a profoundly divided legacy.

The initial gains and further demands for workers' control, and the ending of women's and national oppression, were offset by the effects of a 'counter-revolution within the revolution'. In retrospect, 1921 can be seen as the ending of this particular International Revolutionary Wave, although possibilities still remained up until the crushing of the Communist led opposition in Hamburg, Germany in October 1923.

The earlier vision of communism, bringing about emancipation,

liberation and self-determination (in its widest sense) as the negation of capitalist exploitation, oppression and alienation, was diluted and then largely abandoned. As the prospects for international revolution receded, the new official USSR state-backed Communism was understood from a much narrower nationally based economic developmentalist perspective. National state ownership was now counterposed to private ownership. Official Communists argued that only the national state could promote the necessary modernisation, which the bourgeoisie, or private capitalists, had not or would not undertake in a world already dominated by the major imperial powers.

ii) The effects of the ebbing revolutionary tide

Instead of experiencing the benefits of a rising tide in an International Revolutionary Wave, those looking for international support soon faced an ebbing tide. Unable to ease the heavy burdens, the revolution was forced back to the territorial remains of the Russian Empire. During this period, workers' militias only appeared episodically outside the new Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR). Their attempts to promote armed insurrection were quickly crushed. The Red Army had no permanent success beyond the borders of the RSFSR, highlighted by its defeat outside Warsaw in 1920. But invading imperial armies were on Russian revolutionary 'soil' from 1917, with the Japanese only finally evacuating the Far Eastern Republic in October 1922.

The 1918-21 Civil War, and the direct (e.g. German, British, French, American and Japanese from 1917-22) and indirect (e.g. Polish from 1919-20) imperialist-backed invasions, the famines, and the major flu epidemic (1918-20) all mightily contributed to the problems facing the infant Soviet regime and the Russian Communist Party (bolshevik) - RCP(b). Furthermore, the desperate economic conditions accentuated by wars continued from 1914 to 1922, whilst backward social conditions, including high illiteracy, prevailed in many regions.

However, White counter-revolution and the linked imperialist interventions were defeated within the RSFSR itself. Instead, in the face of continued external imperial pressures, a creeping internal 'counter-revolution within the revolution' occurred. The possibility of international revolution was increasingly abandoned in favour of the defence of the new USSR. Retreats were all but inevitable under the prevailing international conditions. But some of the negative features, which allowed the growing 'counter-revolution in the revolution' to take the form it did, were already to be found in the Bolshevik Party in the earlier stages. And one of these negative features stemmed from how the RCP(b), the RSFSR and USSR handled the 'National Question'.

With the ebbing of the International Revolutionary Wave, the new RSFSR state was forced back on the pursuit of conventional diplomacy, with all the duplicity that involved. In Germany, which had been seen as the main bridge to an international revolutionary breakthrough, Bolshevik leaders resorted to deals with the revanchist Right (3). This was politically justified on the grounds that Germany too was now a victim of US/British/French imperialism. This culminated in the Treaty of Rapallo in April 1922 with its secret clauses for the benefit of the Reichswehr high command (4). This was a new and dangerous use of the theory of Imperialism and 'national oppression' developed in the First World War by the Bolsheviks.

And to try and manouevre between the various imperialist powers other treaties and deals were made. The first was with Estonia - the Treaty of Tartu in 1920 (5). Another was made with Poland - the Peace of Riga in 1921 (6) and with the UK - the Anglo-Soviet Trade Agreement in March 1921 (7). Bolshevik leaders began to accept that the major capitalist powers, particularly the UK and USA, were not facing immediate revolutionary overthrow.

Initially, in recognition of the hypocrisy of the capitalist powers in making deals, the leaders of the RSFSR pursued a more revolutionary course clandestinely through the Third International. But once the

International Revolutionary Wave ended, the defence of 'The Revolution' became defence of the USSR. Eventually the policies of the RCP(b), the Third International and the new USSR were virtually identical. The Third International had to be purged of critical voices. Any now dissident Communist who advocated a course of action different from the leaders of the RCP(b), or the All-Union Communist Party (after 1925), found themselves up against Party officials backed by state power. They faced state sanctions – territorial expulsion, imprisonment or execution.

As the International Revolutionary Wave ebbed, the soviets were increasingly dominated by a single party, the RCP(b). The initial commune-type leading role envisaged for the soviet was soon abandoned. However, unlike the crushing of soviet-like bodies and workers' councils outside the RSFSR, the soviets within the RCP(b) and RSFSR Party-State remained. But now they acted solely as the subordinate local agents of the state. The defeat of the Kronstadt Rebellion in March 1921 marked the final end of independent soviets (8).

Immediately after this, the Party-State leaders signalled their domestic retreat with the implementation of the New Economic Policy (NEP) (9). Initially seen as a temporary expedient, NEP soon formed the longer-term basis for the USSR becoming a state managed, but still largely privately-owned economy. Yet, it was to take until 1926 before the Bolshevik stance in the International Revolutionary Wave of the Russian Revolution being tied to the spread of international revolution was finally reversed (10). Now there was no immediate prospect of international socialist support, it was hoped that the USSR's external protectionist shell could shield it from internal penetration by outside imperial forces. Foreign trade and investment remained under state control.

The creation of the new USSR, and the subordination of the Third International to its international defence was accompanied internally by the dismissal of the previously supported right of neighbouring, ex-Tsarist and constituent republics to independence. Raising this

demand was now seen to be the result of hostile imperialist forces, e.g. in Georgia. And where the demand was raised within the RSFSR, soon to be the USSR, e.g. in Russian Turkestan, this was dismissed as 'National Bolshevism' and again seen as the plaything of outside powers.

Before the First World War, Lenin had written that "it would be wrong to interpret the right to national self-determination as meaning anything but the right to a separate state" (11). He defended this position against those, often inspired by the Austro-Marxists, who argued for federalism and cultural autonomy. However, federalism and cultural autonomy became the constitutional basis of the new USSR. The purpose was the same as for the Austro-Marxists, to maintain the unity of the existing state.

The Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian, and Transcaucasian Federative Soviet Socialist Republics (SSRs) were the initial constituent units (12) of the new USSR. Other SSRs, which joined later were created from above by the Party/State, not by a process of voluntary accession. The former autonomous Turkestan within the RFSFR was broken up into new Turkmen and Uzbek SSRs along with various autonomous SSRs and oblasts in 1924 (13).

After the consolidation of the USSR, official Communism became far more assiduous in suppressing dissident Communists than it did in opposing 'private' capitalist adversaries, with whom it was to make many deals and compromises worldwide. Up until 1941, official Communism killed many more Communists than the Nazis (with whom it sometimes made alliances). The purpose behind official Communist attempts at the worldwide elimination or marginalisation (depending on their degree of control) of dissident Communists, in the political or trade union arenas, was to suppress any new challenge to the Party-State.

The later dissident Communist traditions, which publicly emerged in opposition to the liquidation of their particular factions within 'The Party', did not champion a genuine communism alternative. In 1921,

Trotsky played his part in the suppression of Kronstadt, simultaneously breaking any link he once had with the soviet model of Communism. He also sowed the seeds of his own later destruction by supporting a clampdown on any remaining inner-Party democracy. Many dissident Communist groups went on to see themselves as Party leaderships in-waiting, believing a combination of a renewed Party-state and nationalised property could open the road to socialism.

It is common, amongst the remnant revolutionary Left, to blame the defeat of the 'Russian' Revolution entirely on external factors. It is often claimed that, only once all the wider international possibilities of revolutionary struggle had been exhausted, did internal counter-revolutionary or 'pro-capitalist' leaderships come to the fore, e.g. with the accession of Stalin to full power in 1928, if you are a Trotskyist; or Khrushchev's '1956 Turn', if you are a Stalinist or Maoist. Yet there were no mass workers' uprisings in 1928 to defend the Left Opposition. Those workers who rose in Hungary in 1956 certainly did not do so in defence of Stalin's legacy. Nor did workers lift a finger to defend 'their' workers states, when they crumbled between 1989 and 1991. But sailors and workers did rise in Kronstadt in 1921 to defend the soviet democracy. Their aims were made clear in the *Petropavlosk Resolution* (14).

Communists do not need to champion another retrospective 'saviour' who could have made things different. Those who blame the wider international failure on the lack of 'The Revolutionary Party' ignore the very material and historical reasons why a Bolshevik-style Party had been formed in Tsarist Russia before 1917, but not elsewhere. Those who blame the bureaucratisation of the USSR on the lack of a correct 'Revolutionary Leadership', ignore their own chosen leader's complicity in this process.

Given many later dissident Communists' earlier commitment at the highpoint of the International Revolutionary Wave, an initial reluctance to accept that a counter-revolution was occurring within the revolution is understandable. But the ever-increasing number of arbitrary arrests, exiles to concentration camps and summary

executions of workers, peasants, Communists, Social Democrats and Anarchists all aided those entrenching Party/State power.

Today, we still seek inspiration from the heroic Paris Communards who went down to defeat in 1871. We do this without taking an uncritical attitude to their politics and their actions. Nor do we feel the need to justify every speech or action of a particular individual or party. A critical approach is the only way to really learn and prepare for the future. It is in this spirit, that Volume Four examines how the 'National Question' was handled in the 1916-21 International Revolutionary Wave.

This process means subjecting 'revolutionary icons' to a much more searching investigation. Luxemburg's legacy was itself trampled upon as the counter-revolution took increasing hold in the USSR and the Comintern. Most of the attacks upon this deeply committed revolutionary Social Democrat were malevolent and misplaced. Yet Luxemburg did have weaknesses with regard to the 'National Question'. These have already been highlighted in Volume Three. Their influence on the Radical Left (including influential Bolshevik members) brought about major setbacks during this International Revolutionary Wave.

That ultimate 'revolutionary icon', Lenin, also needs to be subjected to more serious scrutiny. He, more than any other provided a lead to Communists on the 'National Question'. But this was a changing and sometimes vacillating lead. These political changes came about as the result of the impact of the major social and national forces unleashed within the International Revolutionary Wave. Mainstream historical debate has championed either Lenin, 'the hero', or Lenin, 'the villain', with the latter gaining ground since the collapse of the USSR. However, it is possible to take another view - of Lenin, 'the tragic figure'.

But another trend, which had already developed as a component of the International Left before the First World War, were the 'Internationalism from Below' advocates. They were even to impact

on the Bolsheviks in Ukraine. This volume outlines the significance of their contribution. Parts 1B and 1C look at the consequence of not following an 'Internationalism from Below' path in Latvia and Finland. This is not done to show that the adoption of the 'correct line' would have led to the triumph of the revolution. There were specific historical reasons why 'Internationalism from Below' was not adopted by revolutionary Social Democrats and later by Communists in these nations; just as there were specific historical reasons why there were no Bolshevik-type parties outside the Russian Empire in 1917. However, the manner in which struggles for national self-determination were dealt with affected the form the 'counter-revolution within the revolution' took.

iii) Political 'memory loss' after the end of the International Revolutionary Wave of 1916-21

The 'counter-revolution within the revolution' has also led to the 'forgetting' of the 'Internationalism from Below' way of addressing the 'National Question'. Today we live in a more integrated world, but one where the 'National Question' is far from having been resolved. It has re/appeared in old and new forms. Therefore, the purpose of this contribution is to show what is valuable today in the 'Internationalism from Below' thinking dating from the 1916-21 International Revolutionary Wave.

One problem, which has resulted from this counter-revolution, and its associated 'The Party' or aspiring 'Revolutionary Leadership-in-waiting' as the answer to all problems, is together they have held back the critical thinking needed to appraise the 1916-21 International Revolutionary Wave. Some ask whether the Bolsheviks had any choice but to cling on to power in the face of the dreadful vengeance White counter-revolution would have brought in its train. Yet, when necessary, revolutionaries in Russia had plenty of experience of moving over state borders to escape repression and to live to fight another day. And the Bolshevik leaders themselves signed treaties, which abandoned many workers and peasants to the hands of the

counter-revolution and reaction.

There was a major downside to the USSR's survival as a protectionist imperialist state, which came to be based upon the exploitation of workers and peasants alike. Large numbers of workers and peasants were killed, imprisoned and even enslaved under the prolonged 'counter-revolution within the revolution', particularly after Stalin achieved dictatorial power from 1928. And beyond the boundaries of the USSR, but still within the long reach of the Third International, and later the Cominform bureaucracies, many millions, who took part in social upheavals, found themselves struggling, not only against the bosses, landlords, armies and police, but also against those official Communists who took their inspiration from the legacy of the 'counter-revolution within the revolution'. The Party-approved 'Socialism' these officials advocated was a managerial top-down affair.

The social forces which took most inspiration from 'The Party' model included the politically excluded minor functionaries and bureaucrats who remoulded Social Democratic parties, or built new 'Third World' nationalist parties, on similar bureaucratic centralist lines. Although many sincere class fighters joined official Communist ranks, it was often the opportunists, careerists, and 'yes'-men and women who found their way into the leadership. Sometimes Communist Parties attracted people motivated by a jealousy at being excluded from the existing order, rather than a desire for its revolutionary overthrow.

Until the global corporations, backed primarily by US state power, finally undermined the basis for post-World War Two national statified capitalist development, the state-backed, official Communist Parties played their part in maintaining the essential foundations of existing world order, whilst trying to maintain and expand their own niche presence within it. After the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989, many Communist Party functionaries and ideologues revealed their essentially managerialist role by effortlessly transferring their services to corporate capitalism and its political parties, think-tanks and media. Their bureaucratic skills proved useful to their new

masters. Five Year Plans may have disappeared from the wider political lexicon, but countless workers now face corporate development plans, target-setting and glossy managerial propaganda sheets with as much contact with reality as the old *Soviet Weekly*!

And such was their commitment to 'communism' that many former official Communists became leading advocates first of US-led neo-liberalism, then of Right national populism. One person who has followed this trajectory is Vladimir Putin, former USSR KGB officer (1979-91), one-time liberal, Our Home-Russia politician and Boris Yeltsin' appointee (1995-99), before becoming the right populist President of the Russian Federal Republic in 1999 and holding effective power ever since (15).

Although the collapse of the USSR has removed the main material backing for the Party-state model of 'socialism', this also led to a political vacuum. Corporate globalisers loudly proclaimed the end of all opposition to the 'free market', 'free trade' and 'liberal democratic' capitalism - "There is no alternative!" Since the 2008 Crash their national populist adversaries have been every bit as committed to corporate power. Only now they want this enforced through protectionist trade deals and corporate courts, supplemented with an authoritarian populist state. They do not think that domestic or international deals should be restricted by the inherited limited national institutions, such as Congress or Westminster, or by the existing limited international institutions such as the UN or multilateral trade deals such as NAFTA or the EU (16). And where the state machinery is not sufficient to impose their will, then right populist leaders like Trump ate quite prepared to resort to non-state armed militias.

The disastrous human and environmental legacy bequeathed by Party-states, invoking the words 'communism' or 'socialism' in their support, can still be used to frighten. This is done in order to cover up the current massive human and environmental crimes of corporate capitalism. One indication of this is seen in the slogan, "Another World Is Possible". It is seen when 'the free market' is countered

with ‘public ownership’, ‘free trade’ with ‘fair trade’, and ‘liberal democracy’ with ‘popular democracy’. These alternatives have a nebulous character and often boil down to a call for a nicer, reformed capitalism. However, much of the reluctance to move towards an overall and integrated vision of an alternative world order stems from a justified contempt towards official ‘Communism’ and its Party-State regimes, and the fear of being tarred with the same brush.

The conditions of the 1916 to 1921 International Revolutionary Wave can not be repeated today. Yet very real debates and struggles took place, which still have relevance. Alternatives, suppressed at the time, but which can inspire our own struggles today, are very much worth studying. It is always best to learn beforehand from past mistakes, rather than being forced to repeat them again at considerable cost in the course of ongoing and future struggles.

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1. THE FIRST ATTEMPT TO SET UP A POST-NATIONAL WORLD ORDER

A. DIFFERING TIMELINES OF REVOLUTION

i) April 1916 to March 1921 or 'October' 1917 to August 1991?

History records that the key political date of the last century was October 25th, 1917. The consequences of the events, which happened on this day, determined a great deal of world politics for more than seventy years - up until the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989, and the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991. Elsewhere, in the Western imperial-dominated world, October 25th was marked as November 8th. The last Russian Provisional Government of 1917 was overthrown on this date.

Nevertheless, whichever date is chosen, it became universally characterised as the day the 'October' Revolution began. This name stuck despite the fact that the victors, the Bolsheviks, soon changed the Russian calendar from the Old Style (OS) used in Tsarist Russia to the New Style (NS) used in the rest of the Western world. History also places the location of the key events of this day in Petrograd. This city's name too has been subject to change, earlier from St. Petersburg to Petrograd, then later to Leningrad, and today back to St. Petersburg.

However, for most of the Left, certainly until very recently, those changes have only served to idealise the singular significance of these events, along with their date and location. John Reed vividly set the tone in his eyewitness account of the October Revolution, *Ten Days That Shook The World* (1). Although the particular time and place are undoubtedly important, they have loomed so large that they have tended to obscure other features of the wider International Revolutionary Wave. This wave began with the 1916 Easter Rising, in Dublin. The 1917 October Revolution inspired millions. After the

stark horrors of the First World War, perpetrated in the name of nation-state and empire, much of the support for a new, non-national, world order represented an emotional release from this recent nightmare past, and a real hope for a better future. Some of this wider support did not survive the first few knocks, whilst much more was lost through the later, more brutal retreats and setbacks.

The International Revolutionary Wave continued until March 1921, and the crushing of the Kronstadt Rising, just outside Petrograd. A secondary ripple effect of revolution was to continue for some time afterwards, in Bulgaria, Germany and China. But by this time the initial impetus for international revolution in the old Tsarist Empire had largely exhausted itself, as everything became subordinated to the maintenance of the new regime.

One consequence of this was an increasing shift from the pursuit of international socialist revolution to supporting separate national revolutions. This was linked to the abandonment of a revolutionary vision of emancipation, liberation and self-determination to revolution as paving the way for national economic development, with socialism/communism relegated to the distant future. Some of the leaders of these revolutions were linked to the Comintern by a bureaucratic 'internationalism', but this still primarily served the interests of a new Russian ruling class. Others were linked by an internationalism which had little organisational foundation beyond the maintenance of some mutually antagonistic sect-Internationals.

