M. N. ROY'S MEMOIRS
Introduction

AMONG his Indian contemporaries, Manabendra Nath Roy was without a peer; there is perhaps no comparable figure in the East. He was unique in the universality of his experience. A dozen different countries spread over three major continents provide the background of his chequered career. He occupied leading positions in the great movements of Nationalism, Communism and Humanism, continuing to grow throughout in his understanding aided and enriched by his rare intellectual gifts and vast experience. While holding positions of authority and influence and rubbing shoulders with some of the greatest figures of contemporary history, he did not hesitate in choosing the path of wilderness whenever his convictions, in the context of the situations he faced, seemed to demand the choice. He combined firmness of commitment to the basic values of freedom and truth with a remarkable openmindedness, capable of absorbing new ideas and learning from fresh experience. Indeed, his life was a great quest, a steady and purposeful march; the movement had its moments of slowing down or setbacks, but it knew no failures or defeats. It had no room whatsoever for frustration or bitterness of any kind. That his life, no less than his ideas, is his bequest to future generations is the real measure of his greatness.

The story of the life of Manabendra Nath Roy may perhaps never be fully told; the task at any rate seems to be well beyond the resources of any individual. It is indeed unfortunate that he could not continue writing his memoirs, for there are parts of this story he alone could tell. The loss is permanent and irreparable. Those of us who had the privilege of knowing and working with Roy still recall the great initial reluctance he had in starting this writing, a reluctance which all the powers of persuasion and argument of Ellen, his wife, and of his friends and followers had to be used to overcome. The identification of his life with his work was complete. So one
was he with his ideas, ideals and pursuits that he seldom spoke of himself.

Born in a Bengal village, Urbaria (24 Parghanas), in a priestly family, Narendra Bhattacharya joined the revolutionary movement in Bengal as a schoolboy of fourteen. He was soon distinguished as one of its bold and brave members and soon after the outbreak of the First World War, left the country, in disguise, to secure arms for overthrowing the alien rule. Narendra travelled through Burma, Indonesia, China, Japan and the Philippines and reached the USA in pursuit of his mission. Conditions in the USA changed with America's entry in the war and he was arrested. It was in the United States that Narendra Bhattacharya became Manabendra Nath Roy, a name that stuck till the end. Roy jumped bail and escaped to Mexico. The break with militant nationalism and conversion to Marxism began while he was in Mexico and culminated in his founding of the Communist Party of Mexico, the first Communist Party outside the Soviet Union. Roy met Michael Borodin in Mexico and was soon invited to the Soviet Union by Lenin. He reached Moscow in time for the Second Congress of the Communist International and soon won the confidence and admiration of Lenin who described him as "the symbol of revolution in the East." He was elected to the Presidium of the Communist International and was for several years the Head of its Eastern Section. In 1926, he went to China as the sole emissary of the International to guide the revolution there. In 1928 came the break with the International and after a brief spell in Germany, Roy returned to India in 1930—nearly sixteen years after the departure from the country in search of arms.

He returned with arms but of a different kind. He had come back with a vision and with ideas, with a devotion to freedom and justice which while mobilising the Indian people against British Imperialism would also rouse them against their native exploiters. He had outgrown the naive inspiration of colonial nationalism. The new world of ideas and values opened to him by Marxism led him to insist that freedom must develop dimensions other than the nationalist if it were to be meaningful to millions of his countrymen.
INTRODUCTION

However, in less than a year of his return, Roy was arrested and sentenced to six years' imprisonment. On release, he joined the Indian National Congress; but soon after the outbreak of the Second World War, came the break with the Congress on the question of India's attitude to the issues posed by the war. The war signified for him a global struggle between democracy and fascism and the victory of the former was a precondition for the liberation of the colonies. He left the Congress and founded the Radical Democratic Party in 1940. The break with the Congress marked the beginning of his break with communism and the evolution of his ideas beyond and away from Marxism. The man of action and the thinker were soon fused into a system-builder who, more than any one else, was conscious of the limitations and difficulties of any such endeavour and was never tired of emphasising them. His ideas developed rapidly and crystallised into a social philosophy, New Humanism, which he continued to develop and propagate till the end. It was as a corollary of this development that the Radical Democratic Party was dissolved in 1948.

M. N. Roy was, I think, the first Indian thinker who appreciated clearly the significance of the major break-through of the citadel of Imperialism by the forces generated by the Second World War. He was the first to maintain that the issue of Capitalism vs. Socialism was bound to make room for that of Democracy vs. Totalitarianism, a fact supported by many and amply testified to by the history of the post-War period. Roy was again one of the very first few to recognise fully and clearly the implications of the enormous destructive power developed during the War and its bearings on the idea and the technique of revolution. Insurrections have been clearly rendered outdated; the ballot box, on the other hand, has been already found to be insufficient and wanting. If ever there was a challenge to human intelligence and ingenuity, here was one. It will redound to the credit of Roy, even after many of those who dominated the contemporary scene are long forgotten, that he took up the challenge and laid the basis of meeting it in an effective manner.

It is hardly possible here to summarise his ideas. Suffice it to point out that they constitute a dependable response to the
demands of a crisis which steadily increases the feelings of helplessness and hopelessness of the individual by asserting his primacy and supremacy and open up a perspective of restoring sanity and decency in public life. The latter was reinforced by drawing upon the achievements of modern science which have made it possible to furnish biological sanctions for the moral behaviour of man. Roy reassessed the potentialities of the democratic movement when it is free from the distorting influences of power politics. He also reexamined Marxism without any inhibitions. The result was the formulation of a philosophy which is essentially a mid-twentieth-century version of the Renaissance, modified and enriched by the knowledge and experience which man had gained in the intervening centuries.

Thus starting as a nationalist revolutionary and spending nearly twenty years in the vanguard of the Marxian revolution of our time, Roy ultimately crowned his career as a philosopher of the modern Renaissance. This indeed would be an outstanding achievement for any man and especially so for one who never entered the portals of a university or a seminary. And yet what marks out Roy as unique among the dramatis personae of the history of the revolution in our time is a rare combination of the love of freedom, unimpeachable integrity, a sense of loyalty, the courage of conviction, a passionate interest in ideas and their human implications, an unqualified involvement in the struggle for freedom together with complete detachment from the game of power politics through which this struggle often expresses itself, and with all that a genuine interest in the hopes and anxieties of the most ordinary of men who ever came in contact with him. There was something of the universal man in him, whose company made even the most mediocre of his comrades feel that life, with all its ugly patches, was exciting and beautiful and that they, too, had an important place in its ever-renewing procession. Few leaders have been able to release men's creativity as Roy could do without resorting to Shamanism of any kind.

Roy could do this because he was the least interested in himself. His sole concern was to realise freedom himself and to help others to do so. As his conception of freedom developed
a richer and more complex meaning, his political philosophy and activity underwent a corresponding transformation. Similarly, his 'failure' in the pragmatic sense of the word can be seen only as the inevitable consequence of his intellectual and moral integrity. Where others compromised principle with expediency, Roy chose to forgo ostensible success in order that the values he sought should not elude him. What he wrote in his last letter to Stalin is the basic clue to his career: "I cannot reconcile myself to the idea that decency, loyalty and honesty should have no place in the catalogue of Bolshevik virtues." Here spoke a man who was capable of throwing away the kingdom of the whole world for the sake of these simple virtues, a man whose greatness essentially lay in his goodness. Who can deny that the world needs a basic transformation if it is to be a place congenial for men like him to live and to grow?

Reason was the sole guide that Roy accepted in his quest. Reason alone, operating in the light of experience, could solve the problems of men. He believed that once men saw the truth, they would accept it sooner or later. This was of course an unverifiable assumption, but not so Utopian as it may at first sight appear. After all, the educability of man is grounded in his capacity to interpret and to learn from his experience, all that Roy did was to extend the principle from the field of formal intellectual instruction to that of co-operative social living together. For morality is nothing but a body of rules governing inter-personal relationships, and Roy assumed that in a rationally ordered society the claims of morality would be compatible with those of freedom. Indeed they had to be; for, according to Roy, being rational implied being moral and reason itself was but an instrument for carrying on the quest for freedom, which was an expression, on the plane of consciousness, of man's instinct for survival. His approach thus involved both the Socratic scepticism as to the current beliefs and the Socratic faith that knowledge is virtue.

The memoirs cover a period of about eight years, from 1915 to 1923. Part of this material was originally published in The Radical Humanist, a weekly founded and edited by Roy; some portions appeared elsewhere also. The manuscript was originally prepared for the Press by Ellen Roy who unfortunately
is not with us to see it appear in print. The tragic circumstances of her death—she was murdered at her residence in Dehra Dun—make the grief of survivors all the more poignant. I is a little comfort 'hat one of her wishes is at last being fulfilled, through the appearance of this volume which is an excellent introduction to what may be called the formative period of Roy's life and career.

The Publishers have our gratitude for undertaking the work. The difficulties in executing it were formidable. But they tackled these with their remarkable resourcefulness, tact and never-failing courtesy. The photographs included in the volume were old and faded and the difficulties in reproduction were serious. We are thankful for the efforts in getting over these and including these old and rare photographs in the book.

The usefulness of the book has been considerably increased by the inclusion of the checklist of Roy's writings prepared by the University of California. Our thanks are due to the authorities, and Mr. Wilson as also to Dr. Richard Park for making this possible.

We are deeply thankful to Mr. D. N. Marshall, the ever-obliging Librarian of the University of Bombay, who was kind enough to prepare the index in response to our request

The publication of the book would hardly have been possible but for the willing assistance and cooperation, of all these and many other friends. And yet a significant measure of credit in this is due to the Times of India Press for completing the printing work in an excellent and expeditious manner. I cannot therefore conclude without conveying to them our sincere thanks

G. D. PARIKH

Bombay 8 March 1964.
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Part 1

In Search of an Ideal
1

In Search of Arms Through Asia

MORE THAN a quarter of a century before India finally attained the coveted goal of national independence, the tempting vision of an earlier possibility had called a generation of young men to fruitless adventures. On the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, Indian revolutionaries in exile looked towards Germany as the land of hope, and rushed there full of great expectations. By the end of the year, the news reached us in India that the Indian Revolutionary Committee in Berlin had obtained from the German Government the promise of arms and money required to declare the war of independence. The news spread like wild fire, to affect the Indian soldiers of the British army also. Revolution was round the corner, although we had the vaguest possible idea about the things to come. In any case, independence was within reach. The imagined imminence of the attainment of the common goal induced several secret revolutionary organisations to compose their traditional feuds. Clandestine conferences led to the formation of the General Staff of the coming revolution, with Jatin Mukherji as the Commander-in-Chief.

The job of finding money for initial expenditure, entrusted to me, was soon done according to plan. Then we were coo-fronted with the problem of getting the promised arms into the country. Our transporting them all the way from Germany was out of the question. A messenger went to Berlin, with the proposal that the Germans should deliver the arms to us in a neutral country nearest to India. We chose the Dutch East Indies, and before the end of 1914 I left for Java—my first trip out of the country. I returned within two months, with some money, not much; but as regards arms, the coveted cargo
of the Golden Fleece—it was a wild goose chase. They failed to arrive, because, as it was discovered later, the whole plan was a hoax, a veritable swindle.

But our youthful enthusiasm, thoughtless optimism and, above all, the faith in the liberating mission of Germany, were not to be so easily daunted. We resolved to try again; a new plan was made; and I left India for the second time early in 1915, in search of the Golden Fleece, determined not to return without the precious cargo which, we fondly believed, was floating somewhere on the Pacific Ocean. As it happened, I did not return until after sixteen years.

A full story of my experience during those years may be told some day, not as the autobiography of an individual, but as a part of the history of the time. For the moment, I only propose to recollect how M. N. Roy was born. Because if the story is ever to be told, that will not be of a naive youth who started on a wild-goose chase thirty-five years ago; it will be a record of the experience of a different man.

The attempt to smuggle arms in ships having failed, I went abroad for the second time with the alternative plan of bringing arms overland from China. They were to be smuggled through the north-eastern tribal area, where the Abors had risen in revolt only recently. While I left to get arms abroad, a group of our comrades, led by the cleverest amongst us, was to proceed to the north-eastern frontiers, to incite the Abors and the neighbouring tribes to rise again in revolt; this time to be helped with arms and other resources from outside.

I made yet another attempt to bring help overseas from Indonesia. The plan was to use the German ships interned in a port at the northern tip of Sumatra, to storm the Andaman Islands and free and arm the prisoners there, and land the army of liberation on the Orissa coast. The ships were armoured, as many big German vessels were, ready for war time use. They also carried several guns each. The crew was composed of naval ratings. They had to escape from the internment camp, seize the ships and sail. The skeleton crew left on board each ship could have the steam up. Several hundred rifles and other small arms with an adequate quantity of ammunition could be acquired through Chinese smugglers.

who would get then on board the ships. The plan failed because the Germans would not play such a serious game. At the last moment, the money for the purchase of arms was not forthcoming, and the German Consul General mysteriously disappeared on the day when he was to issue orders for the execution of the plan. However, I did manage to extract a fairly large sum of money from them, and remit it to India so that our Abor expedition could be financed.

Thereafter, in disgust, but still full of hope, I went to Japan, Rash Behary Bose was there with an identical mission; he would certainly help me. But I was rather surprised to find that he now believed that our mission of liberating India would be accomplished only in consequence of the bigger mission of Japan to free Asia from White domination. I was still a full-blooded nationalist, and as such believed in the doctrine of racial solidarity. Nevertheless, I could not forget the fact that Japan was Britain's ally. How could we rely upon her helping us in our struggle against British domination? Rash Behary smiled benevolently upon my ignorance of diplomacy: Japan had joined the war on the side of the Entente Powers with a purpose; she should not be embarrassed even if Indian revolutionaries were persecuted in Japan. We must have faith in the leader of Asia and wait patiently for our chance.

It all sounded very impressive, but did not carry conviction. Given a safe and comfortable political patronage, one might wait, pending the fruition of the devious Japanese diplomacy; but could we leave in ille lurch the comrades who were waiting, neither safe nor comfortable, somewhere in the tribal regions on the Indo-Chinese frontier? Nor was a share of the patronage enjoyed by Rash Behary offered to me.

Thrown back upon my own wits, I looked up the Chinese nationalist leader Sun Yat-sen, who had taken refuge in Japan after the defeat of the 1913 July uprising of Nanking, called the Second Chinese Revolution, He expounded more authoritatively the doctrine of Japan's mission to liberate Asia, wisely advised patience and perspicacity. At home in India, we had heard so much of the great Chinese leader, and, given to hero-worship, hailed him as an avatar. Face to face with him, I
found it rather difficult to go down on my knees humbly; the prejudice of cultivated faith—of hero-worship—was challenged by the loyalty to comrades in the self-same faith and, if not as yet consciously, by the native intelligence of a born heretic. The predisposition to believe and the heretical tendency had struggled in me ever since my early school days. But that a again another story.

Sun Yat-sen believed in the liberating mission of Japan. He argued that it was in Japan's own interest to help other Asiatic peoples to free themselves from the domination of European Powers. Next to Japan, he trusted America. But the anchor of his faith was Christianity. He actually said that the peoples of Asia should embrace Christianity as the condition for their political liberation and social progress. I was as yet too young to argue these points. My appeal for help rested on the common ground of the solidarity of Asia against the White race.

But my faith in racial solidarity was shaken rudely by the refusal of the prophet of Asiatic nationalism to help India against Britain. His reason was purely opportunistic. He could not do anything against the British because Hong Kong was the base of his operations in South China. As regards his own country, he was all in favour of giving the Japanese a free hand. The argument was: Let them drive the European Powers out; then China and Japan would come to an agreement on the-basis of the unity of race and culture. It appealed to my nationalist prejudice, but was a little jarring to common-sense. And I could not but be resentful when the plausible argument was applied to India also; once Japan had driven the White Powers out of Asia, India's turn to be freed would come, after China. Meanwhile, we must wait patiently.

After that time (end of 1915), the Chinese provinces of Yunan and Szechuan bordering on Burma and India were in revolt again Yuan Shi-kai's plan to restore monarchy with himself as the emperor. The revolt was hailed as the Third Chinese Revolution. I naturally took it for granted that the inspiration came from the Chinese exiled leader. I suggested that a practical alliance of the Chinese and Indian peoples in their common struggle for freedom would be established if
some arms from Yunan and Szechuan were passed on to our people across the frontier. Sun Yat-sen proposed that I should approach the German Ambassador in China with a demand for five million dollars to purchase the entire store of arms and ammunitions at the disposal of the rebels in Yunan and Szechuan. If the money was available, with it he was sure to win Yuan Shi-kai's supporters and thus bring about his downfall. Consequently, the object of the Third Revolution would be attained, and the redundant stock of arms and ammunitions handed over to me, at any place on the frontier. It was agreed that I should immediately go to Peking to make the proposal to the German Ambassador; if I succeeded there, on hearing from me, Sun Yat-sen would send his emissary to Yunan with the instruction according to our deal. Thereafter, I was to proceed to take over the precious cargo, having paid for it to Sun Yat-sen personally at Shanghai. He would come there to open his offensive against Yuan Shi-kai with silver bullets.

The grandiose plan made a strong appeal to my spirit of adventure. At last, perhaps in a few months, the dream of appearing on the frontiers of India with arms enough to raise an army might be fulfilled. It was so very plausible from my point of view that I completely ignored its fantastic nature as far as Sun Yat-sen was concerned. Many years later, having made myself more intelligently acquainted with the history of modern China and her numerous revolutions, I learned that Sun Yat-sen disapproved of the Third Revolution, because its leader, the Governor of Yunan, was a follower of the noted liberal philosopher-politician, Lian Chih-Chao. But that is a different story, which has already been told in greater detail in my book Revolution and Counter-Revolution in China.

I had to leave Japan in any case, and China was the only place to go. From the day I had landed at Nagasaki, I was under strict surveillance. I had the address of a man in Tokyo, who was to arrange my seeing Rash Behary. I saw him after days of the most elaborate conspiratorial preparations. Yet, the police knew all about it. When the Chief of Police called at the hotel to enquire about the object of my visit to Japan, he asked if I had seen my friend Mr. Bose. On my replying in the negative, he smiled with the characteristically Japanese
polite insolence. After a couple of days, Rash Behary's secret messenger informed me that I was going to be served with a notice to leave Japan within 24 hours, and that I should leave immediately if I wanted to escape practical extradition to Shanghai. Of course, I wanted to do so; but how? Rash Behary with all his high connections, did not offer any advice or help.

I had nothing more to do in Japan. In the meantime, I had seen Dr. Sun Yat-sen and made the deal proposed by him. I must go to China anyhow; so, why not leave immediately? I had previously chosen the route to travel overland through Korea. It was very difficult to shake off the Japanese bloodhounds. The next afternoon I went to the biggest department store. Even there, foreigners had to take off their shoes at the entrance in exchange for cloth shoes, so that the dirt from the streets did not soil the spotless matting which covered the stairs, corridors and halls of the large seven-storey building. I did not return to recover my shoes, went out by another entrance and straight to the railway station. After an hour or so the train from Shimonoseki left. It seemed that I had succeeded in putting the four sleuths off the track. The ridiculous grin pasted on their faces was getting on my nerves. Early next morning, I crossed over to Pusan and took the train for Seoul, having purchased a through ticket for Mukden. My plan was to switch off the main track at Seoul, go to the port of Chi-moolpo and travel across the Yellow Sea to Shangaikwan or Tientsin. The latter place was my destination. Rash Behary had informed me that an important leader of the Gadr Party was living in the German Concession there. But to make it doubly sure that the Japanese were no longer on my track, I decided to give a little more twist to my route. I had booked the passage for Shangaikwan, but left the ship stealthily at Dairen, took the train for Mukden and changed there for Peking. The short voyage on the Yellow Sea in mid-winter was hard. It was a Japanese cargo ship; accommodation and food were bad. In the train to Peking, I relaxed with the relief that I was no longer hounded.

I had purchased a ticket for Peking; but left the through train at Shangaikwan, stayed there overnight and took a
local train which went as far as Tientsin. On the platform, I was accosted by an Englishman—the typical colonial tough of the pre-war days: “Good afternoon, Mr. White—" (I was in Japan with that name). I pretended as if he was speaking to someone else, and tried to pass by. He promptly fell in step and said in a rather pleasant voice: “Before you go to your destination, would you mind accompanying me for a few minutes?” I enquired, where and why? "To the police station; I am the Chief of the British Police.” I had informed myself previously that the railway station was situated in the Russian Concession; and the German was just across the street in front. I made a last desperate attempt: “I am very tired after the journey and would rather go straight to a good hotel. Moreover, I believe we are not in British territory.” He became officious: “That's all right. I know my business. Really, I may not detain you long. Come along.” We were out on the street where a motor car was waiting.

In the police station, he asked me a few routine questions, and concluded by saying: “I am afraid you shall have to spend the night here. We shall make you as comfortable as possible. I have ordered your dinner from the Hotel Astor. We are expecting some information from Japan.” Seeing that I was beaten, I hazarded, "How did you know that I was coming?" He laughed: “Oh, the Japanese Police is very efficient. Good night.” He was gone, and I found myself behind heavy iron grilles. Two armed guards presently took up posts in front of the door. They were Sikhs; but shortly afterwards, they were relieved by two Tommies.

The experience of being locked up like that was not new to me. Curiously enough, in that situation I always went to sleep for hours. Breakfast came in the morning, and the police chief soon thereafter. "Are you ready to accompany me to the Consulate? " Of course, I followed without a word. In the car, he confided that I was going to be presented in the Consular Court. "On what charge? " I enquired. He shrugged his shoulders: “We are waiting for the report.” The Consul General was an aristocratic looking old man, sitting rather funerally in his high-backed chair. He looked sour, obviously had a bad liver, but spoke to me kindly and with politeness.
Why did I go to Japan? Why did I see in Tokyo a secret agent of the notorious revolutionary Rash Behary Bose? What did I propose to do in future? I replied with feigned contrition: I wanted to go to England for study; the war prevented it. But I was eager for a journey abroad for education and went to Japan to get into troubles. On the boat, some fellow passenger gave me an address in Tokyo. I could call if I needed any help. I did not know the language, and thought an Indian resident in the country would be helpful. Soon thereafter I saw that I had made a mistake. I was placed under police surveillance. I got frightened and wanted to return home, but desired to see a little of the world on the way. Therefore, I came to China. Now I did not want to stop anywhere; I wanted to return straight to India.

The Consul General listened attentively and appeared to believe my story. When I finished, he turned towards the Police Chief and asked: “Have you received any further report from Japan?” The grim reply was: “No, Sir, but it may come any time.” The British sense of justice saved me. “You cannot keep this young man locked up indefinitely.” Then, turning towards me: “You have got into trouble; wait here for a couple of days, in a hotel, and then go back to India. There are many revolutions in these parts; keep away from them.” It was like a paternal admonition. I tried to appear meek and penitent, but could not resist a mischievous idea: “Would the Consul General kindly give me a passport, so that I could travel without any difficulty?” The policeman glowered at my cheekiness. The old gentleman stiffened up a little. “No, I cannot do that; I don't know that you are a British subject.” The mischievous repartee was pronounced before I could think twice: “If I was not a British subject, how could your police arrest and detain me, Sir?” The old man was visibly rattled; while getting up, he remarked: “Oh, those are delicate points of law.” But he stuck to his native sense of justice: none shall be detained without trial. The policeman received the order: “The accused is released pending further evidence to support the charge.”

The policeman was furious. Out of the room, I heard him mutter—"the old fool.” Then he asked me where I wished
to go. "To a good hotel," I replied. "There is only one," he said; and then added with a grin—"but it is in the British Concession."

Nonchalantly, I retorted that I wanted to go there; I was a British subject. He called a rickshaw and ordered: "Aatoria." It was a fine hotel. I badly needed a hot bath and a good meal. The first thing, thereafter, was to arm myself with a map of the city. In the afternoon, I went out in a rickshaw—to the Chinese part of the town. My plan was to go to a point nearest to a small river. The German Concession was just on the other side. But two other rickshaws followed me. It was getting dark; I got into a biggish shop and loitered for quite a long time, until sheer boredom drove my guardians to the nearest tea shop. I slipped out by a side-door on a narrow lane, which led to the river only a few steps ahead. I reached it with no difficulty, but found that one must go over in a ferry-boat. The fare was paid in small Chinese coins which I did not possess. I put a bit of silver in the palm of the boatman. He grinned and pushed off, leaving other passengers waiting. In a couple of minutes, I was in safety. The very next day I contacted the local German Consulate.

The plan failed because of the dishonesty of the German promise to help an armed uprising in India. Moreover, it was doomed to fail; there was no guarantee that the curious calculations of Sun Yat-sen would carry any weight with the leader of the Third Chinese Revolution, even if I could fulfil my part of the contract. But presently, the situation changed, and the plan appeared to be strategically well worth consideration, as the German Ambassador admitted.

Yuan Shi-kai died before he had time to ascend the Dragon Throne, and with him disappeared the hope of a restoration of the monarchy in China. The Third Revolution became pointless; and the plausibility of the plan of my purchasing a surplus store of arms increased. When I approached the Germans first with the demand for money, they pointed out the flaw in the plan: How could one be sure that the arms in far-off Yunan, actually in possession of a man I did not have any contact with, would be handed over to me in return for the money paid to Sun Yat-sen in Shanghai? At that time, I was indignant at the insolence of white men who doubted the
honesty of the veteran Chinese leader. However, I thought that their reluctance to part with a large sum of money might be overcome if I could somehow remove the flaw in the plan. So, I did some more travelling, which by itself was full of adventures, and managed to contact the Yunan leader directly.

Finally, I returned to Peking with a concrete agreement concluded at Hankow with an accredited emissary of the Yunan leader in the presence of the German Consul. There was no intermediary; the money was to be paid by the Germans, if they so desired, directly to the party in actual possession of the arms. The latter, in his turn, undertook to deliver the goods, across the frontier, in the tribal area in the north-eastern corner of Assam. They were enough to equip an army of several thousands. There was an additional tentative agreement: on further payment, the Indian revolutionary army would be regularly supplied from the fairly large arsenal at Chengtu, capital of the Szechuan province, bordering on Tibet. There is a passable road over the pass at Sadiya.

By the beginning of 1916, there was practically no military force to defend the British power in India. The Indian officers of the skeleton army stationed here and there were eager to join a popular uprising. We had established contact with them all over the country, already in the middle of 1915. The situation was fully appropriate for an armed uprising. But at the crucial moment, the Germans failed to keep their promise; and I realised that they had never meant to give us any considerable help. While admitting that the final version of the plan was quite reliable and strategically sound, the German Ambassador regretted his inability to spend such a large sum of money. Thereupon, I enquired what was the cost, in men and material, of winning one battle in the War in Europe. The patronising junker did not expect such an insolence from a youngster belonging to a non-white race. He only infuriated me by suggesting that I did not know what I was talking about. I told that I knew that, if the British lost India, they might lose the war also. Was five million dollars too much to win the possibly decisive battle? Of course, I added, I would not win the battle of India for Germany. That seemed to settle the issue.
The Ambassador was visibly amazed, and tried to mollify me. He suggested that I must immediately proceed to Berlin to submit the plan for the consideration of the Supreme War Lord and his General Staff. While bidding farewell, he asked: “Tell me, young friend, do you really believe that you will be able to rule your country without foreign help and advice? ” I snapped back: “Well, don't you think that the privilege of helping us in future should be earned by helping us to win freedom? ” He laughed away his dismay, wished me luck and asked another question: “How many young men like the one I have just met are there in India?” I replied with honest modesty that I was a solitary representative of a very large party of such revolutionaries.
Journey Across the Pacific

ADMIRAL VON HINTZE, who subsequently became Imperial Germany's last Foreign Minister, was the Ambassador in China when I needed German financial help to purchase a large quantity of arms and have them transported to the north-eastern frontier of India. He told me that in war time only the Imperial General Staff could sanction large expenditures, and advised me to proceed to Germany, because he felt that from the military point of view my plan was worth trying and therefore the High Command might finance it. The conversations with von Hintze dispelled my still lingering illusions about Germany's sympathy for the victims of British Imperialism. Yet, having nothing honourable to do either in China or in Japan, I decided to try my luck first with the German Ambassador in the U.S.A., and finally the supreme war lords in Berlin. I was also curious to make the acquaintance of the famous Indian revolutionary exiles in America, of whom we had heard so much at home. But to cross the Pacific was a tough problem. I had no proper passport, and the American immigration law was particularly discriminating about the Asiatics. The Americans had not yet discovered India, notwithstanding the triumphant tour of Swami Vivekananda.

Since I was to go to Berlin on the advice of the German Ambassador, his subordinates and other influential countrymen were helpful in arranging my trip across the Pacific as stowaway in an American cargo ship manned with a crew of Teutonic extraction. The British police was hot on my heels. Yet I had to reach Shanghai. From Peking, I travelled by rail to Hankow, then down the Yangtse in a river steamer to Nanking. In order to shake off any possible secret trailers wanting to run
me down as soon as I reached Shanghai, I was taken on board a German gunboat lying midstream on the river between Nanking and Pukow. On board I met Bhagwan Singh, a leader of the Gadr Party. Having failed in his revolutionary mission to go to Burma and incite the Indian troops stationed there to mutiny, he also wanted to return to America. He was to be my fellow stowaway on the same cargo boat.

The week we spent together as guests of the Captain of the gunboat who gave me the uneasy feeling that on the uncomfortably long voyage I was not going to have an agreeable companion. The slow cargo ship was to take nearly a month to cross the Pacific. Bhagwan Singh was a heavily built man of about fifty, who had picked up many vulgarities of the American "He-man" without losing any of the equally objectionable native characteristics. He was a lusty eater and drank beer by the gallons. We were waiting for someone to come from Shanghai to take us there secretly—straight to the ship just before it was due to sail, Bhagwan Singh prepared a long list of eatables and several" cases of beer to be purchased at Shanghai and placed on board before us. He was providing for a month's voyage during which he evidently expected to eat, drink and be merry.

At last, one night, we were smuggled into Shanghai and taken to the ship in the small hours of the morning. The accommodation did not at all promise a festive voyage. We were to sit under the sailors' bunts in a small cabin aft, right on the rudder. Hardly the ship had begun moving, when an old sailor rushed in to say that the British police were coming on board to search. We must hide. In a great hurry, he unscrewed a plank from the bottom of the bunk. A dark hole opened up; we were to go down it and keep lying on our bellies. Unfortunately, the opening was too narrow for the girth of my companion; he had to be squeezed through by two hefty sailors. The plank was placed back and screwed down. We were buried in the pitch-dark entrails of the ship it seemed to last for ages until we were shaken by the churning movement of the powerful rudder. The ship was moving at last.

We were let out of our hiding; the day was quite advanced; and the ship in the open sea. There was nothing more to be
feared. Our friend, the old sailor, led us up to the tiny covered deck on which the thick steering chain trundled round a huge wheel. Anyhow we got a breath of fresh air and light. After a while, my companion thought that it was time for lunch; one of his food packages and some bottles of beer came up. Cheerfully he began with the latter, and jeered at my foregoing the good things of life. Suddenly, the chain stopped moving; the rudder slowed down; and the ship came to a standstill. The old sailor rushed in to call us down; others had already moved the plank. A British battleship had signalled our boat to stop. We were again buried in safety. But my companion would not miss his lunch; he took the food package along; the beer bottles had to be left behind. After we had made ourselves comfortable on our bellies, I heard some rustling of wrapping paper, and in the dark my compassionate companion offered me something: “Babuji, eat a sausage.” I did not know what it was; I was still a vegetarian. He wondered audibly how long I was going to starve, and took to enjoying his food rather noisily.

Presently, we were startled by footsteps and human voices above our heads. A number of men came down the stairs into the small sailors' cabin. We could hear what they were talking. Someone in a very imperious voice said: “I know for certain that those chaps are on board; damn it! Where can they be? ” The remark was emphasised by stamping with a heavily booted foot on the plank right over our heads. At the same time I heard a pitiable whisper: “Babuji, ab to pakraya.” With difficulty could I resist the impulse to laugh aloud in disgust, when almost instantaneously my clothes were soaked in an invisible trickle of some warm fluid. I had to remain in that filthy condition still for quite some time, wondering if the revolutionary hero had fainted out of fear. Our good friends, the sailors, were subjected to prolonged bullying by some tough colonial police officer. They stood the test, and eventually our ordeal was over. It was late in the afternoon. The ship was subjected to a thorough search; every piece of cargo was moved. Naturally the process lasted many hours.

The sun was setting when we were again allowed to go up to the small rudder-wheel room. My companion fell upon the
food like a hungry wolf and drank several bottles of beer. I ate some bread, butter and cheese. The evening air was very refreshing; but Bhagwan Singh was still jumpy. Having satisfied the primary need, he enquired anxiously if the buggers would not come again in the night. The old guardian angel was reassuring: no, we were out of the territorial waters, none could touch the ship for four days until we reached Kobe; and then the Japs would not dare insult the American flag.

Prejudiced by the initial experience, I found the company of my fellow stowaway rather disgusting. Nearly a month of it would be intolerable. After Kobe, the ship would touch Yokohama. That was my last chance to escape. I thought furiously; by the time we approached Kobe, I had resolved to leave the ship there with the hope of finding some alternative for crossing the Pacific. As the last resort, I could contact Rash Behary. He might be able to help me find a place in some Japanese ship.