From 1922, in the place of that beaten and eroded Tsarist imperial monolith - Russia one and indivisible - a new 'rocky island' emerged - the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR). During the 'Civil War', the RSFSR had brought together most of the surrounding national 'reefs', inherited from Tsarist Russia, but temporarily separated. Together the 'rocky island and surrounding 'reefs' constituted the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), with the Russian, Byelorussian and Ukrainian SSRs at its core. In Russia and Byelorussia, the Bolsheviks had indeed largely defended their power through civil war. There was also an element of this in

Ukraine, although this was supplemented by a large measure of Russian 'bayonet Bolshevism'. And beyond the USSR's three initial constituent states, bayonet Bolshevism and centrally imposed bureaucratic decrees were the main method by which the USSR expanded further to reincorporate the Tsarist Russian Empire, which reached its maximum extent under Stalin the 'Red Tsar'.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was the world's first and only modern state not to bear a national name. Its particular national origins in Russia were seen to be an accident of history by its keenest supporters. They believed the USSR would eventually encompass the whole world. Each of the USSR's constituent republics had a national name but, in the grander scheme of things, particularist 'national man' was meant to give way to universal 'soviet man'. This is what the non-national name of the USSR signified. But this universalism never extended beyond the boundaries of the old Tsarist Russian Empire (with the exception, following the Second World War, of western Ukraine – one-time Hapsburg Austro-Hungarian eastern Galicia, part of Bukovina and Ruthenia - and Kaliningrad - Prussian-German Konigsberg).

Attempts to come to diplomatic rapprochement with the western capitalist states were already evident before 1921 with the 1920 Treaty of Tartu with Estonia. From this date, the state interests of the USSR began to gain the upper hand over the promotion of international revolution. In the face of powerful imperialist pressures, the Communist Party leadership tried to build up the USSR on firm economic foundations by means of state ownership of the dominant sectors of the economy, regulation of the private sector, and a state monopoly of international trade.

When Stalin achieved personal dictatorial control, after 1928, the remaining extensive private sector was largely eliminated, leaving the state as the effective owner or controller of the USSR economy. This statified economy, without any workers' democracy or control, was considered to be the triumph of 'socialism in one country'.

After the Second World War, the USSR became the political, economic and military centre of a wider archipelago (COMECON/Warsaw Pact) of other 'rocky islands' - the 'Peoples Democracies' - created not by revolutionary actions from below, but by top-down Party bureaucratic methods backed by USSR military occupation. The 'People's Democracies' did not join the 'non-national' USSR. Some, such as Yugoslavia, Albania and Romania, even showed reluctance either to join, or to remain part of, the 'platonic' COMECON and Warsaw Pact. The power the USSR held over them was resented. This was no love for its own sake, since the centre of attraction seemed to be self-obsessed, and was unable to form a relationship based on political equality with any of its partners.

Waves of a different nature soon attacked and eroded these 'rocky islands' as the initially confident USSR of the early Five Year Plans fell further back in terms of economic productivity and quality of goods compared to its major post Second World competitor, the USA. The external buttressing was no longer protecting a strong inner core in the USSR. Despite the addition of the post-Second World defences, that core was in a continuous process of economically hollowing itself out. This is why, when the initial breach of these COMECON/Warsaw Pact defences occurred in 1989, it was soon followed by the almost complete collapse of the ipolitical structure of the USSR in August 1991.

After 70 years of 'The Clash of Two Civilisations' - 'West' and 'East' - the latter contestant revealed itself to be an economically less productive, state-protectionist version of the former. The extravagant, much puffed-out, exotic dress, which had covered its emaciated body, was now publicly ridiculed as a wholly inappropriate and very ill-fitting garment. New clothing had to be borrowed from the victor to cover at least some of the nakedness. Useful fragments and scraps from the old regime were still retained though, both for functional and Russian nationalistic dress purposes. Despite this, whole limbs still threatened to fall from the body, so advanced was the previously, largely undiagnosed and poorly treated disease.

People wondered if there had ever been a time when the clothing fitted, and if, under this outer covering, there had ever been a lithe, youthful body, which had been genuinely admired. What had happened to the infant RSFSR and the young USSR? Why was the latter no longer able to attract any suitors and, indeed, what made even recent partners cast their eyes elsewhere?

ii) Timelines in the 1916-21 International Revolutionary Wave

In order to account for this, it is necessary to widen our historical perspective, so that events leading immediately up to, and following directly from, October 25th/November 8th, in Petrograd/Leningrad, are not the sole timeline to be considered. The 1916-21 International Revolutionary Wave was multi-centred and although key events, especially those in the Russian epicentre, affected all other centres, lifting or lowering the tempo in each, their trajectories did not always merge into one single, continuous revolutionary timeline. Indeed, actions were taken, based on this assumption, which held back or prevented such coalescence.

As early as 1915, there had been demonstrations, strikes and mutinies in different parts of the world. These were a response to the horrors created by the First World War. What the Dublin Rising of Easter 1916 represented though, for a small number within the International Left, was the beginning of a conscious, organised effort to seriously oppose the imperial war itself. That is what made April 24th, 1916, the starting point of the new International Revolutionary Wave – "six days to shake an empire" (5) and beyond.

Lenin now realised that the prospect of International Socialist Revolution was becoming a reality under the hammer blows of the war. International Socialist revolution was moving from the realm of abstract propaganda to that of practical agitation and organisation. The Radical Left often failed to make this distinction. After the crushing of the Easter Rising in Dublin, they declared that it had lacked a proper international socialist pedigree, so they dismissed it

(6). Instead, the Radical Left promoted 'pure', working class-based propaganda, uncontaminated by any such 'petty bourgeois deviations'. Then the 'true' revolution would inevitably come along.

Inspired by the example of the Easter Rising, Lenin famously berated the Radical Left's approach. "To imagine that social revolution is *conceivable* without the revolts by small nations in the colonies and Europe, without revolutionary outbursts by a section of the petty bourgeoisie *with all its prejudices*, without a movement of non-conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against oppression by the landowners, the church, and the monarchy, against national oppression, etc. - to imagine all this is to *repudiate social revolution*... Whoever expects a 'pure' revolution will *never* live to see it. Such a person pays lip-service to revolution without understanding what revolution is" (7).

Clearly Lenin did not make the alternative error and dress-up the Easter Rising in glorious red colours. He saw that, although it had an anti-imperialist thrust, it was not a conscious socialist uprising. However, he maintained that it was the job of revolutionary Social Democrats to take part in such events and to organise independently. This placed them in a better position to push such a movement towards socialist objectives and to challenge others, such as the nationalists, who had other designs. Lenin would have appreciated Connolly's alleged advice to the Irish Citizen Army before the Rising. "In the event of victory, hold on to your rifles, as those with whom we are fighting may stop before our final goal is achieved" (8).

Lenin was not a revolutionary romantic. This is one reason he opposed much of the politics of the Radical Left. He believed there to be both a science and an art to revolutionary struggle. A scientific preparation involved the study of the international stage capitalism had reached, linked to a close study of the political contradictions this led to in each state (particularly Tsarist Russia). Since the development of the International Revolutionary Wave in 1916, and its spread to the Tsarist Empire in 1917, it was vital to decide whether the situation had matured sufficiently for the organised revolutionary

forces to plan a successful insurrection. Therefore, the overthrow of the old order should not take place too early, or the counter-revolutionary forces could still be too strong. Nor could it be delayed until too late. Then the wider population might already have lost heart, and thus fail to provide their needed support.

Lenin did not just leave the revolution to mature of its own accord. There were always relevant wider factors, which even the best-organised revolutionary forces could not summon up or control. But there were also appropriate political and organisational tasks, which could speed-up the maturing process, and develop the situation in a more favourable direction.

When the 1917 February Revolution broke out, first in Petrograd, even Lenin had not anticipated its immediate likelihood. Nevertheless, Lenin understood that this was now merely the starting point in a rapidly developing international revolutionary situation. This could best be advanced through a working-class seizure of power in Russia. A revolutionary Russia could be the trigger and inspiration for International Socialist revolution. It took a little time before Lenin persuaded the majority of Bolsheviks of the necessity to plan for such a course of action, as outlined in *The April Theses* (9). Newly radicalised sailors, soldiers and factory workers had entered the ranks of the Bolsheviks and provided Lenin with the support he needed.

However, no sooner had Lenin overcome the hesitancy of some old Bolsheviks, than he faced the tricky situation of how to relate to his chosen new allies. Many of the revolutionary sailors, soldiers and factory workers in Petrograd were eager to topple the Provisional Government. They were prepared to take direct control, if necessary, without the backing of a majority in the soviets. Despite Lenin's undoubted organisational skills, the Bolsheviks found it very difficult to handle the mass oppositional demonstrations that marked the July Days of 1917. The key mobilisation on July 4th (OS) had no single clear purpose. Some wanted to overthrow the government, some to change its composition. There were many armed and unarmed participants. This uncertainty provided an opportunity for counter-

revolution to rear its ugly head and initiate its repression. As a consequence, Lenin was forced to go underground, hounded by the Provisional Government, and denounced as an agent of the kaiser.

But then the counter-revolutionary forces overplayed their hand too. They tried to organise a coup headed by General Kornilov in August. After the Bolsheviks' successful leadership of the forces resisting this, which involved Red Guards, soldiers' and sailors' soviets, popular support flowed in their direction once more. The Bolsheviks became a majority in the key Petrograd Soviet. Although Lenin pointed to new favourable international circumstances, his real concern lay in the possibility that the revolutionary situation in Russia could now pass by. This would lead to disorganised, disconnected, spontaneous risings, which could more easily be isolated and suppressed. Therefore, any procrastination by the revolutionary forces could result in growing despair spreading amongst the people. Either of these possibilities would give the domestic counter-revolutionary forces another chance to crush the existing revolution, and hence delay any further favourable developments in Russia for the immediate future.

Lenin wrote furiously, pointing out the immediate need for the working class to take power to avoid further catastrophe. He showed that the rising popularity of the Bolsheviks made this a very real option (10). So, he demanded that the party take the organisational steps needed for an insurrection. Preparations for the seizure of power were made by the Petrograd Soviet's Military Revolutionary Committee and successfully carried out on October 25th (OS). The seizure of power won the support of the majority at the Second Congress of Soviets held in Petrograd the next day. The new popular revolution soon spread throughout Russia and beyond to other parts of the Russian Empire.

Many on the Radical Left did not appreciate Lenin's method of careful preparation. He closely examined events beyond Bolshevik control whilst, at the same time, meticulously organising the party's appropriate intervention for each phase of the revolutionary process. The Radical Left tended to reduce events to a pre-determined and

inevitable timeline, which could be duplicated in any given situation. Local and 'national' events would all soon be subsumed in one elemental, united, non-national, revolutionary surge.

After October 25th (OS)/November 8th (NS) the abstract propagandists of the Radical Left were now euphoric, since they had a successful workers' revolution and a working-class state power to hold up as an example. There need be no more 'Dublins'. The days of the 'pure' class revolution had arrived! After Petrograd - Berlin, then Paris, London, and maybe on to New York! However, before these ambitious revolutionary leaps took place, there was a more immediately pressing task - extending the revolution to cover the full extent of the old Tsarist Empire.

B. OTHER CENTRES, OTHET TIMELINES – LATVIA

i) Latvia

In 1917 the Bolsheviks' greatest depth of support lay not in Russia, but in the small nation of Latvia (mainly consisting of the Livland and Courland provinces of the Tsarist Empire). Unlike their comrades in Russia (or, at least those under the direct control of Lenin's Central Committee, since the 1912 split with the Mensheviks) the Latvian Bolsheviks still operated alongside other Social Democrats in a common organisation, the Latvian Social Democratic Party (LSDP). Bolsheviks formed the majority in the LSDP, which, before 1912, had also been an autonomous section of the RSDLP. Over the course of 1917, the Latvian Bolshevik leadership edged any organised Menshevik opposition out of the party, as the immediate political impact of their different approaches became clearer.

Latvia was the only nation in the Russian Empire, where non-Russians formed both the majority of the Bolshevik membership and of its leadership. Elsewhere in the Russian Empire, for example in Ukraine, Bolshevik leaders mainly came from the Russians or the Russified, with working-class support from these two groups in the

major cities; whilst in Finland, Bolshevik support came mainly from Russian soldiers in the garrisons, or sailors in the Baltic Fleet.

Although it had an ethnic Latvian majority, the LSDP was genuinely multi-ethnic in composition and also included Russians, Jews and other nationalities. The LSDP formed the biggest single pre-1912 section of the RSDLP, and also of the pre-Revolution section of the all-Russia Bolsheviks. This gives some indication of the LSDP's importance given the relative size of the Latvia and Russia (11). Many Latvians also lived outside Latvia. They formed a significant minority in Petrograd, particularly during the First World War. Here they lived and worked alongside the Russian majority, whilst still retaining their Latvian nationality. The Latvian Strelki (Red Rifles) became key to the defence of the October Revolution in Petrograd and elsewhere (12). Latvians were to contribute important figures to the Bolshevik organisation in Russia itself, including to the party leadership and, after the October Revolution, to the new Russian state apparatus, especially internal security - the Cheka.

The other distinctive feature of the LSDP, compared to the RSDLP and the Russian Bolsheviks, was the support it enjoyed amongst the rural workers, and even the small peasantry in Latvia. The majority of the landlord class in Latvia was neither Latvian nor Russian. They were Baltic German barons, descendants of the Teutonic Knights who had conquered the Baltic Lands in the Middle Ages. However, in addition to the Baltic German barons, there were also a considerable number of Latvian small proprietors (the grey barons), many of whom would have had their eyes cast enviously upon the Baltic German-owned estates.

The LSDP emphasised the economic, social and political divide between the landless labourers and the small and medium proprietors. Nevertheless, in practice, the widely shared Latvian antipathy towards the Baltic German barons often led to the blurring of this class distinction. Therefore, in 1917, up to October, the LSDP was able to get considerable Latvian peasant support too, despite their programme looking forward to the peasants' ultimate demise as a class.

The ‘Agrarian Question’ had presented quite a problem for Marxists in Russia, particularly after the peasants’ role in the 1905 Revolution. At the following RSDLP unity conference, in a departure from previous orthodox Marxist theory, Lenin argued for programmatic sanction to be given for the peasant seizure and division of the large landlords’ estates. He had to tacitly acknowledge that capitalist agricultural production was much less developed in Russia than he had previously argued. This was so the break-up of potentially more productive, large-scale farms could be justified. The main reason for such a policy was political not economic. In a country where peasants formed a majority of the population, the working class needed their support to overthrow the tsarist regime.

In Latvia, however, capitalist relations in agriculture were more developed than in Russia. This encouraged the LSDP to argue that a future revolutionary state should take-over, undivided, the mainly Baltic German baron-owned, large estates. Therefore, the LSDP’s leading theoretician, Peter Stucka, successfully argued that Latvia should be exempt from Lenin’s proposed agrarian programme for Russia, with its support for the subdivision of large estates by the peasants (13).

Furthermore, after the 1917 February Revolution, the farmworker-based Soviets of Landless Peasants often worked jointly with the small peasant owners in the official local committees in rural Latvia. These were set up under the auspices of an Agrarian Committee, when the Russian Provisional Government appointed Dr. A. Priedkhans as its second Governor of Latvia. He was an ethnic Latvian and a Social Democrat. The local committees were meant to arbitrate whenever disputes over landownership or problems over its working emerged (14). As a result, the elemental, anarchic, peasant uprisings, which passed over much of Russia and Ukraine from late 1917 onwards, made less impression in Latvia, especially when compared to the situation there back in 1905. Antipathy towards the Baltic German barons (exacerbated by the German war offensive) probably acted as a partial safety valve, reducing some of the other class tensions amongst the rural Latvians.

ii) The LSDP and the 'National Question' in Latvia

Stucka was a Latvian Bolshevik who was quite capable of coming to his own political conclusions. Lenin understood and agreed with Stucka's earlier analysis of the 'Agrarian Question' in Latvia. Stucka also had a common understanding with Lenin over the 'National Question'. But again, Stucka made his own contribution based on his experiences during and after the 1905 Revolution in Latvia. Stucka's support for Lenin's view was significant because, on this issue, Lenin was often in a minority amongst the Bolsheviks, especially those from outside Russia proper. Sometimes Lenin achieved a majority for his views on paper, but his advice was often ignored. Instead, other Bolsheviks sometimes adopted Radical Left, or even Great Russian chauvinist policies.

Unlike the Bolshevik followers of these particular trends of thought, Stucka fully appreciated the nature of Lenin's tactical application of 'the right to secede'. He understood that a different approach was required when support was being sought in Russia itself, compared to when it was being sought in the subordinate nations of the Empire. At the Seventh Conference of the RSDLP (bolsheviks), held on April 22nd, 1917 (OS), Stucka showed why, as a delegate from the autonomous LSDP, he voted for the complete Bolshevik line, with the exception of the 'National Question', on which he abstained.

He explained that, "To defend the right of separation from Russia is the obligation of the Russian proletariat, but for the Latvians to vote for the resolution would mean merging with the Latvian bourgeois element" (15). How Lenin must have wished he could make the Poles, especially Rosa Luxemburg, see things in a similar light! (16)

However, as the Revolution progressed, growing problems emerged, which challenged Lenin's understanding of the 'National Question'. One reason for this was the falsity of the thinking underlying Lenin's support for 'the right to secede' (17). Contrary to Lenin's expectations, the demand for more radical measures of self-determination, including independence, grew more strongly as the

tsarist apparatus of repression fell apart over 1917. Revolutionary Social Democrats from the 'internationalism from below' tradition, such as Kazirmierz Kelles-Kreuz (18) and Lev Iurkevich (19), had already pointed out this likelihood. Lenin's theory, which supported 'the right of self-determination', but tended to oppose its actual implementation, was somewhat akin to the view held by those who advocate 'coitus interruptus' as an effective method of birth control!

Immediately following the February Revolution though, most national democratic movements in the Russian Empire still supported the limited demand for national autonomy within a democratic Russia. Some demanded their own national republic within a democratic federated Russia. The call for national independence was initially either non-existent, or very much a minority demand, in most subordinate nations of the Empire, with the exception of 'Russian' Poland (by now separated from the Tsarist Empire due to the German military occupation). As the year progressed, though, more of the various non-Russian nations and nationalities began to call for the exercise of their right to self-determination. When this was delayed or denied, by successive Provisional Governments, demands for a more radical break with the Empire grew. This did much to undermine the official, post-February order, which still remained Russian chauvinist and imperialist in character.

Lenin championed 'the right of nations to secede', under both the Tsarist and Provisional Governments. He managed to persuade many doubting Bolsheviks that, when working class power was achieved, demands for the exercise of such a right would then recede. Thus, right up to the October Revolution, Lenin was able to maintain the support of Bolsheviks who tended to be in the Radical Left or even the Great Russian chauvinist camps over this issue, despite their misgivings over any policy which might encourage 'petty bourgeois nationalist' deviations. Many must have believed that Lenin's current national policy was merely temporary; a question of tactics designed to undermine the Provisional Government, whilst the Bolsheviks were still in a minority and formed the opposition. They eagerly anticipated the day when Bolshevik support for the right to national

self-determination could be dropped.

Nevertheless, even before the October Revolution, as soon as it came to a practical engagement with the developing national democratic movements on the ground, this Bolshevik antipathy often reasserted itself, particularly when others competed for political support. These Bolsheviks were politically disarmed when calls were made by members of specific nations and nationalities to exercise their right to self-determination.

Yet the Bolsheviks did have a policy that was meant to address such a situation. This policy was support for national autonomy within a democratic centralised Russia (20). A combination of the continued influence of Radical Leftism and Great Russian chauvinism, however, meant that many Bolsheviks were reluctant to take the political lead in pressing for such national autonomy. Therefore others, especially the radical and populist nationalists, often filled this political vacuum. This contributed to the different trajectory of political events in many non-ethnic Russian areas, which diverged from the Bolsheviks' theoretical timeline for the Revolution, forged in Petrograd and Russia itself.

This, however, was not the case in Latvia where the Russian Bolsheviks' ally, the LSDP was in control. This had much to do with Stucka's influence and his understanding of the need for the LSDP to offer a particular solution to the exercise of national self-determination. Therefore, at the Seventh Congress of the LSDP, held in July 1917, he argued for political autonomy for Latvia. Furthermore, given the Latvian Bolsheviks' strong representation on both revolutionary and official bodies, this was not just a 'paper' position, but also one that could be implemented.

Stucka was also quite clear that autonomy was not merely a policy of administrative or economic convenience, but a demand for the specifically national autonomy of an "undivided Latvia" (21). Whilst such a demand was partly directed against the previous tsarist division of Latvian lands into Livland and Courland, and the German imperial

wartime occupation of Latvia's Courland province, it also was directed against the continued incorporation of the Latgale district, with its ethnic Latvian majority, in the wider Russian gubenia (province) of Vitebsk. By championing national autonomy for the whole of Latvia, the LSDP was able to prevent any nationalist opposition from outflanking it.

This raises a question. If Russian Bolsheviks had universally adopted Lenin's approach to the 'National Question', and Bolsheviks in the non-Great Russian nations had adopted Stucka's approach, could this have led to its more successful resolution in the wider Russian Empire? The most likely answer is 'No'. Latvia held a very distinct position within this empire and the Latvian Bolsheviks held a unique position amongst revolutionary Social Democrats.

Unlike most other non-Russian nationality areas, the primary national conflict in Latvia lay not between the Latvians and the Great Russians, but with the Baltic Germans (22). There had been recent tsarist state attempts at Russification, which were resented in Latvia as elsewhere in the Tsarist Empire. However, this still did not prevent many Latvians from looking wistfully to earlier tsars' longstanding support for extensive Finnish autonomy. This autonomy had been under attack from 1899 and again from 1908. Nevertheless, national opposition to these attacks in Finland had been so effective, that it encouraged both Latvians and their Estonian neighbours, to think that the Tsar's old Finnish national autonomy policy could be restored, and even extended to their Baltic provinces too. Even as late as early 1917, there were still liberal Latvians who wanted Tsarist Russia's outdated zemstvo form of local government to be fully implemented in Latvia, in order to end the specific privileges of the Baltic Germans (23).

The tsar recognised this rather untypical situation of 'shared interests' between Russians and non-Russians in his empire. When World War One started, he even allowed Latvians, despite some conservative opposition, to have their own national regiment - the Latvian Rifles (Strelki). The only other nationality to be willingly conceded this

privilege was the Armenians (24). In a similar fashion to the Latvians, they saw their main national oppressor not in the Russians, but elsewhere - in the Armenian case, the Ottoman Turks.

The warmer relationship between Russians and Latvians extended across the classes. This helps to explain why the Latvians were able, not only to form an LSDP, in which they remained the majority and to welcome Russians in too, but also to fully participate in the Russian sections of the RSDLP and the Bolsheviks.

iii) The revolutionary timeline in Latvia

The situation in Latvia was more politically advanced than in Russia, including Petrograd, from March right up to the eve of the October Revolution. By as early as March 3rd, 1917 (OS) the Bolshevik-dominated LSDP initiated the Riga Workers' Soviet in Latvia's main city. Already, by March 20th (OS), the LSDP formed the controlling majority (25).

The LSDP also had early success with the Latvian Riflemen's Soviet (Izkolastrel). Their majority position was ratified at its Second Congress held from May 12th-17th (OS) (26). The Latvian Riflemen provided the main armed force backing the LSDP in Latvia. One remaining problem lay though in the soviet of the XII Army (Izkosol), which was located on the war front, which passed right through Latvia. Unlike the Latvian Riflemen, the XII Army was organised on an all-Russian basis and remained under the control of Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries (27). As a consequence, it still supported its officers and was pro-Provisional Government.

The LSDP leadership understood the futility of any attempt to seize power in Latvia alone, when significant Russian government forces could still be mobilised against them. The LSDP had 'to mark time' until their Russian comrades were ready. Not that this time was wasted though, since some of the LSDP 'surplus' capabilities went into helping to prepare for the 'Russian' insurrection in Petrograd.

The LSDP, Riga Workers' Soviet and Izkolastrel had also helped to set up the Soviet of Landless Peasants (28). LSDP countrywide hegemony (in the parts of Latvia not occupied by German forces) meant that they were able to win the direct support of the majority of landless labourers and poorer peasants too. This contrasted with the situation in Russia, where the Bolsheviks had to come to a deal with the Left Social Revolutionaries in order to gain wider peasant support for the October Revolution.

The LSDP also took the initiative in establishing the Executive Committee coordinating the workers', landless peasants' and soldiers deputies' soviets. This was called Izkolat and had a Bolshevik majority elected at the special Congress of Latvian Soviets, held between July 29-30th (O.) (29).

When the October 25th (OS) insurrection in Petrograd triumphed, the question of who was now to hold official power was more easily resolved in (non-German occupied) Latvia than anywhere else in the area that had constituted the old Tsarist Russian Empire. The often-tense situation of Dual Power, which had existed between successive Provisional Governments and the Russian (particularly the Petrograd) soviets, throughout much of 1917, was hardly an issue in Latvia. Although most Latvian forces, from the LSDP to the liberals, had looked to an all-Russia solution to the continued crisis, the Provisional Government's writ had counted for relatively little in Latvia. In practice, Latvia exercised its own autonomy.

The LSDP had overwhelming control of the central Izkolat, as well as its constituent soviets of workers, Latvian Riflemen and landless peasants. The LSDP controlled Latvian Riflemen's Soviet was central to the Russian Bolshevik initiated seizure of power in Petrograd. So, the LSDP was fully involved at the all-Russian, as well as the Latvian level.

Between the February and October Revolutions, the LSDP also won control of much of the administrative apparatus in the countryside. Ironically, they could now offer the prospect of a more disciplined

revolutionary transition compared to the very different prospect in those vast areas of Russia and Ukraine, where no such machinery existed. In these other areas, peasants were far more likely to take things into their own hands.

Furthermore, LSDP supremacy in Latvia was not confined to the revolution's base organisations - the soviets. It was underlined by the majority support it gained in elections to the Riga Council (thwarted by German occupation from August 21st [OS]), the district land councils and to Vidzeme/Livland provincial council. (The other province, Kurzeme/Courland, was already under German military occupation.) It would be reconfirmed by the staggering 72% vote the LSDP achieved in unoccupied Latvia, during the elections to the Constituent Assembly in December (30).

There was no need either, for the new all-Russian Soviet government's formal handover of local power to the Latvian Izkolat, nor for Izkolat's formal recognition of this Soviet government. In effect, power had already passed to the Bolshevik LSDP and to the Izkolat Republic within Latvia. Thus, when the Bolsheviks and their allies took power in Petrograd, the Latvian and Russian revolutionary timelines coalesced almost perfectly!

There was no other part of the Russian Empire where the revolutionary timeline unfolded so neatly as in Latvia. Petrograd and wider Russia experienced the July Days when, in opposition to Lenin's careful strategy of winning prior majority support for the Bolsheviks in the Soviet, a minority of revolutionary sailors and factory workers attempted to seize power. This had almost led to a fracture in the Russian revolutionary timeline.

Elsewhere in the Russian Empire and beyond, a multi-centred revolutionary scenario was to develop. There were to be occasions when the Bolsheviks, in effect, behaved more like those impetuous sailors, soldiers and factory workers during the July Days. They organised seizures of power in non-Russian majority areas without any real attempts to win prior majority support from non-Russian

workers (or peasants). There was a major difference between using military force to extend the October Revolution from Petrograd and Moscow to more backward and sometimes resistant, but nevertheless, still Russian provincial centres, and in resorting to such methods in non-Russian national areas where the Bolsheviks, perceived as another Great Russian force, enjoyed a lot less support. Other revolutionary timelines had to be recognised and the failure to do so came at a considerable political cost.

C. OTHER CENTRES, OTHER TIMELINES - FINLAND

i) The revolutionary timeline in Finland

Finland is perhaps one of the more overlooked areas when examining the 1916-21 International Revolutionary Wave. Yet, as in Latvia, revolutionary conditions matured earlier in the crucial year of 1917 than in Russia itself. Indeed, until the Bolsheviks managed to take control of Petrograd in October, this city could be considered as an even more significant point on the revolutionary triangle made up of Riga, Helsinki and Petrograd. Once again, the characterisation 'Russian' Revolution has helped to disguise the substantial contribution of non-Russians to the revolution, and to the alternative possibilities offered by an 'Internationalism from Below' approach.

There is a strong case for suggesting that in Finland the best opportunity for a successful workers' and poor peasants' seizure of power occurred in July of that year. Unfortunately, it was a divided Social Democratic Party of Finland (SDPF) that became embroiled in the increasingly revolutionary situation. Workers and poorer peasants were beginning to take action quite independently of the party leadership. However, the majority of the SDPF leaders were committed to constitutionalism, despite the Finnish landlord and bourgeois Right having few qualms about resorting to bloody extra-constitutional force to thwart them and to achieve their own ends.

As a result, the revolutionary timeline in Finland became completely

fractured by mid-1918. Therefore, Communists tend to remember Finland as the location of the first White counter-revolution, in which many thousands of workers and poor peasants lost their lives. Without examining events more closely, they shudder and quickly pass over to the more reassuring revolutionary timeline in neighbouring Petrograd.

Finland had a strong Social Democratic tradition represented by the SDPF. Finland was the most economically developed nation in the Tsarist Empire. It also had an active constitutional politics. Strangely, there had been no questioning by Lenin, nor the Bolsheviks, of the existence of the SDPF, despite it forming and remaining outside the ranks of Russian Social Democracy. Lenin's 'one state, one party' policy should have demanded that the SDPF join the RSDLP. Following his own logic, Lenin should have made a similar case for the SDPF joining the RSDLP as a subordinate section, to that made for Luxemburg's SDPKPL in Poland.

However, to come to terms with this anomaly, Lenin would have had to reject his theory of greater capitalist development progressively undermining the basis for national democratic struggles (31). He would also have had to examine Finland's history more closely, something he appears not to have done.

Constitutionally, the Grand Duchy of Finland was an autonomous part of the Tsarist Empire, sharing only a common head of state - the Tsar. From 1809 to 1899 the tsarist regime's attitude towards Finland resembled a watered-down version of the Hapsburg regime's attitude towards Hungary. Finland enjoyed a 'privileged' political position inside the Tsarist Empire when compared to all the other subordinate nations and nationalities. As recently as 1863, the Tsar had been actively promoting a pan-Finn policy (32). This helped to encourage a particular type of ethnic Finnish chauvinism, which began to form the basis for a new Right nationalist politics there.

The growing Finnicisation of both society and the administration led to hostility directed against both the Swedes (the traditional local

ruling class) and the Sami (still tribally organised). It was also based on a claim to the land of those Karelians (ethnically related to the Finns) living outside Finland in official Russian territory). This growth of ethnic Finnish nationalism resembled the effect of Hapsburg Hungary's Magyarisation drive directed against Croats, Romanians, Slovaks and Ruthenian Ukrainians. The Finnish and Magyar Right were both heavily influenced by a right-wing German nationalism, which emphasised race and language.

Before 1809, Swedes had held a similar position in Finland to that of the Germans in the eastern Baltic areas. Many Finns, particularly the peasants and the growing middle class, showed a lingering resentment directed against the Swedes. However, unlike the Baltic Germans, the Swedes in Finland also included peasants, fishermen and workers. One reason for the Tsar's pro-Finnish stance had been to undermine the traditional Swedish ruling class. However, the small number of Swedes, who formed the landlord class, had largely come to accept tsarist rule, rather like their Baltic German counterparts. They had formed the base for the traditional Right in Finland.

Finns, however, had been advancing at all other levels of society, overtaking the Swedes. Therefore, after the Tsar's new post-1899 policy of 'Russification', most Finns understood their main political opponent now to be the tsarist regime and its Russian-manned, top-level bureaucracy, especially the Governor General. The new nationalist Right drew its main support from the rising Finnish bourgeoisie and the better-off peasants.

Industrial capitalism was advancing at a fast pace in Finland. The expansion of primary industries, particularly timber for export, provided the investment capital needed for the formation of new secondary industries too. The Finnish bourgeoisie undoubtedly benefited from the nearby Russian market, but the German market was even more important. Indeed, the threat of Finland being drawn closer to Germany was one of the reasons prompting the tsarist regime's new post-1899 'Russification' policy. However, this just gave a further fillip to the national movement in Finland. A widely

supported campaign of non-cooperation meant that Finland's autonomous institutions largely survived. Finland's internal administration and policing remained in Finnish hands.

Furthermore, despite the growth of tsarist state repression, independent Finnish trade unions and political parties enjoyed a legal existence throughout this period. The SDPF (originally formed in 1899 as the Finnish Labour Party), was one such legal party (33). This was a unique situation for Social Democrats in the Tsarist Empire. Once again, this more resembled the position in Hapsburg Hungary. Furthermore, migrant Finnish workers carried this tradition with them, whether to nearby Petrograd, or the USA, especially the copper mining city of Butte in Montana.

The social base of support for the SDPF mostly came from the rapidly growing and mainly Finnish-speaking working class. The SDPF had a strong base in the trade unions. New capitalist farming methods had created greater social divisions in the countryside. There was a growing class of better-off peasants, but there were also more, poor peasants and landless labourers. Many of those who had lost out became part of the working class, particularly in southern Finland. But many poor peasants, as well as rural workers, also gave their support to the SDPF.

Like other sections of Finnish society contesting tsarist rule, the SDPF considered itself to be modern and European. The SDPF tended to look to Germany, which, in the case of its leadership, meant adopting the SDPD as a model, rather than the RSDLP. However, if the SDPD could look back to its heroic days of illegality in the 1880s, under Bismarck's Anti-Socialist Laws in Germany, the SDPF could look to the heroic days of the 1905 Revolution. Workers had formed strike committees and created their own Red Guards. Intense class struggle had taken place between the Finnish workers on one side and the bourgeoisie and middle class on the other. The SDPF also committed itself to the national democratic struggle and opposed the tsarist imperial order in Finland.

As a result of all the opposition during the 1905 Revolution, the tsarist government was forced to suspend its policy of 'Russification' and army conscription. More significantly, the old estates-based Finnish Diet was abolished and a new single chamber assembly (Eduskunta) was created with a greatly increased franchise (raised from 125,000 to 1,125,000), with women's suffrage for the first time in Europe. The SDPF emerged as the largest party in the 1907 election winning 80 out of 200 seats (34).

The SDPF had a foot in both camps of European Social Democracy - from 1899-1905 and again from 1907, the 'western' SDPD. camp of constitutionalism and legality; and from 1905-1906, the 'eastern' camp with its shared experience of Revolution. Increasingly, the leadership was to take the 'western road', but there were plenty of members who would bring their experiences of the 'eastern road' to bear in 1917-8. Nevertheless, there was a real basis for a constitutionalist approach, so there was also a political space for openly Social Democratic, reformist politics in Finland. This was hardly possible elsewhere in the Tsarist Empire.

The strengthening of reformism meant that the SDPF gave a social patriotic lead within the Finnish national movement, rather than promoting 'internationalism from below'. Yet the SDPF did lead the democratic wing of Finland's national movement and opposed the ethnic nationalism of the smaller nationalist Right. The SDPF officially declared itself to be open to Finns, Swedes and Russians in 1906, challenging the 'racial' and language divisions promoted by the Right (35). The SDPF. opposition was to Tsarist Russian oppression not to Russian nationals. The SDPF and the RSDLP maintained cordial relations, since both obviously shared a common interest in opposing tsarist rule (36).

When the First World War started in 1914, there was little war fever amongst the Finns. Contributing to this lack of enthusiasm were the regime's attempts at Russification (from 1899), the marginalisation of Finland's autonomous elected institutions (1908 and 1910), followed by direct Russian military rule (1914), and the recent annexation

(1912) of the province of Viipuri (Vyborg) to provide Petrograd with defence in depth, in case of a German invasion through Finland (37).

Elsewhere in the Tsarist Empire, Russians and national minorities had been conscripted into all-Russian regiments, or even, in the case of Latvia and Armenia, into national regiments. A similar concession also had to be made by the regime when the Polish Legion was formed; but this was grudging and not very successful, because both the German and Austrian regimes had made bolder 'promises' to 'their' Poles. However, the feeling towards the tsarist regime in Finland was very hostile. This had been highlighted recently by the successful 1904-5 anti-conscription campaign. Therefore, no attempt was made to conscript Finns into the tsarist army. This was analogous to Ireland within the UK. However, because of Finland's strategic position, 100,000 Russian soldiers were stationed there, a further reason for the regime's unpopularity (38).

However, the fact that most Finns did not join the Russian army was to have unforeseen effects during the Revolution of 1917-8. For a small number of Finns did get significant military experience. This included the aristocratic Swedish Finlander, General Mannerheim, who fought for Tsarist Russia and was to become the leader of the Finnish Whites in 1918. The Finnish Right nationalists were another force that received military training in the First World War, as the Jager Battalion, under the auspices of the German Army (39).

It was only to be after the February Revolution that some workers got military training, when they firmed their own unit of Red Guards in Petrograd, under A. Duvva (40). Quite a substantial number of Finns worked and lived in Petrograd, during the First World War.

Nevertheless, despite the lack of conscription, the First World War still made its impact felt on the lives of most Finns. Workers and poor peasants faced unemployment and hunger. The timber export market collapsed with the loss of many jobs. Food shortages became more common due to the German naval blockade of the Baltic. The growing resentment led to increased support for the SDPF. They won

an absolute majority of the seats in the Eduskunta (104 out of 200) in the 1916 elections (41).