Our ship was to stay overnight at the Kobe harbour. It was dark when it cast anchor, not alongside any quay. A fleet of small rowing boats gathered all around. It should be possible to slip down to one of them and reach the shore. I made a tempting proposal to my companion: “Let us go ashore in one of these boats and have a good time in the city.” He was very enthusiastic: “Yes, it would be a pity to go away from Japan without a last look at the geisha quarters.” We consulted our old friend. He agreed to let us down by a rope ladder to one of the boats near the rudder; but we were to return under the cover of darkness. Safely ashore, I broke the news to my companion: “I am not returning to the ship at Kobe, because I must go to Tokyo to see Rash Behary for some important business and catch the boat at Yokohama.” That was of course a lie to put off the unwelcome company. He was in a hurry for his nocturnal pleasure hunt. So, we parted more easily than I had hoped. Greatly relieved, I rushed to the railway station to catch the first train for Tokyo.

I did not want to take the risk of seeing Rash Behary again. The Japanese police must not detect my" return to their country. The next time, I might not be able to get out of the trap. Having reached a hotel in Tokyo, I kept mostly indoors, and
thought out a plan of crossing the Pacific. While in China, the Germans had secured for me a French-Indian passport. It was issued to a native of l'ondicherry going to Paris for studying theology—a harmless profession. But to travel as a regular passenger, I must have an American visa on the passport. I decided to take the bull by the horn, pinned a golden cross to the lapel of my coat, put on a very sombre face, and called at the American Consulate. A young lady received me to enquire about my business. Having heard my story, she took the passport and disappeared. After a while, she returned to ask if I was just travelling through the States. The would-be Christian priest told another lie; he was eager to reach Paris as soon as possible to join the next semester of the theological academy. In a few minutes' time, she brought the passport back with the magic seal which would open to me the gates of God's country, if not actually of the heaven. I must have been visibly happy. Because, to my surprise, the young lady who had just acted almost as the fairy godmother, shook my hand to congratulate me. It was a great thing to go to Paris; she wished she was travelling with me. A young Christian gentleman from India must be an interesting company. Well she hoped some day she might be posted at the Paris Consulate.

My heart overflowing with thankfulness, I dropped in a Christian book-shop on the way and reinforced my armour with a morocco-bound copy of the Holy Bible beautifully printed on rice-paper. Next I went to a steamship office and booked a first-class passage on the next boat sailing after two days. Thus provided with all the necessary means to find safety across the Pacific, I decided to do something reckless—to inform Rash Behary that I was in Japan, and leaving for Germany via America. I enlisted the help of an Indian trader whom I had met last time I was in Tokyo; and he managed to pass on the message to Rash Behary's liaison man. To make the long story short, I actually met Rash Behary in the midnight and thereafter went straight to Yokohama to board the ship which sailed early in the morning.

That was my first comfortable sea voyage. It was a big Japanese luxury liner. But with the speed of those days, the fastest ship took about two weeks to cross the Pacific, stopping
a day at Honolulu. From Shanghai to Kobe was not my first experience of a journey as a stowaway. Most of the travelling back and fourth on the China Sea—from Java to Indo-China and back, then from Java to the Philippines—was done that way. It was not always a pleasant experience, but at times quite exciting—being transported from one ship to another on the high seas in a life-boat, in order to avoid going to Hongkong.

Previously, I had twice crossed the Bay of Bengal from Madras to Penang and back as a legitimate passenger, because no passport was needed. But I was then a greenhorn; the European style of the life of a first-class passenger was entirely foreign to me; and the company was exclusively British—swaggering soldiers, colonial officials and rubber planters, whose behaviour towards the native in those days was cold and condescending, if not arrogant and forbidding. Naturally, I felt very much ill at ease, and did not enjoy the journey at all.

The long voyage across the Pacific was an entirely different experience. I had become quite a man of the world during the intervening years. Though still a vegetarian, I had learned the European way of eating at table and dressing, so as not to feel awkward in strange company.

Nevertheless, the two weeks on board the ship across the Pacific were, in a way, like skating on thin ice. The officers who had their meals at the table in the first-class saloon were, of course, all Japanese. The passengers were also mostly of the same nationality. The rest were practically all American Christian missionaries from Japan, China and other oriental countries. There were some who had lived for years in India. One could imagine how very difficult it was for a heathen to simulate the learned Christian theologian or a meek novice aspiring for the sacred frock. Anticipating the situation vaguely, I had taken a single berth cabin. So, most of the time, I could keep away from the crowded decks. But that was conspicuous unless I played seasick, and I was ashamed to do so. Knocking about on the notoriously rough China Sea had hardened me into a tough sailor, and I was proud of my hardihood. On the trip from Manila to Nagasaki, the ship tossed like a shell for
two days. I was the only passenger who could brave it up on the deck.

The point is that I could not hide myself for the two weeks’ journey across the Pacific. At the dinner table I was placed between a South Indian Christian girl going to America for higher study in teaching, and an American Unitarian priest who taught philosophy in the Tokyo University. The latter was a convenient neighbour because his conversation was usually in the form of a monologue. I had only to listen attentively; and his talks were interesting, although Ms theology was sometimes rather abstruse. One day he fingered the golden cross dangling from my watch-chain and asked why I wore that thing. I was taken aback by the irreverent question from a Christian priest. I had no idea of the intricacies of the denominational differences inside the fold of Christianity. I did not know that the Unitarians did not believe in the Trinity or in the story of the crucifixion of Christ. Therefore, I gave the conventional answer. He mocked in his characteristically gentle manner. Did I believe that Christ really lived and was crucified? Still more surprised, I fell back on a defensive position, and said that I wore the cross because it was an emblem of the highest idealism—to sacrifice one's life for an ideal. Thereupon, the teacher of philosophy plunged into one of his long monologues, which was rather like brooding than expressing any definite opinion.

The other neighbour was more troublesome, although I am sure she did not intend to make trouble, but to be friendly and entertaining. Both being from India, albeit renegades, one honest and the other feigned, to the national faith, we began our acquaintance by comparing notes about our respective childhoods at home. The linguistic diversity of the cultural unity of Mother India helped me to explain why, though a native of Pondicherry, I did not speak Tamil, her mother tongue. I was a Bengalee by birth, a native of Chandernagore, as such a French citizen, and lived at Pondicherry only for a few years with the object of coming closer to France. Miss Gray (that was her name) was simply enthralled by my cosmopolitanism. As a matter of fact, I came to know that she was an orphan, brought up in a Christian institution, and herself
spoke only English, which she had been teaching already for years. She was travelling with an old missionary pair like their adopted daughter. As good Americans, they evidently did not like their ward getting too familiar with a coloured man, although Miss Gray was quite brown. But she had a good defence for her behaviour. Her complexion barred familiarity not only with the White passengers; but the Japanese also behaved like members of a superior race. Fortunately for her, she did not notice the discrimination. Except for the time when the girl insisted on being sociable, I used to sit at a secluded spot on the deck reading and re-reading the Bible, it was a profitable experience. I came to be spoken of by the passengers in whispers as the student of theology who was sure to join a monastic order.

One morning, there was a remarkable spectacle on deck. Until the day before, all the Japanese passengers wore their national costume, although the officers appeared at the dinner table in tuxedos. That morning, kimonos had disappeared; all the Japanese passengers were most correctly clad in European suits. Miss Gray, who herself did not wear saree, made some caustic remark about the apishness of the Japs. I agree; I did not like the Japanese, generally. The superficial transformation was due to the fact that the ship was approaching Honolulu. We reached that outpost of American civilisation in the afternoon. All the passengers left the boat to spend the night in the gay city. The teacher of philosophy invited me for a stroll on the beach. We returned to the ship and spent a peaceful evening, watching from the deck the fantastic illumination of the first American city I saw.
3

My Rebirth

HAVING SPENT a year and a half wandering through Malay, Indonesia, Indo-China, the Philippines, Japan, Korea and China, in summer in 1916, I landed at San Francisco. The Pacific had been crossed by a novice from Pondicherry going to study theology in Paris—dally armed with a copy of the Bible and a golden cross dangling from the watch chain. The U.S.A. was already then experiencing the rising storm of war hysteria, a blast of which welcomed the obscure visitor from the East.

The next morning, newspapers carried the banner headline: “Mysterious Alien Reaches America—Famous Brahmin Revolutionary or Dangerous German Spy.” I decamped from the hotel after a rush breakfast in my room, and made for the nearby town of Palo Alto, the seat of the University of Stanford. There I made the acquaintance of Dhanagopal Mukherji who, only in his early twenties, had already made a name as a poet. Younger brother of my friend Jadu Gopal, he welcomed me heartily and advised me to wipe out the past and begin as a new man. Accordingly, the same evening, M. N. Roy was born in the campus of Stanford University. After a couple of months on the West coast, I crossed the continent, to celebrate my rebirth, spiritually as well as politically, in the City of New York.

I had come to America as an emissary of "revolutionary nationalism" actually in alliance with Germany in the fight against British Imperialism. Walking in the footsteps of the future Netaji, nearly a quarter of a century ahead of time, I was on the way to Germany. The Odyssey stopped in New York, for reasons to be recorded if I ever come to write the
thrilling, but not very edifying story of the "Indian Revolution Outside India." The disappointment, however, was not an unmitigated evil; as a matter of fact, at least for me personally, it was a great blessing. It helped me to turn my back upon a futile past, futile because it was narrow-visioned, and to peer, still hesitatingly, into the unknown future of a new life which happened to be full of worthwhile adventures, rich experiences and ultimately disappointments also. It was the beginning of an exciting journey in a new world.

The last half a year of American neutrality in the First World War was a trying time for the Indian patriots who had gone to that land of liberty to enlist sympathy and support for their cause. Previously, they had carried on anti-British propaganda with a good deal of encouragement from various circles of American public. Exiles like Lala Lajpat Rai had free access to the liberal press and platform. But most of them had not been very discriminating in seeking support and alliance. The result was that Indian nationalist propaganda got mixed up with German propaganda, and came to be regarded as violation of American neutrality. Having won the 1916 election with the slogan "He has kept us out of the war," the Wilson administration within half a year abandoned neutrality, which was no longer a good business proposition. During that transition period, anti-German hysteria reached the fever heat; in that hectic atmosphere, the anti-British propaganda of the Indian nationalists was naturally condemned as pro-Germanism. Almost overnight, Indian nationalists completely forfeited American sympathy; its propagandist appeal to the anti-British tradition of the American Revolution fell on deaf ears. Indian nationalists in America were suspected as German agents, arrested en masse and tried as such immediately after the U.S.A. joined the war.

The sinking of the Lusitania threw the fat into the fire, which had been blazing with sufficient fury. A whole lot of American money was at stake. If the Entente Powers were defeated, all that fortune would be lost. The sympathy of American idealism, personified by President Wilson, had from the beginning been with Belgium, cynically raped by Prussian militarism, and France, devastated by the same brute force.
But the all-powerful business world preferred neutrality. That fortuitous support for pacifism not only disappeared when German submarines disturbed the lucrative arms traffic; it was thrown in favour of America joining the war to save her heavy stakes in Europe.

Early in 1917, there intervened another factor which has an irresistible appeal to American political idealism. The Wilsonian call "to make the world safe for democracy" lost much of its force as long as the democratic Powers were allied with Tzarist Russia. What was there to choose between Prussian militarism and Moscovite barbarism? Would democracy be any safer in Europe if the Russian steam-roller reached the Rhine? These troublesome questions disappeared overnight when, in February 1917, the absolute Russian monarchy was overthrown and a liberal democratic government installed. As the new regime was born out of a chaos created by court-sca ndals and fathomless inefficiency of a corrupt government, it was bound to be weak, unable to withstand an all-out German offensive. Having eliminated Russia, the German war machine would throw its whole weight on the Western front; the Allied cause could then no longer be saved.

Under that dramatically changed relation offerees, the call "to make the world safe for democracy" acquired a ring of urgency. Political idealism, backed up by shrewd business calculations, swung American public opinion in favour of active participation in the war, to rush relief to the hard-pressed democratic Powers. On June 7, the United States declared war against Germany. Only one voice of dissent was raised in the Congress—that of the sole woman member, who broke down crying when the dice were cast in support of "the war to end all wars."

Incidentally, it was a rude shock for the Indian nationalists in America as well as for the numerous German propagandists there. The latter entertained the fantastic idea that the twenty million Americans of German extraction, supported by the fiercely anti-British Irish-American, would rise in revolt—to prevent their adopted homeland siding with the imperialist Entente Powers. Ardently wishing for British defeat and, as a corollary thereto, believing in the invincibility of the German
army, Indian nationalists in America shared the illusion of their German friends and patrons. But the “hyphenated” Americans, as the citizens of Teutonic origin were derisively branded by war hysteria, stood loyally by their adopted fatherland, to the great disappointment of those who had counted upon their acting differently. In the figure of speech, blood may be thicker than water, but in actual life it turned out to be very thin. The emotional attachment to the old fatherland gave way to vested interest in the new. Practical loyalty was determined not by emotion, but calculating commonsense.

An experience worse than disappointment was in store for the Germans and their allies in America. German propaganda chiefs operated under the cover of diplomatic privilege. Their secret agents met Indian revolutionaries; together they planned to send arms to India. There was a good deal of bogusity in the whole affair. To not a few participants, it was a pure racket. An American named Star-Hunt took a large sum of money from Captain von Papen, the then Naval Attache at the Washington Embassy, to purchase arms and despatch them to India in a chartered ship. It actually sailed from the South-Californian port of San Diego. That was in 1916. The good news of a shipload of arms coming had reached us in India. Having gone to receive the precious load in Java, I found that the ship with the legendary Golden Fleece was an empty old tanker seized by the Australian naval patrols and taken to Singapore. The story of promised German help to Indian revolutionaries during the First World War may also be told in all its details sometime in future. For the moment, this brief reference is meant to illustrate how bogus the whole affair was—adventurers making money and fooling naive Indian revolutionaries. Towards the end of 1915, I met Star-Hunt living in a luxury hotel at Batavia, still in the confidence of the German Secret Service. I was to meet him again later in Mexico, engaged in some other sort of equally shady enterprise.

Months before America joined the war the U.S. State Department had asked the German Foreign Office to withdraw von Papen. The charge was that he was abusing diplomatic privilege by helping activities directed against a friendly
power. Evidently, the clandestine activities of the German propagandists and Indian revolutionaries associated with them were not unknown to the American secret service. Indeed, American secret service agents were in the "conspiracy." I have reason to believe that Scar-Hunt was one of them. On the other hand, many German agents, some quite high up, were more concerned with making money than with helping the fatherland to win the war. Two such whom I had met in Java were living in a grand style in Mexico when I came there in summer 1917.

However, for various reasons, known and unknown, though imaginable, the American Government took no action against the "Hindu-German conspiracy to violate the Neutrality Act," until neutrality was no longer an issue. Within a week after the declaration of war against Germany, a large number of German agents and Indian revolutionaries were arrested in California as well as in New York. The yellow press flashed the news, both ways across the continent, of the discovery of the "Hindu-German conspiracy," which had ramifications in the Far Eastern and South-East Asiatic countries. I was also arrested in the campus of the Columbia University one morning while returning from a meeting addressed by Lajpat Rai.

Lala Lajpat Rai was in New York when I came there in autumn 1916. He had come to America on a propaganda tour the year before, and with his oratory won the sympathy of liberal minded men for the cause of Indian independence. Like a conquering hero, he was returning home via London. There he was refused the permission to proceed further or to do so at his own risk. The implied threat was that, back in India, he would be arrested. It was suspected that while in America, he had established some conspiratorial contact with the enemy. Like all colonial nationalists, he was of course pro-German; but he was too cautious a man to be actively connected with any clandestine arrangements. However, he did not court arrest and returned to America, enraged and embittered, naturally more fiercely anti-British than ever before. In the meantime, the political atmosphere had changed in the land of liberty, and there still more unpleasant
experiences awaited the anti-British crusader. His liberal friends gave him the cold shoulder on the ground that any anti-British propaganda, either in the press or from the platform, was to help Germany.

The old man was lonesome and homesick, so much so that he loathed the outlandish food. He was happy whenever I cooked Indian dinners for him. One day he asked me if I could prepare Rasgollas. Proud of Bengal culture influencing Punjabi taste, I set about the task. Chhana of course was not available in the land of civilised barbarism. It had to be made at home by applying some acid to boiling milk. To make the long story short, I was myself surprised when the experiment succeeded and the old man behaved like a child. We became friends. The basis of our friendship, however, was not only gastronomical. Both of us were frustrated, disappointed men, each in his own way. He longed to return home to address one mass meeting before his death; I, to go to Germany in quest of help for raising an army to liberate India. Well, we both hugged our sorrows, and consoled each other as best &s possible under circumstances beyond our control.

Naturally, looking out for congenial company, we made new friends — amongst the "Radicals," the common American designation for Socialists, Anarchists, Syndicalists (Communists were not yet born). They were neither anti-British nor anti-German; they were pacifists, against war. Some were anti-imperialists, although I was amused to hear one of them, a Unitarian professor, maintain that colonies were not economic assets. As nationalists, we disagreed with their doctrine of social revolution; as Indians, we vehemently opposed Marxist Materialism with our spiritual genius. However, they sympathised with the aspirations of the subject peoples to be free, and provided Lajpat Rai with a new platform. The audience was small; but the greater part of oratory is the love to hear one's own voice. Lajpat Rai was an orator; I was not, having been a conspirator all my political life until then.

A new mission appealed to our nationalist conscience; to refute the socialist economic theory and combat Marxist Materialism. But to fight the opponents', who happened to be
our only friends and sympathisers, we felt it necessary to know their case. I was penniless; Lajpat Rai purchased the works of Marx and other socialist classics. In my case, the study threatened to defeat its purpose. But it did not matter; because, Lalaji was the warrior on the platform. My defection did not affect his fervour. Eventually, a crucial moment of life came; it was also a parting of ways.

One day, Lalaji finished his talk in a socialist meeting; his theme was to uphold the doctrine of economic exploitation of the working class under capitalism as absurd, while a great country of ancient civilization remained in colonial subjugation. His anti-British tirades and vivid depiction of the poverty of the Indian masses obviously moved the audience, all present being avowed enemies of all forms of exploitation of man by man. But presently came the anti-climax. One in the back of the hall got up to ask a question. Having expressed the general sentiment of the audience that all were against colonial exploitation and sympathised with India's legitimate aspirations, he desired to know, also in behalf of all present, "How did the nationalists propose to end the poverty of the Indian masses?" There followed a lively exchange of words between the speaker and the interrogator. The former grew impatient and excited when his evasive answer —"Oh, let us first be masters of our house"—failed to give satisfaction. The latter pressed his point to the extent of asking provocatively: "What difference would it make to the Indian masses if they were exploited by native capitalists instead of foreign imperialists?" Lalaji flew into a towering rage and retorted: "It does make a great difference whether one is kicked by his brother or by a foreign robber." The audience was surprised into a frigid silence. In the beginning, I shared Lalaji's indignation at the cheekiness of the hoboes (a derogatory designation for the extreme left-wingers in the American labour movement); but I also felt rather uncomfortable; there was something wrong in our case. Suddenly, a light flashed through my mind; it was a new light.

I left the hall alone, still quite confused in my mind, but vaguely visualising a different picture of freedom. Keeping away from Lalaji and other Indian friends, I frequented the
New York Public Library to read the works of Karl Marx, and discovered a new meaning in them. It was not long before I accepted Socialism, except its materialist philosophy. That was my last ditch, which I defended still for quite a long time.

Already for some time, I had been essaying a critique of pacifism from the nationalist point of view. The thesis was that, colonialism being the cause of war, liberation of the subject peoples, particularly India, was the condition for durable peace. My studies after the incident made me doubt the validity of the analysis of the international conflict given in the essay, and of the conclusions drawn therefrom. The rewritten essay became much longer than the original. With the object of enlisting help for its publication, I showed the manuscript to a leading socialist journalist. After a few days I met him in a private gathering of radical intellectuals, to be enthusiastically congratulated for having exposed the economic causes of war from the socialist point of view. I was welcomed in the brotherhood as a new convert, the first from India.

Shortly thereafter, America joined the war. I escaped imprisonment by fleeing to Mexico. There was no time to see my first socialist essay in print. In the new exile, I learned Spanish by translating it with the help of a teacher. My essay was published as "An Open Letter to President Wilson," with the title El Camino Para la Paz Duradera del Mundo—The Way to Durable World Peace—the first literary work of M. N. Roy.
The End of a Mission

IN JAPAN I met one Gupta, who called himself representative of the Indian Revolutionary Committee of Berlin. He had come there from America and was living in secret with Rash Behary, having also been ordered by the Japanese Government to leave the country. Rash Behary had cultivated the friendship of Toyama, the ideologist of the Pan-Asiatic movement patronised by the Japanese Government. Toyama was already then an influential man; later on he founded the notorious Black Dragon (fascist-terrorist) secret society. Gupta told me that without him nothing could be done in America; that the German Ambassador in Washington would not even see any Indian without his recommendation. If that was the case, the natural thing would be for him to give me the recommendation. But he made a different proposition: there was no use of my going to America; I should remain in the Far East, while he went to Washington and over to Germany, if necessary, to have the plan of purchasing arms in China sanctioned. I could not stay in Japan for long without being discovered and expelled again; nor was there any sense in my returning to China, also at considerable risk, where I had nothing to do for the time being. For these quite valid reasons, I would not change the plan of proceeding to America, and suggested that Gupta should also return there so that I could have his help to see the German Ambassador and go over to Germany. He evidently disliked my going alone and was anxious to be across before me. He actually advised that in the eventuality of my reaching New York ahead of him I should not try to see anyone, but await his arrival.
Having landed in San Francisco under rather dramatic circumstances, described in a previous chapter, I had to lie low for some time and spent mostly at the small town of Palo Alto, where the Stanford University is situated. There I met Dr. David Jordan and made other valuable friendships and acquaintances. Afterwards, I visited some more places in California before crossing the continent. It was several months before Gupta and I met again in New York. In the meantime, he had changed his profession. A man in his middle forties, he was living in a hostel of the Columbia University as an undergraduate student. He was fed up with intrigues and accused the Berlin Committee of having let him down when he was risking his life in the front lines of the Far East. Gupta pleaded inability to help me. On my enquiry as to who had taken his place in the revolutionary organisation, he shrugged his shoulders and, apparently with no relevance, made some disparaging remarks about one Dr. Chakravarty.

I was stranded in the jungle of sky-scrapers. The fall (as autumn is called in America) was on the verge of passing into winter. I possessed one suit of Chinese silk and practically nothing in the pocket. Like the uncouth country cousin, while crossing the continent, I had lost one of my two boxes; the trousers of my other two suits were carefully packed in it.

For a few days, I put up with Basanta Kumar Roy, who had lived in the U.S.A. since the early years of the century. Though himself not a revolutionary by profession, he was closely associated with the veterans like Bupendranath Dutta (brother of Swami Vivekananda) and Taraknath Das, before the latter went over to Germany on the outbreak of the war. Basanta Kumars aspiration was to find a niche in the world of literature. He organized Tagore's first lecture tour in the U.S.A., and wrote a biography of the Poet. He was very kind, but being financially not much better off than I, advised me to approach Lajpat Rai for help.

The New York Branch of the Ramkrishna-Vivekananda Mission in the U.S.A. was situated on the ground floor of the house where I stayed for a few days as a guest of B. K. Roy. Naturally, I called on Swamiji to pay my respects, and he invited me to attend his next weekly lecture. The sitting room
of the flat was the lecture hall. The audience was about a score of people, mostly elderly ladies and a few old men. Several among the former had adopted Indian names, and jam also—all Devis. Having heard, while in India, so much about the spread of Vedanta in the U.S.A., I made it a point to attend the branches of the Ramkrishna-Vivekananda Mission also in San Francisco and Los Angeles. The same spectacle everywhere; it proved that the materialist West would not yet atone for its sins and respond to India's spiritual message. It was a disappointment for a believer in India's mission.

Together with a mass of juicy gossip, B. K. Roy gave me some information about Indian revolutionaries in the U.S.A. It was a depressing story of jealousy, intrigues and deceit. He confirmed that Gupta had been replaced by Dr. Chakravarty as the representative in America of the Indian Revolutionary Committee in Berlin, and warned me not to expect any help from the new incumbent. On my enquiry, he added that quarrel among the members of the Berlin Committee was the cause of the change.

Following up the cue dropped by Gupta, with the help of additional information picked up from other Indians, after a few days I climbed the front steps of a three-storied building up-town in an upper-middle-class neighbourhood; but the doors would not open in reply to my persistent rings. To my surprise, I noticed that all the windows were shut and the house appeared to be uninhabited. Back on the pavement, I found a flight of stairs going downwards to the basement, where the caretaker of the house ought to live. I went down and knocked. After a while, someone inside peeped through a small aperture in the door, and presently I was face to face with a wizened figure wrapped up in a soiled dressing gown, oil dripping from his unkempt hair. I did not take him for the janitor, who as a rule should be a negro. Unmistakably he was a fellow countryman; but I was looking for a doctor of philosophy. He helped me out of my embarrassment and, not very gracefully, stepped aside as a gesture that I should come in. I did; the doors immediately closed behind me, and were carefully bolted. I enquired if Dr. Chakravarty lived in the premises. He grinned and said: “Sit down. I have been expecting you.”
So, that was the mysterious doctor. I wondered, why did he use a basement kitchen as his reception room; and what was the rest of the house for? Who lived there? Well, that was not my concern. I enquired if it was true that he had replaced Gupta as the representative of the Berlin Revolutionary Committee. He put his finger in a big pot of vaseline on the kitchen table and rubbed the stuff on his cranium; then nodded in reply to my question.

The doctor did not impress me as a man of much consequence. I might be wrong; but if he ever had any important place in the revolutionary movement, his name could not be altogether unknown to me. However, I thought that it was safer not to tell him anything about the plan in China. I went straight to the point and said that I wanted to go to Germany and expected him to make the necessary arrangements. He closed his eyes, appeared to be thinking of something else, and asked: “Why?” I was exasperated by the play-acting, and replied: “Not exactly for a pleasure trip; I have some important message for the Revolutionary Committee there.” The little man woke up from the pretended half-stupor, dubbed some more vaseline on his top, and changed: “Well, well, we shall see what can be done. Please come again tomorrow afternoon. I must ask for instructions from Berlin.”

The instruction never came. I suspected that it was never asked for. But I managed to peep a little into the mystery of the house, which I visited several times, and its occupants. There was another, as I came to know later. It was a German doctor with a red goatee. I have forgotten his name. Presumably, he was a medical man. Because, in expensively produced advertisement literature, the house was described as a clinic for the cure of all maladies—of the body as well as the soul. The front cover of the pamphlets bore the picture of the twins emerging out of a lotus. Chakravarty seldom went out, and the other almost always remained upstairs, perhaps engaged in some experiment of modern alchemy.

One day I came to find the former correctly dressed for the street. The latter came down and asked me to stay, and to my great surprise offered to take me upstairs. A few minutes later, the door bell rang in the basement. The German doctor ran
down and opened the door. The other walked in, took his felt hat off, put a large lump of vaseline on the head, replaced the hat, and went out again without saying a word. No wonder he came to be described as the oily leader of the oily revolution. The latter part of the description was objectionable; but the rest was a truthful picture of the doctor, and a revolution supposed to be led by such men could not be taken seriously.

The fact was that he had nothing whatsoever to do with any revolution. Nor was he a villain. He was rather a crank and could be flattered to do objectionable things. His German counterpart was the devil of the drama. Undoubtedly, he was engaged in espionage, and had somehow managed to raise his friend to the position he was not qualified to occupy either by record or by merit. How the Berlin Committee trusted him remained a mystery. After all, they had little to say about it. The last word belonged to the head of the German Secret Service in America. He wanted a dummy, and a buffoon could just as well fill the role.

It was a luxuriously furnished house, rather like an exclusive club than a rich man's residence. There was no evidence to corroborate the suspicion naturally aroused by the advertisement. The Indian doctor was the most ill-fitting piece of furniture; and the German pretended to be on the way to sainthood. All the time he talked to me about Hindu mysticism, and the mystic experience of the twin. I was more interested in the purpose of keeping up such an establishment. The ostensible occupants evidently did not belong there. I could only guess. Most probably it was a place of secret meetings of high-placed people. Such a place must have attracted the attention of the police, and provided a clue for further investigation, pending which the place was not disturbed.

However, before long I lost the hope of getting any assistance from anybody to go to Germany. In the meantime, I came in touch with new people and new ideas. That experience, which marked a turning point in my life, has been described in a previous chapter. A new idea of revolution, a new vision of the future, gradually dulled the keenness of the purpose of going to Germany. The only remaining incentive for me yet
to pursue it was the thought that comrades at home might be still waiting hopefully for the success of my mission.

Very little news came from India. Newspapers took weeks to reach and not many of them came. There was hardly any mention of India in the American press. Letters were heavily censored; those containing any news about the revolutionary movement were suppressed at the Indian end. Whatever news trickled out through one channel or another was enough to convey the impression that, soon after I had left India for the second time, by the middle of 1915, most of the prominent members of the revolutionary movement were arrested either to be sentenced to long terms of imprisonment or detained as State prisoners for an indefinite period. The few who managed to escape arrest were absconding; it was impossible to get in touch with them from abroad. A party led by a member of the brains trust of the movement (he is still alive, though no longer active politically) was to have gone to the North-Eastern frontiers to make arrangement for taking delivery of arms and pass them on to the interior of the country. I could get no news of any arrangements made. To whom and to which place should the arms be despatched if the forlorn hope of my mission succeeding was ever fulfilled? So, from the practical point of view, it was no longer of any use for me to pursue the mission, although the idea of abandoning it made me feel that I was betraying a trust.

I was tormented by a psychological conflict between an emotion (loyalty to old comrades) and an intelligent choice of a new ideal. I could not forget the injunction of the only man [ever obeyed almost blindly. Before leaving India for the second time, I personally escorted Jatinda to the hiding place where he later on fought and died. In reply to the thoughtless pledge of a romantic youth—"I will not again return without arms"—'the affection of the older man appealed: "Come back soon, with or without arms." The appeal was an order for me. He was our Dada, but the Commander-in-Chief also. Jalinda's heroic death had absolved me from the moral obligation to obey his order. Already in the autumn of 1915, while passing through Manila, I had received the shocking news, feut then, my reaction was purely emotional: Jatinda's
death must be avenged. Only a year had passed since then. But in the meantime I had come to realise that I admired Jatinda because he personified, perhaps without himself knowing it, the best of mankind. The corollary to that realisation was that Jatinda's death would be avenged if I worked for the ideal of establishing a social order in which the best in man could be manifest. In other words I could turn my back on the old mission without the guilty conscience of betraying a trust, because a new one appealed more strongly not only to my emotion, but also to my intelligence. Otherwise, disappointment and disgust might have persuaded me to end a life of adventures with the end of a mission.
My Experience of American Police and Justice

MY ARREST in the campus of the Columbia University while returning one evening from a meeting addressed by Lala Lajpat Rai has already been mentioned. The show was very Edgar Wallacian: half a dozen hefty fellows pounced on me out of the surrounding darkness; a couple of pistols were actually pointed at me. Presumably, they apprehended that the Hindu revolutionary was a walking arsenal, and did not want to take any chance. Taken by surprise, I asked what was the matter; the reply was a rather violent prod, not quite a kick though, with the exclamation: “Pronto ” (meaning, ”Hurry up ”). In a moment, I was dragged to the nearest gate and pushed into a waiting car. That was my experience with the police of the third country outside India. It was the experience of American toughness—not very pleasant. The Japanese police were very polite, albeit, hypocritically so, and the Chinese—well, they were Chinese, They let me run away, not for any sympathy, but for abysmal inefficiency.

After a fairly long drive, I was unloaded at the iron gates of a huge gloomy structure, and led through a dimly lit labyrinth of endless corridors; the ominous silence of the sombre procession was broken now and then by the sound of my captors spitting lustily. They were chewing tobacco, the stub end of lighted cigars which never-left their mouths. The journey's end was a pleasant surprise. I was ushered into a spacious room brightly lit and luxuriously furnished. The heavy doors closed upon my original captors. They had done their job; now I was delivered to the care of the dreaded District Attorney of New York.
Though a law officer of the rank of Public Prosecutor, the U.S. District Attorney is also the head of the Police, and as such, like under the French system of the administration of criminal law, personally cross-examines persons under arrest before they are produced in court. The purpose of the questionable procedure, as I learned from personal experience, is to wear out the suspected person, so that he may be ensnared into making contradictory and incriminating statements. It evidently runs counter to the sound principle that none should be compelled to give evidence against himself and convicted on that inadmissible testimony. The worst form of the procedure is notorious as giving the "third degree." It is almost like putting the accused on the rack, very similar to the Russian method of extracting confessions described by Koestler in his Darkness at Noon.