However, Finland was under direct Russian military rule, so the formal representative institutions were disconnected from the real machinery of government. The Russian authorities found it less troublesome to allow Finns to have their largely toothless 'debating societies', than to arouse greater opposition by suppressing them. Without such official caution, an opportunity might have been given for German intervention in Finland, fronted by those Finns in the Jager Battalion.

ii) From February to August 1917 - rapid progress along the Finnish revolutionary timeline

Things changed dramatically in Finland, as a result of the February Revolution in 1917. In Russia itself, there was a succession of Provisional Governments, over the next few months, as its own particular revolutionary timeline unfolded. These governments all tried to provide a 'democratic' facade for continued Russian imperialist interests and participation in the War after the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II. As the political situation developed, each new government had to adopt a more radical face. The constitutional monarchy, which was suggested by the liberal Cadets, had to be quickly abandoned in favour of, first a liberal republican government, then, after this, by Coalition governments with representation from the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet.

This led to Menshevik and Social Revolutionary participation in the government. Later, these parties' numbers in the government had to be increased, even though direct Petrograd Soviet membership ended after the July Days. In the process, the Provisional Government changed from being the public face of the revolution to that of the counter-revolution, despite a nominal Left shift along the party political spectrum (apart from the brief period of the Directory) as the year progressed.

In Finland, the governmental timeline, from revolution to counter-revolution, proceeded more rapidly than in Russia. After the February Revolution, a new Finnish Senate, or Coalition government, was formed, based on the results of the elections to the Eduskunta the previous year. The SDPF had won an absolute majority and their leader, Oskari Tokoi, became premier (42). Therefore, in terms of party composition, the government was already, by March 1917, more advanced than that achieved at any time in Russia before the last Provisional Government was overthrown in October.

However, a new, completely non-Socialist and counter-revolutionary Senate was able to take control in Finland in August 1917. This happened after the failure of Finland's challenge during its own much more measured 'July Days' - a challenge initially thrown down by the SDPF leadership. However, when the non-Socialist opposition met this challenge, the SDPF leaders soon backtracked. This opened the door to openly counter-revolutionary forces.

How did the SDPF come to abandon the political leadership it had initially provided? Immediately after the February Revolution, the SDPF was in a commanding position not enjoyed by any other Social Democratic party in Europe at the time. When the Tsar abdicated, his wartime appointees in Finland were all removed. The SDPF argued that, since the Duchy of Finland had constitutionally only been joined to Russia in the person of the Tsar, this union was now, in effect, dissolved and the Eduskunta should inherit all powers (43). From a strict constitutionalist viewpoint this was a quite legitimate argument. It was also a politically astute one, since it gave the new SDPF-led government the maximum freedom to act. However, caught between the contradictory pressures of an increasingly restless working class and the growing forces of counter-revolution, the SDPF leaders lost their political bearings as events overtook them.

The SDPF's claim that the Eduskunta was now a sovereign body would appear to represent a declaration of independence. However, the party was also aware of the economic benefits of the Russian connection. Many Finns worked in Petrograd, whilst Russians also

lived in Viipura/Vyborg, which had rejoined the 'Duchy', when the new Russian Provisional Government cancelled the Tsar's post-1908 anti-Finnish measures in March. The SDPF had never emphasised the immediate need for Finland's independence. Defending and extending Finnish autonomy had been the SDPF's practical policy, with independence a distant ideal. Autonomy for Finland did not appear as utopian as it might have elsewhere in the Tsarist Empire, since it had existed within recent memory, particularly immediately after the 1905 Revolution. Therefore, continued links with Russia in some form could still be assumed in early 1917.

Back in February and March, it was understandable why most Social Democrats did not push for an immediate declaration of Finnish independence. The extensive, 'de facto' autonomy in Finland, and the existence of a popular republican Russian government, following the collapse of the tsarist regime, together formed a heady brew. The SDPF held similar illusions in the new Russian government to those of the vast majority of the Left in Europe at the time, including some leading Bolsheviks in Russia, before the arrival of Lenin. Nevertheless, the constitutionalism of most SDPF leaders prevented a more realistic strategy from emerging, as the continuing, dominant-nation chauvinist, and imperialist, nature of successive Russian Provisional Governments became more and more apparent over the year.

The only political force in Finland, which had argued for independence, was the anti-democratic Right nationalists. However, they sought Finland's 'independence' on the back of German First World War military expansion in the Baltic. This is why two thousand, mainly middle class, Finns had volunteered to join the Jager Battalion in 1915 (44). If such support meant Finland becoming a largely, primary sector producing, economic satellite of imperial Germany, then so be it. The Right only wanted the political power to establish a Finnish state where ethnic Finns dominated. If Finns owned the farmland and forests, and sufficient scope was given to a Finnish bourgeoisie to live well, then economic independence was less important. Much of the Right was anti-parliamentarian and

desired an authoritarian state to keep down workers and national minorities.

At the beginning of 1917, the Right nationalists were in a minority. Their main organised force, the Jager Battalion, was out of the country. Indeed, the Right became much cooler towards the prospect of Finland's immediate political independence, when it appeared to mean a strengthening of the Left. Their fears grew even more when, following the tradition of the 1905-6 Revolution, local trade union committees and Red Guards soon appeared in Finland (45). Those from the traditionally anti-Russian Right still in Finland even began to make their own Russian links, particularly with the Provisional Government. This patriotic Right pursued its own 'internationalist' realpolitik - that of counter-revolution.

In contrast, the social patriotic SDPF pursued 'sentimental internationalism'. This also led them into negotiations with the Russian Provisional Government. They held the naive hope of Finland establishing a better, more equal relationship within the new republican Russia. The non-Socialists in the Finnish Senate were far more astute. They understood the intrinsically conservative nature of successive Russian Provisional Governments. Therefore, they leaned upon the authority of each of these governments to constrain the SDPF in the Eduskunta.

The SDPF, unlike the Bolsheviks after Lenin's *April Theses*, did not seek to create a new revolutionary democratic order in Finland based on workers' councils. Their political aim was to reform the Eduskunta until it became a proper parliamentary democratic body - a policy of liberal rather than revolutionary democracy. They then hoped to use their electoral majority to implement a radical economic and social programme, which could satisfy those increasingly restless workers and poor peasants.

However, the SDPF leaders' adherence to the rules of parliamentary democracy did not satisfy the Finnish employers and middle class. With such a strong Social Democratic presence in wider society, the

Eduskunta could not be relied upon to protect their privileges. Workers and poor peasants looked to the SDPF in the Eduskunta to deliver radical reforms. Moreover, these groups were also mobilising independently to support strong legislation and emergency measures. Neither could the Russian troops nor sailors of the Baltic Fleet, based in Finland, now be relied on to maintain 'law and order'. They were first to be infected by the 'revolutionary virus' and many were soon beyond their officers' effective control.

In early 1917, the Finnish non-Socialist opposition was in a relatively weak position. This is why they looked to the Russian Provisional Government to help them out, despite its continued commitment to the Allies' imperialist war, and to Finland remaining part of the Russian Empire. Most of all, the opposition were against any independent mobilisation by workers and peasants or soldiers and sailors. Nevertheless, despite all the dangers represented in trusting the Russian Provisional Government, SDPF leaders continued to follow their policy of constitutionalism and 'sentimental internationalism'. This gave the non-Socialists their opportunity.

On July 5th (OS) the SDPF group in the Eduskunta passed the Power Act. This was a half-baked measure. It was designed to establish the constitutional powers necessary to implement laws, which could appease increasingly restless workers and poor peasants. In effect, this Act gave the Eduskunta control over domestic matters in Finland. However, defence and foreign affairs were still reserved for the Russian government (46). The SDPF's acknowledgement of the Russian government's right to determine some of Finland's policies invited disaster. It provided the excuse for the Russian government to claim Finland's continued participation in the First World War, and to maintain Russian military and naval forces there.

There was a major reason for the Provisional First Coalition Government's [which now included Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries (SR)] hostility towards the Eduskunta's Power Act. They saw this as merely a first step towards Finland's full independence, despite the SDPF leaders' careful wording, which

limited the Act's ambitions. The ongoing clash between the Bolshevik and Anarchist influenced soldiers and sailors' soviets and the Coalition in Petrograd, and a simultaneous challenge by soldiers in Kyiv/Kiev, made the war a particularly sensitive issue. The fear was that the Finnish Eduskunta would declare an armistice. This could act as a clarion call to Russian forces everywhere to end the war unilaterally.

This is why the Russian Coalition government formed an alliance with the Finnish non-Socialists in the Eduskunta to destabilise the SDPF-dominated government in Finland. Both opposed the Power Act. Although the Menshevik and SR dominated Petrograd Soviet had recognised the right of Finland to self-determination, this was only to be exercised when an all-Russia Constituent Assembly was convened, sometime in the future (47). In the meantime, the Petrograd Soviet gave its tacit backing to the Coalition government's planned showdown with the Finnish Eduskunta.

Therefore, this Coalition felt it had enough support in Russia to declare the Power Act illegal. When the Eduskunta met again in August, the non-Socialists had absented themselves. Reliable Russian troops invaded the chamber and dissolved the assembly (48). Over the summer recess, the SDPF leaders had basked in the widespread popularity of the Power Act amongst the Finnish people. However, they had done little to prepare for the inevitable confrontation with the Russian state. With the dissolution of the Eduskunta the political initiative passed to the Right.

iii) An 'internationalism from below' alternative?

Was there another possible course of action? There was certainly widespread support in Finland for the SDPF's challenge to the Russian Provisional Government. Indeed, many SDPF supporters thought that the Finnish Eduskunta had declared its full independence and was in the process of breaking both from the Russian Empire and the war. As subsequent events in November and January showed, the

Finnish working class and the poor peasants did have the power to take control over the key areas in Finland. Indeed, the fact that a declaration of full sovereignty could also have been official governmental policy in June, if the SDPF leaders had not tried to 'box clever', might have neutralised much opposition from the middle ranks of Finnish society, at this point of time.

Furthermore, unlike the situation in Latvia, there was no immediate threat from German military forces. Although there were certainly German imperial designs upon Finland, these were not as high a priority as their claims to Russia's Baltic provinces. Indeed, the German military, hard-pressed on the Western Front, would probably have been satisfied, for the time being, with Finland's withdrawal from the war. They would have realised that a military occupation and an opening up of a new northern front, in the face of a hostile, newly independent people, was not likely to provide them with significant immediate gains.

The prevailing German military thinking could already be ascertained through their backing for Lenin and the Bolsheviks (49). The High Command was testing out measures that would permit the winding down of the Eastern Front in order to release more troops for the Western Front. Finland's independence would have speeded up this possibility, especially since its most likely knock-on effect would have been to greatly increase the desire for an armistice amongst Russian forces too.

Nevertheless, an assertion of Finnish independence by revolutionary Social Democrats could not have been successfully made in isolation. The most pressing danger came from the armed forces still at the disposal of the Coalition. Yet there was a glaring political division amongst the ranks of both the Russian soldiers and sailors. The regiments stationed in Finland were increasingly opposed to the war (50). The Baltic Fleet's Central Soviet also included the most militant sailors in the Russian Empire. The Bolsheviks had considerable influence amongst both soldiers and sailors. If anything, the Bolsheviks in these soviets were to the Left of the main party. Any

Finnish declaration of an armistice would have been eagerly supported by the soviets of the Russian soldiers and sailors stationed there.

But such an appeal was ruled out by the careful constitutionalism underlying the Eduskunta's Power Act - international issues remained the preserve of the Russian Provisional Government! The social patriotic SDPF leadership was hamstrung by its 'sentimental internationalist' appeal to this very body. To this was added the pious hope of winning the backing of the Menshevik and SR-led Petrograd Soviet. The only realistic strategy was that of 'internationalism from below', with a declaration of full independence, a direct appeal to the Russian soldiers' and sailors' soviets, and a policy of fraternisation.

As early as May 2nd (OS) Lenin had berated the Mensheviks for failing to support Finland's right to secede from the Russian Empire. He could see that the Mensheviks' (and SR's) stance would lead to their siding with the leaders of the Provisional Government in the suppression of meaningful self-determination for Finland. However, he praised the "Finnish people" whose "demand... *so far*, is not for secession, but only for broad autonomy" (51). Thus, even Lenin failed to appreciate the importance of the SDPF making an immediate and complete break with the Russian Empire and its Provisional Government. This was needed not merely for the sake of Finnish national democracy, but as a spur to the wider revolutionary movement, particularly in the crucial nearby area around Petrograd.

When Lenin had to flee from Petrograd after the July Days, he took refuge in Finland, first in Vyborg/Viipuri and then in Helsinki with the Chief of Police, a Bolshevik sympathiser! (52) There was obviously a marked contrast between the political conditions in Petrograd and Finland in the month of July. In and around Petrograd, many Bolsheviks were on the run or in hiding. In Finland, there was still much euphoria after the SDPF's 'independence' challenge to the Coalition, before the August setback.

A better tactic than Lenin's verbal attack upon the Mensheviks in the

Russian Provisional Government for letting down the good name of Russian democracy, would have been to call on the soldiers' and sailors' soviets to show their support for Finnish independence and for an immediate armistice. The failure, by either the SDPF or the Bolsheviks, to adopt 'Internationalism from Below', meant that a revolutionary opportunity was missed. The next time Lenin was faced with the demand to honour the recognition of Finland's right to secede, it would be after the October Revolution, and it would come from Finland's Right nationalists!

iv) From August 1917 to May 1918 - the Finnish revolutionary timeline is broken

It was the SDPF leadership's double failure; first, to prepare Finnish workers and poor peasants for the inevitable Russian government attempt to crush the Power Act; and secondly, to appeal to Russian soldiers and sailors, which handed the initiative in Finland to the Right. After the August suspension of the Eduskunta, new elections were held. There was much resentment directed against Russian state interference and the collaboration of the Finnish non-Socialist minority with this. This led to an increased vote for the SDPF. However, through fraud and intimidation, the non-Socialist opposition managed to win an absolute majority with 108 seats (53).

The rapidly coalescing Right ensured that the new Senate government excluded the Social Democrats. The Right's intention was to form a counter-revolutionary Directorate, headed by the reactionary Svinhufvud, which could ignore parliamentary niceties when necessary (54). They prepared to teach the Social Democratic opposition a harsh lesson. The 92 strong SDPF Eduskunta group still remained a focus of workers' and poor peasants' demands for radical political, economic and social change. However, their leaders were unable to fully control this social base. The Right believed that only a vicious bloodbath could beat down any further threats or challenges from this source. So, this is precisely what they planned. In the meantime, they also ensured that scarce food supplies were kept away

from working class centres to exacerbate hunger and demoralisation (55).

Yet, just as the revolution in Russia was given another chance after the July Days setback, so Finland was presented with a second revolutionary opportunity in November. This time, it was the new events in Russia that provided the stimulus. The October Revolution impinged dramatically upon Finland's revolutionary timeline. In late October, Svinhufvud had totally rejected the SDPF's proposed programme of social reform, *Me Vaadimme* (We Demand) (56). However, inspired by the Bolshevik seizure of power, a general strike broke out in Finland on November 14th (NS). Within 48 hours workers and poor peasants controlled most of the country. Finnish Red Guards, with some limited support from Russian soldiers, took control of the public buildings (57).

However, although a Workers' Revolutionary Central Committee was formed, its SDPF leaders used their influence to call off the general strike in return for apparent political and social concessions from Svinhufvud's government. As Otto Kuusinen, leading Finnish Left Social Democrat (later to become a prominent Comintern official), put it - "Wishing not to risk our democratic conquests, and hoping to manoeuvre round this turning point in history by our parliamentary skill, we decided to evade the revolution" (58).

It was clear to most that Svinhufvud was merely making a tactical retreat. He was still in full control of the Finnish government. This now began to take the form of a 'White Senate'. Svinhufvud's first priority was to build up a large force of well-trained and armed White Guards. The nucleus of such a force had been formed early in 1917 by General Gerich's Shutzcorps, at his headquarters in Vaasa on the Gulf of Bothnia (59). Middle class militias were formed in other areas of Finland. Appeals went out to Germany and to Sweden for support (60). The pro-Russian, tsarist general, Carl Mannerheim, was given overall authority over the White Guards by the government (61). When faced by the class challenge of mobilised workers and poor peasants, the Finnish counter-revolution overcame its own supporters'

earlier mutual national animosities.

Svinhufvud and the Right, in contrast to the Social Democratic leaders in July and November 1917, used the Eduskunta tactically. They gave their counter-revolutionary offensive a constitutional cover, without being constrained in any way by parliamentary procedures they largely held in contempt. First, in an attempt to negate any foreign Bolshevik support for Finnish revolutionary forces (whilst simultaneously seeking foreign German and Swedish support to suppress them!), the 'White Senate' declared Finland's independence on December 6th (NS) - a reversal of the Right's pre-October stance (62). Secondly, on January 13th (NS), the government authorised the White Guards to act as Finland's official state security force! (63)

Both the Right and the Left now prepared for a final showdown. The Right planned their bloodbath. They were able to call upon an increased number of outside forces, beginning with the returning Jager Battalion and later, the crack German Baltic Division, and a Swedish brigade of volunteers. In contrast, the Left faced the two-stage withdrawal of supportive Russian troops and were left to put up a heroic resistance in the face of ever-worsening odds, despite the return of Finnish Red Guards from Petrograd. Furthermore, they lacked leaders prepared to take the necessary revolutionary measures needed to counter the much more determined leadership of the counter-revolution.

The Whites already started with one initial advantage. After personally meeting with Lenin in Petrograd, Svinhufvud won the new Soviet government's (now undoubtedly reluctant) recognition of Finland's independence on December 30th (NS) (64). The Russian government prevaricated, seeing that a storm was about to burst on its north-western border. Nevertheless, most of the Russian troops stationed in Finland were eager to head home, not surprisingly, in view of the success of the Bolshevik's October promise of 'Peace'.

However, significant Soviet Russian-controlled forces still remained

in southern Finland, particularly the garrisons at Tampere, Soumenlinna and Viipura, and part of the Baltic fleet was stationed at Helsinki. Therefore, General Mannerheim decided to build up his White forces first in the conservative north (65). The necessity for this move became even more apparent, when, on January 27th, 1918 (NS), the SDPF leaders, at last recognising the ever-growing armed White threat, initiated a seizure of power, led by the Red Guards (66).

The Reds, as all those supporting the SDPF's latest challenge were now called, could see White counter-revolution staring them in the face. The Red Guards' actions had a great immediate effect. They took over much of southern Finland, forcing Svinhufvud to hide underground, whilst the rest of the 'White Senate' fled north from Helsinki to set up its capital in Vaasa (67).

There were now two governments in Finland. The first was the official White-led government in Vaasa. The second was the Council of People's Delegates in Helsinki. It had a central Workers' Council, with 10 delegates each from the SDPF and the trade unions and 5 delegates from Helsinki workers' organisations. It met in the Workers' House under the red flag (68).

The Whites exercised a dictatorship in the areas they controlled and concentrated their efforts on organised terror and military victory. The SDPF leadership, however, still refused to organise the necessary revolutionary measures to counter this. They spent a lot of time debating and trying to enact the parliamentary democracy for Finland, which the Rights refused to countenance. Kuusinen (once again, in retrospect) stated that, "Most of the leaders had no clear aims of the revolution." To which Victor Serge added, "Their aim was to establish, without the expropriation of the rich or the dictatorship of labour, a parliamentary democracy in which the proletariat would have been the leading class" (69). "Such was the influence of reformist illusions upon the Finnish Socialists. Such was their ignorance of the laws of class struggle" (70).

Red Guards had to take their own local initiatives in the absence of

any clear-thinking or decisive central leadership. In the face of the organised White terror, they resorted to their own episodic Red counter-terror. The relative balance of the two terrors is highlighted by the figures - 1421 Whites executed, 7370 Reds (71).

General Mannerheim launched the first military offensive near Tampere on January 27th (NS) but the Russian garrison, led by the revolutionary, Svechnikov, successfully resisted this (72). A poorly equipped Finnish Red Army was built up from the Red Guards to a force of 60,000 by April (73). This was done behind the shelter of, and with some assistance from, the remaining Russian armed forces. However, all this had to be achieved in the growing knowledge that the Russian forces in Finland were shrinking. This situation was to be mightily exacerbated by the terms of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk The German government imposed this draconian treaty upon the new Russian Soviet government on March 3rd (NS) 1918. Under the terms of this treaty, the remaining Russian forces had to leave Finland (74). Nevertheless, approximately one thousand Russian revolutionary soldiers remained behind clandestinely and joined the Finnish Red Guards (75).

Knowing that the Whites were receiving more and more outside assistance and getting stronger by the day, the Red Army launched its own offensive from Tampere in March. This time it was Mannerheim who was successful in stemming the attack (76). However, the Red Army only suffered a setback and continued to organise for further actions. The killer blow came though, when, following the Russian withdrawal, 20,000 German troops of the Baltic Regiment landed at Hanko, Helsinki and Lovisa, to the rear of the Red forces (77). The Baltic Regiment was well equipped and consisted of professionally trained soldiers (78). They linked up with local Whites and launched a murderous offensive on the workers' quarters of Helsinki. This began with an artillery bombardment of the Workers' House. They then used workers' wives and children to cover their advance (79).

After this major defeat, the Reds were caught in a pincer movement between the German forces advancing from the south and

Mannerheim's forces advancing from the north. Mannerheim first captured the Red stronghold of Tampere, after several days of house-to-house fighting. In the Reds' last major stand, at Tavestehus between Tampere and Helsinki, they were caught between the two counter-revolutionary armies, and any retreat east to Russia was blocked off. The Reds were crushed and their last base at Viipura was taken on May 12th (80). Nevertheless, the seriousness of the Reds' military endeavours, in the face of superior forces, is highlighted by the number of deaths in action - 3414 Whites killed; 5199 Reds (81).

However, the full dimensions of the White terror were still to come. After their defeat and capture, 11,652 Reds died in concentration camps, with another 607 dying after release, whilst a further 1767 were missing (82). With Finland now under German tutelage, the Whites sought a German monarch, Prince Freidrich of Hessen (Vaino I), to preside over their new authoritarian regime (83). With the Right in complete ascendancy, however, old divisions began to reappear in their ranks. The pro-Russian White leader, Mannerheim, appalled at the increasing German domination of Finland, left the country in May (84). He later approached the White Russians to offer his assistance.

These divisions were matched on the Red side. Those members of the Council of Peoples' Delegates, who managed to escape to Russia, were also to split. Initially they were united in the exiled Finnish Workers Committee (85). However, the open reformists amongst the SDPF leadership began to look to the Allies for support instead of the infant Soviet state. They were encouraged by the Allies' greater apparent commitment to parliamentary democracy, now that Tsarist Russia had collapsed, and now that the USA had joined the Entente War Alliance. Veteran SDPF leader, Tokoi, gave his support to the Murmansk Legion, formed by the Allied troops, operating in the far north of Russia, during their occupation of that area in 1919, in opposition to the Bolsheviks (86). Others, however, such as Kuusinen, joined the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks). The majority of these (although not Kuusinen) were later to be killed in Stalin's purges during the 1930s (87).

Despite the splits amongst both the Right and Left, the overwhelming fact was the Right's ascendancy in Finland after May 1918. This fact was not altered by Germany's defeat later that year, the abdication of Vaino I, and Finland's passing into the camp of the Allies. The Whites' brutal terror had led to the complete rupture of the revolutionary timeline there. The national democratic issue had been central to the revolutionary challenge in Finland. However, neither the SDPF's essentially social patriotic, but merely 'sentimental internationalist' approach; nor Lenin's 'formal internationalist', 'leave it to the Finns to decide', approach matched up to what was required.

Finland's national democracy was inextricably linked to the wider, developing, International Revolutionary Wave. An 'internationalism from below' strategy could have led to a progressive outcome. When the political initiative was handed over to the Right, the 'democratic' was stripped from the 'national democratic', leaving only the 'national' with its increasingly 'race'-based nationalism and fascism to poison Finnish politics over the following two decades.

D. OTHER CENTRES, OTHER TIMELINES - UKRAINE

i) The two revolutionary timelines in Ukraine

If the revolutionary timelines advanced more quickly in Latvia and Finland than in Russia itself, the timeline of revolution developed more slowly in Ukraine. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say there were two revolutionary timelines in Ukraine developing at different rates. That in the mainly Russian (and Jewish) peopled cities advanced but a short step behind the revolutionary timeline in Russia itself. However, the timeline marking the revolution's progress amongst the largely Ukrainian-speaking peasants, rural workers, and those workers in the smaller Ukrainian-speaking urban centres moved forward at a slower pace. Moreover, because of the impact of the unresolved 'National Question', there was a strong tendency for the progress of the two revolutionary timelines to block

each other, opening the way to counter-revolution.

The difficulty was trying to develop a strategy based on 'Internationalism from Below' which could coordinate these two timelines, so they advanced the ongoing International Socialist revolution. An all-Russian strategy, which subordinated the national democratic movements to the Russian centre, produced one contradiction. A Ukrainian patriotic strategy, which saw the primary antagonist in the Russian state, whatever its political complexion, produced another. These contradictions opened up some unfortunate prospects – on the one hand the White counter-revolution or the Red 'counter-revolution within the revolution' of the Great Russians; on the other, the Ukrainian patriotic counter-revolution and subordination to Western imperial powers.

The problem lay in how to address the issue of Ukrainian national democracy. This was seen, after the February 1917 Revolution, to be a threat to the Mensheviks' and SRs' constitutional road to a reformed all-Russian state. Any more meaningful self-determination had to await the establishment of a future Constituent Assembly. After the October Revolution, the Bolsheviks (and their Left SR allies) took control. However, they too saw any independent political activity to further Ukrainian national democracy as a barrier, but this time to their aim of setting-up an all-Russia Soviet state.

Therefore, despite their differences, the various tendencies within Russian Social Democracy inherited some common failings when it came to address the situation in Ukraine (88). Most Social Democrats had recognised the importance of the 'National Question' in Poland, Latvia and Finland, even if they disagreed over how it should be addressed and resolved. But in the case of Ukraine, many Social Democrats, including a lot of Bolsheviks, denied or doubted the existence of a 'National Question' at all. Ukraine was either just 'south Russia' or even 'Little Russia'.

The situation in Ukraine was certainly complex (89). In 1913, Lenin had acknowledged the existence of a Ukrainian nationality that was

oppressed under the tsarist regime. He was somewhat more ambiguous over the existence of a Ukrainian nation (90). Instead, Lenin praised the role of capitalism in breaking down the barriers between the Russian and Ukrainian nationalities, ignoring the state and employer-promoted suppression of the Ukrainian language. As a consequence, his position on Ukraine was then more akin to that of the Radical Left at the time. Lenin tended to look to general democratic demands, rather than national democratic demands, to deal with the still remaining oppression there (91).

However later, in 1916, under the impact of events in Ireland, Lenin came out more clearly in support of the Ukrainian nation's right to self-determination (92). Nevertheless, Lenin still thought that, once a revolutionary democratic regime had been set up in Greater Russia, any demand for Ukraine to secede from the new state would be likely to evaporate. Lenin supported the right of Ukrainian national self-determination, in the struggle against the Russian Provisional Governments before the October Revolution. But he became more hostile when the overwhelming majority of Ukrainians did not behave as his theory dictated. They refused to drop their demand for a meaningful exercise of Ukrainian self-determination, even after the Soviet seizure of power in Petrograd and Moscow. Instead, the democratic demand for more popular sovereignty, leading eventually to widespread calls for independence, grew apace in Ukraine, as it did elsewhere.

Therefore, after October 1917, Lenin's theory of progressive assimilation, inherited from Kautsky, helped to place the Bolshevik Party in opposition to the growing Ukrainian democratic movement. This led, in effect, to the Bolsheviks taking over the role the Mensheviks had played before the final ousting of the Provisional Government. It allowed the Ukrainian Centre and Right far more scope to turn the national democratic movement against the Bolsheviks, the post-October, Council of People's Commissars (Sovnarkom) located in Petrograd, and against the International Revolutionary Wave itself.

The Ukrainian Right (with the Centre vacillating) wanted Ukraine to remain part of the Entente military alliance in December 1917. However, given the Entente's inability to provide any direct military aid in early 1918, the Right instead sought the support of Germany and Austria-Hungary, this time against the Bolshevik-dominated all-Russian government. In November 1918, the Right returned once more to a pro-Entente policy, after the latter's victory in the First World War.

Interestingly, despite Lenin's declared post-1916 support for the right of Ukrainian self-determination, the Bolsheviks had never formed an autonomous territorial section for Ukraine. Yet, when Lenin was serious about a particular course of action, he always ensured the necessary organisational measures were taken. This situation contrasted with that in Poland, which already had its initially Bolshevik approved SDPKPL, Latvia, with its Bolshevik approved and later controlled LSDP, and Finland, with its Bolshevik recognised SDPF. In Ukraine there was no Bolshevik approved, nor recognised, territorial organisation to campaign over the issue of national self-determination. The Bolshevik branches there were merely local units of the Russian party - effectively 'south Russian'.

After the February Revolution, open political organisation became legal in the wider all-Russia state. The Bolsheviks convened two separate regional conferences of the Russian party in Ukraine, one in Kiev/Kyiv and the other in Katerynoslav (later Dnepropetovsk/Dnipro) in June (93). For all practical purposes, Ukraine did not exist for the Bolsheviks. Even in the heartland of the Ukrainian national democratic movement in Kyiv/Kiev, the local Bolsheviks failed to publish a single editorial on the Ukrainian question in their paper, *Golos social-demokrata*, between the February and October Revolutions (94).

When, in April 1918, the Russian Bolshevik Party belatedly initiated the Communist Party (bolshevik) of the Ukraine - CP(b)U) - this hardly improved matters (95). The Kiev Radical Left in the new CP(b)U only supported this move as a cynical ploy to gain more

independence of action for their faction amongst the Bolsheviks. They had been forced into opposition, when the Bolshevik majority gave its support to Lenin in the signing of the draconian Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. The Russian chauvinist, Katerinaslav group, however, opposed the formation of any new Ukrainian party, even a politically subordinate one, since its very name raised the spectre of the existence of a Ukrainian nation, which they denied even existed.

However, as the revolutionary situation developed throughout the wider all-Russian state, and in Ukraine itself, a growing band of Ukrainian, pro-Soviet communists saw the cause of national democracy as an issue, which could contribute to the wider international revolutionary struggle. The Ukrainian Party of Social Revolutionaries - UPSR (which included many members who had left the Russian SRs) was the first to develop a definite pro-Soviet wing. This became the UPSR majority in May 1918 (96). They went on to form the UPSR (borotbists) (97), renamed the UPSR (communist-borotbists) in May 1919 (98). The term 'Borotbist' (meaning supporter of 'struggle' in Ukrainian) was as popular in Ukraine, at the time, as the term 'Bolshevik' (meaning the 'majority' in Russian) was in Russia.

In August 1919, the Borotbists united with the Left Independents, a small pro-Bolshevik breakaway from the Independents. The Independents formed a pro-Soviet, but anti-Bolshevik wing when the Ukrainian Social Democratic Labour Party (USDLP) split in January 1919 (99). The new united party was named the Ukrainian Communist Party (borotbist) - UCP(b). It applied for admission to the new Third International (100). However, even the remaining USDLP-Independents dropped their outright hostility to the Bolsheviks and formed another Ukrainian Communist Party in January 1920, popularly known as the Ukapisty (101). They applied to join the Third International too and survived as a legal party until 1925, five years after the UCP(b) had been absorbed into the CP(b)U in March 1920 (102).

This untidy process of revolutionary differentiation was made both

more difficult and more prolonged by the Bolshevik majority's failure to realise the genuine revolutionary potential in the Ukrainian national democratic movement. However, a tendency did develop within the Bolshevik Party, and particularly its later CP(b)U subordinate, which clearly saw the need for another approach to this issue. This tendency was formed to counter the Radical Left (the Kievans, led by Grigori Pyatakov, Eugenie Bosch and later, Christian Rakovsky) and the Russian chauvinists (the Katerynoslavians, led by Eduard Kviring and Yakolev Epshtein) within the CP(b)U. The 'Internationalism from Below' tendency was supported by the Poltava section of the CP(b)U, led by Serhii Mazlakh and Vasyl' Shakhrai (103).

ii) Timeline 1 - the Russian revolution in Ukraine

When the February Revolution took place, those areas in Ukraine with a mainly Russian, or an assimilated Ukrainian-Russian population, followed a similar pattern to the areas of Russia proper. The key areas were the heavily industrialised cities of southern and eastern Ukraine, in the lower Dneiper/Dnipro and Donbass/Donbas (Donets Basin) which were culturally mainly Russian; and Kiev/Kyiv itself, which despite being the historical heartland of the Ukrainian nation, still had a large Russian and assimilated Ukrainian-Russian population in the ranks of the working class, the middle class and in the administration. Odessa/Odesa, in the south west of Ukraine, was a major Russian imperial port on the Black Sea, and was more ethnically mixed, but still dominated by Russian speakers.

These large cities proved to be fertile ground for the Bolsheviks. Working class soviets were quickly established, just as in Russia proper. Their composition was mainly Russian or Ukrainian-Russian, with participation also from Jewish workers. At the time of the February 1917 Revolution, though, most Bolsheviks and Mensheviks still coexisted within the same RSDLP organisation, just as they did in Latvia (104). However, Bolshevik activists were able to use growing working class (and some soldier) support to oust the Mensheviks from the RSDLP in Ukraine. This was because they

were preparing for the second Revolution, which was resisted by the Mensheviks (105). The Bolsheviks then organised to win majorities in the workers' soviets, a task they had achieved in the major cities, especially in the industrial Donbass, but also in Kiev, by October (106).

The Katerynoslavan wing of the Bolsheviks, based in the Donbass, had no independent political ambitions. They viewed themselves as staunchly and reliably working class, based solidly in the heavy industrial workplaces of the region. They also saw themselves, very definitely, as a detachment of the Russian Revolution, whose leadership could be safely left to the Bolshevik centre. Whenever problems or external threats arose affecting their local control, Petrograd and Moscow were their first ports of call for support. Affairs further west in Ukraine, or 'southern Russia', were of relatively little consequence to them. Economic links to the west were far less important than those to the north. The Katerynoslavans only made their voice heard, in protest, when they were asked to join with their Kievan comrades in a common Ukrainian organisation.

The Kievan wing of the Bolsheviks, however, was a very different group. Under the leadership, first of Pyatakov, and later of Rakovsky, they saw themselves as a detachment of a cosmopolitan World Revolution. The Kievans were often not from Russian ethnic backgrounds themselves (they included Ukrainian-Russians, Jews and Rumanians in their ranks). Yet they still saw the massive territorial extent of the Russian Empire as a historic gain, which should not be broken up. They were partisans of the international Radical Left, having strong neo-Luxemburgist views (107). This tended to put them in opposition to all movements for national self-determination.

Furthermore, as part of the international Radical Left, they fought for their views at the very centre of the Bolshevik Party. A revolutionary romanticism influenced virtually all wings of the socialist movement after the heady days of February 1917. This even affected large sections of the orthodox Marxists; but none were so enthused as the Radical Left. They gained strong support as revolutionary fervour

took a hold over newly radicalised young workers, soldiers and, in particular, the radical intelligentsia. The Radical Left used this support to renew their challenge to Lenin and his support for 'the right of national self-determination'.

Their opportunity came at the all-Russia Bolshevik conference, held in Petrograd in April 1917. Pyatakov, the Ukrainian-Russian leader of the Radical Left, "revived the 'Polish heresy' by denying that national self-determination could have any place in the socialist programme" (108). He won the support of the drafting commission to make a report to do "away with frontiers", to oppose "splitting up great nation formations into small states" and to condemn self-determination as "simply a phrase without definite content" (109). Lenin had to intervene to uphold the long-standing official Bolshevik policy. Nevertheless, it was clear that there was strong Bolshevik support for the Radical Left policy, whilst some others opposed the official policy, if more quietly, from a Great Russian chauvinist viewpoint. However, Lenin pulled the wavering and undecided back, by persuading them that support for 'the right to national self-determination' was primarily a tactic to undermine the Provisional Government.

This was the Petrograd Conference where the decision was taken to adopt Lenin's *April Theses*. The Bolsheviks were now committed to a strategy of overthrowing the Provisional Government. Bolsheviks, who doubted the wisdom of the party's continued support for the right of self-determination could now look forward to the situation when this policy would soon become redundant. Lenin's own theory told them this policy would not need to be exercised since, when the working class ruled directly, this demand would quickly evaporate.

Therefore, between February and October, Bolsheviks in Ukraine worked first, along with their comrades in Russia proper, to win control of the workers' soviets. Support was also built amongst Russian soldiers on the South and South Western Fronts. However, Bolshevik support here lagged behind the SRs and the Ukrainian Socialist Bloc (USPR plus USDLP) (110).

There was another problem. Support for the all-Russian Provisional Government (led by the Right leadership of the SRs and the Mensheviks), was very much on the wane, as 1917 progressed. Support for the Ukrainian Central Rada (National Council) (led by the USPR and USDLP), was still strong in October. This contradiction would lead to a series of crises, produced by the crossed timelines of revolution in Ukraine.

iii) The Ukrainian Left after the February Revolution

In the aftermath of the February Revolution two main parties emerged on the Left in Ukraine. They were the Ukrainian Social Democratic Labour Party (USDLP) originally formed in 1905 (111) and the Ukrainian Party of Social Revolutionaries (UPSR), which only formed in April 1917, although Social Revolutionaries had been active in Ukraine for a decade (112).