Well, it was an interesting experience, though not quite excruciating. I was still young, in the early twenties, with nerves steeled by years of terrorist activities. It began quite pleasantly. The dapper District Attorney received me with the typical American joviality. He was so and so, going to ask me a few questions, and was sure that a "wise man from the East" would tell the truth, the whole of it. He motioned me to a large leather chair, and held out a box of Corona cigars. During my short stay in the land of the superlatives, I discovered that expensive cigars were the badge of power and opulence, whereas the cheap vile smelling ones were the token of robust manliness of the rough-neck. Both were represented in the sanctum of American criminal justice which, I came to learn later in the night, was the frightful "Tomb," the mediaeval prison of super-modern New York, where under-trial prisoners are held under the tender mercies of the District Attorney, to be given the "third degree."

I took the inviting armchair, but refused the cigar. My oriental composure seemed to annoy the urbane District Attorney. His facial features hardened. "How did you enter this country?" It sounded like the vicious hissing of a viper. But it did not nonplus one accustomed to similar encounters with the Denhams and Tegarts of the British-Indian C.I.D. My answer, "Across the sea," infuriated the modern
inquisitor. "Of course, but where did you land?" On my replying that I was not paid to give information to the police, he growled: "I know everything; don't think that you can deceive me." I said, "Why then all this trouble? I am at your mercy, do what you like." And I added: "I thought America was the land of liberty." He must have been staggered by the insolence of a damned coloured man. As it were, for moral support or physical courage, he looked back to the two towering figures behind him, obviously policemen of higher rank. They grinned viciously, the vile smelling cigars held in blackened teeth, and glowered at me. "Should we take him down, where the other fellas are?" The chief nodded his order, and I was marched out again in the corridor radiating the fetid heat of New York summer, and down in the bowels of the Tomb, where the living were buried. The watch-dogs of justice stopped before a grated door behind which crouched a small human figure, dead or alive, difficult to say. They jeered: "Look here, boy, there lies the oily leader of the oily revolution—lily-livered fellow; has vomitted the whole yarn. No use your bluffing; come up to the boss and square it out with him." On the way back, they confided: "We have caught other birds—black, brown and pink. They are all safe there. Don't try to kid yourself, guv'nor."

The nocturnal sight-seeing round through the macabre entrails of the Tomb, where living men are buried for days and weeks, ended again at the imposing entrance of the District Attorney's office. Presumably, the return of the party had been announced by some secret contrivance. The doors were thrown open immediately, and the District Attorney, as slick in the small hours of the night as earlier in the evening, grinned a welcome, although the thin lips tightened with a cruel curl. Having motioned me to a capacious leather-upholstered chair across the desk, he lolled back in his, took the inevitable cigar in meticulously manicured fingers, and drawled, "now then, Father Martin, behave like a good Christian, and have pity on me; it is getting late. I am a married man, you know."

The passport with which I had travelled across the Pacific bore that name, I had destroyed the tell-tale document, but
remembered that the name was entered in the passengers' list of the ship. However, I recovered my wits almost instantaneously, and affected surprise. But the moment's hesitation gave the sharp-eyed inquisitor an opening. The velvet gloves dropped; he sat up, thrust his chin almost halfway across the big table and a frightfully hard voice whispered: "I know you are a deep 'un; but you have seen where you are! What about it? You can choose between the hospitality of the Tomb and the fresh morning air."

Wanting to end the ordeal one way or the other, I took up the challenge: "Well, Sir, I have seen the inside of jails not much better than your Tomb; you will not frighten me; but I would prefer to be out. I have a mission. (I still believed in one!) I never meant to do any harm to this country. I ohn want to serve mine. What have you got against that? " Hf looked a little pensive, frowned; then in a rather friendly tone . " Well, you have violated our Immigration Law." It was my chance to get one in: "Why make a mountain of a molehill? I shall get out of your country very soon.”

He looked grave, got up, and to my surprise came round the table and laid his hand on my shoulder. “Well, I guess I shall let you go, for the time. You will appear before the Grand Jury at 11 A.M. tomorrow in the Town Hall.” Taking a closer look at his prey, he added in a rather pleasant voice: “I feel you will not run away. Good morning.'1 Then he urned to the men in the background and gave his order: “Take the gentleman out, and put him in a taxi. He will go home.”

Out in the corridor, the sleuths growled; they evidently disapproved of the Chief's order. However, order was order, and presently fresh air woke me up from a sort of stupor. It was not a pleasant experience; and once I learned that I was in the Tomb, I had had no hope to come out. Usually none does, so soon and so easily, at any rate.

In the taxi, I tried to recollect the events since the evening. It was like a bad dream. But was it over? It must be. I began to plan for the future. The day dawned before I reached the northern part of the City where I lived. Newsboys were shouting: “Hindu-German conspiracy unearthed! Enemy
Agents in Custody! " I bought several newspapers. One of them carried the headline: “Oily Leader of the Oily Revolution Locked-Up in Tomb.” Next morning I went out calling, to learn that a number of Indian political exiles had been arrested the night before. Among them was Dr. Chakravarty, who called himself the representative in America of the Indian Revolutionary Committee of Berlin. The disparaging but picturesque headline, almost a masterpiece of yellow journalism, referred to him. Why, I have already explained in the previous chapter.

At the appointed hour next day I presented myself at the entrance of a gloomy, not very imposing building in the most crowded part downtown. It was as if a surging sea of hats (the faces under them could not be distinguished) was rushing inland through so many creeks of narrow streets. A remarkable aspect Of the scene did not attract the attention of a half-educated forlorn foreigner, yet in the early twenties. Now looking back through a quarter of a century and more, in the light of experience and lessons learned in the meantime, I can remember that it was a crowd moved by individual wills. Perhaps that is the essential feature of what is called the American way of life. A crowd composed of a multitude, each pursuing his own business, utterly unmindful of what might happen to his nearest neighbour. Yet, none could step out of the crowd; his life must be lived in it, as an integral part of it, dominated by the law or lawlessness of the crowd. Individual wills deliberately, not always necessarily, seeking consummation in the crowd is a paradox of modern civilisation.

I was standing at the gate of the Temple of Justice, physically outside the surging crowd, but fascinated by its massive movements, somewhat dazed by its impersonal powerfulness. A heavy hand fell on my shoulder from behind; a picture of the previous evening’s experience in the campus of the Columbia University flashed through my mind. Was I arrested again? I turned around, to be reassured by the broad grin on a familiar square-jawed face—of one of my armed custodians of the night before. He pushed his bowler back, shifted the ever present cigar from one corner of the mouth to the other without using his hand, and guffawed: “Ha, there you are, a
man of his word.” I accompanied him inside the building, and was ushered into a largish room. Lengthwise, a gallery covering the whole wall went all the way up to the ceiling. Every seat was occupied by a cross-section of the surging crowd outside—mostly rather slovenly dressed men and women, above the middle age. The acrid smell of burning cigars filled the crowded room. Neither wealth nor learning nor fashion seemed to be represented. I was confronted with the great American democracy in miniature.

The District Attorney was standing by his desk near the opposite wall, stern and full of dignity. He showed me to a particular place (there was no dock) and in a rather sepulchral voice said: “Here is the Grand Jury.” Almost inaudibly, I whispered: “Very grand indeed.” In my knowledge of the administration of law, acquired entirely from personal experience, a Jury ought to be composed of half a dozen dignified men, visibly weighed down by their responsibility. The trials I had stood in India dispensed with the Jury on the ground that specially appointed experienced Judges should not be handicapped by the opinion of laymen. (In 1931, after I returned to India, the Allahabad High Court actually dismissed my petition for a Jury trial on that ground. The "experienced" Judge sentenced me to twelve years' transportation, later on reduced to half by the same High Court.) The point is that, to be confronted with a Jury composed of a couple of hundred people who did not seem to be at all interested in the case, was a surprise which prompted my remark. But the District Attorney took it ill. Good luck that he did not prosecute me for contempt of Court. But he turned towards me severely and said: “I indict you for violating the Immigration Law of the U.S.A.” No witness was examined, no evidence produced. The Grand Jury endorsed the indictment. I had no idea how; the District Attorney said so, and ordered my release, pending the trial, on personal security. But I was not required to sign any security bond. It was all so unconventional.

The District Attorney pronounced the judgment of the day: “You will be summoned again; present yourself on the appointed day and hour. But I warn you, don't try to escape. You will be under strict surveillance.”
With difficulty I could keep up a glum face. From personal experience I had learned that the U.S. District Attorney was the local dictator. But his naivety amused a hard-boiled terrorist, proud of his skill to dodge the denizens of law. I left the Court with the grim determination not to come there again. To court imprisonment had not yet become a revolutionary virtue. For good reasons, too. In the pre-Gandhian days, imprisonment for a political offence was not State hospitality, and it lasted for years of hardship which put patriotism to a severe test. Naturally, the revolutionaries of that period tried to keep out of jail as long as possible, although some of them would not mind to go to the gallows. Personally, I was of the opinion that death sentence was preferable to more than five years’ imprisonment. On the eve of leaving India for the first time, I had jumped a bail of Rs. 10,000. The alternative might have been life-long imprisonment. It takes a good deal of courage to court that. But the revolutionaries did not lack the courage; they were practical men.

I had come to America on the way to Germany. As soon as it became clear that no help for the purpose could be had in the U.S.A. either from the Germans or from the representative of the Indian Revolutionary Committee of Berlin, I resolved to explore other possibilities. Neighbouring Mexico, in a state of permanent revolution, appeared to be the land of promise. If I could not proceed further, I would settle down there and at last take active part in a revolution, India was no longer my sole preoccupation, I was just learning to think of revolution as an international social necessity. And I learned from my Socialist acquaintances in New York that Mexico was in the throes of a social revolution. Indeed, it was reported that one General Alvarado had actually established socialist economy in the State of Yucatan, the home of the Maya civilisation. My socialist conversion was not yet deep enough to counter the patriotic belief that in the prehistoric days Indians had somehow managed to cross the ocean and colonize Mexico. That made my longing to go there irresistible.

Before the Hindu-German conspiracy was unearthed, I had armed myself with a letter of introduction to General Alvarado from the President of Stanford University, David Starr Jordon
who was the foremost pacifist in America at that time. Now it was high time to clear out. But how to dodge the police in a country where the coloured man could be so easily spotted? The methods successfully practised at home would be of no avail. One must simply take the chance. Reckless daring was the only possible method. The obvious thing to do at first was to change the place of residence. I selected a crowded locality; while shifting to the new lodging, I could detect no surveillance. Was it then a bluff? It would not be wise to tarry. The sleuths might have lost the track, and may pick it up presently. So, one evening I left the new lodging and went to a restaurant. After dinner, I went out by another door, hailed a passing taxi and made for the railway station. Previously, I had informed myself that late in the evening a train left for the border-town of San Antonio, The train passed through several southern States, but I encountered no difficulty on account of my brown skin. On the third day noon, the train reached the frontier station. It was blazing hot; when I left New York was blanketed with snow. A few last-minute difficulties were overcome with sheer brass, and I was over the Rio Grande, laughing heartily for having called the American bluff.
EVER SINCE the war of independence in the second decade of the last century, Mexico has had a turbulent history. The Republic was founded on the ruins of the Spanish Empire by a class of colonial landlords proud of the blue blood of the conquistadores flowing in their withered veins. Their revolt against the mother country was motivated by the reluctance to pay tribute to a bankrupt monarchy which had lost all power and prestige in Europe. But culturally, they were Europeans, and, as colonial rulers, too proud to mix socially with the inhabitants of the land of their permanent domicile.

The substitution of the ancient rule of the Catholic monarch by that of the colonial aristocracy, jealous of the purity of their Spanish blood, however, did not mean freedom for the sons of the soil. Therefore, the war of independence, begun as early as 1811 under the leadership of the parish priests, Hidalgo and Morelos, continued as the struggle for power between the Mexicans of mixed as well as pure Indian blood, and the colonial aristocracy which claimed descent from the conquistadores (original Spanish conquerors). After nearly half a century, the Mexicans won.

Notwithstanding the exclusiveness of the descendants of the conquistadores, a numerous race of mixed blood had arisen. Very proud of their native ancestry and passionately patriotic, they also imbibed the eighteenth-century European culture which inspired them with the ideals of political freedom and social justice. After the Spanish rule was overthrown, they challenged the supremacy of the colonial aristocracy, backed up by the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. Like in the
eighteenth-century France, the latter became the butt of attack of the
democratic forces, led by Benito Juarez, a full-blooded son of the soil.
While the civil war was on, Mexico got involved in a war with the
United States on the issue of Texas. The democratic forces, however,
won the civil war, and Juarez became the President of the Republic
early in 1861.

The war with the United States had ended in the cession of extensive
territories in the north, covered by the present States of Texas, New
Mexico and California. But even then, the democratic forces in
Mexico were not left alone to consolidate their victory over the
colonial aristocracy and Catholic hierarchy. Britain, France and Spain
held the government of Juarez, as soon as it was established,
responsible for the extravagances and misdeeds of earlier
governments controlled by the enemies of democracy. A large
financial claim was pressed by joint armed intervention, and a
Hapsburg monarchy was foisted upon Mexico. But Juarez carried on a
heroic struggle for years, and drove the ill-fated Emperor Maximilian
out in 1867.

The liberator died in 1872, and the country was again plunged into a
civil war, which continued until the eighties, when a scion of the
Spanish conquistadorei, General Porfirio Diaz, established a
nominal republican dictatorial regime with the support of the
northern neighbour.

Under the dictatorship of Diaz, law and order reigned for a quarter of
a century. Foreign capital, British and French and subsequently
American, flowed in. As business required peaceful conditions,
foreigners with capital invested in Mexico persuaded the
Governments of their respective countries to back up the dictatorship
of Diaz as against democratic opposition. On the other hand, under
Diaz, the colonial aristocracy also regained their power and privileges.
The revolution led by Juarez was undone. Mexico became the playground
of the idle rich from the Latin countries of Europe. The vast
wealth produced by serf and slave labour on the haciendas (feudal
agricultural estates) was spent lavishly so as to make Mexico City and
the neighbouring pleasure resorts, centres of lustre, luxury and
elegance. The pure-blooded children of the soil, constituting nearly
two-thirds of the population, toiled and moiled in silence. But the
mixed-blooded middle-class cherished
the memory of the revolution as their heritage. They had acquired education, imbied modern culture and were moved by progressive social and political ideas. In 1911, they rose in revolt and, led by Francisco Madero, overthrew the Diaz dictatorship. It was a democratic revolution with a liberal programme of agrarian reform, which enlisted the support of the rural masses.

The Mexico of Diaz was a happy hunting ground for the privileged few. The colonial hacendados (owners of feudal agricultural farms) as well as foreign capitalists raised the bogey of chaos and anarchy, and organised a counter-revolution under the leadership of one General Huerta. Under the threat of American armed intervention, and unwilling to plunge the country in civil war again, Madero resigned the presidency of the Republic in 1912. Direct armed intervention by America was obviated, but civil war could not be avoided. Huerta was an upstart, a puppet. He commanded neither any measure of popular support nor allegiance of the armed forces. Other aspirants for power appeared on the scene. Adventurers took to large-scale banditry under the banner of revolution. Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa were the most outstanding bandit chiefs, who aspired for the presidency of the Republic.

When I came to Mexico, the civil war was still raging practically throughout the country. One faction, headed by General Veuustian Carranza, had got the upperhand, and only a year ago established itself in the capital, with a number of State Governors and military chiefs owing allegiance to it. Carranza himself was a landlord of Spanish origin, but he proclaimed loyalty to the tradition of Juarez and Madero. His first act immediately after seizing power was to convene a Constituent Assembly. Under the given conditions of the country, it could not possibly be elected strictly according to the rules of formal democracy. But pragmatically it proved itself to be democratic. It counted among its members a goodly number of idealist intellectuals, not only of advanced liberal views; some of them were professed socialists, and a few anarchists; one of these latter actually was the author of the new organic laws of the Republic. Handiwork of visionaries,
the Constitution was rather hastily drafted and was defective from the practical point of view. But it legalized principles of social justice, such as common ownership of the gifts of nature, mainly land, and the sub-soil riches.

Article seventeen of the Queretarro Constitution consequently became anathema with the landowning class and the Church, which, as in mediaeval Europe, owned extensive landed property, and also with the foreign capitalists. During the Golden Age of the Diaz dictatorship, these latter had acquired long-term (practically permanent) concessions to exploit not only the precious petroleum deposits, but all other mineral resources also. Native feudal-sacerdotal reaction and foreign financial oligarchy formed a holy alliance against the Carranza regime.

On the other hand, the Villistas and Zapatistas waged war against it. They, particularly the latter, could win the support of the rural masses by pointing to the fact that Carranza was a landlord of Spanish descent. His government thus found itself between two fires.

It so happened that I could help it out of the difficult situation. That was my first experience in practical politics. I believe that I gained more than I could help the Carranza regime to stabilize itself and consequently the Mexican democratic revolution.

Internationally, the Carranza regime was in an advantageous position. British capitalists were the most injured by the Queretarro Constitution; but the war in Europe did not permit Britain to do anything in Mexico more than sending diplomatic notes of protest. The role of keeping the refractory Republics of Latin America under restraint had been allotted to the U.S.A. by common consent. The liberal President Wilson had actually sent marines to occupy the Mexican port of Veracruz in 1916. But from the next year, the colossus of the North also could not actively intervene in Mexico because of its participation in the war in Europe, which thus gave the Carranza regime a breathing space. But the relation of forces inside the country was very unfavourable to it. I succeeded in helping it in that respect, and myself acquired an invaluable experience in practical politics.
Even after the promulgation of the radical liberal Querétaro Constitution, the Carranza regime had to contend with two formidable internal enemies, both of which appealed to the native blood and to the cupidity of the dispossessed poor. After the failure of his nearly successful bid for the Presidency, Pancho Villa degenerated into sheer banditry. Nevertheless, he maintained his hold on two northern States by pretending to play the Robin Hood. That role is bound to be very popular in a country where riches are monopolised by a small minority and the vast bulk of the people is submerged in abject poverty. But he enjoyed the greater strategic advantage of having his rear protected by the boundary of the U.S.A. Arms and equipments for his guerilla bands were continuously replenished by smuggling them across the land frontier. But the Government troops could not drive the rebels too far to the north. Because, every time any number of the latter crossed over the frontier, the U.S. Government held the Carranza regime responsible. Eventually, U.S. armed forces marched into Mexican territory on the pretext of suppressing banditry.

Zapata was a more formidable enemy. He was not a mere bandit, he had a social base, so to say. His role was analogous to that of the Anabaptists at the time of the Peasants' War in Germany. His pure Indian blood was his greatest asset. Because he was a son of the people and did not have the chance of going away far from them towards the corrupting atmosphere of governmental power, Zapata never lost the halo of mediaeval heroism. So much so that even beyond the frontiers of Mexico he was hailed as the revolutionary champion of the freedom of the Mexican people living in feudal bondage. He did actually try to establish a sort of agrarian Communism in the territories occupied by his armed followers.

The news of that experiment attracted some intellectual anarchists, who constituted a sort of brains trust for him. Later on, some of them were disgusted by the brutalities committed by his followers and left his Arcadia in the mountainous State of Zacatecas. On the other hand, impelled by revolutionary impatience, the anarchist lawyer who had drafted the Querétaro Constitution, joined Zapata with the hope that a son of the people would be more ruthless than the civilized feudal
aristocrat Carranza. The impetuous anarchist intellectual was again disillusioned by the experience of having lived under the agrarian commune of the Zapatistas. There was much more of licence than liberty; plenty of savage cruelty, but little of social justice. He changed sides once again, and we became friends, although experience had made him a cynic, while I was still full of great expectations. He jeered at them as illusions.

While Pancho Villa played the Robin Hood in the far-off north, the Zapatistas roamed more or less freely in the neighbourhood of Mexico City with the aid and connivance of the poor. They were no longer a danger, but a nuisance. They raided villages to plunder, and were punished with matching brutality when captured.

About twenty miles from Mexico City, there is a suburb called San Angel, with an old church and a deserted monastery in the neighbouring forest. Crowds went to San Angel on weekends or other holidays. But the deserted monastery, only a few miles off, was said to be an outpost of the Zapatistas. The anarchist lawyer discouraged my plan to seek an interview with the Mexican Anabaptist leader, but agreed to accompany me in an excursion to the nearest outpost of his followers in the deserted monastery of San Angel. There we did not find any Zapatista alive but several dead bodies were dangling from trees on the roadside. The villagers told us, with remarkably callous indifference, that Zapatistas had raided the neighbourhood a couple of days ago; some of them were captured and hanged by the Carranzistas. To keep the dead bodies dangling like that was an usual practice to warn others. Subsequently, I came to know from personal experience that the gruesome practice was very widespread.

But I am anticipating. Having outlined the historical background of the new scene of my being and becoming, I shall now take up the thread of the story.
The City of the Sleeping Woman

The belief that the Mexicans are a warlike race is derived from the fact that their country is named after Mexite, the war-god of the Aztecs who ruled in Anahuac, before the Spaniards came. The valley of Mexico was called Anahuac, which means "the country by the water." Topographically, the valley of Mexico is very interesting. Only six hundred years ago, it was a group of lakes situated about 8,000 ft. above sea-level. The capital of the Aztec Empire, with a population of half a million, adorned with massive stone buildings, stood on a number of islands. The present Mexico city was originally built on the site of the Aztec capital, completely destroyed by the Spanish invaders.

But since the sixteenth century, a remarkable geological transformation has taken place. The bed of many of the lakes has risen to form a valley, in which stands one of the most beautiful cities of the world. The water of the dried-up lakes has receded to accumulate in the two remaining ones (Xochimilco and Chalco), which constitute the famous "floating gardens" about ten miles to the south of the city.

On Sundays and other holidays, las Chinampas, the floating gardens, put on a gay festive appearance. Thousands from the city rush out in crowded electric tram cars to spend the day in paddle-boats profusely decorated with garlands of flowers, which grow abundantly in the neighbourhood. The vegetation is rank, the valley of Mexico being situated on the northern edge of the torrid zone. Even the surface of the water near the shore is covered with thick vegetation—the continuous expanse of deep green broken up with patches of flowers of all colours.
The aquatic passéo (promenade) on the Chinampas is the most typical Mexican scene of merry-making, good-natured frivolity and friendliness, gaily clad girls singing popular Spanish songs, accompanied with guitars played by their gallant escorts, some of whom cannot resist the impulse to dance, at the risk of turning over the boat. Sometimes, the mishap actually occurs, and indignant senoritas, screaming with delight, are fished out of the shallow water looking like wet cats.

The Chinampas are called the Venice of the New World. But there is a great difference: the one is conventional in every respect, the other natural. I liked the neighbourhood and the human atmosphere so much that I often went there with Mexican friends who called me "the melancholy philosopher from India," because of my temperamental inability to participate in riotous merry-making.

Soon after coming to their country, I found yet another possible reason for the Mexicans being called a warlike race. They are evidently very fond of wearing military costumes and bearing arms. But the fondness is rather that of children for toys. I learned that from personal experience in course of time. A military officer would often take his pistol out of the holster and shoot, not to kill, but to punctuate an argument he might be having with friends in the mess, on the roadside or even in a drawing-room.

The mediaeval practice of the duel was still in vogue; but as a rule, the adversaries, defending their honour, would fire several shots in the air or at the ceiling of the room, and then embrace and kiss each other. The streets of the capital were swarming with men in uniform. That was only natural in a country which had been nearly ten years in the throes of a civil war, still raging only a few miles away. But not many of those armed and uniformed men were worshippers of Mexitel; the war-god of the Aztecs had been forgotten with them; but their "White Sleeping Woman" is still there, the symbol of peace, as she was before the Spanish invaders brought war to Anahuac.

Mexico City, the second highest capital in the world, situated seven thousand four-hundred feet above sea-level
stands at the south-eastern end of the valley closed in by two higher ranges, the Sierra de Guadalupe and the Sierra Nevada. The former, less than a thousand feet higher than the city, is sanctified with the temple of the patron-saint of Catholic Mexico “Our Lady of Guadalupe.” An old cathedral of haloed memory stands there in the vicinity of the city, where she is believed to have made the miracle of drawing water out of the barren rock. But having made a miracle for the poor, Santa Guadalupe is worshipped particularly by the beneficiaries, mostly pure-blooded natives. Mexico City is protected by another deity of the natural religion of the Aztecs.

In the south-eastern vicinity rises the much higher Sierra Nevada (the snow-clad range) topped by the volcanic peaks of Popocatapetl and Ixtaccihuatl. They had stood there as the heavenly sentinels guarding the gates of Anahuac when the Aztecs reigned there. Both are now extinct; but the name of the former (Smoking Mountain) indicates that six hundred years ago, it was an active volcano. While it was thus more appropriately symbolic of the role conferred on it by legend and mythology, the latter must have been an object of romance, poetry and affection. The word means "White " or "Sleeping Woman " ; philologists differ on the meaning of the adjective, and the difference may never disappear. The word was hieroglyphically depicted. The symbol of a woman is clear, but the meaning of the adjective is a matter of imagination. Whatever may be the opinion of experts, white is certainly more appropriate; and both the adjectives describe the picture fully.

From Mexico City, the peak of Ixtaccihuatl looks like a woman lying on her back. It being perpetually snow-covered, she is white; and to lie there still, she must be sleeping. In any case, the twin peaks which, through centuries, have given birth to legends and myths, and quickened the romantic imagination of poets, certainly add a grandeur to the beauty of the valley of Mexico.

The temple of "Our Lady of Guadalupe " is completely eclipsed by the goddess of the native natural religion, who personifies the miracle of perpetual snow in the tropics. The picture symbolises the culture of modern Mexico—Catholic
Christianity superimposed by the Spanish conquerors, periodically challenged by the outburst of native paganism. Anti-clericalism has been the main incentive of Mexico's revolutions ever since the days of Hidalgo and Morelo, both parish priests.

In the good old days of Diaz, the Sierra Nevada was a sort of national park of Mexico. The pleasure hunters from Europe went up there in excursion parties well provided with everything to enjoy natural beauty in comfort and luxury. On the way up there were well appointed government rest-houses and private hotels. All that had changed since the revolution. The "White Woman" slept in peace and the "Smoking Mountain" kept the vigil. The Mexicans with their subconscious loyalty to the pagan tradition most probably were happy. They were proud of their national park, but reverential about the abode of the legendary gods and goddesses. It was no longer defiled by the levity of the luxurious foreigners. The revolution had done that much; and when I was there, the approaches to the home of the national deities were guarded by pure-blooded Zapatistas. On my wanting to go up to the snow-clad peaks, I was warned that the slopes of the range, hardly twenty miles from the capital, were infested with bandits. Several times, I went a part of the way up, but did not venture further. My instinctive sympathy for paganism expressed itself in the strong fascination for the "Sleeping Woman." The picture symbolised the tradition of an ancient culture, pure and serene, but dead.

The twin peaks are visible practically from all over the valley. But they stood right in front of the balcony of the house which I occupied for the major part of my stay in Mexico; it was a centre of international intrigues, in which the President of the Republic participated; there, I cultivated my friendship with the first Russian Bolshevik who initiated me in the subtleties of the revolutionary creed; and there was born the first Communist Party outside Russia. From the balcony of the house, I tried innumerable times to photograph the "Sleeping Woman" twenty miles away. Once I succeeded by accident; I was a green amateur in photography. An enlarged copy of that rare photograph hung for years covering
nearly the whole length of the wall of a photographer's shop on the fashionable Avenida Francisco Madero.

One can see how the memory of the City of the Sleeping Woman still haunts me. I am not a nationalist; any country is as good or as bad for me as any other. The more I saw of the world, the more I felt that any country would be so much better without its inhabitants, full of prejudices and parochialism. Mexico might be an exception; I cannot say exactly why. Perhaps it was a matter of “mystic experience,” resulting from the fascination for the "Sleeping Woman".

I am no poet; I could not write a single line to depict her beauty; as a matter of fact, never in my life could I understand what is beauty; but I am told that it is something which is beyond understanding; it is to be felt, mostly in imagination; or created out of imagination, then to be worshipped. Well, that has been all Greek and Latin to me. Yet, I was fascinated by the "Sleeping Woman," and still feel a strong attraction for the simplicity, wildness, barbarism, cruelty and kindness of Mexico and her people. Both may have changed during the last thirty years; but I feel that they can never change beyond recognition. Therefore, if I ever shall have to live elsewhere, I shall go to Mexico. Everything may have changed; but the "Sleeping Woman" is still there; and the "Smoking Mountain " is too dead to be jealous.

My fascination for Mexico, however, was not to be explained by the dictum that blood is thicker than water. My education was still very inadequate. Yet, the legend that in the course of his digvijay Arjuna came to Mexico and populated the country by breaking his vow of Brakmacharya, did not appeal to me. It was too absurd to be taken seriously. The more plausible theory of prehistoric migration from India is equally fantastic, even' if it is assumed that once upon a time there was a land bridge across the Pacific. Such a far-fetched hypothesis may have been necessary when anthropology believed in monogenesis. The lingering belief in a creation, which lay subconsciously behind the theory of monogenesis, having been destroyed by the advance of scientific knowledge, much light has been thrown into the dark corners of prehistory. The empirically sounder theory of polygenesis rules out the necessity
of assuming fantastic migrations to explain cultural similarities in distant parts of the globe. The successive stages of cultural development, marked by the belief in magic, animism, paganism and polytheism, can be referred back to the unfoldment of primitive rationality, which is a biological heritage of the human species. Given the common heritage, primitive mankind in different parts of the world thought and acted more or less similarly. This scientific reading of prehistory reveals the common foundation of human culture and raises the hope that the dream of One World may some day be realised.

It took me some time to discover Mexico after I came there. Hotel Geneva, where I landed, thanks to the kindness of my Canadian fellow-subject of the British Crown, was a curious place. There was absolutely nothing Mexican about it. In a sense, it was a desirable place; it kept its boarders away from the native dirt and smell. But the arrogant exclusiveness of the small Anglo-American colony was very objectionable. The host and the guests alike behaved as if they were living not only in a beleaguered fortress, but must also protect themselves against infectious maladies. Most of them were immune to the virus of revolution; they were afraid of physical maladies naturally bred in the insanitary conditions of a large city which had been until recently in the throes of a civil war. They all bemoaned the good old days of the Diaz dictatorship, and wished that the Golden Age would return.

On the very day of my arrival, I was struck by the absurd artificiality of the atmosphere in which foreigners preferred to live in Mexico. The comfortable room and a steaming hot bath, to wash away the dirt of the journey, were very welcome. But the American amenities of life did not make me forget that I was in the capital of a country which is said to possess distinctive cultural characteristics of its own. I believed that culture consisted largely in cooking. The belief still lingers in my mind, whose simplicity has been greatly destroyed by sophistication. However, the wisdom of the old dictum that, when in Rome behave like a Roman, has been pragmatically verified. I wanted to behave like the Mexicans, when in Mexico. So I ordered a dinner composed of classical Mexican dishes. The kind host of Nueva Loredo had treated me to one
of the national dishes. In Hotel Geneva, I ordered two others I knew of—tamales and Chile con carne. The waiter, a Mexican himself, looked at me in surprise, and said that he could serve those dishes only out of tins made in U.S.A., either by Libby's or Heinz's, famous for their fifty-seven varieties. I was more surprised in my turn, and asked why Mexican dishes were served out of tins made in U.S.A. The waiter replied, because "none of the guests eats native food." I changed my order, and demanded a beefsteak.
Mexican Memoranda

I DID NOT know a single soul in Mexico; nor had I tried to make any contact before coming there. Although in a short time I came to like the country and its people immensely, and felt myself almost at home, my going there was not a deliberate choice. Not willing to spend time in an American prison and thereafter be deported to India where a much heavier sentence awaited my return, I had to get out of the United States. My attempts to cross the Atlantic having not succeeded, I had to choose between Canada and Mexico as the only possible escape. In the former country, I would be under the jurisdiction of the long arm of British law. To choose Mexico was, therefore, a forced move. I left in a hurry.

But on arriving there, I did not feel helpless; there was something in the atmosphere. The letter of introduction to General Alvarado was the point of departure of my search for that something in a concrete form. I knew that the General was the Governor of the far-off State of Yucatan; but I did not know/ that the place was practically inaccessible from Mexico City. There was no railway connection. Travelling on land, a distance of about a thousand miles, one must, in the last lap of the journey, pass through the wilderness of the large States of Tabasco and Chiapas, both marshy and mountainous. The usual route was across the Gulf of Mexico; but the ships were mostly American; leaving from the Mexican port of Veracruz, they, as a rule, called either at some American Gulf port or Havana. I must keep away from both. Some Mexican ships went direct; but mostly they were small and not seaworthy. They seldom carried passengers.
For these reasons, I had to abandon the idea of going to present my letter of introduction to General Alvarado in his State and see his Socialist experiment. That was a disappointment. I was naturally eager to have a first-hand knowledge of the practice of economic theories which had just begun to appeal to my imagination, if not yet to a conscious sense of social justice. However, subsequently, I realised that it would have been a greater disappointment if I could have gone to the El Dorado of the American Utopians.

The Socialist economy of Yucatan was State monopoly of the export trade in the aloe sisal fibre, which constituted about ninety per cent of the total production of the State. And in reality, it was a monopoly of American capital invested in that industry. In so far as the monopoly was administered through the State, it was a sort of State capitalism, which was necessarily monopolistic. At that time, I did not like the system, because at best, it was reformism.