The USDLP was led by members of the radical intelligentsia and was largely composed of members from the relatively small, Ukrainian-speaking working class. The USDLP had a spectrum of opinion from Left to Right, which was reflected in its leadership. This meant it was pulled in different directions. Lev Iurkevich, physically suffering from a developing paralysis, was on the internationalist Left wing; the writer, Volodymyr Vynnychenko, belonged to a pro-Russian Centre; whilst Symon Petliura was later to emerge as the leader of the pro-Entente Right.

The First World War had severely disrupted the forces of Ukrainian Social Democracy, just as it did the forces of Russian Social Democracy. Although the majority of USDLP leaders maintained an anti-war stance, a minority had already deserted to the camp of the Hapsburg Empire, whilst Petliura and others initially joined the tsarist councils in Moscow to assist the war effort.

Iurkevich had been active, alongside Volodymyr Levynsky, the Left's theoretician from the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party (USDP) (in

Austrian Galicia and Bukovyna). Iurkevich published the Left internationalist *Borotba* in Geneva to oppose the imperialist machinations of both the Entente and the Central Powers. As well as polemicising with Lenin (113), Iurkevich enjoyed quite close relations with Trotsky and had articles published in *Nashe Slovo* (114). Throughout the war, Iurkevich maintained his strong support for genuine autonomy for Ukraine as part of a democratised, federal Russia. He opposed the separatist projects of the Central Powers-backed, Ukrainian social-patriotic, Union for the Liberation of Ukraine (SUV). "They have lit the torch of Ukrainian independence - to light up the route of the Austrian armies towards Kiev" (115).

Iurkevich correctly anticipated, in a similar manner to Kelles-Kreuz before him (116), that "the national conflicts of Austria, between seven small nationalities, will seem no more than children's games in comparison with the great struggle that will take place in Russia following the fall of Tsarism" (117). He argued that, "We are sure that the liberation of Ukraine will be the watchword of the Third International, and of the proletarian socialists of Europe, in their struggle against Russian imperialism" (118). Quite clearly, Iurkevich, as an advanced internationalist, was already committed to a new International. Iurkevich also had a sound understanding of the imperialist designs of the Central Powers and the Entente; of the imperial nature of the Russian state; and of the weaknesses of the RSDL. and Bolshevik theories with regard to national liberation. He was probably better placed than any other member of the USDLP. Left to make the next political leap.

After the February Revolution, successive all-Russian Provisional Governments hid behind the call for 'revolutionary unity' to disguise their continued commitment to Russian imperialism and chauvinism. A clear need developed for Ukraine to break from the Provisional Government and the all-Russian state, as part of an 'internationalism from below' strategy to advance both the democratic and international socialist cause. Iurkevich's writings from the First World War brought him very close to such an understanding. The growing movement for international socialism and national liberation would

likely have done the rest. Unfortunately, the ailing Iurkevich died in a Moscow hospital, shortly after the October Revolution, when he tried to return to Ukraine by a roundabout route (119).

Instead, it was the Centre that dominated the politics of the USDLP, in the period between the February and October Revolutions. Its chief representative, Vynnychenko, was the party's leader. The USDLP's experience gave it a political weight way beyond the party's actual membership (118). In early 1917, the USDLP still held an orthodox Marxist, anti-peasant stance, which made them suspicious of the newly formed UPSR (121). They considered a working class electoral alliance with the Bolsheviks in the August municipal elections in Kiev, showing that class was still a greater pull than nationality or nation (122).

The organising centre of the UPSR also came from the radical intelligentsia. The UPSR had a similar Left-Right spectrum to the USDLP but had less political experience. However, the UPSR very quickly gained mass support, primarily from peasants and rural workers, particularly after the formation of the closely linked Peasant Union (Selyans'ka Spilka) (123). They supported the redistribution of all state, tsarist family and private landlord held land to the peasants for their own use. This was to be done through the peasants' communal organisations, with any expenses to be borne by the state (124).

The UPSR/Spilka had an even greater political hold over the peasants than the SRs did in Russia. The Russian SRs faced some competition from soldiers returning home whom the Bolsheviks had influenced. The Bolsheviks had made considerable headway in the soldiers' soviets, with their demands for an immediate armistice and for peace. However, when Bolshevik-influenced soldiers in Ukraine returned home, it was usually to Russian, not to Ukrainian villages. Therefore, the UPSR had an almost clear field amongst the poorer peasants.

The UPSR and USDLP entered the early revolutionary period after February 1917 with leaderships that resembled those of the Russian

SRs and Mensheviks respectively. However, the Ukrainian bourgeoisie was small and exerted far less pressure than their Russian equivalents upon the parties there. The theory of Ukrainian 'bezburzhuaznist' (bourgeoislessness) was so widely held, that quite Rightist forces adopted a 'socialist' label, including the ultra-patriotic Ukrainian Party of Socialist-Independentists (125) and the liberal Ukrainian Party of Socialist-Federalists (similar to the Russian Kadets) (126). Both of these parties, in their own particular ways, represented a petit-bourgeoisie and aspiring bourgeoisie, which wished to become a new Ukrainian ruling class. The Ukrainian patriotic equation of 'bourgeoisness' with external forces was inherited from an earlier populism (127). Sometimes, such external forces were seen to be 'Russian', but as chaos engulfed Ukraine 'capitalism' and the 'bourgeoisie' were seen to be a Jewish/'Yiddish' import, with tragic consequences.

However, as well as their hatred for the bourgeoisie, the Ukrainian Left also detested the landlord class, whether Russian or Ukrainian (including its Cossack element). In response to this opposition, the Ukrainian landlords organised the Rightist, Ukrainian Democratic-Agrarian Party (UDAP) in July 1917. This party was founded in connection with a congress of Poltava landowners (128). The creation of the UPSR and the Peasant Union, with their radical agrarian policies, disturbed the founders of the UDAP. They thought that the Russian Provisional Government no longer had the authority to restore order. Worse, the continued Russian connection just increased 'anarchy' in Ukraine, as revolutionary waves spread out from Petrograd. Therefore, the UDAP thought that Ukrainian independence, and the building up of Ukrainian military forces led by the Cossack aristocracy, was the answer to their problems (129).

A Union of Ukrainian Statehood (UUS) met in Kyiv in the same month as the UDAP (130). This organisation more reflected the concerns of the urban middle class. The formation of the Kiev/Kyiv Soviet and the Ukrainian Workers' Congress represented a threat to their class interests in the cities, so the UUS also declared for an independent Ukraine, hoping to develop their own Volunteer forces to

re-establish discipline.

As the year progressed, Ukrainian soldiers, like their Russian comrades, became more and more mutinous, in the face of the defeats and slaughter on the war fronts (131). Radicalised soldiers - 'peasants in uniform' - wanted to return to their villages and get control of the land. However, the all-Russian Provisional Government was committed to continuing the war for imperial ends. The Menshevik and SR dominated VTsIK looked to a future Peace Conference to end the war (hopefully without annexations or reparations). They also looked to a future Constituent Assembly to implement agrarian reform and to deal with any demands for self-determination arising from the nations and nationalities.

Just like their Russian SR and Menshevik counterparts, the leaderships of both the UPSR and USDLP remained wedded to policies that left them paralysed as the revolutionary situation developed. The soldiers' demand for peace, the peasants' demand for land, and the workers' demand for control of the factories, were all raised more loudly as the year progressed. Only revolutionary measures could break the deadlock. In Ukraine the need to break with the all-Russian Provisional Government became increasingly associated with the demand for political independence.

The USDLP's and the UPSR's continued adherence to a policy of autonomy within a democratic federal Russia, also left them continually wrong-footed by successive all-Russian governments. For, in effect, autonomy acknowledged the central authority's right to make the final decisions. Yet, the growth of the real movement for Ukrainian self-determination, over the year, continually pushed the Central Rada into taking its own decisions, despite the official limitations on autonomy within the new state. Successive Russian governments were not slow to deny the Central Rada the right to implement 'autonomy' unilaterally. By definition, the scope of autonomy has to be decided centrally. So, the Ukrainians were told they had to wait for the convening of a future Constituent Assembly - in the meantime, just obey the orders coming from the centre!

The USDLP and UPSR leaderships were caught in a very similar bind to those of the SDPF leaders in Finland, when they tried to enact the Power Act. Although the revolutionary situation in 1917 was never as developed in Ukraine as in Finland, the key event, which first highlighted the USDLP and UPSRs' political weakness, occurred as early as July 4th (OS) a day before the Finnish Eduskunta's passing of the Power Act (132). To see the significance of this it is necessary to examine the second timeline of revolution taking place on the same territory as the 'Russian' revolution already outlined (133),

iv) Timeline 2 - the Ukranian revolution up to July 4th, 1917 and a missed 'Internationalism from Below' opportunity

When the news of the Revolution in Petrograd reached Ukraine on February 27th (OS) it was celebrated with the same enthusiasm as elsewhere in the Russian Empire. Indeed, the mainly Ukrainian-manned Volynskyi regiment had been the first to join civilian demonstrators in Petrograd. The Ukrainian colony in Petrograd sent representatives to the new Soviet of Workers' Deputies. However, even in Petrograd, Ukrainians still celebrated their own radical history and culture. 30,000 joined a demonstration to commemorate the Shevchenko Anniversary on March 9th (OS). Taras Shevchenko was Ukraine's national bard (1814-61) whose public commemoration had been banned under the Tsar (134). Ukraine was to emerge as a cockpit in the International Revolutionary Wave, and just as Lev Yurkevich predicted (see Volume 3, Part 4B), the 'National Question' was to be to the forefront of the revolution in Ukraine.

The Ukrainian Central Rada (Council) was formed in Kiev on March 4th (OS). The Society of Ukrainian Progressives initiated the Central Rada. This group was soon to reform itself as the Ukrainian Party of Socialist-Federalists. It consisted mainly of professionals and members of the Ukrainian intelligentsia. One of their members, the historian and writer, Mykhailo Hrushevsky, who had previously given his support to the tsarist war effort, was elected President of the Central Rada. However, as the whole political atmosphere shifted to

the Left, the USDLP and UPSR became the dominant political forces in the Central Rada (135).

Ukrainians were swept along by the general euphoria after the February Revolution, most seeing themselves as part of a wider, elemental, all-Russia democratic movement. On March 9th (OS) the Central Rada issued a declaration. "Liberty has come to all peoples and oppressed nations of Russia" (136). The growing strength of Ukrainian national feeling, though, was shown in a demonstration of 100,000 held in Kyiv on March 19th (OS) (137).

To enhance its legitimacy, the Central Rada convened a Ukrainian National Congress, between April 6th and 8th (OS). This Congress had representatives from peasant, professional, military and cultural-educational organisations, political parties, municipalities and zemstvos (138). However, it was slower to extend its base, particularly to the workers. It was not until July 11th-14th (OS) that the First Ukrainian Workers' Congress sent delegates to the Central Rada, after the First Soldiers' Congress, held between May 5th-8th (OS) and the First Peasants' Congress, held between May 29th - June 2nd (OS), had sent their own delegates (139). The main radicalising force, in the early stages, came from the soldiers.

The Ukrainian National Congress moved beyond an ethnic/cultural conception of Ukrainian nationality rights to that of territorial rights for a Ukrainian nation. In so doing, the nationality rights of non-ethnic Ukrainians were also recognised. Nevertheless, a large majority still felt that Ukrainian demands could be met by means of "national and territorial autonomy on the principles of the democratic Russian republic" (140). However, one Congress demand already pointed beyond merely devolved autonomy for Ukraine. This was the call for direct Ukrainian representation in any peace negotiations concerning Hapsburg-held eastern Galicia and Bukovyna. This demand represented a move to extend the remit of the Central Rada to international affairs. It was, therefore, a challenge to the authority of the Provisional Government (141).

Over time, the Central Rada began to take on some of the characteristics of a provisional government. It created a smaller body, the Mala Rada (Executive Committee), in April and a General Secretariat (Cabinet) in June, under the chairmanship of USDLP member, Vynnychenko (142). The growing influence of the Central Rada meant the development of another form of dual power in Ukraine. Only, instead of the dual power contested between the All-Russian Provisional Government and the Soviet Central Committee that existed in Petrograd, in Ukraine dual power was contested between the All-Russian Provisional Government and the Ukrainian Central Rada. The grounds were being laid for a major political clash between the Central Rada and the Provisional Government.

The Kadets were keen to reassert Russian imperial interests within the Entente's war alliance. They pressed the First Coalition Government, formed on May 4th (OS), which included three Menshevik and two SR Ministers (143), to launch a new military offensive against the Germans and Austro-Hungarians.

This Coalition saw, far more clearly than the Central Rada, the political implications of a Ukrainian unilaterally declared 'autonomy'. Maintaining the imperialist war alliance and mounting a major military offensive needed centralised control. Any meaningful autonomy, which could lead to a collapse in military discipline, already strained to breaking point, was anathema to the Coalition. The Mensheviks and SRs on the Soviet Central Committee, desperate to maintain governmental unity with the Kadets, could only tail-end the successive pro-war Provisional Governments. This was in line with their belief in the need for an extended period of bourgeois rule in Russia.

The all-Russian parties, represented in the successive Coalition Governments, had various attitudes towards Ukrainian self-determination. In line with the Kadets' desire for more centralised control, they were hostile to all but the most token cultural and administrative concessions. The Mensheviks toyed with the idea of national cultural autonomy and a reformed local government within a

unified Russia. Anything further was only meant to be decided with the agreement of a future Constituent Assembly. This delay also applied to the most radical 'solution' on offer within the Coalition - the SRs' call for a vague, territorial-autonomous Ukraine, as part of a wider all-Russia federation (144).

Despite the growing tensions, the Central Rada's leaders still identified the revolution in Ukraine with continued support for the All-Russian Provisional Government (supported by the Soviet Central Committee). They did not recognise the longer-term untenability of this dual power situation.

Bolshevik delegates only entered the Central Rada in August, after the first Ukrainian revolutionary challenge to the Russian Coalition government on July 4th (OS). They also joined the Mala Rada. To begin with, the Bolsheviks' Kiev regional organisation was prepared to play up the contradiction between the All-Russian Provisional Government and the Ukrainian Central Rada. After Lenin's victory at the April all-Russian Bolshevik Conference, even leading Radical Left spokesman, Pyatakov, went along with the Bolshevik delegates' statement to the Central Rada, opposing Russian imperialism and supporting autonomy for Ukraine (145). However, the Bolsheviks saw this support for the Central Rada as only being a temporary state of affairs until the greater contradiction - that between the All-Russian Provisional Government and the Soviet Central Committee - was resolved, in favour of the latter. The USDLP and UPSR were much slower than the Bolsheviks, in proposing a complete break with the all-Russian Provisional Government.

Despite the Ukrainian National Congress giving its clear support to a multi-national, territorial Ukraine, the all-Russian Provisional Government only, and somewhat reluctantly, recognised the existence of a five province Ukraine (Volyn, Podollia, Kiev, Chernigov, Poltava), instead of the eight and a half provinces claimed by the majority of Ukrainians (which also included Kharkhov, Katerynoslav, Kherson and Taurida minus Crimea). The successive Russian provisional governments also tended to run affairs in Ukrainian cities

through the mainly ethnic Russian, middle class-controlled, Council of United Civic Organisations (146).

It was such attempts to minimize the territorial extent of Ukraine, to marginalise the Central Rada, and to undermine its influence, which led it to send a ten-man delegation to see the members of the Coalition and the VTsIK in Petrograd in May. They were coldly received (147). When the returning Central Rada members addressed the First All-Ukrainian Peasant Congress, at the beginning of June, the delegates expressed their anger over how these representatives had been treated by the Russian authorities (148). This prompted the Central Rada, on June 3rd (OS), to make its own tentative moves to implement Ukrainian autonomy (149).

However, the Russian Coalition's plans for the Kerensky Offensive, to be launched from Ukraine, were now far advanced. In an attempt to mobilise Ukrainian opinion behind it, the Coalition made moves to coopt one of the Central Rada's demands - the 'Ukrainisation' of the regiments, firstly for those Ukrainian soldiers stationed in the rear and, then later, for those operating on the South and South Western Fronts. This concession was probably made for similar reasons to the earlier tsarist regime's backing for the regiment of Latvian Rifles (150). It was thought that the formation of specifically Ukrainian regiments would raise the enthusiasm of Ukrainian soldiers for continuing the war, particularly in Hapsburg eastern Galicia (western Ukraine). Many Ukrainian soldiers, however, had given their support to the 'Ukrainisation' of the regiments for quite different reasons. One of the strongest was that they thought that such a policy offered soldiers the chance to return home to their villages!

Ukraine suddenly overtook Finland as the main perceived challenge to the Russian Coalition. In Finland real autonomy was already a fact of life, and there was even stronger national opposition to the war. Nevertheless, the Coalition was not faced with the prospect of discontented Finnish soldiers (151). In Ukraine, however, the Coalition faced the problem of a volatile and increasingly hostile army. 'Trench Bolshevism' was rife (152). This is why the Coalition

opposed the convening of the Second Ukrainian Military Congress, which they knew would be a focus of opposition. However, this did not intimidate the soldiers. The Second Ukrainian Military Congress went ahead. The Central Rada took heart from this act of defiance and used the occasion to publicly declare its First Universal on June 10th (OS). This outlined nine points, which advocated extensive and immediate autonomy.

The First Universal was met with similar enthusiasm in Ukraine to the reception given to the Eduskunta's later Power Act in Finland (153). The new General Secretariat was set-up, led by Vynnechenko (154). Not surprisingly, the initial response of the Coalition's Judicial Commission, in Russia, on June 13th (OS), was to declare the First Universal "an act of open revolt" (155). However, aware of the need to maintain some support in Ukraine, whilst preparing its new military offensive, the Coalition watered this down to a "milder proclamation to the Ukrainian people" on June 15th (OS) (156).

On June 18th (OS), after two days of heavy shelling, the Kerensky Offensive was launched from Russian-held Ukraine, in the direction of Lemberg/Lvov/Lviv in Austrian-held Ukraine (157). The attack faltered after a few days, so the Coalition's authority waned. Therefore, the Central Rada felt confident enough to press ahead with its autonomy measures, anyhow (158). So, the Coalition had to retreat further. Tsereteli, a Menshevik and the VTsIK's representative in the Coalition, pointed out to the Kadets that, "General opinion was extremely alarmed by the growing conflict with the Ukrainian people of thirty millions so close to the war zone"! (159)

The Coalition sent negotiators to meet with representatives from the Central Rada. The Coalition decided to make conciliatory noises and promises. This was to ensure that any final decisions were put off until the convening of the Constituent Assembly. By adopting such delaying tactics, they hoped to give themselves a freer hand to pursue their own policies in the here and now. The Coalition representatives were much more far-sighted in promoting the demands of the Russian bourgeois class. The Central Rada's representatives, on the other

hand, tended to vacillate. There were no such clearly articulated class demands being placed on them; whilst its USDLP and UPSR leaders' theories and policies continued to hold them back.

However, the Ukrainian representatives still had one advantage. After the collapse of the Kerensky Offensive, the balance of the wider forces was not so favourable to the Coalition. Therefore, the net result of the negotiations, the Declaration of July 3rd (OS), was a compromise. The returning negotiators were pleased, and the Central Rada issued a Second Universal the following day (160). They claimed to have pushed the Coalition considerably beyond its earlier dismissive positions. The Central Rada, and its General Secretariat, had indeed been officially recognised, and the territorial extent of Ukraine extended to cover the eight and a half provinces claimed.

That some gains had been made was accentuated by the resignation of three Kadet Ministers from the Coalition, when the July 3rd Declaration was announced (161). This was the first time Ukrainian affairs had imposed themselves so dramatically upon all-Russian official politics. Nevertheless, the limitations of the politics of the UPSR and USDLP leaderships were also exposed. However, much they might have desired peace, and however much they might have grumbled about the stalling actions of the Coalition, they were powerless to break from its murderous embrace. Countless thousands had just died in the Kerensky Offensive (161). The soldiers were not pleased with the deal.

Suddenly, as in the simultaneous July Days in Petrograd, of 3rd - 5th July (OS), radicalised soldiers came to the fore. The soldiers' earlier support for the Central Rada's policy of the 'Ukrainisation' of the regiments had not brought them the desired results. Consequently, support for Ukrainian independence increased rapidly amongst the disgruntled Ukrainian troops. Previously, calls for independence had been confined to the tiny ultra-patriotic Right, which opposed or downplayed the raising of 'divisive' social issues. The Ukrainian Left had been able to marginalise the Right's voice, with calls to maintain 'revolutionary unity' with Russian peasants and workers. Most

soldiers still considered themselves peasants first and were eager to see land reform. Now, however, far more soldiers saw independence, followed by an armistice, as the best prospect of returning home to their villages.

On the night of July 4th (OS) the Second Ukrainian Polubotok Regiment took control of Kyiv, "planning to proclaim the independence of the Ukraine, to call Ukrainian soldiers back from all fronts, and to conclude a separate peace treaty with the Central Powers" (163). The First Ukrainian B. Khmelnyskyi Regiment was going to join them. However, it appears that the USDLP and UPSR leaderships' influence was still quite strong in this regiment. They were persuaded of the dangers of breaking-up 'revolutionary unity' with Russia. Therefore, they stepped back and forced their brothers-in-arms, in the Polubotok Regiment, to submit to the Central Rada (164).

In the face of this climbdown, the initiative returned once more to the Right in the All-Russian Coalition. This also followed the failed challenges by the Bolsheviks and Anarchists in Petrograd, and the threat posed by the passing of the Power Act in Finland. The Kadets demanded a clampdown, not only on the Bolsheviks, but also on the undisciplined army. In Ukraine, the mutinous Polubotok Regiment was sent to the front (165).

The events of July 4th, and immediately after, showed that the USDLP and UPSR leaderships were quite unable to see what was required in the situation they faced. The failure to meet the real needs of the soldiers and of the wider revolution also gave an opening to Ukrainian Rightist forces, which had been marginal up to this point.

An alternative 'Internationalism from Below' strategy would have backed the call for independence to help undermine the Russian imperialist, war-mongering Coalition Government, and to open up the immediate prospect of an armistice in Ukraine. This would have had an electrifying effect on all the military and naval fronts. Meeting the Ukrainian soldiers' growing call for an immediate armistice could

have won support from the many disgruntled Russian soldiers still stationed in Ukraine. Fraternisation with the Germans was already taking place on the fronts (166). It could also have appealed to the Russian soldiers, sailors and workers in Petrograd, who were moving into direct confrontation with the Provisional Government, but who, as yet, had no clear political aims, and were forced to politically retreat after the July Days.

The political opportunities were perhaps even greater in Latvia, where the Bolshevik-controlled, Social Democrats had made great advances in the Riga Workers', Latvian Riflemen's, and Landless Peasants' Soviets. However, they still needed to win majority support amongst the all-Russian XII Army, where, nevertheless, the example of the calling of an armistice would likely have won considerable support. Furthermore, such a strategy would also have had a likely knock-on effect in Finland, where many Finns thought that their Social Democratic government was in the process of breaking free from the Russian imperial embrace, and from the war, after the passing of the Power Act.

The events of July 1917 could have accelerated the International Revolutionary Wave, if an 'Internationalism from Below' strategy had been adopted. This would have needed revolutionary Social Democratic/Communist parties in each of the nations concerned, coordinated in a wider International, instead of a 'one state, one party' organisation with its centrally imposed, bureaucratic strategy. This had the effect of cutting across the differing timelines of revolution within the various nations, often upsetting the general tempo. 'Internationalism from Below', in contrast, offered the prospect of using particular national struggles to lift this tempo and hence to spread the revolution.

v) Two timelines clash - towards the October Revolution

With the setbacks of early July, and the removal of radical soldiers to the front, this time it was the Central Rada, which faced a diminution

of its influence. They sent another delegation to Petrograd in mid-July, to further negotiate the implementation of the July 3rd Agreement (167). This delegation was widened to include a non-ethnic Ukrainian member, Moisei Rafes of the Jewish Social Democratic Bund. They faced far greater hostility from the Russian government representatives compared to the situation a month earlier (168). The Kadets had returned to government.

On August 4th (OS) the new Coalition issued its 'Temporary Instructions for the General Secretariat of the Provisional Government in the Ukraine' (169). These represented not just a retreat from both the First and Second Universals. The area of the Central Rada's jurisdiction was cutback once more to five provinces; the number of its ministries cut from fourteen to nine; and the General Secretariat was converted into a transmission belt for central government directives (170).

Perhaps not surprisingly, the 'Instruction' was favourably received in Russia, but met opposition in Ukraine. The Commander of the Kiev Military District had taken the precaution of installing Russian troops in the city's garrison, when the returning representatives addressed the Central Rada. (171). A pressured Vynnychenko tried to sell the Instructions. He resorted to bravado. "Everyone knew that it was not a peace, but a temporary truce, that a struggle would and must follow" (172). Significantly though, he made no preparations for the coming showdown. Yet, the attempted Kornilov coup on August 25th (OS), which implicated Prime Minister, Kerensky, was only a few weeks away (173). A successful coup would have brought the open supporters of 'Russia One and Indivisible' to power, once again.

Vynnychenko fell back on tokenistic shows of opposition. The Central Rada decided not to send representatives to the Moscow State Conference on August 12th (OS). This body was trying to cobble together a new Coalition (174). Kerensky used the opportunity to verbally attack both the Ukrainians and the Finns (175).

After the failure of the Moscow State Conference, Kerensky set up a

five man Directory on September 1st (OS), which included a general and rear-admiral (176). Its purpose was to face down the Soviets, which were now coming increasingly under Bolshevik control, and to restore discipline in the army and navy. Not surprisingly, the Directory made no real attempt in Ukraine even to work through the limited 'autonomous' institutions outlined in the Instructions (177).

However, after the fall of Riga, in Latvia, on August 21st (OS) and the failed Kornilov coup on August 25th (OS), discontent rose rapidly, leading to strikes by workers, land seizures by peasants, and mutinies in the army and navy. A Democratic Conference was called from September 14th to 20th (OS), in another failed attempt to create a new Coalition. Kerensky just went ahead anyhow and appointed a new government. This was the Third Coalition (178). All this succeeded in doing was to further discredit the Mensheviks and SRs, who allowed ministers to be appointed from their parties, without any accountability to the Soviet Central Committee.

When the Coalition delayed the promised elections to the Constituent Assembly, the last Provisional Government's days were numbered. To cover its retreat the Coalition set up a shadow parliament, the Russian Provisional Council of the Republic. There were only to be seven Ukrainian members. Both its name, and number of Ukrainians to be included, provided the Central Rada with the evidence of its Great Russian chauvinist intentions. The Central Rada refused to participate (179).

But right until the end, the leaders of the Central Rada were still attempting to prop up an all-Russian official democracy that now existed only in their imaginations. The defeat of the attempted Kornilov coup did not halt the Provisional Government's drift to the Right. As a result, millions of soldiers, workers and peasants were becoming increasingly disillusioned and radicalised. They were taking independent direct action (180). There was now a growing chasm between the people and the government.

It became very clear that the latest Coalition would become, as it

continued to prevaricate, the target of another Rightist counter-revolutionary coup. But, like the leaders of the Mensheviks and the SRs, Vynnychenko and other Central Rada leaders saw no need to plan decisive revolutionary action. They were still looking to the elections to the Constituent Assembly for a new mandate and lease of life.

However, the belief in the need for a Constituent Assembly, shared by the Russian Mensheviks/SRs and the Ukrainian SDLP/PSRs failed to unite them in a common purpose. The Russians wanted the scope of any Ukrainian autonomy measure to be decided by an all-Russian Constituent Assembly. The Ukrainians wanted to hold a Ukrainian Constituent Assembly first, so it could decide upon the extent of Ukrainian autonomy. This would then be ratified by an all-Russian Constituent Assembly. If the Russians accused the Ukrainians of not understanding the meaning and limitations of 'autonomy', the Ukrainians accused the Russians of failure to acknowledge their 'right to national self-determination'.

This division was further accentuated as the Central Rada once more began to implement policies to consolidate its authority in Ukraine. It had to take such measures to fill the gap left by the continued collapse of the all-Russian Coalition's authority. On September 29th (OS) a decision was taken to the Mala Rada to give the General Secretariat more power. It received the support of all its political party and nationality representatives, apart from one Russian Kadet (181). On the timeline of revolution, the Central Rada was still at the stage of being the subject of popular pressure to exert its authority. Ukrainian peasants, workers and soldiers all expected radical measures to be taken which would alleviate their ever-worsening economic situation and bring an end to the war. The Central Rada still enjoyed a wide support that successive all-Russian Provisional Governments had frittered away.

Virtually powerless to do anything in Ukraine itself, the last all-Russian Coalition government issued a statement, on September 26th (O.), suggesting that it might return to the July Agreement covering

Ukrainian autonomy. After all the past delays and prevarications few Ukrainians were convinced (182).

The leaders of the Central Rada had continued to take initiatives, which they regarded as cementing 'revolutionary unity'. From September 8th-15th (OS) they had convened a Peoples' Congress in Kiev, with representatives from thirteen of the Russian Empire's nationalities. The Congress called for the "Russian state to be reorganised into a federative republic based on the national-territorial principle, that nationalities such as Jews, who were dispersed among other peoples, would benefit by the right to obtain extra-territorial personal autonomy, and that a 'Council of Nationalities' should be attached to the Provisional Government" (183). Ironically, this suggestion was not too far removed from the constitutional form eventually adopted by the USSR, despite it being inspired by the theories of the Austrian Marxist, Otto Bauer (184). The Congress also suggested a 'Council of the Peoples', sitting in Kyiv (185), presumably since Ukraine was the largest non-Russian nation in the proposed federation.

However, since the proposals from the Peoples' Congress amounted to an immediate demand on the Provisional Government, it was not likely to be well received in Petrograd. Indeed, the Ukrainians' ability to assemble so many other nationalities from the wider Russian Empire probably made some Russian Coalition members very uneasy.

When the Central Rada debated the setting up of a Ukrainian Constituent Assembly on October 10th (OS), it came up with a compromise resolution. "The will of the peoples of the Ukraine for self-determination could only be expressed through a Ukrainian Constituent Assembly, which **would** {my emphasis} be in accord with the will of the peoples of the Russian Empire as expressed at the All-Russian Constituent Assembly" (186). The Central Rada's political illusions demonstrated in that simple word "would" were glaring!

The Coalition ordered the Russian prosecutor in Kiev to investigate

the General Secretariat, with a possible view to arrests. A Russian commissar was appointed to the city (187). The grounds were being laid for a second showdown between the Central Rada and the Provisional Government. This was the scenario Vynnychenko claimed to have foreseen, when he addressed the Central Rada, back in August.

Despite the earlier setback faced by the soldiers after July 3rd, radicalisation had proceeded apace, both at the fronts and in the rear. A Third Ukrainian Military Congress was held between October 21st-31st (OS). It opposed the appointment of the Coalition's commissar and the summoning of the three General Secretariat members, including Vynnychenko, to Petrograd. It promised to take whatever action was needed to defend the General Secretariat and the Central Rada (188).

Yet, once again, Vynnychenko and the General Secretariat turned their backs on the use of revolutionary defiance. They scurried off to Petrograd once more, on October 23rd (OS) (189), hoping to cobble together another compromise. However, they were not arrested, so they neither became national martyrs nor forgotten fools. By the time they reached Petrograd, the second 'Russian' Revolution was just beginning.

vi) From October 25th, 1917 (OS) to February 7th (NS) - Ukrainian revolutionary timeline is fractured as Russian social imperialism turns to 'Bayonet Bolshevism'

The October Revolution provided another opportunity for the revolution in Ukraine, just as it did in Finland (188). The Russian garrison in Kiev remained loyal to the ousted Provisional Government. The Bolsheviks saw the Kiev garrison as a counter-revolutionary centre opposed to the October Revolution. The Central Rada saw it as a stronghold for the Great Russian chauvinist forces, which had continually stymied Ukrainian self-determination over the previous months.

Therefore, the Bolsheviks and the Ukrainian Left formed an alliance, the Committee for the Defence of the Revolution. It had representatives from the Mala Rada, the Kiev Soviet, the all-Ukrainian Council of Soldiers' Deputies, and from the various socialist parties in Ukraine, including the UPSR, USDLP, Bolsheviks and the Bund (189). In effect, this new body formed what the majority of workers, peasants and soldiers had been striving for, at the all-Russia level, over the previous months - a socialist coalition based upon the popular revolutionary organisations.

It was the refusal of the Menshevik and Right Socialist Revolutionary (SR) Party leaderships to meet this popular demand in Russia, which had persuaded the majority of Bolsheviks to follow Lenin in organising the overthrow of the increasingly discredited all-Russian, bourgeois-socialist, Coalition Government. Lenin originally wanted any new Soviet government (Sovnarkom) to be led by Bolsheviks only. Some Bolshevik members, Rykov, Nogin and Milyutin, wanted to approach the other Left parties to form a more broadly-based socialist coalition. In the end, a compromise Sovnarkom was formed with a Bolshevik/Left SR Coalition (190).

Just as the refusal of the Mensheviks and SRs to form a specifically Socialist coalition led to the collapse of the last Provisional Government in Petrograd; so, the Mensheviks, along with the Bund, sabotaged the Committee for the Defence of the Revolution (CDR) in Kyiv. On November 8th (NS.), a motion was passed, at the Mala Rada, which condemned the Bolshevik/Left SR seizure of power in Petrograd. This prompted Pyatakov to lead a Bolshevik walkout from the Mala Rada and the CDR.

This may have been a precipitate move. For, the real reason the Ukrainian Left parties had gone along with this, was not support for the ousted Provisional Government, but because the Menshevik and Bund delegates on the Central Rada, happened to be Russian and Jewish minority representatives, whom the Ukrainians were anxious to keep on board (191). In practice, the Central Rada was prepared to

acknowledge the Sovnarkom as the de facto government in Russia, but not its designs upon Ukraine. The Central Rada was no supporter of Russian counter-revolution, since its members understood quite clearly what that would mean for Ukrainian self-determination.

This was highlighted when Kvetsinsky, the Russian, pro-Provisional Government, military commander in Kyiv, launched an attack on the local soviet of workers' and soldiers' deputies. The Ukrainian, Left-dominated Mala Rada, took action to defend the Bolshevik dominated soviet. So too did the Third Ukrainian Military Congress, which sent delegates to join the fighting. As a result, the counter-revolutionary forces had to withdraw from Kyiv (192).

Certainly, the passing of the anti-Bolshevik/Left SR motion at the Mala Rada showed that the unity represented by the CDR was quite fragile. The Ukrainian Left parties, like most observers, (including some Bolsheviks) thought that the seizure of power in Petrograd would be short-lived. Nevertheless, whereas in Russia proper, anti-Bolshevik/Left SR feeling was mobilised by Right and Centre Mensheviks or by the Right SRs, in order to win support for the overthrow of the Sovnarkom, the subsequent actions of the Central Rada showed that what it wanted was the freedom to exercise self-determination in Ukraine. This now seemed to be possible with the collapse of the last all-Russian Coalition government.

Indeed, one of Sovnarkom's earliest decrees was the Declaration of the Rights of the People of November 15th (NS) (193). This should have guaranteed Ukraine's unequivocal right to self-determination. The Rada's own Third Universal, published a few days later on November 20th (NS), still seemed to recognise a shared future (194). It proclaimed the Ukrainian Peoples' Republic in federation with Russia, with national-personal autonomy for the Great Russian, Jewish, Polish and other national minorities. In addition, it included economic policies, which were broadly in line with popular demands. The land, previously belonging to the nobility, non-toilers, monasteries and churches, was to be confiscated. The eight-hour working week was to be introduced (195).

The best possible revolutionary policy at this time would have been based on the strategy of 'Internationalism from Below' and a realisation that there were different timelines of revolution in Petrograd (Russia) and Kiev (Ukraine). In order to gain Ukrainian recognition for the new Sovnarkom in Russia, it would have been necessary for the Sovnarkom to recognise the Central Rada's authority in Ukraine.

Now, the Central Rada was certainly not the political equivalent of the Sovnarkom in revolutionary or class terms. Yet there was still plenty of scope for it to be pushed further Left, whilst also using the time to extend the influence of the soviet principle of organisation. Lenin had been scrupulous in recognising the timeline of revolution in Russia, refusing to seize power prematurely and building support in the soviets. An immediate recognition of independence would have given both the Bolsheviks, the pro-Russian Left of the USDLP and UPSR, as well as the wider revolution in Ukraine, a considerable fillip at this time.

The failure of the Bolsheviks to adopt such a strategy in Ukraine led to the first of several disasters for the revolution in Ukraine, Russia and beyond. The leadership of the Ukrainian Left parties bore some responsibility too. Nevertheless, the failure to win a majority in these parties to an 'Internationalism from Below' strategy was mightily helped by years of RSDLP, Menshevik and Bolshevik, Russian chauvinist hostility towards the Left wing of the USDLP (and later, towards to the emerging Left wing of the UPSR) and often to the Ukrainian people themselves.

However, immediately after the October Revolution, the Bolsheviks were in a weak position in Ukraine west of the Dnipro (the Right Bank). This gave added impetus to the Central Rada's ongoing attempt to assert its authority, particularly in this area of Ukraine. The weaknesses of Vynnychenko (and the USDLP and UPSR Centres') politics, however, continued to show up, just as they had over the July 3rd and October 23rd Russian state's challenges to Ukrainian self-determination earlier that year.