The Bolsheviks had just captured power in Russia, and a faint echo of the revolution reached across the Atlantic. All left-wing socialists were in an exuberant mood, and lived in an atmosphere surcharged with great expectations. They were all would-be Communists. I was sucked up in that electrified atmosphere. In my case, it was not a few degrees rise of the revolutionary temperature. It was a mutation in my political evolution: a sudden jump from die-hard nationalism to Communism. With the fanaticism of a new convert, reformism was an anathema.

But, as I realised later, the rapid progress was rather superficial. It was, indeed, not motivated by any opportunist consideration. The idea of going to Russia had not occurred to me as yet. It was an emotional satisfaction to profess the most revolutionary faith. Culturally, I was still a nationalist: and cultural nationalism is a prejudice that dies very hard. Socialism appealed to me because of its anti-imperialist connotations. Its Utopian or humanitarian aspect was not altogether new to those who had drawn their revolutionary inspiration from Ananda Math. Therefore, the ideal of social justice could be easily incorporated in my inherited hierarchy of values or in whatever philosophy of life I might have had in those days. The
anti-imperialist connotation of left-wing Socialism was emphasised in Communism. Therefore, my stay in the half-way house was brief. The road from revolutionary anti-imperialist nationalism to Communism was short. Not only I experienced this psychological process, but many others subsequently underwent the miraculous transformation, and consequently corrupted Communism. I also went a long way in that Urection, but fortunately could discern the fatal pitfalls before it was too late. I stopped to think and discovered the fallacies of the new faith. But that was the end of a journey which had lasted for nearly a quarter of a century. It began in Mexico.

The practical difficulty of reaching there and a strong emotional exuberance caused by the echo of the Russian revolution diverted me from the journey to the El Dorado of Yucatan. I stayed on in the Mexican capital, to find new moorings there. For enquiring how I could present a letter of introduction to General Alvarado, I managed to get an interview with the Minister of Defence, who happened to be a son-in-law of the President of the Republic. That experience made me acquainted with the lovable aspects of the Mexican character. An obscure foreigner being invited to see a Cabinet Minister, in reply to an enquiry about one of his subordinates—that could happen only in Mexico.

I went to the Afinisterio de la Guerra (Ministry of War) as the place was frankly called. Mexicans do not believe in hypocrisy. The Government maintains an army as the instrument for waging war. The Department for administering it, therefore, should be called the Ministry of War. The Mexicans called the spade a spade. I was received with all ceremonious politeness, and escorted by armed guards through red carpeted corridors to the Minister's office. He was evidently expecting the visitor, in the fullest splendour of the regalia of his office. He was also the Commander-in-Chief of the army. A plumpish, rather short man carrying a sword too long for his height, with all the appropriate dignity, naturally frightened me a little. But presently I was reassured by a friendly smile and warm handshake. He led me to a satin upholstered guilt chair. I took a glance round the spacious room. It was all green and gold—d La Louis Quince. Would I kindly show the letter to
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General Alvarado? I had it with me; but it was sealed. Without the least hesitation on that, the Minister tore the cover and read the letter. I noticed a smile of satisfaction on his face. I was informed that General Alvarado was expected at the capital any day, and the Ministry would inform me as soon as he arrived. I thought the interview was over, and I got up to go.

The Minister also got up, and with the classical Spanish gesture of politeness, which the Mexican gentleman does so superbly, requested me to sit down; before I left, he wanted to assure me that I was very welcome and safe in the Republic of Mexico. The word safe struck me; he must have noticed some expression on my face, or perhaps wanted to be dramatic, as all conventionally cultivated Mexicans are prone to be. "My honourable colleague, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, has received some intimation about you. But, Sir, that is a diplomatic secret, which I should not divulge. I only wanted to reassure you that you are in a country which has fought for freedom ever since the days of Hidalgo and Juarez. You are free and safe here." This time, he got up first, and with a demonstration of dignity, almost majestic, walked ahead of me to the door, the much too long sheathed sword trailing on the thick carpet, held it ajar with his own hand, to bow me out.

The whole affair looked like a scene out of a comic opera. Out in the corridor, and then in the street, I tried to take in the significance of the dramatic experience. It made a profound impression on me. Evidently, the Crown Prince, as the Chief of the army was banteringly called (President Carranza had no son) knew about me, and the knowledge about the arrival of an obscure foreigner had reached him through the diplomatic channel. It gave me a feeling of international importance. But the more important part of the experience was the feeling that I was amongst friends, I did not have to wait long to have the feeling reinforced.

The next day, I received a letter from the editor of one of the leading dailies of the city, said to be the non-official mouth-piece of the Government, very politely enquiring if I would care to call at his office. The letter contained an explanation for the impropriety of the request; because I was staying in an undesirable place, the writer would not call on me.
I felt that the plot was thickening. It was an intriguing situation, and it seemed that more interesting and exciting experiences awaited me. It was hardly a week since I had come to a new place, a complete stranger, acquainted with not a single soul. But already I was given to understand that I had friends in high quarters. It was an experience which might have resurrected my belief in Providence, had I not been a born sceptic.

However, at the appointed time, I called at the office of El Puchlo (The People) and met the editor, a tall, rather heavily set man, well beyond the middle age. His behaviour was grave and paternal. He might have a grandson of my age. I liked it for a change from the pompous effusiveness of the previous interview. But that was a Cabinet Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, and this only a journalist, although the latter might be of more consequence in a democratic order.

After the preliminary exchange of politeness, which was free from the usual Mexican extravagance, the editor once again begged to be pardoned for not calling on me: “You are guest in our country, and we Mexicans are a hospitable people, although they say," he added, rather in irony than in bitterness, "that we are backward.” I took up the cue and replied: “Well, Sir, we are in the same boat; my country is similarly stigmatised by the arrogant imperialism of the White race.” The quiet composure of the elderly man inspired confidence. I did not know how it happened; but before I left his office after a couple of hours, he knew my whole story, and the sincerity of his sympathy was palpable. "We shall meet again," he said. "Often; but you must move out of the hotel. It is not a safe place for you.” It was an intriguing remark, but he would say no more, and I felt as it were in paternal respect, if not obedience. Before I left, he invited me to dinner at his home and meet his wife. In the meantime, he would find a more suitable place for me to stay. A few days later, I moved out of the Hotel de Geneva to a small house in the respectable residential part of the city called Colonia Roma. But during the last days of my stay in the hotel, I had another unexpected experience which led to a resumption.
of old relations. I had noticed that the guests in the hotel divided themselves in two groups. There were actually two dining rooms. On some discrete enquiry, I came to know that a number of Germans lived in the hotel. Most of them had come from the Far East or the United States. On their arrival, the hotel became a battle-ground. The Anglo-American residents took it for their territory, and would not tolerate the presence of enemy aliens. But Mexico was a neutral country; the Germans stood their ground. The patriotism of the Canadian proprietor would not go to the extent of losing a considerable business and perhaps provoke intervention of the authorities, by turning the Germans out. Ingeniously, he divided the hotel practically into two, each part allotted to one of the warring groups. As a British subject, I was accommodated in the allied part. But after the first day's experience, of being told that no native food was served there, I stopped going to the common dining room and ordered meals served in my room. Nor did I frequent the hotel lounge and drawing rooms. My exclusiveness must have been noticed and the behaviour of all the fellow-guests was naturally frigid. Even the host appeared to avoid me.

Until I discovered Mexico, it was a rather disagreeable situation. Therefore, one day after lunch, when everybody retires for siesta, I was rather surprised by a gentle knock at my door. The surprise was greater when I opened the door to find one of the German boarders whispering if he could come in. He was in before I could say anything. He profusely apologised for the intrusion; but he had an important message to deliver, and must not be seen by any of those on the other side while speaking to me. While he spoke in an earnest low voice, I identified him as one of the "poached eggs" who always amused me—an inseparable pair of men living in the German part of the hotel, very short, dressed similarly: their soft cloth hats somehow reminded me of poached eggs. I wondered where the other one was! After a couple of minutes, while letting out my visitor I found his counterpart at the far end of the corridor, evidently keeping watch.

It was all very conspirative, reminiscent of the good old days at home. The message was that two friends I had met in Java
were in Mexico, and would be happy to contact me again: would I kindly walk along a certain street after dusk that very day to be picked up by a passing motor car? I agreed, sort of automatically. The visitor was evidently nervous and wanted to go as soon as possible. Of course, I was not under any obligation. I had made no solemn promise. I could go or not go. But what's the harm? I remembered the Minister's assurance that I was safe in Mexico. It might have been a mere gesture of hospitality. Anyhow, I could not imagine any possible danger and resolved to go to meet the friends from Java. I could imagine who they were.

Later on, I came to know of the elaborate attempt of the Anglo-American Secret Service to kidnap me. The chief of the British-Indian C.I.D, Denham, had come to San Francisco to conduct the "Hindu-German Conspiracy" case. An old associate who had been sent out of India to trace me, was arrested at Shanghai. He was produced in the case to testify that I was the principal culprit in the conspiracy, which spread all over the Far East. I read the news in the paper. It caused me some pain; I was quite friendly with the chap at home and we had together taken part in some daring "revolutionary actions." He had a sense of humour, which did not desert Him even in the most difficult and dangerous situations. In a word, revolutionary ruthlessness and austere puritanism did not altogether kill the humanness in him. I simply could not believe that he would turn a traitor. But there he was. On return to India, fifteen years later, I learned that he had become some sort of a Sanyasi, like many other old revolutionaries. He had died since then.

The trial at San Francisco was over. But I learned from reliable sources that Denham stayed on in the U.S.A. with the determination to nab the arch-conspirator and take him back to India. The attempts to kidnap me were inspired by him. I was told that he actually came to Mexico.
IN THE evening, I went to the appointed place. It was a street in the residential part of the city—quiet, well-paved, clean, lined with trees on both sides. The evenings in Mexico City are delightful. I walked leisurely, breathing in deeply the invigorating air blowing gently from the snow-clad volcanoes. But my mind worked feverishly, crowded with the memory of the strange experience of the last days and hours, I was somewhat dazed, wondering what was going to happen next. A huge touring car overtook me with uncanny silence and pulled up. A door was thrown open noiselessly and I climbed into the front seat by the side of the man at the wheel. When the car moved, I turned my head backwards to see if there was anybody else in. The Poached Eggs sat there, half sunk in the thickly upholstered capacious seat. Not a word was uttered by anybody. It was a short drive to the place where the man at the wheel got out and motioned me to follow him. The Poached Eggs were left in the car.

The door right on the street opened noiselessly as we approached it. Immediately, we were in a well-furnished reception hall. My companion threw off the thick coat he was wearing, rather unnecessarily, to be caught dexterously by a liveried attendant, and tossed his naval officer's cap on a chair. He was a bulky, broad-shouldered man of early middle-age, with greying flaxen hair and steel blue eyes. On the whole an impressive figure. He pushed open a door, stepped aside with a military gesture, and stiffly bowed, an invitation for the visitor to enter. It was a long, rather low-ceilinged room, walls panelled with dark well-polished wood, the floor covered with thick carpets.
As we entered, two men got up from deep leather-upholstered chairs at the far end of the room. I recognised them as the two German officers who had gone to Java to arrange for the transport of arms to India. One was an army officer, a Captain, I believe; the other, a high official of the colonial service. The former was said to be an emissary of the Imperial General Staff. From the way in which the rich and powerful Helfferich brothers kowtowed to him, one could imagine that the former was an important person. Their elder brother at home was the Kaiser's last Finance Minister and President of the Reichsbank until Schacht replaced him. The Helfferich brothers owned the major share of German interests in the Far East, and could be regarded as pioneers of the abortive German Imperialism. They were to finance the scheme of fomenting an armed uprising in India to embarrass Britain.

The reunion in Mexico made us all happy. After the first exchange of greetings amongst old friends, the host was introduced: “Commander von Koenig of the Dutschland" Once again, the Nordic giant clicked his heels and bowed stiffly to a representative of an inferior race. But it was war time, and everything is fair in love and war.

Soon after the famous submarine Dutschland had run the British blockade for the second time and reached an American harbour with a precious cargo of chemical dyes, the U.S.A. joined the war. The German submarine was seized, and its crew interned. The Captain was not on board; he managed to escape and found refuge in Mexico, like many more of his countrymen.

The initial ceremony of reunion and introduction over, we settled down to talk business. Prinks were served; I excused myself. The friends from Java recollected that I had behaved similarly there also. I myself was no longer proud of the negative habit as a token of moral superiority. Puritanism was wearing thin simultaneously with many other prejudices. But I still did not take alcoholic drinks, because until then there had not been many occasions to do so.

After the exchange of notes about our respective adventures, since we parted company nearly two years ago in Java, the
Captain, who had, in the meantime, won the coveted Iron Cross for some unknown meritorious service to the Fatherland, asked me for a detailed account of the plan which I wanted to submit to the General Staff. He gave the reason for his inquisitiveness: Gehelmrat (the Kaiser's Privy Councillor) von so and so was soon coming to Mexico with plenipotentiary powers for an overall review of the activities of the diplomatic and secret agents in the American cities and the Far East. The supreme authorities in Berlin would then issue orders for the execution of the recommendations in his report. I was duly impressed by the confidence, and outlined the plan in which I was no longer much interested. All the three were outraged by the news that the agencies in China had failed to appreciate the importance of my plan and render me the necessary help which they thought was paltry.

After some animated conversation amongst themselves in German, which I did not know then, the naval Captain asked me why I did not proceed to Berlin from New York. But how could I have? "I would have taken you on the Deuishland in her first return voyage." I keenly felt a loss—not so much of the chance of going to Berlin as of the thrill of travelling on the famous submarine which crossed the Atlantic thrice, defying the blockade. But how could I get in touch with him? Why, through the Embassy! The idea had not occurred to me, but the latter must have thought of it when I was waiting for a chance to cross over with such an important mission.

So, my failure to test to the end the sincerity and seriousness of the German offer to help the liberation of India was due to the oiliness of the leader in New York. I kept the bitter thought to myself; it could not be shared with foreigners. I had lost confidence in them. There was something fishy about the queer occupants of the mysterious house in New York. But I could not imagine that the impostor was deceiving me, and anything about the plan; but he knew that he was betraying the cause he pretended to represent. Of course, I had not told him anything about the plan; but he knew that I had come all the way from India and wanted to proceed to Berlin with an important message to the Indian Revolutionary Committee.
It was his business to inform the German Embassy, which he evidently did not.

However, now I recollect the deceitfulness with a sense of gratitude. For me personally, and perhaps for others also, it was a blessing in disguise. It marked a turning point in my life. It helped me to get out of a blind alley, to escape the tragic fate of the Indian derelicts of German intrigue, whom I encountered in Berlin as so many museum pieces. The mighty German army had then collapsed: The Supreme War Lord had fled from his fallen empire; a revolution had swept away the ruins of the old regime; Germany, still bleeding from the wounds of war, and starved, nevertheless was throbbing with new ideas, experiencing a new cultural outburst. All that did not mean anything to the Indian revolutionaries who had flocked to Berlin during the war with the hope of liberating their country with the help of the Kaiser's Germany. Even in 1920, sitting at the centre of Europe, while the guns of the Russian Red Army boomed in the nearby eastern horizon, the superannuated veterans of the Indian revolution outside India ridiculed Socialism and did not believe that the Russian Revolution would last long. But for the deceitfulness of the oily leader I might have been in that strange company of the castaways of history.

At that time in Mexico, when I saw that I had been deceived by an impostor, I was angry and resolved to avenge the wrong by availing myself of the opportunity of establishing direct contact with the German High Command over the head of the Indian Revolutionary Committee in Berlin and its treacherous agents. If the expected emissary could secure Berlin's sanction of the plan, I would return to China to try again. It was more than a year since I had left that country. Things might have changed in the meantime. So, contacts must be established immediately. Financial aid was offered for the purpose. I agreed to accept. It was sorely needed. The little money I possessed was practically exhausted during the week since my arrival in Mexico City. The major part went in payment of the hotel bill. The windfall was very welcome. We made an appointment to meet again after several days, and parted. We should not meet too frequently, but remain in close contact.
through intermediaries. I went out of the house without escort, and walked to the left, as previously advised, until the next corner, where another car was waiting. It took me home without my giving the driver any address. German efficiency, I thought; but was all the conspiratorial method really necessary? I had to learn from experience.

The next day, a rather foppishly attired Mexican young man called. After the exchange of some banal pleasantries, he produced a letter of introduction from the editor of El Pueblo reminding me that I was expected at dinner with him and his wife in the evening. The bearer of the letter would accompany me; by the way, he was an intelligent young man of some education, and might be a very good and reliable private secretary, if I wanted one. Until the previous evening, I did not know how to pay for the next day’s meals. How was I to employ a Private Secretary? Was I receiving all this unusual attention from high quarters because of a misapprehension that I might be one of the fabulously rich Indian Rajas in disguise? What a fantastic situation! I sent the young visitor away with the request to call for me in the evening.

The dinner that evening gave me the first experience of the domestic and social aspect of Mexican life. It was not a formal dinner party. There were two more guests, one very interesting, and the presence of the other significant—a young lady and rather asinine young man, respectively. I was, of course, presented to the hostess in the first place: “Dona so and so.” I “was in the presence of a mother matron, all in black silk, with a fine lace mantilla (the classical headdress of Spanish ladies) thrown over the head. I paid my respects as best as I could, in an awkward manner. Taking up the cue from the husband, the lady said something staggering, in Spanish—" Servidor de usted, Senor, aqui inena ustadstt casa " (At your service, Sir, this house belongs to you.) What would she do if I moved in the next day? But the offer was not seriously meant. It was the gesture of unbounded hospitality..

Of the guests, the young lady was editor of a monthly magazine—La Mujer Moderna (The Modern Woman), the first and only of its kind in Mexico. She did not strike me as a blue-stocking or a suffragette, but just a female rather of
the horsy type. Her visible modernism consisted in smoking black cigarettes held in the loop of the hairpin, just taken out of its proper station, whenever necessary. I learned subsequently that she had been Private Secretary of Carranza before he became the President of the Republic. In recognition of her services, the latter raised her to a public position. She was not qualified to edit a magazine of any literary pretension, but sex appeal had attracted around her a group of young writers seeking public recognition. Some of them actually wrote poems obviously addressed to her, but to be published as her work. Well, I saw a good deal of her during the earlier part of my stay in Mexico. So, I shall not anticipate.

The young man was there presumably as her escort. But by himself, he was of some social importance. He was a brother of the Foreign Minister, though himself only a bank employee and the national tennis champion. He was very stupid, but spoke several foreign languages. Under his patronage, I learned to play tennis, which I had previously regarded as an unmanly game. He was proud of his pupil because before long I could give the champion a good run on the court. His coming to meet me, obviously on invitation, as the escort of La Mujer Moderna, as I came to call her (others took up the practice and she liked it) was not accidental, I suspected that much immediately; my suspicion was corroborated the next day.

The conversation at the table, and before and after dinner was rather desultory and halting. Neither of the ladies spoke English. I could engage the hostess in broken French. La Mujer Moderna did not speak even that language, which was almost the mother tongue of all Mexican intellectuals. With no training in table or drawing-room manners, as I was, I felt that the three men should not carry on conversation which the ladies could not follow. Strangely enough (for me), the other two men, punctiliously conventional as they were, did not seem to mind brushing aside the ladies with a polite "excuse me". However, none was bored, and we did not part until it was midnight. After dinner, La Mujer Moderna brightened up and carried on a Uvely conversation in Spanish with her escort. The hostess evidently felt somewhat embarrassed; but I reassured her that, though I could not follow the conversation, I enjoyed
the sound of the language, as I really did. La Mujer Moderna was doing most of the talking. She walked up and down the room, waiving the black cigarette she had in a hairpin, to brush aside any attempt of the young man to put in a word now and then.

Before we left, the host took me aside to ask if I would contribute a series of articles to El Pueblo about the British rule in India. "You know ours was also a colonial country: our forefathers revolted and the Mexican people overthrew the Spanish rule. Unfortunately, even after a century, Mexico is not yet really free. We are still waging the war of independence. Therefore, Mexicans sympathise with you, and would be benefited by a knowledge of your country and the struggle of its people for freedom. We are also Indians, you know, I am of the pure blood." I looked at him automatically—a dark handsome, intelligent face, which could belong to any Indian of the best type. I agreed to write the articles, but pointed out the fact of my ignorance of the Spanish language. He consolingly reassured me that I would get over the difficulty in no time; meanwhile, the young man who called at my place in the morning would translate the articles. Thus he was appointed my private secretary. The next morning he presented himself to enquire when my first article for El Pueblo would be ready for translation: and simply informed me that he was going to purchase a new typewriter: Oliver was the make most popular throughout Latin America. I felt that events were being pushed by some unseen hand. Once again, the faith in a divine providence, almost overwhelmed by my commonsense, counselled caution pending further developments.

But it seemed that Providence was determined to regain my allegiance. In the afternoon, Senor Fernandez, the brother of the Foreign Minister, whom I had met the previous evening, turned up to say that his bank had been instructed by one of its clients to pay me ten thousand pesos. The peso was the unit of Mexican currency worth fifty per cent of the American dollar, and Mexican currency was the soundest at that time. The Carranza Government had abolished paper money; the currency was the silver peso, and five, ten, twenty peso gold coins. I got all that information from my new friend, the bank employee.
The next day a peon from the bank came to deliver a bag of twenty peso gold pieces against a receipt. The Providence was good and kind indeed, although my flagging faith could not be reinforced by the sight of glittering gold delivered on my doorsteps, so to say, without my asking for it.
10
Socialism in Mexican Politics

IN MY time there were no political parties in Mexico. Numerous
groups struggled for political powers; but they all centred around
individuals, mostly military men. Madero, who led the revolution of
1911, was the only civilian to become President of the Republic for a
short time. Most rebels or leaders of revolutions, however, issued
programmatic proclamations, appealing to the people to rally under
their respective banners. Some solution of the agrarian problem
figured prominently in each proclamation. Distribution of land was
the common solution.

Ninety per cent of the people lived on land under feudal conditions.
General poverty of the rural masses and perennial unemployment of a
large number of land labourers made soldiering an attractive
profession. Consequently, any movement against the established
regime took the form of a military rebellion, and opposition leaders
were either military men or called themselves Generals whose appeal
would find a greater response from would-be soldiers. And the latter,
being land-hungry peasants or unemployed agricultural workers, were
more strongly attracted by the promise of land distribution.

Years of civil war, and the practice of rebel leaders, including some
major ones, degenerating into sheer banditry, had disgusted the
progressive and democratic sections of the middle-class. They also
keenly felt the need for a radical agrarian reform, but kept away from
the armed struggle for military supremacy carried on by politically
ambitious Generals. The terms ‘revolution’ and ‘revolutionary’ had
fallen in disrepute. The disgust and apathy of the bulk of the educated
middle-class precluded the rise of any political party.
The groups contending for power or struggling for supremacy were named after their respective leaders. The supporters of the then established regime, for instance, were called Carran-zistas; and the two main rebel groups Zapatistas and Villistas, respectively. The active following in each case was composed of military men or minor leaders of armed insurgent groups.

Since the revolution of 1911, Carranza was the first to hold the presidency for a sufficiently long period and to have established a constitutional regime, the authority of which was recognised in most parts of the country. In 1916, a Constituent Assembly was convened to frame the Constitution of the Republic. Thereafter, a Parliament was elected which met regularly. A constitutionally enacted system of laws was replacing the decrees of the revolutionary provisional government. There were groups in the Camera de las Deputados (The Chamber of Deputies); but they were not political parties. The majority group was called 'the Carranzistas'. Another loosely constituted group composed of liberal intellectuals (lawyers, teachers, medical men, etc.) called itself. 'Socialists’ but it was not an opposition group; some of its members also called themselves Carranzistas that is to say, supporters of the established regime; one of them was the Speaker of the House. The Mexican Constitution being modelled after the American, members of the Government do not sit in the Parliament. The Executive, therefore, could not be held responsible to the Legislature. Consequently, there was an atmosphere of unreality about the Parliament. However, the government was considerably demilitarised, several distinguished civilians having been appointed to important ministries, such as the Foreign Affairs, Finance, Education, Public Health, etc.

The left-wing politics was equally amorphous and unorganised, dominated emotionally by anarchism and syndicalism, as in all Latin American countries. But on some enquiry, I came to know that there was a Socialist Party, distinct from the Parliamentarians, who also called themselves ‘Socialists’. Its leader, an elderly lawyer, however, was a personal friend of the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies.

After I had been several months in the country and picked up enough Spanish to carry on ordinary conversation, I went
to the office of the Socialist Party, and actually bearded the lion in his
den. The modest home of Ignazio Santibanez was the office of the
party. He wore a longish black beard streaked with grey, presumably
to impersonate the Prophet of Socialism. On my introducing myself as
a foreigner interested in the revolutionary social movement, he
enquired if I was the author of those very excellent articles in El
Pueblo. (The use of extravagant adjectives is a feature of the Spanish
language—a manner of speaking not to be taken literally.) What to
say in those articles was a problem for me. I had solved it to my
benefit; now I discovered that the articles also served the purpose of
my introduction to the critical and really progressive section of the
reading public of the city.

While thinking about what to say in those articles, I recollected the
scene in the meeting addressed by Lala Lajpat Rai in New York. On
the other hand, I remembered that the new educated middle class
people I had met during the short time since my arrival in Mexico,
pretended to be eager to know more about la India mysteriosa than the
sort of things I wanted to say. My tentative attempt to suggest that
India was rather a land of drabness and poverty than of dream and
beauty had failed to arouse much interest.

Until then, my acquaintance with the Mexican educated middle-class
was mostly confined to the courtiers of La Mujtr Moderna. The
attitude of a small group should not be generalised. But I had already
got a vague impression that the politically indifferent section of the
educated middle-class was nevertheless pro-Allies, because of their
loyalty to the French cultural tradition. To sympathise with anti-
British sentiment appeared to them as a betrayal of their cultural
loyalty. That was reminiscent of the American Liberals refusing their
press and platform to Lajpat Rai with the argument that any
propaganda against the British was helping Germany. However, I did
not see any sense in doing anti-British propaganda in a country which
could help India little even if it were convinced of the justice of her
case. Moreover, the spectacle of poverty of the Mexican people was
no less grim than that of the Indian. To tell the Mexican all about the
poverty of India and its cause, British exploitation, etc., would be like
carrying coal to Newcastle. As a matter of fact, in Mexico I realised, what I could not do in China, that national independence was not the cure for all the evils of any country. These thoughts raised in my own mind a question which provided the clue for a better understanding of Indian history. Why did India repeatedly fall a prey to foreign invasion during the last thousand years of her history? The search for a satisfactory answer to this question led to my "discovery of India". Marxism, though my knowledge of it at that time was very perfunctory, came in handy. In the articles I outlined the picture of India, past and present, as a picture of class-struggle. The poverty of the Indian masses was the result of economic exploitation by British imperialism and native feudalism. The liberation of the Indian masses, therefore, required not only the overthrow of British imperialism but subversion of the feudal-patriarchal order which constituted the social foundation of the foreign political rule. The corollary was that India needed a social revolution not mere national independence.

The leader of the Socialist Party was enthusiastic about my articles, because they depicted India, for the first time, in his knowledge, not as a dreamland, but as a country very much like his own. He added that other members of his party had also read those articles, and wanted him to contact their author and invite him to speak at a party meeting. Those articles should not appear in the bourgeois press, I expressed thankfulness for the appreciation, and said that I could be contacted through the editor of the paper. No, a Socialist could not ask for any favour from a bourgeois. However, we had met, and that was the most important international solidarity of the fighters for Social Revolution which could not be broken.

I felt as if I was in the presence of Kail Marx himself. Tjie beard hiding a solid white shirtfront, a stiff celluloid neckband supporting the favoured collar of a shabby black coat, the drab appointments of the study of an indignant intellectual—all these together created the appropriate atmosphere for the pathetic faith and enthusiasm of an ineffectual visionary. I was really moved; my still wavering intellectual acceptance of the faith in the historic role and the invincible power of the
world proletariat was enlivened and reinforced by an emotional response to the appeal of the symbolic personality of the Karl Marx of Mexico.

Before taking leave, I diffidently enquired if the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies was a member of the Socialist Party. The keeper of the purity of the proletarian faith was horrified by the idea. "No, ours is a revolutionary party; we do not believe in parliamentary reformism." "Of course, not; I only thought that he might be an acquaintance." The old man mellowed: “Oh, Don Manuel, surely I know him, as a professional colleague; a bourgeois politician, but a good man. Would you like to see him?" I did not want to damage my easily won reputation by evincing any desire to cultivate the acquaintance of anybody outside the revolutionary ranks; but the Karl Marx of Mexico was neither intolerant nor malicious as the prophet of Proletarian Revolution had been. He insisted that I should meet Don Manuel and that he would fix an appointment. Before long, I came to know that the rank and file of the party, composed at that time of a couple of hundred workers, practically all fiercely anarchistic, suspected the leader of bourgeois opportunism, secretly hugging the ambition of entering Parliament.

A couple of days later, I received a very striking letter. It was an invitation to attend a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Socialist Party. It was not the content but the appearance of the letter which was striking. It was written in red ink on an old typewriter, and concluded not with any of the usual conventional expression, but with the exclamation: Soludoy Revolution Social (Greetings and Revolution). The signature of the person who so hailed me through the postal service was evidently not meant to be read, though it was extremely decorative—with several artistic flourishes trailing down to the lower edge of the sheet. The fantastic manner of signing one's name was, as I learned subsequently, the usual practice. My "secretary" was very much distressed by the nakedness (as he said) of my signature. He actually tried to teach me to embellish it with at least a few loops and rings, so that it looked like the signature of a distinguished person. Poor chap, he had to give me up as a bad pupil. He must have wondered if I was
really a distinguished man. I consoled him by saying that his signature which he used to imprint on all my letters he typed, made up for the plainness of mine. I remember he used to embellish his signature with two or three loops around it, ending in a downward spiral.

As announced in the letter of invitation, Santibanez called early in the evening and we went to the meeting. It was in the house of the Secretary of the Party, in a part of the city far from fashionable Colonia Roma. I felt uneasy not only about my clothes; the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat might resent the smell of bourgeois society which I might be carrying. I could not very well get rid of the clothes; but if there was any smell of Colonia Roma about me it was completely overwhelmed in the proletarian atmosphere. Like all big cities, Mexico also had its bright and dark, beautiful and ugly, rich and poor parts. The contrast perhaps was more striking, because of the natural environments; the ugliness of man-made poverty flaunting at the smiling face of nature.

The Secretary of the Socialist Party was a printer by profession; but, not a wage slave; and he was naturally proud. He owned a small press which was situated in a room of his dwelling. We entered to find about half-a-dozen men assembled in the same room. The Secretary, a powerfully built young man in his thirties, welcomed the strange visitor with some natural reservation, and handed to me a four-page printed sheet—the latest issue of the party organ, La Lucha, which was printed and published by himself. The full name of the paper was Da Lucha de los Classes (The Class Struggle). I noticed that all the others in the room held in their hands copies of the paper, which they must have been reading before we came. I glanced over it as a gesture of politeness; with my then inadequate knowledge of Spanish, it would have taken me hours to read it with the aid of a dictionary.

However, old Santibanez, with his bourgeois sense of decorum intervened to relieve my embarrassment, which he must have noticed. There followed an elaborate introduction. I expressed the desire to know more about the others than they about me. The Committee was composed of nine members: except Santibanez and one school teacher, all were pure-
blooded proletarians. Every one of them present was a fine type of the Mexican of mixed blood. Santibanez explained that it was not a formal meeting of the Committee; they had assembled to meet me. I expressed my thankfulness and the hope of being of some service to the common cause. Instinctively, as a gesture of apology for my non-proletarian appearance, I must have looked at my own clothes. A jovial looking man of middle age, with a shock of wavy black hair, which made him look rather fierce, came up to me, placed his hands on my shoulders, and said: “We don't mind your clothes; all of us would like to be so dressed.” All laughed cheerfully and gathered around me, obviously to make the embarrassed visitor feel quite at home and among friends. I did feel like that.

When we were about to disperse, I diffidently enquired from Santibanez if we all could not go to a nearby place to have coffee. To my great relief, the invitation was accepted. We went to El China—the Chinaman’s small restaurant, which subsequently came to be the birthplace of the first Communist Party outside Russia. I mean, where the idea of founding it was conceived a year later. For weeks and months, I had to match my Marxism with the passionately anarchist and fanatically syndicalist convictions of the leaders of the Socialist Party. Usually, our discussions lasted until dawn, and then we went to El China. The owner woke up, pretending to be annoyed and angry; but without fail produced coffee and hot cakes for our breakfast.

The memorable battle between marxism and anarcho-syndicalism began with our first visit to El China. Some other guests were engaged in a heated discussion. A newspaper was passing from hand to hand. Santibanez explained that the evening papers carried the sensational news that the dispute between Mexico and the U.S.A. on Article 17 of the Querrectanro Constitution, which declared that all underground riches were the property of the nation, had reached a stage where it could not be settled peacefully; that the danger of American armed intervention was, therefore, imminent. As we had not touched any political question the whole evening, I asked what would be the attitude of the Socialist Party, if the danger materialised and what was proposed to do to prevent
it, if possible. The Secretary intervened with great vehemence: “What has the proletariat to do in the quarrel between two bourgeois governments? We are indifferent.” If the danger of intervention developed into a war, threatening the independence of Mexico, could they still be indifferent. The reply given by all in a chorus was emphatically in the affirmative. I was taken aback. Was that Socialism? But I was not yet prepared to begin the battle. We dispersed. On the way Santibanez remarked: “That's the trouble with us. They are all anarcho-syndicalists.” There was a touch of sadness and frustration in the tone of the old man. For the moment, I could say nothing to cheer him up; but I resolved to take up the struggle for Socialism.
During World War I

SINCE THE reunion, I met my old German friends several times. They introduced me to the diplomatic circles and the leaders, men and women, of the local German community. The Germans were not exclusive like the Anglo-Saxons. They mixed more freely in the Mexican society. Following the very good rule that every German who went to reside in a foreign country must learn the language, all of them in Mexico spoke Spanish, in addition to English.

One of them, whom I met and became quite friendly with, was a septuagenarian scholar who had lived more than twenty years in the Far East as professor of philology in a Japanese University. But his life mission was different. He had come to the Far East with the object of writing a dictionary in five languages—Chinese, Japanese, German, French and English. He had been working on (lie monumental work all those years and required many more years to finish it. He was heart-broken that his life's mission was interrupted by Japan joining the war on the side of the Entente Powers. The Germans were sure that Japan would be loyal to her spiritual ally. And even after Japan openly joined the wrong side, there remained some secret relation between the two natural allies.

However, Dr. Gramatsky (that was the name of the old philologist) was distressed and waited impatiently until the war was over to return to Japan and resume his work. Learning that I had been to the Far East, he enquired if I knew the languages. I justified my ignorance on the ground that Chinese was so difficult to learn. The old encyclopedist amazed me with the remark that it was the easiest language. Duly impressed by his linguistic talent, I asked him to teach me
German and French, which he did quite well, although I am a very indifferent linguist. Only Spanish I picked up in a few months well enough to deliver my first public lecture in the language and write my first book.

As he was experiencing difficulty in finding a suitable residence within his modest means, I invited the old doctor and his wife, not less than thirty years junior, to occupy a part of my house. The good lady was very helpful in running the household; but the old man got on my nerves before long. He was the typical Prussian professor, blatantly reactionary to the core. One day, he told me that I must be acquainted with the soul of Germanic culture, if I wanted to learn the language properly. And, he added, Indian culture was so very akin to the Germanic that I should be captivated by the spirit of the latter. I had not yet quite outgrown cultural nationalism, such as the Prussian professor's learned dissertation touched a sympathetic chord in my emotional make-up although that response of mine made me feel intellectually uncomfortable.

The next day, the doctor proposed that my German lesson would be my listening to a poem that he himself had composed—a poem which breathed the spirit of the Germanic culture. I enthusiastically welcomed the offer of such an interesting experience. It was an ode to the Kaiser and a passionate condemnation of the democratic world, which regarded him as a mortal man, to be pulled down from his proud imperial pedestal. I have forgotten the text; I did not care to keep a copy. But I remember the imagery of a gigantic shadow of the War Lord, a descendant of Charlemagne and the Ottos, cast on a blood-stained sandy waste. The other picture was that of an old man with blood-shot eyes and veins almost bursting out of his temples. I was frightened of having a case of apoplexy on my hands. But in the nick of time, the good lady appeared on the scene, took her husband away, put him in a bath tub and turned on the cold water tap. Later on I came to learn from experience that any criticism of the Kaiser and everything that he stood for excited the old man so much that nothing but an ice-cold bath could bring down the temperature of his boiling blood.
DURING WORLD WAR I

It was an ordeal to live in the same house with a pathological fanatic who might die of apoplexy any day. Nor could I throw the old man out in the street. As time passed and he came to know my sins against the tradition of Indo-German culture, we ceased to be on speaking terms. That impossible situation continued until the middle of 1919 when I met the first Russian Bolshevik. He had reached Mexico under strange circumstances, and was stranded. I had to come to his help, and asked the old German couple to quit, so that the stranded Bolshevik might be comfortably accommodated.

My contact with the other members of the German colony in Mexico was more educative and less painful. In the beginning I felt rather awkward to be lionised by society ladies who, I suppose, were doing their patriotic duty. But before long I succeeded in the attempt to hide my awkwardness in a strange surrounding with stiffness. It seems that this not very commendable behaviour continued to be my psychological armour for a long time. I realised that when recently I read a book by a British ex-communist whom I knew quite well when both of us were in Moscow in the early twenties. He describes me as the most arrogant man he ever met. I don't know if I deserve the compliment (the description in the book was derogatory); but it is true that I have always been rather stiff, if not arrogant. In the earlier days of my contact with modern ideas and modern culture, it was the expression of an inferiority complex. But in course of time, experience taught tolerance and modesty, which smoothened the angularities of a still immature personality.

The American wife of the Counsellor to the German Minister in Mexico took me under her protecting wings. They were a young couple who had met when he was Secretary at the German Embassy in Washington. Both were highly cultured, and their home was the meeting place of the social elite, Mexican as well as German. One day, the young couple, Freiken and Freifrau (Lord and Lady) von Schoen called to invite me to tea at their home. Though naturally flattered by the exceptional honour of being invited personally by the hostess, I was also intrigued. After all, I was not such an important person. However, I liked the German diplomat and
his American wife. The latter complained against the rudeness of the local Anglo-American society, which boycotted her for having married a German. The unfairness of it! She did not marry an enemy alien; they married before America joined the war; she could not divorce the man she loved because a German submarine had sunk an American ship! The Freiherr smiled happiness and looked thankfully at the flushed face of the handsome young woman. But presently he frowned slightly and bit his lip. Why did not the American Government join the war a few months earlier? She knocked the floor with her high heels as if to emphasise the point. Then she would not be so humiliated now. That was thoughtless indiscretion of the impetuous ex-American lady, which obviously pained her German husband.

I could not imagine why she poured out the sorrow of her heart to a stranger, who could not possibly help her, not even with appropriate words and gestures of consolation. For the moment, the situation was rather awkward. The young man was evidently feeling very uncomfortable. Suddenly she laughed, took her husband's arm and said: “I am taking revenge.” Then, turning towards me, “all good people of Mexico meet in our home. I want you to join.” A smile to make the invitation irresistible, and she walked out, a tall handsome figure; the Freiherr, not a very impressive looking man, shook my hand and followed. He carried, as I learned later, a gnawing feeling that the scene humiliated the Prussian aristocrat in the presence of a stranger.

The same afternoon, when I came to their home for tea, he availed of the first opportunity to apologize for the behaviour of his wife. I was surprised; there was nothing to apologize for; on the contrary, she did me honour by taking a stranger into confidence. That set the young diplomat at ease and he became positively lyrical about his wife. She was the most brilliant light of Washington society. She won that coveted position not as a heiress, but by her own charm and wit. Hers thus was an unusual social success in the American capital, where wealth was the measure of all values. Rich American heiresses thronged Washington society to find husbands among foreign diplomats belonging to the European aristocracy—to
purchase titles with dollars. But German culture, like the Indo-Aryan, was not materialistic! The cultured Prussian aristocrat would not sell the badge of his nobility. Nor was Miss so and so (he gave his wife's maiden name) to be attracted by the rank or title of a man. She was so very popular in Washington diplomatic circles that she could have married any Ambassador; of course, bachelor ones, he added hastily. "We fell in love and married."

The hostess surprised us in our retreat and admonished her husband for monopolising the wise man from the East. She was really very attractive. Notwithstanding the American breeziness, there was some distinction and dignity about her. She had been educated in one of America's famous Women's Colleges and evidently had not spent four years flirting on the campus. She had the intention of taking up a profession but most probably good looks won for her a more comfortable station in life. She was strikingly handsome. The German aristocrat could have sold his title for beauty as well as fortune. His preference spoke for him; he was certainly a man of refined taste and romantic idealism. The intolerance was not one-sided; the girl was actually suspected by the Germans as an American spy. She was really in a very difficult and humiliating position, as she had complained when they came to invite me. The Freihen stood his ground and compelled the suspicious German community to make amends to the injured girl who, thereafter, had little difficulty in winning the proud position of the queen of the colony.

With another temperamental outburst, she put me in a very awkward position. "I was naughty this morning," she said. "Please forgive me. . . ." She addressed her husband: "You know I love you." The dignified diplomat could hardly restrain the tears. For me it was a novel experience—to observe the demonstration of palpably sincere emotion. I was as yet too primitive to appreciate the experience. Now I can do that. The queen commanded, and we followed her to join the other guests.

It was there that I made the acquaintance of Maestro Casas, the Rector of the University, a jurist by profession, but temperamentally and by education a philosopher. An old boy of
the Sorbonne, he was naturally pro-ally and did not make any secret of his sympathy. Nevertheless, he was a part of the decoration of Freifrau von Schoen's salon. With a sublime disregard for the feelings of the company, the Francophil Maestro Casas used to expound Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* as not understandable for the German mind soaked in scholastic metaphysics. I was amazed to find men selling hardware or buying coffee crossing intellectual swords with a veteran academician.

A Spaniard who taught Spanish literature in the University also frequented the Freifrau's salon. Having joined the University to give finishing touches to my knowledge of Spanish, I was his pupil. One day, in the class, he read out parts of the epic poem narrating the legend of the Cid. It was an inspired declamation. The next time we met, I admired his performance as well as the legend of the Cid. He said something about the inspired wisdom of ancient India. Maestro Casas snapped; "It would do India no end of good if she set aside her mysticism and learned wisdom from Voltaire.” For the two professional intellectuals, it was just a duel of wits. For me it was the incentive to read Cervantes and Voltaire, until then mere names, the former not even known. The Cid was much too classical for my taste at the time.

The doyen of the German colony was a hardware merchant. He twitted the Francophil Maestro Casas: “but for the love of learning of the Prussian King Frederick the Great, the genius of Voltaire might not have been noticed.” Casas retorted that Sanssouci was a pale imitation of Versailles. Such conversations in the salon of the Freifrau aroused my curiosity about the cultural aspect of European history. It guided my steps to the *Biblioteca Nacional*. Every day I became more and more painfully conscious of how uneducated and ignorant I had been.

The wife of the rich German hardware merchant was an artist. She wanted to paint my portrait. When she explained what I should have to do to oblige her—to go to her place every morning for days and sit like a fool for a couple of hours daily, I asked why she wanted to take all the trouble. I meant, why she wanted to put me to ail the trouble. We had become
friends; but we would part company, sooner or later, perhaps never to meet again. She wanted to keep a memento. A photograph would do, I replied. She was evidently surprised by my ignorance of the difference between a photograph and a painted portrait; that the latter was a work of art. What is art? She explained briefly and promised to do so at length while she would be painting my portrait. I was again curious, and agreed to sit like a fool for a couple of hours for days. The idea of having my portrait painted by a nice rich lady, to be hung up in her salon, was flattering.

It was a pleasant surprise that she did not want me to sit still like a statue. On the contrary, she talked all the time she worked and tried to make me talk too. In a couple of days, the ice was broken, and I joined the conversation initiated by her. It was a discussion about art. My ideas scandalised her; but she concealed her reaction and took some pains to educate the boor lionised in the cultured German community.

The practical lesson began with music. Pablo Cazals was in Mexico. Would I like to go to his concert? I refused because music was an incoherent mass of noises for me. What did I think of vocal music? My opinion was not so drastic. Cazals' wife was a singer. I agreed to give her a trial. A woman standing rather stiffly in a conventional dress playing all manner of tricks with her voice made no appeal to me. But Cazals' performance on the cello made a hole in my armour of prejudice against music. Nevertheless, I resisted still for some time, until a Polish pianist gave me a practical lesson.

After some discussions, he told me: “Don't try to understand; music cannot be appreciated intellectually, not at first. It is felt.” He made me sit by him at the piano; stretched the fingers of both his hands on the key-board; looked dreamily at nothing. Before I knew what was happening, there was a terrific noise. I felt a wave of vibrations in my entire nervous system. The pianist was frantically shaking his locks, his fingers moving rapidly on the keys. Another bang with both hands, and he stopped, as if in a trance. Then looked at me and asked how did I feel. "Don't think—how do you feel? " My obstinacy gave way and I confessed the experience of a physical sensation. "That is music," he said triumphantly.
I was shaken; prejudice gave way to a predisposition. But I must understand why music was felt and not understood. The understanding came later.

Before the tea party dispersed, the hostess commanded me: “Come to dinner tomorrow.” Freiherr von Schoen came to confide that His Excellency the German Minister would be pleased to meet me; would I mind accepting the invitation to dinner? Of course not, I replied. It would be a pleasure to meet His Excellency. I was learning politeness. I was curious also. Were the Germans really serious about resuming the plan of purchasing arms in China?
Last Attempt to Purchase Arms in China

IN ADDITION to the Minister, the two old German friends were present at the dinner. Obviously, it was not a society function, but a business meeting under cover. As soon as we rose from the table, the hostess retired and Freiherr von Schoen conducted us to the smoking-room. All lighted cigars, I took a cigarette, and brandy was passed round. The Minister opened the conversation. How far had I progressed with the preparation for resuming the very important work unfortunately left unfinished in the Far East? I had contacted some Indian revolutionaries in the United States; some of them should proceed to China as soon as possible. I also intended to send a messenger to Japan with the object of enlisting Rash Behary's cooperation. One of the Indian revolutionaries was coming to see me in that connection.

The Minister then enquired if I had any contact with the Chinese revolutionaries, either in Mexico or the U.S.A. I had none. He offered to put me in touch with some who could be very useful. I accepted the offer thankfully, because I was doubtful about finding any suitable Indian. It was decided that a Chinese merchant would immediately leave for Japan with my letter to Rash Behary. But knowing almost for certain that the letter would not help, I wanted to find some means of directly contacting the people in Yunan. The Chinese merchant had old business relations in Indo-China; he could go as far as Yunan, if necessary.

But simultaneously, the Germans in China should be advised also to move in the matter. For that purpose, Dr. X (the colonial official) would go to the Far East, where he had numerous contacts. Should he contact my friend in Japan? I
was surprised. How could a German enter Japan during the war? I was reassured that there were ways for doing such things. Presumably, the gendeman would travel with a false passport as citizen of some other country. That was nothing new for me. However, the Minister took me into confidence with the revealing remark: “Japan is not our enemy.” By and by, I came to know more about the international intrigue. For the moment, it was decided that the Doctor should leave as soon as possible, and more funds be placed at my disposal to be used for sending other emissaries.

Since the days in Java, I had not found the Germans so ready to part with money. Whatever might be the motive of their generosity, I was confronted with a moral problem. Should I accept more money than I could spend for the purpose for which it was offered? I remembered my experience of the Germans making use of purchasable Indian revolutionaries. Dozens of them, mostly belonging to the Gadr Party had been sent by the Germans with a few pistols and a few hundred dollars each, to make some trouble in the Malaya States or on the Siam-Burma frontier, troubles which could be reported in the German press as revolts against British Imperialism to keep up the morale at home. Those Indian dupes of German intrigues went on their mercenary mission with the high hope that the Indian troops stationed on the outskirts of the British Empire would rise in revolt at the call of the Gadr Party issued from the safe distance of San Francisco. Most of them were arrested on the way and held as prisoners until the end of the War. The few bolder adventurers reached their destination, to be caught and hanged. In some cases, the soldiers who were expected to revolt, betrayed the revolutionary emissaries. That tragic story of the Indian dupes of German intrigue is still to be told. The finale was enacted in the San Francisco Court during the trial of the "Hindu-German Conspiracy Case.” Some of the Indian accused had been arrested in the Far East. One of them shot the leader of the Gadr Party dead in the dock to avenge for the death of so many dupes.

The memory of the callous behaviour of the Germans quietened my conscience. In China I had personally experienced that behaviour. They refused financial help when I could
purchase a large quantity of arms practically on the frontier of India. Why should I not provide for the future when the opportunity to do so might not again come my way? Moreover, I might make another serious attempt to carry out the plan, now that the Germans appeared to be ready to play their part. In that case, I should not place myself again completely at their mercy. It would be wise to provide myself with a sufficient fund before returning to China, if it came to that. The chance to do so was there, and it should not be missed. In India, we used to commit dacoities, often resulting in the murder of innocent people, in order to get money. The end justified the means: the money was to be spent to promote the cause of revolution and freedom. I was still pursuing the same cause. So, the decision was made.

Within a week, I had to hoard near about 50,000 pesos, all in gold coins. At that time, I lived in a house on the outskirts of the city. Beyond it, there were maize fields stretching to the foot of the snow-clad range—a distance of 15 to 20 miles. And Zapatistas roved on the wooded slopes and raided the outlying parts of the city from time to time. Nobody knew how many of the peons working in the maize fields constituted the reconnaissance patrols of the dreaded bandit chief. But I liked the house, because of its situation. The entire horizon from the south-east to the south-west was completely open, crowned with the magnificent 'Sleeping Woman,' her proud consort standing guard at a little distance.

However, the unexpected hoard, which kept on increasing, persuaded me to take some measures of precaution. I acquired a good rifle and a pair of Mauser pistols, and kept a dog—the splendid brown Alsatian who remains the most vivid part of my Mexican memories. His resounding bark used to echo in the open horizon. His imagination that other dogs were barking at him made him furious, and he barked all the more and louder. He slept on the floor by my bed just across the open door. I felt sure that the ferocious beast would tear to pieces any possible intruder. Standing on his hind legs, the paws rested on my breast and he could lick my face; and I was over six feet high. He was only a year old when he died of pneumonia, all of a sudden. No death ever gave me such a
painful feeling of irreparable loss. I never again kept a dog. The vet who treated him and took the carcass away offered to send me the cured fur. I could not bear the idea of having before me the picture of the death of my dearest friend, who was so very full of life.

The strangest acquisition was an iron safe which gave me more trouble than security. It was one of those new fangled gadgets with no key. It was to be opened by turning a small knob to make a certain combination of figures on a dial. The combination, called the key, could be changed as often as one wished. But the figures must not be written down; they had to be memorised. I could never remember numbers. One could imagine my predicament. I broke the rule; used to write down the key and change it every day. However, the embarrassment of riches did not last long. The cause of revolution was no longer in a far-off land. And I was relieved partially of the burden by some Indian revolutionaries who must have thought that a share in the loot legitimately belonged to them.

My first anxiety was to send news to comrades at home that I was still trying, and there was hope. As a token of the hope I wanted to send some money for the preparations there. I had lost contact. But Rash Behary claimed that he was in constant touch with the people in India. I decided to fall back on his co-operation. An equivalent of Rs. 20,000 was sent to him through the Chinese merchant introduced by the German Minister, with the request that he should arrange for its safe remittance to certain persons in India. The Germans assured me that the Chinese emissary had delivered the money, and proceeded to Indo-China on the way to contact the Yunan Governor. Years later, I came to know that the money never reached where it was meant to. I do not know even today what happened to it, nor do I care to.

Not relying entirely on the Chinese emissary, I approached some Indian revolutionaries in the U.S.A. One came to see me with the report that several members of the Gadr Party, who had previously lived in China, were prepared to go there with any mission allotted to them. I was doubtful about the revolutionary volunteers. Most probably, they wanted to get
away from the U.S.A., where they might be arrested. But the gentleman who came to see me could not go himself because he had made contacts in high places in Washington and was preparing a powerful pro-Indian movement in America. The best use of any money I might get from anywhere would be to finance his movement. He must keep a well-staffed office in Washington, give parties to Senators and diplomats, spend on publicity, and himself tour extensively.

As the money at my disposal was meant for a particular purpose, I could not use it for his movement about the importance of which I was frankly sceptical. He was furious and threatened to write to India exposing my treachery. He was not one of the old emigres. I had known him in India. Later on, he went to America for studies, and there played high politics under the influence of Agnes Smedley. She was an anarchist of the Bohemian type when I met her in New York, and got interested in India when working as Lajpat Rai's secretary.

Since the young man was not prepared to do anything in connection with our plan, I suggested that he should stay in Mexico. No, he must return to his work at the American metropolis, but would travel via San Francisco and send to China the two people ready for the mission. He took two thousand dollars along for their journey. From the first American frontier station he wrote to me an extremely abusive letter, and proceeded directly to his destination. The two men in San Francisco never went on their revolutionary mission.

The eagerly expected great event happened: the Kaiser's Privy Councillor arrived on his secret mission. I met him after a few days—a new type of German, intellectual and civilian. All Germans I had met until then, whatever might be their station in life, bore themselves more or less militarily, most probably because of their compulsory military training in youth. This high German official could easily pass as a cultured Englishman—of the Oxford don type. There was nothing ostentatious about him. Naturally, from the very beginning, I felt very much at home in his company. His behaviour was free from the slightest touch of patronising benevolence, which had so often rubbed me on the wrong side.
In our first meeting, there was no business talk. Most of the time, he spoke about the situation in Germany, without the usual German bravado. It was not easy to fight single-handed against the whole world. He made some deprecating remarks about Germany's allies. America's coming in might have tipped the scale against Germany, but for the development on the eastern front, which had practically collapsed after the February Revolution in Russia. Kerensky's effort to rally the demoralised army would fail; the peace propaganda of the Bolshevik leader, Lenin, was disintegrating the army. Germany must now strike eastwards, literally according to Bismarck's dictum. There would be no resistance to the German army reaching the Caucasus; it was already in the Ukraine. Then a push ahead to defeat the British in India. He spoke in a low voice without being in the least agitated by the picture of the conquering army of a modern Alexander, which evidently was before his mind's eyes.

Turning towards me with a twinkle in his half-closed eyes, he said: “The Imperial General Staff is bound to have a lively interest in your plan.” Before I could make any remark, he switched off to speak as if to himself: “In order to hold the western front yet for a time, we must attack America in the rear. Mexico must be the base of operation. President Carranza must be incited and helped to lead a Latin American revolt against the Monroe doctrine. In the U.S.A. and Canada, we must organise extensive sabotage.”

Having agreed to meet again on an appointed day, we dispersed. It became at last clear to me why in Mexico the Germans were behaving so very differently. Some serious trouble in India could be fitted into their grand strategy for winning the war in Europe. It was like the drowning man catching at a straw. I had lost the mystic Indo-Aryan faith in the invincibility of Germany. Nevertheless, the feeling of participating in international intrigues was exhilarating. I must choose the scene of my activity. The idea of helping the formation of a Latin American Union against Yankee Imperialism was attractive. That might present an opportunity for impressing upon the Latin American governments, beginning with the Mexican, the advantage of introducing certain
measures of reform to consolidate their position with the active support of the masses. The result of propaganda on that line, initiated in Mexico, was that the talk of Socialism became fashionable throughout Latin America. Until then, the leftist movement in those countries was anarcho-syndicalist. It did not attach any importance to national sovereignty. Therefore, it was indifferent to any resistance to American intervention, overt or covert, political or economic. What was there to choose between two capitalist governments? The indifference of the masses weakened any resistance to foreign aggression or peaceful penetration. The widespread talk of Socialism in high circles indicated the growth of a consciousness of the necessity of drawing the masses in the political life of the country. I don't know if that was a service or a disservice to my newly espoused cause; but I cannot disown a measure of responsibility in that connection.

However, the decision about my immediate future was made in the next meeting with the German friends. Again the initiative of the conversation was taken by the Geheimrat in his characteristically quiet and unostentatious manner. The plan of purchasing arms in China could not be delayed. More than a year had passed since the contract was made. There would be no difficulty in raising the necessary funds. Admiral von Hintze (who was German Ambassador in China when I was there) had returned to Berlin as the Foreign Minister. He would immediately send directions to his successor in Peking to sell a part of the frozen assets of the Deutsche Ostasiatische (German East-Asiatic) Bank. But I must be present on the spot before anything could be done. Herr Kapitaen Z. (one of my friends from Java), as representative of the Imperial General Staff, would also return to the Far East to be at my service. For preliminary expenses, till the entire fund needed for the arms deal was raised, fifty thousand dollars would be placed at my disposal before I started on the journey, which would be risky. This last remark was made by the Geheimrat with palpable concern. But the prospect of a new adventure appealed to me..

The third and last meeting with him, after a few days, launched me on the next stage of my political career. There
was an official banquet at the Legation. My presence on such an occasion would be inexplicable. But I received a mysterious note from Baroness von Schoen. She would call on me somewhat later in the evening to conduct me personally to an important rendezvous. I was more surprised when she came at the appointed time, alone. As if having anticipated my surprise, she said flippantly, as soon as the doors shut behind her: “Don't look like a scared rabbit; I am neither an American spy nor do I want you to elope with me.” Then she regained seriousness, and asked me to hurry up. She was taking me to the Legation. I should not mind the absence of a formal invitation. I was going there as a special guest. " You can imagine that much from the selection of the escort," she added banteringly,

A luxurious limousine stopped at a side-door of the Legation and we were in a brilliantly lighted room in a second. It was all so much like a detective story. Before I could recover from the surprise of the experience, the Geheimrat walked in. He profusely thanked my illustrious escort for her services. She retorted: “Dismissal! Well, I go to join the dance.” Without any exchange of words, the Geheimrat held my arm and said that he wanted to introduce me to the President. In the Meanwhile, we had crossed a corridor and an imposing door opened before us. We entered a huge room, extremely well furnished. A very dignified looking gentleman with a rather longish grey beard in an immaculate evening suit stood up as we approached him. His Excellency General Don Venustiano Carranza, President of the Republic of Mexico. It was all too sudden for me to choose the proper words for the occasion. The President extended his hand, and in a deep pleasant voice wished me 'Good Evening ' using the Spanish expression Buenos Noches. The Minister of War had spoken to the President about me; so also had la Senorita X (La Mujer Moderna). The President of the Republic was glad that I wished to live in the country for some time, and reassured me that anybody with sympathy and goodwill for the Mexican people would be made to feel quite at home. I was very thankful, and had by then collected my wits to say so in appropriate words.

It was the Geheimrat's turn to speak. His Excellency had been duly informed of my mission, and kindly promised that
I would receive all necessary facilities for the journey. In case I returned to Mexico, His Excellency would graciously accept my services in connection with the activities of the projected Latin American Union.

Once again the President shook my hand, wished me 'Good Night' and 'Good Luck.' Out on the corridor, the Geheimrat said: “Let us also say 'Good-bye' here. I am leaving tomorrow, via Argentina. I wish you all success.”
FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH BANDITS

UNKNOWN AND UNSEEN friends helped the elaborate preparations for an adventurous journey back to China in quest of arms. I had rather mixed feelings: the heart was not in the adventure; it was undertaken under the force of habit, but the conviction was lacking. I no longer believed in the mission which had appealed to the imagination of a youthful revolutionary, and sent him chasing chimeras for a year and a half. But the pull of the new vision of freedom was not yet strong enough to resist atavism. Nevertheless, one decision was made: If I succeeded in the new adventure, comrades at home would not only have the arms, but a new vision of freedom to fight for. I did not stop to think if the new vision would appeal to them. Why not? We all shared the same vague desire to uplift the poor and the down-trodden. Bankim Chaterji's Anand Math was our common source of inspiration. Therein we found our revolutionary ideal. As a matter of fact, we had distributed amongst ourselves the roles of the prominent figures of that drama. They were Sanyasins. We had taken the vow to follow in their footsteps. The imagination of establishing our Anand Math somewhere in the upper reaches of the Brahmaputra Valley, winning over the people with our ideals, arming them and then advancing further into the country at the head of an invincible army of liberation—all this made me feel that, if my mission succeeded, I would return to India not only with arms, but a new idea of revolution.

In order to avoid my travelling through the U.S.A., it was to be a sea-voyage. Once a month, Japanese ships of the South-American Line carrying upper-class passengers touched some Mexican port on the Pacific. I must catch one of them.
Yet another precaution was to be taken. As a rule, those ships touched San Francisco also; but occasionally, some did not. One of those latter must be chosen. There would be no difficulty about landing and even staying in Japan because I was armed with a semi-diplomatic Mexican passport and a letter of introduction to the Mexican Consul-General in Yokohama. He was to help me in financial transactions through a Japanese bank. The difficulty was to reach the nearest Mexican port on the Pacific. The last stretch of the railway to Manzanillo passed through a mountainous country infested with bandits. There was no regular train service. Other Pacific ports were more inaccessible. And it was not certain that the ship I was to catch would touch the small port of Manzanillo. It might, to take a cargo of tobacco, which grew profusely in the surrounding country.

The first part of the journey to the Pacific coast—the major part was comparatively safe, although the railway ran through Zapatista territories. However, Guadajara was the most important city on the Pacific slope; a regular train service was maintained. A passenger train under military escort ran daily from the capital to Guadajara. The distance was not very big; trains leaving early in the morning could reach their destination while it was still daylight, if nothing serious happened on the way. For me, the first stretch of the journey was uneventful. The country was of barbaric magnificence, ideal for guerilla operations. No wonder that the Zapatistas could not be dislodged from their hideouts in those thickly wooded high mountain ranges.

Our train reached Guadajara soon after dusk. I had been advised where to go. It was the best hotel of the western capital, as the city was called. I was in the heart of Mexico. During the previous years of revolution and civil war, few foreigners had ventured so far inside the turbulent country. A magnificent cathedral was the only remaining monument of the Spanish rule. Even the blood of the conquistadores had disappeared. The colonial aristocracy had run away from the dangers of the civil war. The neighbourhood was a fruit-growing country—the orchard of Mexico. The streets of the city were lined with huge heaps of mangoes, which grew wild
in the forests, oranges, zopotes—all kinds of fruit, which may not be known outside Mexico.

It was lucky that Guadaljara was such a pleasant place. I had to stop there for several days. The next stage of the journey was to be in a military convoy. The chief of the local garrison had previous instructions to send me on as early as possible. He told me that convoys went out, as a rule, to clear the line of guerilla bands; in other words, for actual fighting. I might travel more peacefully. The distance was short; ordinarily, four to six hours’ run. His plan was to rush me through immediately after one regular convoy had cleared the line. I must, therefore, be ready to start at a moment's notice, any time, maybe in the small hours of the night. That happened to be the case.

We left soon after midnight. It was hardly a train—two bogies pulled by an engine, one of them full of soldiers. Two convoys had been sent on that day, the first went through “without any encounter; the second was attacked, but the assailants were beaten off. It was expected that they won't return so soon, and the respite was to be availed of for our little party to dash through. But the condition of the track being uncertain (it ran along steep mountain slopes), the train had to go very slow—not more than 15 to 20 miles an hour. Lights were turned out and all glass windows let down. Splinters flying from them crashed by bullets were more dangerous than the latter themselves. Of course, none could sleep. The order of the convoy commandant was that all in our bogie should crouch on the floor on hearing any gunshots outside. We all were armed with Mauser pistols to be used in the eventuality of the bandits actually boarding the train. Until that last moment the soldiers in the accompanying bogie were to deal with the assailants.

The day was breaking in the eastern horizon; in another two or three hours we should reach our destination. Suddenly, the stillness of dawn was disturbed by reports of gunshots. The train pulled up with a sharp jerk; the soldiers jumped down their bogie and lined up on both sides of ours with their guns levelled. I cocked my Mauser and rested the muzzle on the window. The commandant shouted an order, and volleys
were fired at the wooded slopes on either side. There was no reply. We waited silently for the enemy's next move. Nothing happened; they seemed to have moved away. Meanwhile, the half-light of the dawn had given way to the brightness of the day. The Pacific was visible ahead of us to the West. The train started trundling downhill, and in a couple of hours reached Manzanillo.

It was a small, practically deserted port, hot in the day time, being in the tropics. Except for a number of fishing boats, there was no waterfront activity. Ocean-going vessels seldom called except those of the weekly coastal service between the South-California port of San Diego to Panama. A ship of the Japanese South-American line was expected to call to pick up a large cargo of tobacco; but none was sure. A couple of days later, the southbound coaster was due. Travelling on it, one could catch the Japanese ship at Salina Cruz, another Mexican port about 300 miles to the South. Instead of waiting indefinitely at Manzanillo with no certainty of the Japanese ship calling there at all, I decided to catch it at Salina Cruz.

The voyage along the coast in a fairly big American ship was enjoyable. There were only a few passengers. On the second day, the ship called for several hours at Acapulco. It is one of the finest natural harbours of the world—a large deep bay, surrounded almost on all sides by high mountains. Confronting the narrow entrance to the harbour, there stands high up on the mountain a big white church. It is quite a distance from the port, and the neighbouring hillside is not populated. Who goes to that lonely church to pray? Very few, if any now. Once upon a time, it was a cloister meant for nuns condemned to do penance for their pecadillos. It was closed down by the Juaristas in the 'sixties of the last century, and several hundred fallen angels were set free.

Salina Cruz is a small but important port. From there, a railway line runs across the narrow strip of land, the Isthmus of Tehuantapec, between the Pacific Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico. The distance is hardly more than a hundred miles, approximately the same as the breadth of the Isthmus of Panama. Originally, the Isthmus of Tehuantapec was selected
as the site for the Atlantic-Pacific waterway. But for political reasons, the original plan was abandoned and the Isthmus further to the South was chosen. The Mexican Government was not prepared to compromise its sovereignty. Subsequently, a Japanese company approached the Mexican Government for the concession to build a parallel canal across Tehuantapec. Presumably, pressure from Washington frustrated the plan.