The Central Rada was still looking to a future final settlement between a Ukrainian Constituent Congress and an all-Russian Constituent Congress; and to a future international Peace Conference, to solve the current problems concerning Ukrainian self-determination and the continuing war. Their support for an international Peace Conference meant they could not give wholehearted support to those Ukrainian soldiers deserting and wanting to return home to their villages.

Vynnychenko's fence-sitting also left the way open to Simon Petliura, from the Right wing of the UPSR. This was because Petliura saw more clearly the need to take decisive measures to make Ukrainian sovereignty real - and hopefully protect middle class interests. To buttress support, he turned to the nationalistic students and the urban middle class to build up the core of a Ukrainian armed force. This force helped to increase the political weight of the previously marginal Ukrainian Right.

In Russia proper, the Bolsheviks had managed to build up reliable Left armed support in a few Russian army regiments or units, such as the Latvian Rifles, and amongst the sailors, as well as to form detachments of Red Guards from the workers' soviets. This they had achieved at the same time as giving their political support to an immediate armistice, which was a key demand for the majority of soldiers and sailors. The contradictions in this position only began to emerge during the Sovnarkom's stalled negotiations with the Central Powers, at Brest Litovsk, in mid-January 1918. Yet, despite the major loss of territory and setbacks represented by the final Treaty of Brest Litovsk of March 3rd (NS), the Bolsheviks still retained a large enough reliable armed core, around which other elements could later be drawn to build up the Red Army.

However, the decisiveness, which the Bolsheviks demonstrated in Russia proper, where they had the support of the majority of workers, was not to be duplicated in Right Bank Ukraine, where they enjoyed only minority support. They attempted a coup in Kyiv on December 12th (NS) but were easily rounded up and arrested by forces loyal to

the Central Rada. They were soon released (196). After this failure, Lenin decided to invade Ukraine to assert the Sovnarkom's direct authority.

There were a number of reasons given for Lenin's ultimatum of December 16th (NS) to the Central Rada (197). The first was hypocritical. The Central Rada was accused of disorganising the South Western and Southern Fronts through its 'Ukrainisation of the armed forces' policy! The Sovnarkom seems to have very quickly taken on the role of the Mensheviks and SRs in the previous Provisional Government, now that it too was responsible for the ongoing peace negotiations with the Central Powers. They thought that the best deal, which could be attained, would come by maintaining order on the fronts.

In truth, the Bolsheviks held a more ambiguous attitude towards 'Ukrainisation'. In contrast to the situation on the Northern and Western Fronts, where the Bolsheviks now enjoyed majority support amongst the soldiers, the Right Social Revolutionaries had maintained their preponderant influence in the regiments on the South Western and Southern Fronts. This meant that their Russian officers might mobilise them for a counter-revolutionary attack on the new soviet regime. The Central Rada's 'Ukrainisation' policy disrupted any such moves by the Russian officers on these two fronts - a fact which was, no doubt, quietly welcomed in Petrograd.

The second reason, given by Lenin, was the Central Rada's disarming of Bolshevik-led Red Guards in Ukraine. The disarming of the Red Guards could have been quite easily avoided, if the Bolsheviks had recognised the Central Rada's Third Universal in line with the Sovnarkom's publicly declared support for the 'right of self-determination'. Such political recognition of would still have left the Bolsheviks completely free to organise in Ukraine.

Nor could there any longer be any doubt of the breadth of support for the immediate recognition of Ukrainian sovereignty. This was highlighted by the results of the elections to the all-Russian

Constituent Assembly, held on November 25th (NS). 61.5% of the votes in Ukraine went to parties that supported the Central Rada. The UPSR won 45.3%, the Russian SRs 24.8%, and the Bolsheviks 10% of the total vote. In Kiev and Podolia provinces, the Ukrainian Socialist Bloc (UPSR plus USDLP) won 77% and 79% of the vote respectively, whilst the UPSRs alone won 83% of the vote in Poltava and 71% in Volynia provinces (198).

If the Bolsheviks had honoured its declaration of the 'right of self-determination' this would probably have been enough to bring about the reconstitution of the Committee for the Defence of the Revolution. The Central Rada was strongly opposed to the ousted Provisional Government because of its continued hostility to any meaningful Ukrainian self-determination. The basis for a defensive alliance, at least, quite clearly existed. Indeed, the UPS. Left was actively involved, at the time, in negotiations with their Russian SR Left counterparts (now directly involved in the Sovnarkom) for plans to establish a soviet-based Ukraine (199). Lenin must have known of these moves, yet he still chose to crush Ukrainian sovereignty and the only realistic option for revolutionary Left unity in Ukraine. Yet, just two weeks later, he was quite prepared to recognise the reactionary Svinhufvud's declaration of full Finnish independence, a move very obviously being made to prepare the ground for a counter-revolutionary bloodbath! (200)

Lenin resorted to a third reason for issuing his ultimatum to the Central Rada. This was its refusal to allow Red Russian troops to cross Ukraine to deal with the new threat represented by the Kaledin and his Don Cossacks, whilst allowing counter-revolutionaries to make the same journey (201). The obvious implication was that the Central Rada was in league with the White Russian counter-revolution. Lenin's 'reason' was somewhat contrived. The Central Rada was trying to assert its authority, with the forces at its disposal (which could have included the Bolshevik-led Red Guards, at this stage) throughout Ukraine. However, the Central Rada had far fewer forces at its disposal further east, where Whites were passing through on their way to the lands of the Don Cossacks. Many would have

traveled as individuals, not in military units.

There was an element of 'realpolitik' in the Central Rada's policy towards the Don Cossacks (similar to that practised by Lenin to a divide his enemies). The Central Rada's USDLP and UPSR dominated leadership continued (up until the Russian invasion) to support a federal Russia. To further this end, they had initiated a Peoples' Congress, held in Kyiv, back in September. Representatives from thirteen nationalities attended, including the Don Cossacks (202). There had been a growing movement to assert greater Cossack autonomy from the Russian imperial state. Ukrainian democrats and nationalists welcomed all national movements that weakened this centralised and oppressive state. It was probably in this hope that the Central Rada made no moves to prevent the formation of a Don Cossack state by Kaledin (although, unlike Ukraine at this time, this short-lived state did become a centre for wider White Russian forces). The Central Rada saw the White Russians as their greatest enemy, and probably hoped to simultaneously remove them from Ukrainian soil, and to open up divisions in their ranks over the issue of Cossack self-determination.

However, a few days after their failed coup attempt in Kyiv, the Bolsheviks were presented with another opportunity provided by the special all-Ukrainian Congress of Workers, Peasants and Soldiers from December 17th - 19th (NS) they had initiated in the same city. Given its timing, it was probably meant to approve the planned Bolshevik coup in the city five days earlier! Despite the setback to Lenin's designs, the Bolsheviks led, this time, by Vasyl' Shakhrai, still intended to have this Congress recognise the overall authority of the all-Russian Sovnarkom, albeit now by verbal persuasion alone.

The Bolsheviks had the advantage that they were trying to build and extend support for the October Revolution on the basis of immediate peace and land for the peasants. In contrast, the Central Rada, still pursuing a constitutionalist road, was now preparing for a Ukrainian Constituent Assembly, the elections to be held on January 9th, 1918 (NS). They were also awaiting the convening of the all-Russian

Constituent Assembly, now that the elections for this body had been held. This relative passivity gave the Bolsheviks the opportunity to win support from disgruntled soldiers who wanted to return home immediately, and even from peasants eager for land redistribution.

However, the local Bolshevik, Shakrai's position was completely undermined by Lenin's ultimatum calling for the Central Rada to submit or to face war. The majority of the 2500 delegates at the all-Ukrainian Congress of Workers, Peasants and Soldiers were even more incensed than the First Peasant Congress had been over the way the all-Russian Provisional Government had treated the Central Rada's delegation back in June, or the Third Military Congress had been upon hearing of the threats to Ukraine's General Secretariat in late October. Only eighty delegates supported the Bolshevik ultimatum (203). The Sovnarkom and the Bolsheviks were seen to be the latest manifestation of the Great Russian chauvinism of the previous Provisional Governments and the tsarist regime. The overwhelming majority of the Congress delegates signalled their support for the Central Rada.

The Bolshevik delegation quickly departed for Kharkhov/Kharkiv, a Russified city in eastern Ukraine. However, the Donets, Kryvoy Rog and Katerynoslav Bolsheviks assembled there wanted nothing to do with these Kiev Bolshevik delegates from Right Bank Ukraine. The Left-Bankers, of course, recognised no Ukraine at all, just different regions of South Russia. So, they probably thought that the Kiev Bolsheviks should have headed for support to the Bolshevik centre in Petrograd instead. Indeed, the Kiev Bolsheviks were so unwelcome in Kharkov that their comrades initially offered them the hospitality of one of the city's jails! (204)

However, although both politically defeated in Kiev, and unwanted in Kharkhov, the Kievan Bolsheviks enjoyed one undoubted advantage. They still had the backing of Lenin, who needed them for his designs to annex Ukraine to Russia. Therefore, the Kiev Bolsheviks were able to have the ongoing Donets-Kryvoy Roy Regional Congress of Soviets rename itself as the First All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets

of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies, despite the fact they had just fled from the real, much larger and more representative, first such Congress in Kyiv!

The Kharkhov Congress proclaimed a Ukrainian government, with a Central Executive Committee (TSiKU) and a Peoples' Secretariat (Cabinet) (as opposed to the Central Rada's Mala Rada and General Secretariat). However, so strong was the local Bolshevik opposition to even a nominal Ukraine, that this Central Executive Committee was to preside over separate soviet republics for the Donets-Krivoy Roy, the Odessa Region, leaving a Ukraine Soviet Republic, which only covered the Right Bank, Poltava and Katerynoslav areas (205). Furthermore, the Katerynoslav Bolsheviks completely boycotted the Central Executive Committee since they did not recognise the existence of Ukraine! (206)

This geographical fragmentation of Ukraine reflected the 'South Russian' regional organisations of the Bolshevik Party itself. An attempt had been made to address the possibility of forming a subordinate specifically Ukrainian 'party'/section of the RSDLP at a South West Regional Conference held in Kyiv between December 12th - 18th 1917 (NS). However, there was no agreement reached, even on the basis of the minimalist 'Ukraine' encompassed by the South West Region (207).

Therefore, the whole purpose of the shadowy, and in itself, almost powerless Peoples' Secretariat, was to act as a nominal Ukrainian government. This was to be installed, primarily by invading Russian Red Army units. A few ethnic Ukrainians were given seats as political window-dressing. However, the Bolsheviks and the Sovnarkom took all the real decisions at an all-Russian level. Orders from the centre often just by-passed their 'official' Ukrainian government. The real power on the ground was its Bolshevik-appointed military leader, Antonov-Ovseenko. He extended the Sovnarkom's influence, as the mainly Russian Red Guards conquered more Ukrainian territory (208).

Where ethnic Russians or assimilated Russian Ukrainians formed a majority in the cities of eastern Ukraine, the Bolsheviks were successful in initiating a number of Red Guard takeovers. However, external force became an increasingly necessary as the Red Guards moved into the more ethnic Ukrainian majority areas. The former Russian monarchist, now Sovnarkom-appointed, Left SR, General Murayev, headed these forces. He demanded that every soviet should 'elect' a solely Bolshevik/Left SR Executive, or have its existing Executive arrested. In Poltava, this was supplemented by the threat to raze the city to the ground! (209)

In the meantime, the Central Rada was trying to mobilise its forces. However, the continued Bolshevik threats, the attempted coup, followed by the Russian Red Guard invasion, had weakened the position of the pro-Russian Left (and Centre) of the UPSR and UDSLP and strengthened the position of their now anti-Russian Right wings, and particularly of the UPSR's military leader, Petliura. He, in turn, was prepared to mobilise Right nationalists, nationalistic students and the Ukrainian middle class.

Ukrainian self-determination, as defined by the Right, made only minimal (usually paper) concessions to the burning social and economic issues concerning peasants and workers. Far more important to them was the public display of Ukrainian symbols, including the blue and yellow flag, Ukrainian national and church processions, and the public promotion of the Ukrainian language in the cities.

The peasants found their own demands for immediate land redistribution were largely ignored. They were told to await the meeting of the Ukrainian Constituent Assembly, in a very similar manner to the promises made by the old all-Russian Provisional Governments. Also, Ukrainian peasants did not feel the need for the enforced recognition of the Ukrainian language, which was being pushed in the multi-lingual, but mainly Russian-speaking cities. The everyday language of the Ukrainian villages was Ukrainian. Ukrainian soldiers, themselves mainly peasants-in-uniform, were also

impatient with the rate of demobilisation. ‘Trench Bolshevism’ was in the ascendancy.

When the initial clash took place between the largely ethnic Russian, Red Guards and the Central Rada forces in Kiev, in January, their respective weaknesses were highlighted. The majority in Kyiv adopted a neutral stance. The Bolsheviks, however, allied themselves with former tsarist gendarmes in a defence of ‘Russia’ (210); whilst the Ukrainian nationalist forces consisted mainly of students and middle class volunteers, supplemented by some ‘Ukrainised’ army officers and sailors from the Black Sea fleet (211). In this clash, the forces of the Central Rada prevailed.

Yet General Murayev’s much more substantial and largely Russian Red force, was only a few days away from Kyiv. However, at no point did the gravely threatened Central Rada attempt to mobilise the quite numerous anti-Bolshevik Russian forces in the city (212). The probable reason was that many Russian Rightists were more opposed to any form of Ukrainian self-determination, than they were to an invading Russian army, even if Bolshevik/Left SR led! This rather undermined Lenin’s December 17th (NS) ultimatum accusation of Central Rada/White Russian collaboration.

It was only to be a few days before the Red Russian forces arrived in Kiev. Murayev conducted a bombardment of the city. This was supported by a strike of ethnic Russian workers. He defeated the Ukrainian forces and occupied the city on February 7th (NS), although fighting went on for a few more days (213). The national nature of the conflict was highlighted by the welcome given to General Murayev’s largely Russian forces by Russian Right SR, Rybatsov; and by the execution of Ukrainian Left SR, Zarudnyi (recently in joint negotiations with the Russian Left SRs over a planned soviet Ukraine!) (214) But, even before his arrival in Kyiv, Murayev had issued Order No. 14, stating that he was “bringing freedom ‘from the distant north’ on sharp bayonets”! (215).

‘Bayonet Bolshevism’ only held sway for a few weeks, before the

German Army arrived. During this time Murayev suppressed every public manifestation of Ukrainian national identity (216). He considered those speaking Ukrainian to be counter-revolutionary. Meanwhile, Antonov-Ovseenko soon dashed the hopes of Ukrainian peasants who had heard of Bolshevik governmental support for immediate land redistribution. No sooner did they occupy the land, than they faced Antonov-Ovseenko's punitive, armed, food detachments (217). The Bolsheviks and Left SRs refused to recognise any Ukrainian revolution, just seeing a 'bourgeois' Ukrainian government and a 'Little Russian' peasantry, whom they held in contempt.

This incredible shortsightedness, which reflected a very definite Great Russian chauvinism, would bring catastrophe, not only to Ukraine, but to Red Russia too. It would also create a barrier to a possible south-west expansion power from Russia Ukraine (including the former Austro-Hungarian areas of eastern Galicia and Ruthenia) to Hungary, where a revolutionary rising took place, but were left physically isolated. Instead, the Russian revolutionary government once more resorted to 'Bayonet Bolshevism' in its failed westward counter-offensive in Poland, aimed to connect with hoped-for German revolutionary forces in 1920.

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2. 1918 – THE LOST YEAR OF THE REVOLUTION?

A. THE FIRST WAVE OF REVOLT BEYOND THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

i) The longer term implications of the Treaty of Brest Litovsk

As a direct or indirect consequence of the Treaty of Brest Litovsk, finally signed on March 3rd, 1918, Latvia, Ukraine and Finland all passed from either Bolshevik or Social Democratic control to German or Austro-Hungarian imperial control. Although this Treaty was ostensibly between the representatives of the Central Powers (Germany, Austro-Hungary, Ottoman Turkey and Bulgaria) and the Russian Soviet Government, in reality it was dictated by the German High Command and accepted first by Lenin. The Treaty was only very reluctantly agreed, by the majority of the Bolshevik leadership, and later by Bolshevik and Soviet Congresses. It provoked much internal opposition within the Bolsheviks, particularly amongst the Left Communists (a Radical Left faction), led by Bukharin. However, the Treaty was even more strongly opposed by the Bolsheviks' Left Socialist Revolutionary coalition allies. They resigned from the Soviet Executive, the Sovnarkom, the better to undermine the Treaty.

Eventually, by late 1918, the German Army faced collapse on the Western Front, whilst the Kaiser's regime was opposed by a mounting challenge at home from workers, soldiers and sailors. With the imminent prospect of military defeat and political revolution, the new Social Democratic-led German government signed an Armistice on November 11th. As a consequence, the notorious Treaty of Brest Litovsk collapsed. Lenin appeared to be vindicated. The Bolsheviks, now in sole control of the revolutionary regime in Russia, re-established Soviet rule in many areas lost to the Germans, Austro-Hungarians and Ottomans, as a result of the Treaty of Brest Litovsk.

However, the retreats and accommodations, along with the political arguments, accepted and used by Lenin and the Bolsheviks to justify signing that Treaty, had other longer-term consequences. Methods that had been seen as drastic emergency compromises in March 1918, reappeared when the post-October Revolution was forced back in on Russian territory. This contributed to the one-party, dictatorial nature of the new regime, which finally triumphed after the crushing of the Kronstadt Revolt in 1921. This also contributed to a more disguised,

Russian supremacy within the new USSR, which was eventually formed in December 1922, from the truncated territories of the former Tsarist Empire.

At the centre of the political arguments, which raged around Brest-Litovsk, was once again the issue of national self-determination. The ‘right of self-determination’ was promoted in three forms – reactionary, liberal and Leninist. The Radical Left, including Luxemburg, until her premature death in January 1919, opposed this ‘right’. Those advocates of the ‘Internationalism from Below’ tendency questioned the usefulness of the slogan, given the hypocrisy or insincerity of its main advocates, and advocated Communists taking the lead over national self-determination in oppressed nations.

Further material for completing this can be found at:-

Why Putin has invaded`Ukraine, Part 2

https://allanarmstrong831930095.files.wordpress.com/2023/07/ukraine2-1.pdf

and

From pre-Brit to Ex-Brit - The forging and the break-up of the UK and Britishness

https://allanarmstrong831930095.files.wordpress.com/2023/08/from-pre-brit-to-ex-brit-.pdf