Although the narrow hinterland is the most fertile, covered with rank tropical vegetation and inhabited by the handsomest stock of natives, the seaboard is a sandy waste swept day and night by a strong wind blowing across the Isthmus. I was the only person to land there from that particular ship, which left southwards after a few hours’ stop at the little port. On enquiry, I discovered that there was no news about the arrival of the Japanese ship. I must wait indefinitely in a small hotel surrounded by sand dunes. The nights in a place right on the endless watery expanse of the Pacific were very pleasant; but the wind howled throughout the day, raising clouds of dust and tiny gravel, which rattled on the tin roof and beat against the windows.

The hotel-keeper apologetically explained that Salina Cruz had not always been such a deserted, almost haunted place. In good old Diaz days, the transcontinental traffic on the Tehuantapec railway almost rivalled the Panama Canal. But now it was extremely difficult to run one train daily both ways. Until a year or so ago even that much was not possible. Miles of the track had been torn up in many places by bandits. Though the country was pacified to a great extent, the thickly wooded hill tops as well as the deep ravines afforded admirable hideouts to bandits still holding out, obviously with the aid and connivance of the handsome mild-mannered but proud Tehuanans.

After I had waited for several days, news came that the expected ship was not calling at Salina Cruz, carrying a full load from Chile; she had left Pana directly from Honolulu. The next sailing was due after a mouth. To wait that long was out of the question. The alternative was to take the south-bound boat due in a week or so, go all the way to Valparaiso and return on the same. That was a fantastic idea. It was an
annoying and disappointing experience; but it was also a relief. It suddenly dawned on me that I really did not want to go again on the wild-goose chase. Mexico called me back; there I had made new friends, found new interests and planned to begin a new political career. On the other hand, the way back to old adventures was practically closed. The difficulties of going ahead and the predisposition to return contributed to the resolution to go back. The hazardous train journey across beautiful Tehuantepc must be undertaken.

The distance was about a hundred miles covered in daylight. A train ran daily, of course under escort. The accommodation was easily obtained. It was a long train, mostly composed of goods wagons with two bogies for passengers hitched on to the tail end. The reversed arrangement was due to the fact that, more concerned with booty than blood-letting, the bandits attacked with the object of cutting off the goods wagons if these were at the end of the train. About the middle of the day, the train was running along a deep ravine almost hidden under a forest of huge trees with thick foliage. Suddenly, there were gunshots ahead. The train pulled up. The escort was chasing a group of bandits lying in ambush to attack the train. It was a minor affair, which did not last more than half an hour. Our train moved on and presently we were regaled with the gruesome spectacle of nine freshly killed human bodies dangling from trees and telegraph poles.

In a short while, the train reached a biggish station—the administrative and trade centre of the neighbourhood. Peace and order reigned. The platform was crowded with fruit-vendors mostly belonging to the fair sex, picturesquely dressed, strikingly handsome women—tall, erect, with finely chiselled faces. The men also were worthy matches. A remarkable looking stock, but dying. The Tehuanans are endogamous—too proud to mix their blood with inferior types. Nature punishes such exclusiveness. Inbreeding reduces the birth-rate, and the particular group dies off eventually. I thought it was a pity that the shadow of death should be cast over the beauty of the Tehuanans.

Puerto Mexico, the terminus at the other end, was a striking contrast to Salina Cruz. It was a crowded seaport at the mouth
of the river flowing from the mountainous marshes of Chiapas. Countryboats loaded with bananas and pineapples came down the stream to be sold to the wholesalers at the port, and from there shipped to Veracruz or the Gulf ports of the U.S.A. The distance to Veracruz was very short—about sixty miles; but there was no railway connection. One must travel in one of those Mexican ships which carried fruits. Hearing that one was leaving late that very evening, I rushed to catch it, and succeeded in getting on board a small dirty craft, its hold overloaded with bananas and the deck, only a couple of feet above the water level, equally overcrowded with human beings, domestic animals including birds in cages. Being a first-class passenger, I managed to obtain a rather unstable deck chair, with repulsively grim canvas. I was soon surrounded by mountains of passengers' luggage of all assortments—boxes, bundles, baskets. A dog crouched near my feet, and a parrot screeched over my head. But I cheered up my drooping spirits with the thought that next morning the ordeal would be over, and as soon as the boat cast off, the stench and stuffiness would be blown off by the fresh sea breeze.

Near about midnight (punctuality is not a Mexican vice), the superannuated engine of the aoo-ton ship squeaked and panted. She was off, giving her heavy load a good shake-up. In an hour or so, she ran into a storm which threatened to be a gale. Small, unreliable boats like that did not venture far out in the sea. But the fear of being dashed against the beach by the heavy sea induced the skipper to keep as far away as he dared. The storm grew stronger; the dim kerosene lamps on the deck were blown out. We were all plunged in darkness, relieved from time to time by the phosphorescent crests of the high waves tossing the tiny craft. Women shrieked with fear, men cursed, the dog by my side barked. It was a veritable pandemonium. Waves rolled over the deck. Seasickness became epidemic, which did not spare even the dog and the parrot. I expected the miserable tug to turn turtle any moment. The anxiety seemed to immunise me against the epidemic. (I have always been a good sailor. Even the notorious China Sea did not upset my stomach. Only once, I was sea-sick—on the Mediterranean, which was then like a
heet of green glass), I did not know how long the ordeal lasted. Quietness, except for the roar of the still raging sea and the shrill whistle of the storm, descended on the deck—not of death, but of exhaustion. Suddenly, the eastern sky brightened, and the huge red disk of the sun rose out of the sea. The storm had gone down, although the sea was still heavy. The frail craft had weathered the storm for six hours— incredible!

Day-light woke up the passengers; they had fallen asleep out of exhaustion. They began to count themselves and their belongings. No passenger was missing; but a good part of the luggage had been washed away. How soon should we reach Veracruz? The skipper did not know. He seemed to have drifted too far out. However, the sun gave him the direction. About mid-day, he discovered that the storm had driven our boat quite a distance beyond Veracruz. She was turned backwards, and reached Veracruz late in the afternoon.

That was my first visit to the principal port of Mexico. But I had had enough of sight-seeing, and loved to be back to civilisation as soon as possible. It was too late to catch the train that evening. I went to a hotel, a very good one, of the international standard; had a bath and a good meal and sound sleep in a clean comfortable bed. In the morning, I went about to take a look over the town, where I returned several times later on.

The railway line from Veracruz to the capital was safe. Trains ran regularly and according to time-table. Except the One across the Andes, from Argentina to Chile, the Veracruz-Mexico City line is said to be the most beautiful in the world. From the sea-level it rises to the altitude of 8,000 feet; running latitudinally, it begins in the tropics and ends at the feet of eternally snow-capped mountains. Travelling by the night train, one cannot see much of the scenery. But when I woke up, the train had reached the Mexican plateau; the Smoking Mountain was standing guard, as he had done at the time of the Aztecs, and the White Woman sleeping. I was glad. It was like homecoming.
DURING MY absence, several Indian revolutionaries had come to Mexico from different places in the U.S.A. Evidently, the young gentleman, who made off with a couple of thousand dollars and threatened to expose me in return, had caused it to be known that I had acquired a gold mine. The new-comers had duly reported themselves at the German Consulate which, however, would do nothing for them. I returned to face a number of irate revolutionaries, who thought that I had cheated them by running away with the loot. They were placated by a weekly allowance of some gold bricks each, as the 20 peso pieces came to be known amongst ourselves.

One of them, however, was not content with such a modest share in the loot. He had been himself for a time the representative of the Berlin Revolutionary Committee in America and the Far East. He volunteered to go to Japan, where he claimed to have influential contacts with whose help he would do anything to be done in China. He went over my head and made the proposal to the Germans. They referred him back to me, because all connected with the plan had left Mexico. In order to put a stop to his busy-bodying and finally to turn my back on the past, I agreed to his going to Japan. How much money did he want? That was, of course, the crucial question. His demand was fantastic. I offered him ten thousand dollars, and promised to remit more when he reached Japan. The amount offered was much more than he needed for the trip. So, he was cornered and had to accept. His plan was to travel through the U.S.A., where he claimed to have friends to help. After a couple of weeks of his departure, I received a letter from him. He had returned to Mexico and warned the Germans that I
was cheating them. I wondered who was cheating whom! AnyWay, all my German friends had gone from Mexico, I could cheat no more, and would not be cheated either.

One of the Indians who had come to Mexico was a lovable fellow. He was not a professional revolutionary, but had got mixed up with the crowd socially. He was a good mechanic, and as such earned a handsome wage at the Ford Factory. He had little patience for politics and thought that the Mexicans were fools. Nor did he sympathise with my new ideas. Socialism was senseless for a skilled worker who had earned five dollars a day. But he was lazy and reluctant to risk a return to his lucrative job at Detroit. Being thoroughly apolitical, he could be of no use to me. Nevertheless, he stayed on, and I paid him ungrudgingly several gold bricks week after week. On his part, he was satisfied to play the businessman on leave.

The failure of my last attempt to carry out the mission with which I had left India two and a half years ago definitely closed that chapter of my political career. Convinced that I could do nothing for the liberation of India in the near future, I resolved to apply myself wholeheartedly to the new fields of revolutionary activities which promised satisfaction, if not immediate success.

I recollected my conversation with the socialist leaders with reference to their attitude towards a possible American intervention in consequence of the conflict over the nationalisation clause of the Mexican Constitution. That issue should be the point of departure of activities which would, on the one hand, make of Socialism an effective political force and, on the other, strengthen national resistance to any possible foreign intervention. It could be imagined further how, on the basis of such an internal relation offerees in each country, the projected Latin American Union could be a powerful international instrument of mutual co-operation and common resistance to the overlord-ship of the northern colossus.

Recurring revolutions and perennial civil war were the curse for practically all the Latin American Republics. The revolutions mostly were military insurrections against established governments disliked by foreign interests firmly entrenched in
the economy of the country. Civil war naturally followed such artificially engineered revolutions, and themselves in most cases degenerated into banditry, as the dispute was not over any political principle or social programme. Only professional soldiers and a handful of political intriguers could be actively interested in such ruinous adventures. Ignorance, poverty and destitution compelled the rural population to provide the soldiers of fortune with a steady supply of cannon-fodder.

But education and a high level of culture made the urban middle class disgusted with the prevailing state of affairs, and consequently it kept aloof from military insurrections and political intrigues. Under these circumstances, the relatively small class of industrial workers were influenced by anarcho-syndicalism, which taught them to distrust politics and politicians, and eschew political action. Yet, it was obvious that a greater sense of social responsibility and a broader revolutionary vision respectively, on the part of the urban middle-class and the industrial workers were the conditions for a healthier national life, and also for a greater resistance to aggressiveness and intrigues of foreign interests. Fortuitous combinations of circumstances had placed me in a position to help create the conditions for the establishment of political liberty and social justice in the country where I happened to be.

The new field of activity chosen, and its pattern visualised, I resolved to go ahead with no regret for the failure of my earlier mission, no wistfulness about a sterile past. I must see the President as soon as possible. Since my recent adventurous journey was undertaken not only with his knowledge, but tacitly under the protection of his Government, it could be presumed that he was already informed of my return. However, in the absence of the German intermediary, I must now directly seek an interview with the President. The good services of *La Mujer Moderna* could be easily enlisted. The editor of *El Pueblo* could also be relied upon for help in this connection. Meanwhile, I should resume contact with the socialist leaders and have a serious discussion with them about the ways and means of promoting the cause of Social Revolution under the given circumstances. I called on Santibanez, and at his place met a couple of young American Radicals.
Hundreds of pacifists, anarcho-syndicalists, socialists of all shades, had escaped to Mexico in order to evade compulsory military service, which was introduced soon after America joined the war. They were derogatorily called the *slackers*. According to their respective persuasion and predisposition, some wanted to join the Zapatistas, others to go to the E! Dorado of Yucatan, and the rest to try their luck anywhere. Most of the Radical refugees, however, ultimately drifted towards the capital and congregated there.

Apart from their more or less approximating political creeds and social ideals, the left-wing journalism, art and literature of America were fairly well represented in the ranks of the refugees. There were, for example, Maurice Baker, poet and cartoonist, Irwin Granwich, novelist (subsequently known as Michael Gold), Henry GHntenkamp, painter and cartoonist, Carl Beals, journalist, who later gained some reputation as the author of books on Mexico and Spain. The first three, together with other minor lights amongst the *slackers*, had been regular contributors to the Radical literary and art journal *The Masses*, edited by Max Eastman; and they all belonged to the Greenwich Village group -- the Bohemia of New York.

One of the two I met in the socialist leader's place was Charlie Philips, who had recently attained some notoriety for organising pacifist demonstrations in the campus of Columbia University. He was arrested together with a fellow student, daughter of a senior professor. Both ran away and reached safety in Mexico. In the midst of all that excitement, they married. Charlie was a boisterous young man, quite up to his reputation. He had heard about me already in New York, and was mighty glad to meet. I must meet the other guys also, and of course Elinore. We became friends, Charlie and I. He outgrew his pacifism, and became a passionate advocate of class struggle, although in the process of political evolution, he lost Elinore—physically, if not her affection, as he claimed perhaps as an anodyne for a bruised heart. He attended the Second World Congress of the Communist International as my fellow-delegate from Mexico, and later on when Manuel Gomez became a prominent member of the Communist Party of the U.S.A.
The same evening, on Charlie's invitation, I met the other gentlemen in a restaurant. Irwin Granwich, Maurice Baker and Henry Glintenkamp were there, and of course, Elinore who played the hostess. Charlie's campus chumminess verged on vulgarity, which jarred my still lingering puritan austerity. The distinctive personality of the hostess was accentuated by her singularly deep voice, almost a bass. Noticing that I was impressed by it, Charlie proclaimed that he fell in love with EUnore's voice first and then with herself. No doubt that it was the remarkable voice which drew one's attention to her, but there was more behind it. She was quiet and cultured, with no particular penchant for politics. Charlie was her preoccupation, and he did not deserve it. She left him before long; he was terribly cut up; and she did not choose a better man either.

It was Irwin Granwich who impressed me most in the first evening of my acquaintance with the followers of American Radicalism. As a poor Jewish child, he had grown up in the ghetto of the East-side of New York. Embittered by the experience of early life, he was attracted by the destructive creed of anarcho-syndicalism, represented in the U.S.A. by the I.W.W. (Industrial Workers of the World, popularly known as the Wobblies). Still in the middle 'twenties, he had already won some reputation as a revolutionary novelist. His ambition was to produce a literary masterpiece of the order of Gorky's 'Night Lodging' depicting the life as lived in the slums of New York. With all his affected bitterness and cynicism, he was possessed of a tolerant temperament and a generally attractive personality. From the very first day of our meeting, I liked him immensely, and he seemed to reciprocate the sentiment. So we became friends to the extent that I once narrated to him an episode of my early youth in India on the basis of which he wrote a short story to be published in an American literary magazine as our joint work.

Maurice Baker was equally likable. Notwithstanding their Bohemian woolliness, his political ideas tended towards left-wing Socialism. Glintenkamp was the only gentile of any distinction amongst the slackers, most of them being of European Jewish parentage. As the name indicated, he was of Dutch descent and as such had no plebeian blood in his veins.
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Most of the time on the first evening of our Bohemian party, he paid court to Elinore, the other gentile in the community of Jewish slackers. Blood proved thicker than the water of youthful love, and eventually she deserted Charlie for Henry, initially for the scientific purpose of a sex experiment, which turned out to be very positive.

It was an Italian restaurant where we met for dinner. The food was good; but I surprised the company by refusing to drink the dark red beverage poured out of a fat-bellied bottle neatly dressed in a tight-fitting straw jacket. Irwin regretfully appropriated my share of the drink and was delightfully inebriated. He insisted on the distinction between his cheerful state and drunkenness. I saw the point, and the remaining armour of my threadbare puritanism fell off, quietly, not with a bang. I did not drink that evening, but promised to get over my prejudice in course of time.

Before we dispersed Charlie gave us an interesting piece of news. Some Mexican General (he did not know the name) was planning to start a daily paper which would have an English section, and was looking out for an editor. As a Mexican capable of editing the English section of a daily newspaper was not to be easily found, and no respectable American or Englishman, would take a job under a native, it had been offered to Charlie. Should he accept it? Financially, it was a windfall, because the fraternity of the Radical Slackers was on the verge of starvation. I told them that for daily bread they should not compromise conviction; nor was any of them inclined to do that, anyway. It was agreed that we must find out who was starting the newspaper, and with what purpose.

When we met again a few days later, information, gathered in the meantime, was pooled. It was General Alvarado who was starting the paper to enlist support for him as the next President of the Republic. The appeal would be based on his record in Yucatan. Therefore, the tone of the paper would be socialistic. But having regard to the fact that American influence was the decisive factor in the political life of Mexico, General Alvarado was anxious to enlist American support for his ambition. American opinion about Mexico was formed very largely by the Americans actually living there. The object
of the English section of the projected daily was to enlist the sympathy and support of the American colony in Mexico for General Alvarado's candidature for the presidency of the Republic. The general feeling was that the responsibility of editing such a paper could not be consistent with the conviction of Radicals opposed to American Plutocracy. But I pointed out that its English section could not contradict the socialist tone of the paper, and that consideration would vouchsafe a latitude of freedom for the editor of the English section. However, it might be useful to ascertain what the ambitious General really wanted, and I undertook the task of doing that. Meanwhile, Charlie should accept the job, on the understanding that it would be done collectively by a purposeful small group of Radicals, including myself.

Soon after my melodramatic interview with the Minister of War, General Alvarado had come to the capital as expected, and I met him on that occasion. On my mentioning that Dr. Jordan's letter of introduction had been taken by his chief and not returned, the socialist General laughed heartily. The Commander-in-Chief was curious about his subordinate's connection in the U.S.A., and was satisfied that the letter I carried did not expose any compromising relations. On the contrary, it was a recommendation for General Alvarado as well as for myself. Thanks to their creed, the pacifists must be opposed to American intervention in Mexico, and therefore, must be recognised as friends of the latter. Later on, I gathered from other sources that General Alvarado's loyalty to the Carranza regime was suspected because his aspiration for the presidency was known. In Mexico, political intrigues were publicly talked about.

In the meantime, a stronger candidate for presidency had appeared on the scene in the person of General Obregon. His having enlisted American patronage was another open secret. He was pro-Ally—the only exception amongst leading Mexican politicians. He actually headed an armed insurrection and overthrew Carranza in 1920. General Alvarado therefore looked upon him as his rival. He would publish a daily newspaper with the purpose of fighting him. The line of attack would be denunciation of militarism and a plea for an early
return to civil administration. In other words, *El Heralds de Mexico*, as the projected daily was to be called, would be an organ of liberal democratic opinion. That much I gathered from the editor of *El Pueblo*. He even hinted that as an instrument to fight General Obregón, the new daily could count upon presidential patronage. His advice was to let the English section of the new daily inform American public opinion about the true nature of Mexico's problem.

The position was clear enough; on my report and recommendation, the shadow cabinet of the fraternity of Radical Slackers agreed to Charlie's accepting the appointment definitely. I undertook to write a series of articles on the "Monroe Doctrine." Collective work of a number of talented men, the English section of *El Heraldo* made an impression from the beginning. It carried clever cartoons, poems and short stories, which had a general appeal. Political views expressed in the Editorials initially pacifist and then more radical, went down as sugar-coated bitter pills. Charlie's aggressive chummi-ness proved to be irresistible for the Chief Editor, a man of the General's confidence, who in the beginning tried to be forbidding and officious. Before long, the English section set the tone of the main paper, and *El Heraldo* came to be an organ of Radical opinion.
TOWARDS THE END of 1917, Mexico's relation with her powerful northern neighbour became very strained. The visit of the Kaiser's secret emissary had reinforced German influence. A powerful radio station, newly built with German help, maintained a close contact between Berlin and the New World. Mexico City became not only the centre of German propaganda, but attempts at large-scale strategic sabotage in the U.S.A. and Canada were also directed from there. To counteract German influence, American pressure increased. Press propaganda against the Carranza regime was intensified. Though still in the throes of a civil war, there was an incredibly large measure of freedom of the press. Leading daily newspapers, obviously subsidised by interested foreign powers, carried on a campaign against President Carranza. The neutrality of his government was condemned as pro-German, and day after day Mexican democracy was incited to repudiate the policy and take the honourable place on the side of the Entente Powers. The pro-ally press was led by an Italian journalist (naturalised Mexican citizen), backed up by General Obregón's hardly concealed preparations for an armed revolt against the Carranza regime.

The conflict between Mexico and the U.S.A. came to a head on the crucial issue of the nationalisation clause of the Constitution. The Mexican Government contended that the new Constitution had nullified the legal validity of the concessions previously granted to foreign concerns as regards the exploitation of mineral deposits, particularly petroleum. The latter raised the bogey of confiscation, and challenged the
legality of the Constitution; in other words the sovereignty of
the Mexican people. But the Mexican government was prepared for a
compromise, on the basis of the common agreement that the
concessions granted under the Diaz regime had lapsed on the
promulgation of a new Constitution, the Mexican Government would
issue new leases to the old foreign concerns. The latter refused to
agree. Thereupon, the Mexican Government threatened to prohibit
export of petroleum on the ground that it was State property. One
could suspect German hands pulling strings from behind. At the same
time, the legality of the Mexican case was indisputable. A
compromise was possible, and the Mexicans, being the weaker side,
were eager for it. But they would not tolerate foreign business
concerns flouting the fundamental law of the land.

A test case went up to the Supreme Court of Mexico. Anticipating that
a Mexican Court would not overrule the Constitution, the American
Government threatened to land troops on the Gulf ports to protect
lawful commerce against arbitrary Government interference. The
argument was that the petroleum fields were private property;
therefore, prohibition of the export of petroleum would be
confiscation. While a forcible seizure of the main source of national
income was thus threatened, some American troops actually crossed
the land frontier of the north on the pretext of keeping away Mexican
bandits raiding American territory.

Naturally, Mexico City was full of excitement; anti-American feeling
ran high. It was apprehended that individual Americans might be
insulted and even assaulted in the resulting altercations. The pro-ally
newspapers aggravated popular indignation by justifying the defiance
of the petroleum companies and insinuating that the policy of the
Mexican Government was dictated by German intrigue. A good-
natured demonstration of anti-Americanism in that tense atmosphere
is worth recapitulating.

The famous Negro pugilist, Jack Johnson, had recently to run away
from the U.S.A. because he married a white woman. He took refuge in
Mexico, where he tried to set up an agricultural colony for Negroes
with Government help. Meanwhile, he was employed by the army to
give boxing lessons to younger officers.
Sanborn's drug store, on the fashionable Avenida de Madero, was the social centre of the Anglo-American colony. The drug store is a peculiar American institution. It is a chemist's shop where all varieties of toilet articles are sold, and which is also a confectionery. The soda-fountain dispensing multi-coloured cold drinks, however, is the mainstay of a drug store; the high-class ones run tea-rooms, cafes and restaurants, where members of the fashionable society congregate. Sanborn's icecream was famous. They also served excellent coffee; and the Orizaba (Mexican) coffee is the best in the world.

Having learned to appreciate the good things of life, I frequented the place, sometimes with members of the "Slacker" fraternity, and occasionally alone, to sit quietly and watch the strange behaviour of the inhabitants of a different world. One afternoon, when I was alone, a tall handsome Negro walked in, accompanied by a young woman belonging to the white race. They looked around, obviously for an empty table, found one in the back of the room, and sat down. The place was crowded. Feeling a certain frigidity in the atmosphere, I kept observing the couple. They sat for quite a while, but none came to serve them. Finally, the lady beckoned a waitress, exchanged some words with her, the latter shrugged her shoulders and walked away. The slighted guest was evidently furious. But her companion stood up, towering over her quivering figure, tried to look nonchalant, took her by the arm and both walked out.

I knew that Negroes were not served in American restaurants, not even admitted to barber shops kept by white men. But we were not in America, and the Mexicans, with mixed blood running in their veins, were well known for racial Catholicism. Nor did I know who the particular Negro was. I had no idea that Jack Johnson, was in Mexico. Anyhow, I could not but sympathise with the insulted couple; and my sympathy wanned up to indignation when I noticed the supercilious smile and silly giggling all around.

I was rising with the determination never to come to the place again, when a large number of uniformed men rushed in the shop, escorting the Negro. As soon as they marched in, many guests promptly got up and left. The party ordered the
waitresses to put several tables together, sat down, and called for the manager. A rather sheepish looking man, trying to affect an air of dignity, appeared on the scene. In a cheerful chorus, the entire company shouted: “Jack, give your order to Mr. Sanborn.” So, it was famous Jack Johnson. He grinned and looked embarrassed. The manager called several waitresses and ordered them to serve the party. One of the party who assumed leadership said; "The girls will do for us; but Mr. Sanborn, you must personally wait upon Jack to make amends for the insult done to him.” The manager hesitated; thereupon, he was reminded that he was in Mexico where the black man was as good as the whitest of the white. Then he was given the stern warning that, if he wanted to do business in Mexico, he must obey the laws of the land, and in Mexico all were equal before the law, irrespective of the colour of their skin.

Gnashing his teeth to control his emotions, the manager went to the pantry, brought a tray and placed it before the Negro. The latter got up, and with a broad, frank smile, which must have shamed the insolent white man, shook his hand and said: “Pardon me for all the trouble, Mr. Sanborn.” The party left the table and went out to be confronted with a riotously cheering crowd. There was neither any anti-American demonstration nor any nationalist outburst. The cheers were all for the Negro, who was carried on shoulders, it was a demonstration of the love of justice. A man had been insulted simply because of the dark pigment of his skin. Mexican chivalry wanted to vindicate human rights and human dignity.

I never met the Negro again except once, casually, much later, and felt that the experience had made a deep impression on him also. We were collecting money to publish a Spanish translation of the Soviet Constitution. Irwin Granwich and I ran into him one day on the street. Irwin stopped him: “Say, Jack, have you anything against the Bolsheviks? ” A little puzzled, the Negro giant replied: “Nao, not that I know of.” Irwin asked for a contribution and explained what for. Jack pulled out a ten dollar bill with a broad grin, and wished the Bolsheviks luck.
While mounting and-American feeling was hidden under the surface of the good nature of Mexican public life, the Government was worried and harassed. The middle-class, though resentful of American aggressiveness, appeared to be indifferent to the threat of a foreign armed intervention. Except for the army, the government had no means to resist the imminent danger, and the army was not quite reliable. General Obregon was known to have supporters in the ranks of the armed forces. Owing to the demoralising tradition of civil wars waged for no principles, money went a long way with professional soldiers; and General Obregon's armoury was full of silver bullets.

It seemed that in despair the government searched for reliable friends everywhere like the drowning man catching at a straw. I received an invitation to a tea-party at the place of La Mujer Moderna. It was not the usual gathering of her literary admirers, but a semi-official function, attended, among others, by the Foreign Minister and the Socialist President of the Chamber of Deputies. The younger Fernandez was present to introduce me to his brother, who treated me like an old acquaintance. After a few moments, he took me aside to ask if I was still living in the house on the maize fields. Then he confided with a diplomatic smile that all sorts of people were interested in me and advised me to be careful in my movements. But I should not worry; because of the situation of my house, the police had been ordered to keep a special watch.

The President of the Chamber of Deputies had heard about me from his friend Santibanez, and was anxious to meet me, because he wanted to discuss the future of the Socialist Party of Mexico. Don Manuel was a forthright man, though not at all overbearing. He went straight to the point. He was a Socialist, so were many others belonging to the liberal professions. But misled by fanatical anarcho-syndicalists, the workers did not trust the petit-bourgeois intellectuals. Yet, the two important social groups must come together if Socialism was to be a factor in the politics of the country. I agreed, and enquired why he and others like himself did not join the Socialist Party. He sneered: “What could reasonable people do with the fanatical anarcho-syndicalists? ”
suggested that his friend Santibanez might be an exception and that we should meet to discuss the question of re-organising the Socialist Party.

It was my turn to go to the point: “Might we not organise working class action to protest against, and eventually to resist, the threatened American intervention? " "How? " he enquired, obviously interested. A general strike could paralyse the petroleum industry. Preparatory to that ultimate move, mass demonstrations should be organized in the capital. He shook his head, as if in despair. The anarcho-syndicalists did not see any difference between one Government and another; they will not raise a ringer in support of our government. I thought that their influence could be overcome, if the government responded sympathetically to the economic demands of the working class. The discussion on these lines led to two decisions: firstly, we should have a conference with Santibanez and a few selected leaders of the Socialist Party; and secondly, I must have an interview with the President to submit the outlines of a labour policy of the Government for his consideration.

The Foreign Minister joined us as if to put an official seal on our decisions. Don Manuel made him acquainted with my plan of a possible popular resistance to American aggression. The Foreign Minister was more French than Spanish in his education as well as temperament. He evidently sought for a rational sanction for the plan. He was not a Socialist, but believed in democracy and social justice. His rational attitude and confession of faith was bourgeois, in the hasty judgment of an Utopian Marxist moving emotionally first towards Communism, as I was then. Nevertheless, the experience of being taken into confidence and seriously by such high placed persons gave me the feeling of importance, which subdued the fervour of an uncompromising revolutionary judgment.

The next day, I discussed the matter with the Slacker fraternity, of course, only in inner circles, which was the editorial board of the English section of El Heraldo. Having found asylum in Mexico, should we not do something to help the host? My American friends being all Red revolutionaries,
did not approve of the bullying of the petrol-kings. But they did not like the idea of backing up another bourgeois government. Advocates of a social revolution, they would rather support Alvarado against Carranza. I argued that, for the moment, the choice was not between two Mexican parties or personalities; it was between foreign Imperialism and the national independence of Mexico. The proletariat had no fatherland; how could internationalist social revolutionaries support one enemy of the working class against another? Theoretically, I agreed, but contended that preparatory to capturing power, the proletariat must organize itself as a decisive factor in the political life of the particular country, and that it was a very opportune moment to do so.

Charlie was a pacifist; he had no theoretical obsession, his approach to revolutionary politics was primarily emotional. The idea that out of gratitude for the hospitality, we must help Mexico against foreign bullies, appealed to him. With his characteristic impetuosity, he declared that we must all join the Socialist Party and build it up as a revolutionary mass organisation. The others agreed, though with mental reservations. Baker and Glintenkamp were Bohemian parlour revolutionaries; they did not care much for politics. Irwin Granwich was an anarchist Communist. He believed in social revolution, but not in the State and political organisation. All these points of difference had to be argued out in the course of time. For the moment, as comrades-in-arms—all fighting, each in his way, for the social emancipation of the dispossessed and exploited masses, we must stick together, being in Mexico, we must get in touch with the native working class, participate in their organisation and in their revolutionary action.

Having thus resolved to join the Socialist Party, we called on Santibanez. He almost went into ecstasy; our joining it, would thus form the Socialist Party of Mexico into a veritable international organisation—a red-letter day in its history, which must be fittingly celebrated in a public meeting of the party. I suggested that at first the executive committee of the party should meet to admit us as formal members of the organisation; thereafter, the new members will be introduced in a public meeting.
I availed of the opportunity to give the information that other Socialists, such as the President of the Chamber of Deputies and others like him, might join the party if the outlook of the latter was broadened. Santibanez rushed to the defence of his vested interest: these opportunist parliamentarians and bourgeois intellectuals had only contempt for the working class. Diffidently, I counselled caution.

What is the harm in meeting those people to discuss the possibility of cooperation, which would add so much to the strength and prestige of the party? If in the maturing crisis, the party could play a role, it was sure to become a political factor, which no government could ignore. Then I ventured the hint that the government might be willing to help the party play such a role.

The hint was not missed by the lawyer's shrewdness. Santibanez asked if I had seen Don Manuel. I admitted, and added that I had seen others also. He dropped the sectarian attitude of the leader of a small party, and with great enthusiasm enquired if Don Manuel had mentioned Maestro Casas. It was my turn to be surprised. What, the Rector of the University also a Socialist? I bluffed: leave those people to me. If the Executive Committee of the party could be persuaded to drop sectarianism, all those people would join, and the Government might take up a sympathetic attitude towards the immediate economic demands of the working class. As the latter mainly concerned the anarcho-syndicalists, it should not be difficult to coax them to fall in line.

There was a faint flush in the sallow cheeks of the Karl Marx of Mexico; behind the thick glasses, his eyes shone. After all, he might not have wasted a whole life for nothing.
ONE OF the first things I did on reaching Mexico was to engage a Spanish teacher. On the recommendation of the editor of El Pueblo, I engaged an oldish man who taught Spanish in the Escuela Nacional (University). His rank corresponded to that of a Professor in India. But in Mexico, high schools are called Colegios, their teachers professors. Colleges are, called escuelas (schools), and only heads of departments are maestros. So, my Spanish teacher had no academic title, although he occupied the rank of a senior lecturer in the University. He was a modest man of rather slender means with old-fashioned ideas. He always spoke of the golden days of Diaz and deplored the ravages and extravagances of the revolution. But his attitude was of a sort of philosophical detachment; he was not interested in politics and held a low opinion of the revolutionary leaders.

He particularly lamented the cultural degeneration of the country, and referred to the unfinished opera house to drive his point home, following the European rich, Grand Operas and ballets which used to visit Mexico City every year in the winter. To make his capital worthy of the distinction, Diaz, during the last years of his regime, sanctioned ten million pesos for the construction of an opera house which would compare with the very best in Europe. Architects and skilled workmen came from Italy. But the revolution broke out before the proud marble structure was only half finished. In my time, it still stood there in a park in the centre of the city, hidden behind a forest of scaffoldings as a monument to the past glory of the days of Diaz. Grand operas and ballets no longer came to Mexico.
On the other hand, the great national sport, bull fight, was prohibited by the Carranza Government as cruel and barbarous. The bull ring of Mexico City, built also at the time of Diaz, is the largest in the world—a circular stadium which accommodates 35,000 people. If the non-completion of the opera house could be regarded as a token of cultural setback, the prohibition of the bull fight was certainly a move in the opposite direction. But those who, like my teacher, lamented the faded glory of a past which belonged to the idle rich, were incapable of appreciating the merit of efforts to build up a democratic future.

Early in 1918, the huge bull-ring was put to better use, showing that revolution had not destroyed culture with the Diaz dictatorship. The Italian grand opera and the Russian ballet came again to Mexico City. The opera house could not be completed in a short time, nor did the revolutionary Government want to deprive the people of the enjoyment of art. The bull-ring was thrown open for the purpose, and for days it was full to capacity to hear Caruso sing to an audience of more than thirty thousand in a gigantic Greek theatre. I could never imagine that human voice could be anything like that. In comparison to the majesty of Caruso's voice, Pavlova's dancing and the whole ballet appeared to me rather flimsy and frivolous. My appreciation of great art was still very primitive.

A hefty man in thin light underwear jumping about the stage—I could not see what was the art in it. It might be skilful gymnastics; then why not go to the circus to see even more skilful performances of that nature? As a matter of fact, with respect to ballet my artistic taste refused to be cultivated. The only ballet I could ever sit through was in the third act of every Russian opera. And even then it was not the dancing—women wheeling on their toes like tops—but the music and the riotousness of the ensemble which impressed.

I have already mentioned that after some initial lessons in grammar, I learned Spanish by translating, with the help of my good teacher, the small book, *The Way to Durabe Peace*, I had written while still in the U.S.A. In Mexico I added to it a longish chapter on the origin of the Monroe
Doctrine and its development in practice during nearly a hundred years. That work gave me the occasion for a fairly comprehensive study of the history of the New World, particularly since the American War of Independence. It was a very useful knowledge to acquire, which greatly helped the development of my political ideas and understanding of the contemporary world situation.

Formulated in 1823, the Monroe Doctrine was to keep out of foreign entanglements following the injunction of George Washington, and to demand a reciprocal attitude on the part of the European Powers. In his message to the Congress, the fifth President of the U.S.A., Thomas Monroe declared:

The American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintained, are henceforth not to be considered as subject for further colonisation by any European Powers.

That was in 1823. The countries of South and Central America had one after another thrown off the Spanish yoke during the preceding ten to fifteen years. But European reaction having been galvanised by the Holy Alliance, it was apprehended that Spain might try to recover her American colonies.

Thus, originally, the Monroe Doctrine was the "Hands off America" signal to European Imperialism. It continued to be the guiding principle of American foreign policy for one hundred years; its latest expression was the isolationism which kept the U.S.A. out of the League of Nations. That was like the last flare-up of a dying flame.

In 1923, through the instrumentality of the Dawes' Plan and the Young Plan, the U.S.A. intervened in Europe to bolster up reaction in Germany and thus to help the creation of the conditions for the eventual rise of Fascism.

On the other hand, during the preceding hundred years the practical application of the Monroe Doctrine had established a virtual American protectorate over the New World. On the plea of preventing European colonisation, the U.S.A. had militarily intervened time and again in Central and South America. Being the next-door neighbour, Mexico was the
worst sufferer in this respect. In addition to numerous local armed interventions, the U.S.A. waged two major wars against Mexico and annexed the extensive territory now covered by the States of Texas, Arizona and California.

Until the closing decades of the nineteenth century, American energy was absorbed at home. Even after that period the U.S.A. was a debtor country. Foreign capital, particularly British, played a big role in the drama of spectacular industrial development. During that time, the U.S.A. could not interfere in the economic life of Central and South America. Having completed the conquest of the continent to the north of the Rio Grande by the end of the nineteenth century, the U.S.A. turned to the conquest of the New World. The political protectorate established by the Monroe Doctrine served the purpose of financial penetration which amounted to economic monopoly, and reduced the political independence of the weaker neighbours to a mere formality. To promote periodical revolutions and civil wars was a part of the policy. Pan-Americanism was essentially not much different from Pan-Germanism or the Japanese doctrine of "co-prosperity sphere."

The chapter on the Monroe Doctrine written for my book first appeared as a series of articles in El Heraldo de Mexico. They created some sensation and won for me many friends amongst well-placed Mexicans. I was informed by the Mujcr Moderna that Don Venustiano was deeply impressed by them. They were not only an interpretation of history, but also led to some political conclusion: the necessity to put an end to the North-American tutelage. With that purpose, a Latin American League should be formed as the counterblast to the Pan-American conference sponsored by the U.S.A. I had developed this idea, and it appealed to President Carranza, before the German Kaiser's Privy Councillor came to Mexico with the mission of encouraging such a movement. His extremely friendly attitude towards me most probably was determined by this knowledge.

The publication of my first literary-work was celebrated by a society function—a tea party was given by la Mujer Moderna. Not only was her entourage of budding literatures present, but
the occasion was graced by the presence of such intellectual elite as Maestro Casas. A few Generals, Ministers and high officials were also present. The company included the President of the Chamber of Deputies and several leftist politicians. But in the salon of *la Mujer Moderna* no serious discussion was ever possible. She must occupy the centre of the stage, waving the black cigarettes stuck in her hairpin. Fortunately for her, there was none to rival. The fair sex stayed away from social functions with intellectual pretensions.

A poet who used to write verses published as compositions of *la Mujer Moderna* (obviously his lady-love) made a fulminant little speech to say that the "melancholy philosopher from the ancient land of mystery and wisdom" had come to fire the Latin Indian soul once again to burst out in a magnificent flame to dispel the gloom of North-American tutelage, to remind the Mexicans of the glorious tradition of Morelos, Hidalgo and Juarez, who delivered the message of liberation. This is an unsuccessful attempt to recapitulate metaphors. But the most remarkable part of it was the tone quivering with emotion. The entire party appeared to be profoundly impressed, except Maestro Casas on whose big face under a shock of black hair I detected the faintest flicker of a sardonic smile, and I liked it. As regards the rest, one could imagine the sabres rattling in the sheaths of the uniformed Generals; the diplomats wore impassive faces; Ministers looked full of practical wisdom of the statesman; the politicians beamed approval; but the other member of the personal entourage of the hostess appeared to me to be green with jealousy.

As soon as the oration was over, she walked up to her poetic devotee, shook his hand and in a voice choked with suppressed emotion (the man was married, and the Catholic Church did not allow divorce), said "bravo." The grateful man almost fell on his knees at the feet of the adored.

The situation was brought down from the stratosphere of tense emotion to the atmosphere of the earth by the earthy *Mujer Moderna*. She could not concede the centre of the stage to any one for any length of time, not even to the worshipful poet. Having rewarded the latter with a furtive look while shaking his hand, she resumed her role: took out a black
cigarette, and half a dozen men rushed with fire to light it; she won't allow anybody the familiarity of taking out the hairpin. It was her turn to make a speech—a short one, only a couple of sentences, but very businesslike, to the point. The author of the new book must be presented to the President of the Republic. Preparatory to that ceremony, she would personally deliver to Don Venustiano a presentation copy with the author's inscription. Everybody acclaimed approval; again it was Maestro Casas who condescended a grudging consent by almost imperceptibly shaking the enormous head only once. When the party began to disperse, he came up to me and growled: That was all frivolous emotionalism. The case should be submitted to the critical judgment of people who could help the formation of intelligent public opinion. It was a plausible case. Would I care to deliver some lectures on the subject in the University?

I was flattered; but at the same time, the idea of making speeches sent a cold shiver down my spine. Never in my life had I until then made a public speech. It was not a part of our conspiratorial revolutionary activity. We never believed words could make a revolution; more powerful weapons were required. I did get over that early prejudice, but could never be a success on the platform. In Mexico, I did learn to make public speeches, but only to restricted audiences, such as party conferences, party membership meetings, trade unions. I did not address any mass meeting until I came to Russia.

However, I accepted Maestro Casas' invitation, and after a few days delivered my first public lecture at the University. The entire student-body and all the teachers were present. The lecture was in Spanish; it was previously written out with the help of my teacher, who appeared to be very proud of his pupil. On the second day, I was more courageous; I did not read out the written paper, but delivered its contents from memory.

There were five lectures. On the last day Maestro Casas presided and made a short concluding speech; a new interpretation of the recent history of the New World had been placed before the students and teachers of the University for a critical examination. The learned guest had drawn some bold
and provocative conclusions from an independent study of history. If he was right, whoever pronounced that judgment must do so fully conscious of the responsibility involved. The liberators of Latin America were indeed great men; their memory must be respected; but the struggle for liberation in the contemporary world must blaze new trails. That I thought, was a very significant hint. Nothing more outspoken could be said from the academic chair. But it was unmistakable; the doyen of the intelligentsia of the land sounded the tocsin of a social revolution.

The feeling (it was rather wishful thinking) that I might be contributing to the initiation of a social revolutionary movement was very gratifying. It was one of the happiest moments of my life, marking the opening of a new chapter.
MY SPANISH teacher was the chess champion of Mexico; Don Manuel, the President of the Chamber of Deputies, was his rival. Even as a student in India, I had played the game, amateurishly, and wanted to learn it well. It was the only indoor game which had any appeal to me, I thought that it was a sheer waste of time to play cards. Fortunately, my Spanish teacher was not a snob; though the national champion, he did not feel it beneath his dignity to play frequently with an amateur like me.

I no longer required any Spanish lessons; yet I liked the old man to come three times a week, as he also did to. Chess replaced the Spanish language as the subject of my lessons. Don Manuel used to join us occasionally; and I got the rare opportunity to learn the game by watching two masters matching their wits. I thought the latter was more brilliant, trying to imitate the style of Capablanca, the then world champion. The other man was more methodical, and almost always won by wearing out the brilliance of the opponent with patience. Immediately after the opening gambits, Eton Manuel quickly marshalled his more powerful pieces for an all-out attack. Checked at that early stage of the game, he seemed to lose interest, and the opponent had his way. The latter was in no hurry to counter the initial thrusts; invariably his first concern was to castle his king in a particular position. By that defensive tactic, he somehow blunted the edge of the attack. Thereafter, it was a game of patience and matter of time.

Although it failed more often than succeeded, Don Manuel's style appealed to my temperament. But whenever I tried it, the champion won the game even before my powerful pieces
were free to move. One day something entirely unexpected happened, not quite unexpected though. I had hit upon an idea—to stake everything on preventing the champion from castling the king. My initial moves must have been unconventional, very amateurish. The champion took no notice of them; and, evidently thinking that I was moving my pieces aimlessly he was not in a hurry to build up the impregnable defence for his king.

To open up the way for my black bishop, I sacrificed a knight. The champion realised the mistake half a second too late. I was amazed to hear him remark quietly *perdido* (lost), and keep on repeating it. But to me it was not at all clear how I was going to win, although I had attained the tactical object: the position of my black bishop made it impossible for the opponent to castle his king. On my saying that even then I did not see how the game was settled in my favour, the master finished it by defeating himself. I tried to defend his position, not of course to show that I could do it better than him, but to learn the possible variations of attack that could be made on the basis of the tactical position gained by initial moves.

Notwithstanding the apparently good humour with which the champion took his defeat, I could see that he was rather upset. He insisted on saying that it was not a fluke; that the offensive was very well planned, at least the five last moves having been carefully thought out in advance, as against all possible variations of counter-moves. I was terribly flattered when he added that I was no longer a novice, and could have finished the game myself; because it simply could not be lost, unless one made a mistake such as I was no longer likely to make. So, from the same teacher I got two certificates, one for the Spanish language and the other for playing chess.

The next day, Don Manuel came to congratulate me on my having beaten the champion. With sincere modesty, I tried to disown any credit for just a chance. But he was irrepressibly boisterous, I imagined, not so much over my feat as for the defeat of his successful rival. However, he challenged me to repeat the method in a game with him. We played: the champion watched. I was nervous; but the trick worked again. Don Manuel was very happy that the champion had found a
match. I did not think so. In any case, I could not take to playing chess as my profession. For a time, we did play a good deal, and I often won. But the champion remained undoubtedly by far the better player. He knew so many variations; and I had neither time nor patience to study them all in practice and develop counter-moves. However, the one opening combination which outwitted my teacher must have been quite good. With it, two years later, I drew a game with Alekhine in Moscow. He was not yet the world champion; nor did I know that I played with the man who would defeat Capablanca the next year.

The chess fever was over soon enough. The editing of the English section of *El Heraldo* was an interesting and often an amusing job. Then I had got actively involved in the activities of the Socialist Party. The first thing I did was to transform the party organ *La Lncha* into a regular weekly of eight page". That required some money which I could easily spare. The small press was bought over from the Party Secretary; re-equipped with some new machinery and new types, it became property of the party. Old Santibanez was very happy; things were moving at last. All the time the inner circle of the party was engaged in a hectic discussion night after night. The Socialist Party did not accept Marxism easily. Wishing to carry the discussion outside the small circle, I proposed publication of pamphlets on the various subjects of our discussion. The money put in the party press thus served a useful purpose. After the publication of half a dozen pamphlets, mostly written by myself, I suggested the issuing of a manifesto by the Socialist Party to convene a conference with the object of forming a mass party of the working class.

It was about the middle of 1918. The news of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia had reached the New World to fire the imagination of all who dreamt of the proletariat capturing power. It was no longer a Utopia. The manifesto calling for the formation of a working class party as the instrument for capturing political power, therefore, could not be dismissed as fantastic. The idea that to be actually in possession of political power might be within the realm of practical possibility shook the preconceived anarcho-syndicalist theoretical antipathy for
the State. The manifesto found a widespread response. The issue of *La Lucha* in which it was first published had to be reprinted three times. The response from the States came in the form of innumerable letters from people wanting to attend the conference.

The Executive Committee of the Socialist Party met to plan the organisation of the conference; some of its members were evidently taken by surprise. It appeared to them that they had bitten off more than they could swallow. It was going to be a large conference. No joke to organise it. Where was the money? I reassured them that on that account there need be no anxiety. Money could be raised for a popular cause. But there should be no haste; the conference must be a success, marking the appearance of the working class as an important force in the political life of the country as also of Latin America; Everything must be very carefully planned—correspondence with the prospective delegates, large-scale propaganda, drafting of the resolutions, so on and so forth. Everybody was full of fife, but none knew exactly what he could actually do. So the meeting ended by appointing me the editor of the party organ and the director of party propaganda. I was also charged with the duty of securing fraternal delegates from other Latin American Republics to attend the conference. The *Slackers' fraternity* had already declared their desire to be fraternal delegates from the U.S.A.

In the midst of the hectic atmosphere of the preparations for an international Socialist Conference in Mexico, Don Manuel called one day with a diplomatic mission. The President would be pleased to grant me an interview. The first one in the German Legation was off the record, so to say. This would be a formal function in the official residence of the President. Important members of the Government would be present, and I was invited to stay on for lunch. Don Manuel informed me that the President had been closely following my activities to reorganise the Socialist Party, and was keenly interested in the result, particularly in the matter of fraternal delegates from the Central and South American countries attending the conference. Then he confided that I could count upon the co-operation of Mexican diplomatic and Consular
representatives in that respect. I was relieved to know that it was going to be not a stiff official function, but might be a fruitful interview.

The President of the Mexican Republic resided in the old castle of Chapultepec built on a hillock in the midst of a beautiful park at a distance of five miles from the city. The broad avenue connecting the park with the city was the Champs d'Elysees of the New World—the scene of a daily fashion parade. The bridle-path along the avenue continued inside the park, where rich refreshments were served to the fashionable riders in luxurious pavilions. Since the days of the ill-fated Maximilian and his Queen Charlotte, some of the finest horses of the world had been seen trotting, cantering or galloping on the famous Chapultepec bridle-path. Every European celebrity was counted amongst the illustrious riders, one time or another.

In the history of Mexico, the horse occupies a place of singular interest. The equestrian species is not a native of the New World. The Spaniards first introduced horses in Mexico, and possession of those strange animals contributed not a little to their conquest. Men riding on the back of animals so much stronger than themselves must have appeared to the superstitious Aztecs as gods descending from the heavens. While there is no reason to assume that the aborigines of the New World came there from India across the Behring Straits, the ancestry of the Mexican horse is certainly Asiatic. The Saracens had brought Arabian horses to Spain, and their progeny came over to the New World with the Spanish conquerors. The native-bred Mexican horse, however, is smaller than his Arabian ancestor. But they are fine animals, and practically every Mexican is an excellent rider.

Having made Mexico my second home, I had to learn the national sport. I had always liked riding and wanted to do it well. But I never had much of a chance. Shortly before leaving India, I had taken some lessons on the Calcutta Maidan. I was then an absconder, as most of the time I used to be in those days. I expected that very early in the morning, when the Maidan was deserted, there should be no undesirable encounter. I was mistaken; on the third or fourth day, I saw Denham the then Chief of the Special Branch C.I.D., also
riding. My equestrian practice thus ended abruptly. So, when in Mexico the chance came again, I seized it with enthusiasm. But I disliked joining the parade of fashionable riders, mostly foreign, on the Chapultapec bridle-path. After a few days’ practice, as soon as I felt myself secure in the saddle, I preferred cross-country riding. Mexicans ride in the Spanish style, legs stretched out fully in long stirrups. I found the style so much more comfortable than the English. The Mexican saddle is also more comfortable; one sits much more securely, the expert rider with both hands free, because the reins could be thrown round the pommel in the front of the saddle. So, sitting on "Silver King" (that was the name of the white horse I regularly hired) and accompanied by my Alsatian, I used to ride miles every morning, exploring the entire neighbourhood of the city, right up to the lower slopes of the Sierra Nevada, and making many friends amongst the country folk.

In my days, the old glory had faded away; yet, every afternoon, the Avenida de Chapultapec was enlivened by rows of motor cars carrying gaily dressed society ladies accompanied by gentlemen in brilliant military uniforms. Nobody who counted for anything in Mexico City could stay away from the paseo. The President himself was not an exception. Every day late in the afternoon, his black limousine emerged from the castle gates, drove out to the city and returned. Throughout the drive, which lasted for half an hour or so, the President was occupied with the polite gesture of raising his top hat to the numerous socialites who participated in the fashion parade.
Interview with the President

THE DAY before the interview, Don Manuel came to inform me that he would call for me at n a.m. Then, in a rather embarrassed manner, he suggested that I should be properly dressed. He must have noticed that I never dressed conventionally, according to particular occasions. On my saying that I did not possess different clothes for different times of the day, he offered to take me immediately to the tailor who would make me presentable within twenty-four hours. There should be no objection to having a new suit of clothes cut in a particular fashion. But I did not like the idea of attaching so much importance to conventional dressing up, and refused to be taken, as it were, into the greenroom to be made up for appearing on the stage. I said that, if the President was sufficiently interested in myself, he should not mind what I wore, provided of course that it did not smell badly; and my clothes were very presentable, good enough for the snobbish German society of the city. In the U.S.A., I was poor; but since coming to Mexico, I could afford to be well tailored.

The little scene with my good friend Don Manuel settled the taste for the rest of my life. I never wore a morning coat or a dinner jacket; stiff collar was my pet abomination, and for years I was known to friends throughout Europe for my uniform of gray flannels and brown coat. I still think that that is the most comfortable and presentable outfit for men. In dinner jackets, particularly the long-tail variety fashionable in those days, men looked like monkeys; and for them to dance, flapping their tails, was the most ludicrous sight.

Don Manuel's attitude to my whim was quite good-natured. He wondered if I was not a Russian Bolshevik in disguise, who
might any day come out with the famous beard and bleeding knife between the teeth. Joking apart, he said that it was going to be an important meeting and he did not want it to be prejudiced by negligence about some silly detail. Don Venustiano, after all, was a Spanish aristocrat and as such bound to have conventional ideas about behaviour. Why should we not make concessions in minor matters? I was impressed by Don Manuel's wisdom and apologised for my silly whim.

He reminded me that the interview had been arranged in pursuance of my talk with the Foreign Minister at La Mujer Moderna’s tea party. The President would expect some concrete proposal about measures to win the confidence of the working class. Evidently, Don Manuel desired to have an idea of what I would propose.

We had some talk during which I outlined a plan of action: The Socialist Party would hold a public meeting to protest against the threatened American intervention; the meeting would pass a resolution calling for a mass demonstration of protest and appealing to the democratic middle class to join hands with the toiling masses in a mighty defence of the sovereignty of the Republic and its Constitution; democratic leaders like Don Manuel should publicly endorse the protest in one form or another; students and teachers should join the demonstration; and finally, there should be no interference by the police or the military. After the demonstration in the capital, emissaries of the Socialist Party would go to organise a strike of the petroleum workers to hold up the pumping, refining and export of oil, should the foreign companies defy the law of the land. The working class initiative to develop a popular resistance to foreign intervention should encourage the Government to take a stronger attitude. At the same time, the Government should encourage the working class by supporting the latter's economic demands.

Don Manuel expected that the plan would appeal to the President, not because the latter was a liberal by conviction, but as a matter of practical politics. His main consideration would be not so much to help the development of a democratic resistance to possible foreign intervention; it was to make his
Government popular, so that he could consolidate his position as against rivals like General Obregón. The President was particularly anxious to isolate the latter by exposing the fact that he had secured American patronage by promising repeal of the Petroleum Law on becoming the President of the Republic. Obregón was Governor of the large and rich State of Sonora with several hundred miles of common frontier with the U.S.A. There was a number of large modern agricultural farms in Sonora; they were all owned by Americans who also held concessions for exploiting the mineral riches. As Governor of the State, Obregón was closely associated with a powerful group of American businessmen led by the Texas Oil King Dahomey. The President was naturally anxious to remove his rival from the position of vantage; but he did not dare to do so. The ambitious General, relying on American support, might raise the standard of revolt and plunge the country again into a civil war before it was hardly out of the earlier one. A popular anti-American movement would be good strategy; it would have the fullest, albeit secret, support of the Federal Government.

Don Manuel gave an interesting piece of information: There was a school teacher in Sonora who was politically ambitious and called himself a Socialist. He had organised agrarian strikes in some of the American farms, and consequently attained a measure of popularity as well as incurred the displeasure of the Governor. Carranza himself, being a feudal landlord, would naturally frown on the political activities of such a man. But again, considerations of political strategy might prevail. It was to encourage the ambitious school teacher to offer himself as the popular candidate for the governorship of the State. The encouragement could be given through the intermediary of the Socialist Party after it was reorganised as a mass organisation. When the school teacher's name was mentioned, I remembered that he had enthusiastically welcomed the proposed socialist conference and promised to attend it with a large delegation from the State of Sonora. It was Plutarco Calles, who did become not only the Governor of the State, but rose to the presidency of the Republic after Obregón. In between, he served on the Carranza
Government as the Minister of Labour. Calles was one of the most colourful Mexican personalities. I shall have to write more about him later on. For the last time, I met him in Paris in 1925, when he was touring Europe as the first civil President of the Mexican Republic. Recollecting our old days in Mexico, he said that he had preserved his Socialist Party membership card bearing my signature as its Secretary.

On the appointed day, accompanied by Don Manuel in his official capacity as the head of the legislative branch of the State, I was ushered in the magnificent reception hall of the Chapultepec castle. Huge gold-framed portraits of Spanish Viceroy’s, who had ruled over the land of fabulous riches for several centuries, hung on the high walls of the hall. The thought uppermost in my mind was that I was there as the spokesman of the dispossessed masses to offer their help and co-operation to a distressed descendant of the proud race of aristocratic rulers. I was pleased with my decision not to have put on any badge of respectability, but come as an ordinary citizen, dressed like one of the people. Another thought also passed through my mind: Had the wheel of fortune turned differently, I might be in Berlin awaiting the pleasure of the Kaiser to grant me the favour of an audience. A couple of years earlier, the latter chance might have meant much more to me. Standing in the hall haunted by the ghosts of so many aristocrats, I felt happy to have chosen the democratic way. I was indeed going to be received by a feudal landlord; but in his official capacity he was the elected head of a democratic State, and he was eager to win the help and co-operation of the common people. That was certainly a chance for democracy. If it was missed, the blame belonged to its leaders. Most probably I would have had my share of the blame. In those days I did not believe in democracy. In any case, I left Mexico too soon, before my efforts could bear fruit. Others might have persisted in the endeavour; but the Carranza regime was overthrown. The democratic front was as yet too young to save the situation. Having learned from experience, if the chance returned, today I would act differently. Only I have had enough of politics. If the chance for democracy came again, I hope others would make a better job.
We were led across the hall to a door which opened to let us into a large room looking over the tops of the trees in the park. My companion introduced me to the President and several Ministers, all in military uniform except two. The President wore striped trousers and a morning coat. Drinks were served—different sorts of wine, no hard liquor. Don Venustiano chatted with me standing by one of the tall windows, a glass of wine in hand. I had by that time learned to enjoy the luxury. He talked about my round trip through the Western and Southern States and joked about the encounter with bandits. It was very difficult to pacify a mountainous country with a few good roads and worn-out railways. Then he added in a confident tone that it would be done by and by if only the powerful neighbour of the north would leave them alone.

The conversation was thus skilfully led up to the threat of intervention. Until then the others stood by listening. Now they all showed signs of agitation, and some indignant remarks were made. I fully sympathised and expressed the conviction that the Mexican people would surely vindicate their honour and sovereignty. Out of gratitude for the hospitality and protection I had received, I would do everything to serve my adopted country. With the concurrence of all present, the President congratulated me on my success in reminding the Socialists that they were also Mexicans, and must do their duty to the patria (motherland). I was thankful for the appreciation of the little service I could render to my adopted country, but at the same time ventured the remark that it was not easy to preach patriotism to the people who did not feel that the patria belonged to them. Then I hastily added that that was the case in every country; Mexico was no exception. The benevolent aristocrat retorted that to give land to the peons was the object of the Mexican revolution; but the agrarian reform could not be carried out fully as yet because the meddlesome foreigners instigated civil war for all these years. Don Manuel murmured something about legislation for the protection of labour. The Chief Executive replied that it was the business of the head of the Legislature to see that just and equitable laws were passed. Then, turning towards me, he said that he wanted to appoint a Labour Minister. Did I think that among the
Socialists there was anybody fit for the position? I pleaded for a little time; and thought that in the meantime Don Manuel might recommend someone. Before the year was out, Calles joined the Federal Ministry as the Minister of Labour.

After a while, all except Don Manuel and the Foreign Minister left. The butler came to announce lunch and the four of us moved to the dining-room. The talk at the table and over drinks afterwards was to the point. The President approved of my plan, warmly supported by Don Manuel. The Foreign Minister, usually a very quiet man, from time to time put in a word of caution against diplomatic difficulties. We passed on to the plan of the Latin American League. The President suggested some competent person touring to establish contacts, and enquired if I would not like to visit other Latin American Republics. The idea was very fascinating, but I would defer any decision until the Socialist conference. The President saw the point; on my part, I was very much relieved to know that he would not insist on officialising the proposed League. Finally, I made bold to enquire if Mexican Embassies, Legations and Consulates in the various countries of Central and South America would help us contact socialist leaders there and enable them to come for the conference. The Foreign Minister looked at the chief and nodded a smiling approval. I had to see him in this connection.

The interview was more fruitful than I had hoped. It lasted for three hours. Don Manuel stayed behind just for a moment. He rushed to join me in the reception hall, beaming all over the face, to blurt out that everything was all right, I could now go ahead full-steam with my plans. Don Venustiano would play the game to the end.

In the car running down from the castle, I enquired why all this confidence and patronage should be bestowed on an obscure foreigner. Don Manuel explained: “Exactly because I was a foreigner; I could be made the diplomatic scapegoat, if necessary. In a tight corner, the Government would disown responsibility for all my mischief.” While dropping me at the door of my house, he reassured in a grave voice: “Don Venustiano will never let you down; aristocratic chivalry, you know. Already he has resisted Anglo-American pressure for your extradition.”
their homage with Karl Marx. But the mighty maker of the dreamland of a new social order was beginning to command the greatest admiration of all.

One of the American fraternal delegates, who had enthusiastically helped the organisation of the conference, produced a picture of the legendary leader of the year-old October Revolution of Russia. It was given a place of honour on par with that conceded to the prophets of socialism, anarchism and syndicalism. John Reed had just returned to New York with his lyrical account of the "Ten Days that Shook the World." He was an old comrade of some of the revolutionary slackers in Mexico; the latter had written to him for a picture of Lenin and a message for the Mexican proletariat preparing for the capture of power.

The conference opened in a delirium of joy; but the chosen people, the Mexican proletariat, was not there to receive the call to arms, which was the essence of the historic message of the Great October Revolution transmitted through its poetic historian. The hall was reserved for "bourgeois politicians," as some of the more outspoken anarcho-syndicalist delegates remarked with disgust and cynicism. But to please al companero India (the Indian comrade), as I was addressed in the revolutionary ranks, who was given the credit of having organized the celebration of the Red Letter Day in the history of the Social Revolution in Mexico, the Preparatory Committee of the conference had issued invitations to a large number of people recommended by me—people of progressive democratic ideas whose active participation would raise the political status of the Socialist Party and promote the plan of the Latin-American League. They included the Rector of the University, several other academic personalities, the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, some members of the Parliament, a veteran journalist together with many junior colleagues, authors, poets and artists.

Given their fanatical distrust of class collaboration, it was a bold move to welcome the representatives of the revolutionary proletariat with such a demonstration of bourgeois sympathy. Only La Mujer Modema was left out of my list. Her presence might have been the last straw to break the camel's
A Regional Socialist International

THE FIRST conference of the Socialist Party of Mexico met in December 1918. In addition to the several hundred delegates from different States of the Republic, a number of socialist leaders from Central and South American countries assembled on the occasion to discuss the plan of the Latin-American League and set up an organising committee. The latter group included lawyers, teachers, authors, poets, journalists—all passionate crusaders for the liberation of the working class, but among them there was not a single industrial labourer or a son of the soil. The singular fact did not fail to strike me, although I then missed its significance. Most probably, the overwhelmingly earthy composition of the Mexican delegation drove the experience down in my sub-conscious mind, to be recollected many years later when intellectual maturity resulting from many other experiences began to dispel the mist of the dawn of the new faith.

Among the Mexican delegates, there were workers from the oil fields, some of them highly skilled mechanics, men and women employed in textile mills, miners, dockers, railwaymen, motor drivers; there were artisans as well as a few small traders; and many came from the land; not ordinary labourers, but overseers in large modern farms. Intellectuals and professional men, such as teachers, writers, artists, physicians, lawyers, who mostly belonged to the capital. Provincial delegations included a good many school masters. There were few well-versed in socialist theory; the industrial workers were mostly anarcho-syndicalists; and the general level of education rather low. But all were fervent Utopians—passionate believers in social revolution. Bakunin and Kropotkin shared
back. But I suspected that it would rather be a demonstration of the
mediaeval attitude to the female which prevailed among the most
fervent advocates of social revolution, than of proletarian wrath
against petit bourgeois vulgarity.

However, with that thin sugar-coating, the bitter pill went down. As a
matter of fact, I felt, though with some trepidation that "the children
of starvation" were happy and proud; the distinguished gathering was
a recognition of the importance of the confidence. Even the sternest
revolutionary is not always immune to flattery. I also felt flattered by
the success of my first attempt at high politics. But before the
conference settled down to business, it was distracted by an uproar of
human voices outside the hall. We did not propose to play Hamlet
without the Prince of Denmark; the proletariat was not really
forgotten. Thanks to the dramatic sense of the Bohemian
revolutionary emigres from the United States, the stage-management
was excellent. To the revolutionary class was allotted the all-
important role of occupying the streets. Revolutions take place there,
not in halls.

The delegates rushed out, the respectability followed, to welcome a
mass demonstration led by Charles Philips and Irwin Granwich.
Behind a huge picture of Lenin, held high in front, there was a forest
of red flags and festoons. Slogans written (of course in Spanish) on
the latter were striking: "Down with Yankee Imperialism ",
"Petroleum Belongs to the Mexican People", "Long Live
Revolutionary Alliance of Latin American Republics", "Long Live the
Bolsheviks", "Long Live the Soviet Republic of Mexico." I felt that
Charlie's enthusiasm had carried him too far. Yet, it was an
achievement to have persuaded an overwhelmingly anarcho-
syndicalist demonstration to raise some of the slogans.

According to a previously laid plan, socialist agitators had collected
small groups of "the children of starvation" from the backwaters of
the city and led them to join a mass demonstration in the Plaza—an
open space in the centre of the city. To the north stood the magnificent
old cathedral built by the slave labour of countless pagan Mexican
peons to satisfy the vanity of conquering Christianity; and to the east,
the rambling ugly structure of the Palacio Nacional, once the gilded
residence
of proud Spanish Viceroyys, now seat of the Republican Government. The mass meeting in the Plaza was addressed by several speakers including Charlie Philips. He was a consummate demagogue, though he spoke broken Spanish. The meeting was swept into a frenzy of patriotism when an American cried: “Down with Yankee Imperialism.”

Having performed that feat, Charlie demanded, of course, in behalf of the conditioned audience, that encouraged by mighty mass support, President Carranza should consolidate the revolutionary anti-imperialist front by taking measures to protect the interest of the working class. Again, according to previous arrangement, the President appeared on the balcony of the Palacio National to greet the people and to declare that, the voice of the people being the Voice of God, he would obey It. The promise, given within a hearing of the cathedral, electrified the religious revolutionary mass which was then led down the main streets of the city to the conference hall, to deliver to the delegates assembled there the message that the revolutionary will and might of the working class had triumphed.

Charlie was the hero of the day. He was carried into the hall on the shoulders of the delegates, jostling for the honour, and elected by acclamation chairman of the first session. Before delivering his impromptu address he brought the assembly on its feet by the announcement that there was a message from the Great October Revolution, which had liberated the workers and peasants of Russia by overthrowing the bourgeois democratic Kerensky regime. The fickleness of the hero-worshipper was striking. A year ago, when I was still in the United States, Kerensky's popularity was sky-high amongst the American Radicals, who inhabited or frequented Washington Square, the Bohemia of New York. The God having fallen, he was reviled and ridiculed by earstwhile worshippers, who now adored the new hero, Lenin. Until a year ago, he was a dark horse, his name hardly known, referred to with contempt as the German agent, who hid himself in a haystack on the frontier of Finland.

The conference, the proletarian delegates and bourgeois guests, all alike, listened with rapt attention to the message
from Petrograd, composed by John Reed in New York, and applauded vigorously when the chairman finished reading the spurious document by raising the slogans "Long Live the Great October Revolution", "Long Live Comrade Lenin." A new god and a new religion demanded the devotion of the revolutionary proletariat. I joined the ranks of the faithful in quest of the Utopia.

As no business could be transacted in an atmosphere surcharged with whipped-up emotion, the conference adjourned after the chairman's speech. The next session was addressed by fraternal delegates—a lawyer from Argentina, a poet from Peru, a professor from Columbia, so on and so forth. The Mexican invitees preferred to remain silent observers, only the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, who was an avowed Socialist, made a short speech, presumably in behalf of all, to reaffirm their faith in liberty and social justice. I noticed that the Rector of the University, Maestro Casas, vigorously nodded his big head to endorse the applause. Happy smiles replaced the scowl of suspicion which had until then lingered on the proletarian visage of the conference.

A provincial delegate, with a burly figure in unkempt clothes, rushed to the rostrum and, before the chairman could intervene, began speaking in a resonant voice to congratulate the distinguished guests upon the wisdom of their historic resolution to leave the sinking ship of the bourgeois social order and jump into the stormy sea of revolution to join the proletariat. It was a typically Mexican melodrama; the speaker dashed back to the midst of the audience, to be found presently locked in the embrace of Don Manuel, the Socialist Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, the two kissing each other. All restraint broke down, riotous emotion overwhelmed, for the moment at any rate, the die-hard prejudice of class consciousness. There was an all-round handshaking, back-slapping, embracing and kissing. The climax was reached when Charlie called on everybody to sing the Internationale. The Mexicans are a musical people; all joined in. Western music is distinct from poetry; one can sing a tune without knowing the verbal text associated with it. I was the only unmusical person. Even years after, I could never join in singing the Internationale.
The provincial delegate who opened the scheme was Plutarco Elias Calles, a village school teacher in the northern State of Sonora. His meteoric rise in the political firmament of Mexico began with the dramatic gesture in the conference. Though an agitator by temperament, Calles was a man of some education, intelligent, capable of initiative, and therefore qualified for leadership. I had corresponded with him previously for the preparation of the conference. Now I made his personal acquaintance.

The conference concluded with the election of the Executive Committee and office-bearers. For the first time, the Socialist Party of Mexico ceased to be a small, ineffective group confined to the capital, and became a national organisation. But the ghost of anarcho-syndicalism still haunted it. According to the new Constitution, the enlarged organisation was to be called *El Partido Socialists de Mexico* (The Socialist Party of Mexico). Proletarian conscience objected to the nationalist connotation of the name. It was argued that, Socialism being international, the Socialist Party could not be limited by the frontiers of a particular country. After a good deal of wrangling, a compromise formula was found in a verbal subterfuge. The alternative name chosen was *El Partido Socialists Regional Mexicano*, The make-believe was that the term "regional," being geographical, did not contradict the international character of the socialist movement. As it were to emphasise the point, I, a non-Mexican, was unanimously elected the General Secretary of the new party.

The conference passed a resolution to set up a Committee which would convene, as soon as possible, a Regional International Conference with the object of forming the Latin American League. The Committee was composed of the fraternal delegates from the South and Central American Republics plus several Mexicans. As the General Secretary of the Mexican Socialist Party which sponsored the plan, I was also elected Secretary of the convening committee. It was to have its headquarters in Mexico City. In the first meeting of the committee, there were serious disagreements about the composition of the projected Latin-American Conference and League. The majority favoured a Regional Socialist International.
They admitted that many non-socialists would participate in a moment for the defence of liberty and democracy against Yankee Imperialism, but apprehended opportunist deviations unless the organisation was controlled by proletarian revolutionaries. No decision was made except that the possibilities must be explored on the spot, and for that purpose I should undertake an extensive tour which, however, could not be done before the initial period of the reorganisation of the Mexican Socialist Party. Meanwhile, the delegates from Central and South America returned to their respective countries, where local committees were to be set up, mainly to popularise the plan.

Before the provincial delegates dispersed, the Executive Committee met to discuss with them the question of setting up party organisations in the various States of the Republic. On that occasion, Calles stood head and shoulders above his fellow delegates. He staggered the Committee by proposing that the Socialist Party should lead an armed uprising in Sonora with the object of overthrowing General Obregon from the Governorship of the State. When it was pointed out that Obregon commanded a considerable army and was suspected of getting help from North America, Calles impetuously, but very indiscreetly, retorted that exactly for that reason the Federal Government should secretly support the anti-Obregonista movement which he could organise and lead.

It was a very exciting perspective; but would it not be too big a bite for a party still to be organised? "Comrade General Secretary," Calles addressed me personally, "that's how things are done in Mexico." Could he have some time to speak with me personally in detail, so that I saw how the ground lay? Of course, I would be delighted if the Committee authorised me. The permission was granted, and the same evening I came to know intimately the village schoolmaster who was to be the President of the Republic four years later.
CALLES GAME to dinner. My mode of living was not exactly proletarian; a house in the plutocratic Colonia Roma furnished with green satin-covered Louis XV furniture, was hardly the proper place to receive a rather exhibitionist son of the soil. However, I had no other place, and the confidential talk with Calles could not be held in a cafe under public gaze and within hearing of the inquisitive. Scandalising my next-door neighbours, I kept no liveried servants—my pet abomination. A healthy and handsome pure-blooded Mexican woman was my major domo. She was an excellent cook, did all the marketing and, with the help of a muckacho (boy), kept clean the two-storied house with eight rooms full of furniture designed to catch dust. In defence of my taste, let it be mentioned that I did not buy a single piece of furniture; the house was rented furnished without my having seen it previously.

I told Maria, my cock, that a Mexican gentleman from Sonora was coming to dinner and she should prepare the most suitable dishes. She did her very best, although the guest seemed to disappoint her—a puro India (a full-blooded son of the soil) did not impress her as of any importance. She was very proud of my radical American friends who flirted with her furiously. But I saw to it that none went too far, the respectability of the establishment must be maintained. Calles evidently relished the classical national dishes excellently prepared with no limitation to the amount of chillis. The tortillas (chapatis made of maize flour) were also first rate.

I wanted to put the wild man from Sonora in a good mood. He was rather offensive the day before in the meeting of the Party Executive, when he insinuated that, being a foreigner,
I did not understand the Mexican way of doing things. But he instantly felt that he had made a *faux pas*, because many moustaches moved indignantly. Had I not ignored the unintentional rebuff, a vigorous protest against the objectionable remark of the uncouth delegate from Sonora and a formal vote of confidence in *el compañero Indio* would have been quite on the cards. That would have been very awkward for impetuous Galles, who only wanted to be vehement.

The first thing he did when we sat down for the expected conversation after dinner, was to offer a profuse apology, in the classical style of a Spanish gentleman, for his unpardonable (that was the word he used) behaviour the day before. Upon my reassuring him that it was of no importance, he plunged into a detailed exposition of his plan, which was to culminate in his being appointed the governor of the State of Sonora. I was struck by its plausibility, shrewdness as well as naivety. The then Governor, General Obregon, was known to be aspiring for the Presidency of the Republic; he was backed by the Americans, who did not like Carranza's foreign policy. Sonora had a common land frontier with the United States. The geographical situation of the State was very favourable for the building up of an anti-Carranzista force with American aid. Therefore, President Carranza should see the necessity of removing his rival from the strategic position.

I asked what could the Socialist Party do in the matter? dalles' reply was devastating: Was I not the secret adviser of the President, and was it not for that reason that I was elected the General Secretary of the Socialist Party? I was amazed by the working of the Mexican political mind, and was actually on the point of admitting that Galles was right the day before. He was so very full of his own ideas that he won't let me speak; I was only to listen to the confident exposition of his plan.

With the very plausible pretext that Obregon was a presidential candidate, Carranza should relieve him of the army command and governorship of Sonora so that he could be free to conduct the campaign for his election to the Presidency of the Republic. A powerful man like Obregon was indeed to be expected to act according to the tradition of the country—to defy the order and start a revolution. Calles was
prepared for the eventuality; he could organize an anti-Obregonist uprising with popular support, provided that the Federal Government backed him. In that case, he would be the obvious Federal nominee for the governorship of the State. He clinched the issue by inviting me to visit Sonora to see personally how the ground lay before I put up his plan for the approval of President Carranza.

It was all very exciting. Would it not be going beyond my depth? The spirit of adventure prevailed. The plan might be fantastic; but what had I to lose if it failed? Nothing. In any case, I was sure to be richer by some experience of the kind of things we had dreamt of doing in India, but could not. The worst would be that I must flee from Mexico in search of safety in some other land. The dice were cast. Calles left the capital a couple of days later. I was to follow him soon afterwards.

The Party Executive pranced like a pack of war horses when I reported my conversation with Calles. The Socialist Party was no longer a small group of propagandists. Before long, it would be leading an actual armed insurrection and one of its members might soon be the Governor of a State where the New Social Order would naturally be established. Two members of the original group, both hefty workmen, volunteered to accompany me to Sonora, their rough proletarian manners ill-concealed an affectionate attachment—anxiety for my safety. Revolution might be a dream, but I had made friends.

Lest there might be any suspicion in the Obregonista camp, it was publicly announced that, in pursuance of the resolution of the Conference of the Socialist Party, the new General Secretary would undertake an extensive tour of the Republic. The Orizaba, the seat of textile industry, the all-important port of Veracruz and the petroleum fields along the Gulf coast were included in the tour programme. All the places were far away from Sonora, which was to be visited rather incidentally, so as not to arouse any suspicion.

My destination was not easily accessible; travelling thereto was still rather hazardous. There was no direct railway connection. One had to travel either through the U.S.A. or by sea along the Pacific coast. The first route was the safer and shorter in time; but it was closed for me. Remembering the harrowing
experience of the journey on a coasting vessel from Puerto Mexico to Veracruz, I was unwilling to repeat it on the Pacific coast. The alternative was to travel overland under military convoy. Anyhow, I must discuss Calles\(^1\) plan with friends in high quarters, and ultimately the President's connivance, if not consent, was to be obtained before any step was taken. It turned out to be much less difficult than I expected. The plan was enthusiastically received at the army headquarters. General Obregon was becoming too dangerous to be tolerated much longer. He must be removed from Sonora, where he could be in constant touch with the North-Americans and build up a large army with money freely supplied by the Texas Oil Company. The political aspect of the plan must be discussed with Don Venustiano.

Another interview with the President was due, for me to report the result of the Socialist Conference as regards the projected Latin-American League. The other plan, immediately of so much greater importance, could be submitted incidentally on that occasion. As thereafter I was to see the President quite frequently, the formalities of interview were dispensed with. We met at Don Manuel's place for dinner, which was not publicly announced even as a social function.

Don Venustiano naturally was more interested in Calles' plan than in my report of the rather slow progress of the Latin-American League. Of course, the constitutional head of the State could not speak frankly with reference to the plan of an armed insurrection against one of his subordinates. But he agreed that a popular campaign for the election of State Governors should be encouraged wherever law and order were restored, and added that, thanks to General Obregon's able administration, Sonora was certainly ready for the establishment of a constitutional regime. The Federal authorities would order the election in Sonora, and direct General Obregon to take all measures calculated to guarantee the fullest freedom for a constitutional election campaign. That was clear enough. The President's constitutional correctness was the green signal for the anti-Obregonist movement. I was learning how things were done in Mexico.
After a few days, the Federal Government issued a decree ordering election of the Governor of Sonora. The ground given was that General Obregon, being a candidate for presidency, should be relieved of other responsibilities so that he could be free to begin his election campaign well ahead of time. The Socialist Party promptly announced its decision to contest the election in Sonora, and to send its General Secretary, accompanied by two senior members of the Executive Committee, to select on the spot the most suitable candidate and inaugurate the election campaign. The subterfuge of visiting the inaccessible northern State incidentally in course of a general tour was no longer necessary. Anyhow, I was advised by the particular department of the Federal Government to keep away from the ports or any other proximity to the frontier. My security there could not be guaranteed. Presumably, the plan of kidnapping me was still being pursued by my old persecutors.

I decided to travel directly to Sonora overland, under military convoy to be provided by local Field Commanders, The route ran through the rich central States of Aguascalientes and Durango in which are situated the famous silver mines of Mexico. Thereafter, it ran along the massive range of the Sierra Madre, which is called the spine of the country, and constitutes the barrier between the two large northern States of Sonora and Chihuahua. The latter was still controlled by the bandit chief Pancho Villa, who held his fortress, thanks to the powerful patronage of the American owners of rich cattle ranches and extensive lead, zinc and silver mines and refineries, situated in the State. Aguascalientes (Hotwaters), striding on the southern spurs of the Sierra Madre, is studded with hot springs which in the colonial days attracted gouty Spanish aristocracy and subsequently at the time of Diaz used to be the fashionable Spa of the New World.

During the five years of savage civil war, both the rich central States were deserted to rack and ruin. So deep in the interior of the land, the foreign owners of the mines could not count upon any effective protection from the Government of their respective countries. They escaped to save their lives, leaving behind valuable properties which were plundered and
pillaged by professional bandits who alone benefited from the condition of lawlessness and disorder created by the civil war. Only of late, garrisoned by Federal troops, the central mining States were slowly returning to normal conditions. Though the refineries were still idle, some of the mines had begun working, providing employment to an increasing number of displaced and destitute peasants of the neighbourhood.

The proletarian hearts of my two colleagues went out in sympathy for the comrades labouring there without protection. They insisted that we must stop for some days to hold meetings, organise a trade union and establish a branch of the Socialist Party. I was not sure how the local military Commanders would react to such "revolutionary" activities; but at the same time, it was impossible to oppose the legitimate function of the self-appointed liberators of the toiling masses. They were simple-minded fanatics who could not be expected to observe the delicate rules of revolutionary political conspiracy. However, a few days' break in an arduous journey was welcome. While my conscientious colleagues went about their revolutionary duty, I preferred to take it easy.

The deserted mining villages, protruding pitheads overgrown with tall grass and rusting refineries behind crumbling walls, situated in valleys, were surrounded by thickly wooded mountain slopes, hot springs gushing out here and there. I was reassured by the local military Commandant that the neighbourhood was completely clear of bandits, who had withdrawn northwards into the higher and more inaccessible ranges of the Sierra Madre. In a few days, when continuing the journey, we should have to come within the radius of their murderous operations.

The jefe (local military Commander) was a jovial full-blooded Indian in the middle forties. In the typical Mexican manner, he welcomed me as a brother, and a fellow-fighter for the cause of revolution. His confession of faith afforded the opening for a political conversation. Referring to the activities of my colleagues, I diffidently hoped that the jefe did not mind; we had no intention of embarrassing him. He stopped my apologetic explanation with a majestic wave of a powerful arm, as if to emphasise the staggering exclamation: "Why
should I mind? We are all Bolsheviks! " To absorb the shock, I pretended ignorance. What was Bolshevism? I was only a Soaalist. The retort was still more amazing: “I don't know what is Socialism; but I am a Bolshevik, like all patriotic Mexicans.” Evidently, noticing that I was perplexed, the unexpected follower of Lenin helped me out with an explanation: “The Yankees do not like the Bolsheviks; they are our enemies; therefore, the Bolsheviks must be our friends, and we must be their friends. We are all Bolsheviks.”

Since that memorable conversation, nearly a year passed before I met the first original Russian Bolshevik. He was very pleased to hear that the echo of his resounding cult had penetrated deep into the wilds of Mexico so much ahead of him. But I was vaguely disturbed. Could revolutionary international solidarity be reduced to such a simple equation of passion? Many years of experience and reflection ultimately enabled me to discover the great disproportion of passion and principle inherent in the revolutionary faith.
SONORA is the second largest State of the Republic of Mexico. It has a four-hundred mile land frontier with the States of Arizona and New Mexico of the North-American Union. Running practically the whole distance through desert country, the frontier could be nowhere clearly demarcated nor properly guarded. The result was that there was brisk smuggling of all sorts of goods both ways.

Under the influence of President Wilson's Secretary of State, William Jenning Bryn, a fundamentalist Christian, drinking of alcohol had just (in 1918) been prohibited in the United States. But the forbidden fruit was in great demand, particularly in the cattle-breeding ranches and mining camps in the States of Texas, New Mexico and Arizona. Therefore, a voluminous illegal trade in alcohol was carried on across the unclearly demarcated and badly guarded northern border of Sonora. Large quantities of alcohol entered the State through the small ports on the Gulf of California, Not being a contraband in Mexico it travelled freely on the railway from Guaymas, the Gulf port, to the frontier town of Nogales. The railway ran through Harmosilla, the capital of the State. Though carried on by Chinese, Japanese and Mexican nationals, the lucrative traffic was financed by Americans. Before long, it nearly provoked American armed intervention in Mexico, and incidentally contributed to Calles' political fortune.

My visit to Sonora was not very eventful. Sparsely populated, there was little life of any kind, Harmosilla, in those days, was a glorified village. All important Mexicans lived in the frontier town of Nogales. Calles pointed out that fact as guaranteeing the success of his plan. The southern three-quarters of the huge
State were mountains, the fertile valleys inhabited by the aboriginal children of the soil, who only wanted to be left in peace. There was plenty of mineral resources still to be exploited. They were owned by Americans under long-term concessions given by the Diaz regime. Besides smuggling, cattle-breeding was the other considerable economic activity. The huge cattle ranches were mostly owned by Americans, who behaved like lords of the land.

In Mexico City, I had been advised not to venture too far to the north. We travelled through a major part of the State to reach the capital. There, a public meeting was held to announce the establishment of a branch of the Socialist Party, and that its leader Calles was a candidate for election to the governorship of the State. He made a thundering speech, demanding that the nacientes and mineral riches should be confiscated by the State according to the Quirretano Constitution. He also demanded an end of the military rule and its early replacement by a civil government. The audience applauded lustily when he concluded by declaring that, if elected Governor of the State, he would forthwith set the peons free from serfdom by carrying through a drastic agrarian revolution.

The forthcoming election did not seem to arouse any general enthusiasm. On my expressing surprise at the lack of popular interest Calles confided that there would be no contest, because there was no other political party in the State to set up a rival candidate; then, with a broad grin, the astute politician added that therefore he had hit upon the device of a constitutional election. The thin rural population was still largely under the influence of the Catholic clergy, who did not like the military because the officers allowed the soldiers to plunder the churches. But anti-clericalism preached by all Mexican revolutions ever since the glorious days of Juarez had found faint echo even in the remotest village. That was more so in Sonora, which had been for years the scene of the bitterest civil war between Juaristas and the imperialists in the fifties of the nineteenth century. The minority of the rural population, affected by the revolutionary anti-clerical propaganda, was under the influence of village school teachers, and Calles was their leader. If it came to an actual election, the parish priest and the village
school teacher between them would lead the rural flock to the polling booths to vote for the democratic candidate. As there would be none other than Calles, his election was certain, if it did come to voting, he repeated. Evidently he did not believe that there would be any. I wondered how he could be so sure; there was no civilian rival, but the military was still the master of the situation. Would they let an openly anti-Obregonista candidate for the State Governorship have a walk-over?

My misgiving was removed the next day, when a number of officers of the local garrison met me clandestinely on the invitation of Calles. They were all subordinates of General Obregon and owed allegiance to their chief. But they were all Bolsheviks! They had heard from Calles that a Bolshevik Party of Mexico had been formed to fight Yankee Imperialism. As officers of the revolutionary army, they must pledge their support to the candidate of the new party. The memory of the conversation with the jift at Aguascalientes still fresh in memory, I said no more than thankfully accept the pledge in behalf of the Bolshevik(?) Party of Mexico.

On my return to the Federal capital, I was surprised to learn that Calles was not over-optimistic when he repeatedly made the enigmatic remark: “If it actually came to an election.” While a conspiracy was being hatched to oust him from his stronghold, General Obregon had resigned his governorship of Sonora and shifted the headquarters of his army command to Mexico City. That was indeed a bold and puzzling move. A representative of the English section of El fferaldo de Mexico was deputed to have an interview with the General. He was very frank; he was grateful to Don Venustiano for relieving him of all official responsibility so that he could prepare for the coming presidential election campaign. What would be his programme? Agrarian revolution at home, and friendly relations with all abroad. He did not believe that Germany was going to win the war, and had no idea about what was happening in Russia. Therefore, his immediate plan was to go abroad with the object of obtaining first-hand knowledge of things, so that, if entrusted to guide the destiny of the Mexican people> he would be able to prove himself
worthy of the trust. It was a clever diplomatic, non-committal statement, which only let loose a spate of rumours.

Amazing developments took place behind the scene. General Obregon advised the President to appoint Plutarco Elias Calles his successor as the Governor of Sonora. His argument was that there would be no contest; so, why the mere formality of an election? It amounted to abdication. But Obregon demanded a price: he should be appointed Ambassador in Washington. For that proposal also, he offered very plausible reasons: Whatever might be the result of the war in Europe, the United States of America would survive it as the greatest Power of the World; Mexico would be well advised to cultivate the friendship of the powerful neighbour; rightly or wrongly, Washington was prejudiced against Don Venustiano and all others known to be in his confidence; therefore, one who had disagreed with his foreign policy would be the best choice for the diplomatic post in Washington; he would have the greatest chance of regaining the confidence of the powerful neighbour. As Carranza could not be expected to make up his mind immediately on such a serious matter, the accommodating rival offered to remove himself from the scene for a time, if the President gave him leave and the permission to go abroad for rest and medical treatment.

It was a veritable case of the Greek meeting the Jew—each trying to outwit the other which, in the context of Mexican politics of those days, meant stabbing the rival in the back. Out-manoeuvred for the time being at home, Obregon wanted to try his luck abroad. Carranza, on his part, was prepared to take the risk of letting his rival go beyond his reach to acquire greater control of the situation at home. His motto was: Be master of the present; the future will take care of itself. It was a gamble with aristocratic recklessness, most probably encouraged to a degree by my revolutionary purposiveness. Ultimately, Carranza lost—nearly two years after I left Mexico. I did not lead him up the garden path; he had judged for himself and acted accordingly. Yet, had I remained in Mexico, I would have stood by him—until the bitter end. The old proud aristocrat, in his late sixties, was butchered while he was a fugitive.
General Obregon having resigned and been granted leave to go abroad for rest and medical treatment, Plutarco Elias Calles was appointed the Governor of Sonora. The Federal Government declared that in the absence of any other candidate, it was not necessary to hold the election. The news was flashed in an extra of *El Heraldo de Mexico*; the Socialist Party celebrated its first great victory with jubilation. The credit for it ought to be ascribed to the astuteness and audacity of Calles. But the party doctrinaires celebrated it as the victory of Marxist realism over anarcho-syndicalist utopianism. If that was so, in the last analysis, the credit belonged to me. I disowned it, not in, mock modesty but honestly. As a new convert to the Marxist faith, I believed in the sovereignty of objective conditions and the inevitability of historical developments. I might have been an instrument, but things would have happened exactly as they did, anyhow.

Calles was a stormy petrel. Within a matter of months, since his meteoric rise from the lowly station of a village school master to the governorship of the State, he presented his patron, the Federal Government, with a serious problem. It was the choice between the risk of a possible American armed intervention and a climb down in an international conflict which would impair the prestige of an intransigent patriotism.

Obscure men suddenly coming to the top as soldiers and politicians was not unprecedented in Mexico. But the elevation of an avowed Socialist to the governorship of the second largest State of great strategic importance was a novelty. For Americans having vested interests in the economy of Sonora, as holders of mining concessions or cattle-breeders or smugglers of alcohol across the frontier, it was like a red rag to the bull. They gnashed their teeth, cursed and spat in the true style of the Wild West he-man. But they could do nothing against the outrage until the "red upstart" gave them an opening to hit. Calles, on the other hand, itched to do something spectacular to justify his dramatic rise to power. A go at the generally disliked Yankee was sure to be popular.

The prohibition in the United States had contributed to the rise of a chain of bars along the frontier on the Mexican side. Every night crowds of "he-men" from the mining colonies
and cattle ranches of Arizona and New Mexico frequented the
drinking dens and the brothels which had sprung up around them.
Violence and vulgarity knew no bounds; drunken brawls frequently
ended in murder. Such a scandal should not be tolerated in any
civilised country. But it could not be stopped without incurring the
wrath of those who made money from the sinful traffic in alcohol. The
traffic passed through the State of Sonora. To control or forbid it,
therefore, was within the legal competence of the State Government.
No effective control being possible in the absence of an efficient and
incorruptible civil administration, the governor issued a decree
prohibiting supply of alcohol to the bars along the frontier, which
facilitated wholesale breach of law on the other side. Calles thought
that his morally justifiable action would be regarded also as a gesture
of good-neighbourliness.

The righteous indignation of those making money out of sin knew no
bounds; they vigorously protested against the dictatorial
encroachment on the freedom of trade, and appealed to their home
government to protect the American citizens' legitimate right in a
lawless land. Confident of the powerful protection, which had of late
been frequently forthcoming whenever demanded, the alcohol
smugglers openly defied the decree prohibiting their trade. Dispensing
with their Chinese and Mexican employees, the American owners
announced that they would themselves convoy the cargo of alcohol
from the port of Guaymas to the frontier of the United States. The
railway which carried the contraband was also owned by an American
company. The alcohol smugglers and railway officials co-operated in
the defiance of the law of the land, practically demanding extra-
territoriality.

It appeared that the new governor had taken too big a bite. The
Federal Government could not help him much, and the Socialist Party
still less. The former sent a diplomatic note of protest to Washington;
and the latter invoked the international solidarity of the proletariat—
and called upon their comrades on the other side of the frontier to rise
in a mighty revolt against capitalist greed and imperialist arrogance.
Both were equally futile. In that desperate position, Calles got support
from an unexpected quarter. The army which was
still formally under the command of the deposed General Obregón went over to him, to teach the insolent Yankees a good lesson. Now as General, Calles, the Governor, ordered the seizure of the cargoes of alcohol wherever found throughout the State, and to arrest all who claimed proprietorship or resisted the enforcement of the law. The army took the matter in hand; it was a little war against the traditional enemy. The officers rewarded their patriotism with fills of free drinks. A large number of American citizens were arrested; a few might have been killed; they were all armed. The yellow press on the other side of the frontier carried stories of atrocity.

The fat was in the fire. The perennial spectre of American armed intervention again cast its shadow athwart the country. Effective resistance was out of question; on the other hand, something must be done to save face. Otherwise, the demonstrated weakness of the Federal Government might encourage revolts against it. Carranza rose to the situation, to overcome the crisis with a stroke of statesmanship. In recognition of his patriotic services during the short period of his governorship, he invited General Calles to join the Federal Government as the Minister of Labour, and requested Obregón to return to his post and set things in order to the satisfaction of all concerned.
CALLES' DRAMATIC elevation to Federal Ministership did not surprise anyone outside the Socialist Party. Meteoric rise of obscure persons in the political or military firmament was a frequent phenomenon in revolutionary Mexico. It happens whenever a country is in the process of social churning. Chaos provides equal opportunity to all, although it may often be seized by incompetence. But fortuitous prominence does not last long, particularly when there is no established political order or a popular party to patronise mediocrity. Revolution may eat her own children, but she also breeds non-conformism and heresy. Calles was a child of the revolution. In his case, original obscurity was not associated with competence, nor was mediocrity the sanction for his popularity. But history being a harmony of accidents, the obscure school teacher might or might not have risen to prominence.

Success is the measure of greatness, and men greater than the successful great men are known to have preferred unpopularity to paying the price of success. Calles certainly had his merits, which however might not have raised him to prominence and power if he was not helped by a fortuitous combination of circumstances. And these latter were created by romanticists who believed that they were making history. I must plead guilty of having been one of them, although in those days I called myself a revolutionary, contemptuous of romanticism; I did not know that an honest revolutionary was a romanticist, revolution being a romantic adventure.

Months before Calles appeared on the scene as the stormy petrel of Mexican politics, the way to his rise to power had been prepared, historically so to say, by Don Manuel's good
services in persuading President Carranza to patronise my political experiment. In the first formal interview, he had expressed his desire to appoint a Labour Minister and enquired if a suitable candidate could be found amongst the Socialists. That evidently was a gesture meant to grant an official recognition to the nascent Socialist Party and consequently raise its status in the public life of the country. But for the predisposition to patronise the Socialist Party, President Carranza need not have taken any notice of the obscure school teacher, and might have treated him differently when with impetuosity he made a nuisance of himself.

Obregon had to be reinstated in his position of vantage, and the powerful northern neighbour could not be pleased by the promotion of an upstart who had dared encroach upon the vested interests of American citizens. Carranza was intensely anti-American; but he was a Spanish colonial artistocrat, and as such could have no genuine sympathy for social revolution, not even of the liberal variety. But he was a bold gambler, who played with large stakes. His daring opportunism gave me an opportunity to make an equally opportunist experiment in Leninist revolutionary strategy, even before I met the arch-revolutionary opportunist.

My association with Carranza was an interesting experience. The difference in age and our respective stations in life precluded formal social relation. Nevertheless, there developed a mutual trust although no personal intimacy was cultivated. During the latter part of my sojourn in Mexico, we met frequently, subject to the socio-political convention and diplomatic inhibition, which stood between the President of a bourgeois republic and the General Secretary of a Socialist Party still outside the pale of respectability. Carranza's usual attitude of dignified reserve did not prevent me from speaking freely.

Many years later, it dawned on me that an affinity of cultural traditions made the strange relation possible. It was a typical case of noblesse oblige. Carranza personified the Christian culture of the European Middle Ages, which seems to have appealed to the Brahmanical tradition of intellectual aristocracy. My socialist conscience struggled hard to deny to myself the
empirical truth that, while I felt at home in the company of a feudal aristocrat, the uncouth comrades never ceased to embarrass me. It was not a case of bourgeois snobbishness, which I detested heartily. The conventionalities of bourgeois culture were assiduously practised by the Mexican middle-class. I found them quaint, artificial and sometimes devoid of sincerity. Curiously enough, they were regarded as the badge of respectability and aped by the avowed enemies of the bourgeois society.

For example, *La Mujer Modenta* publicly smoked black cigarettes and was generally suspected of indulging in other kinds of libertinism; but at the same time, she meticulously simulated the *grande dame* by letting men kiss her hand instead of shaking it. And drawing room revolutionaries, who breathed fire against the bourgeoisie through bad poems, passionately pressed her finger-tips to their lips which evidently wanted so much more. So-called intellectuals, embittered by failure in life, fiercely preached anarchism, but punctiliously wore celluloid collars, often soiled, as the badge of respectability. On Sunday mornings, they would compromise their anti-clericalism to accompany piously catholic wives to the Church. On that occasion, they never failed to put on frayed striped trousers, shabby cutaway morning coats and aged top hats. White spats worn on black shoes and yellow gloves, carried in hand, completed the conventional armour of the disguised revolutionary knight-errants. Even the Marxian beard of Santibanez covered an equally Marxian soiled shirtfront. The hallmarks of bourgeois respectability also penetrated the proletarian ranks. Executive members of the Socialist Party attended committee meetings, not to mention formal social gatherings, in conventional Sunday clothes.

The experience of these curiosities sowed in my mind the seeds of heterodoxy and heretical thoughts which shocked the new-found faith. Although the fanaticism of a convert quietened conscience and silenced doubts, I could never be a fully orthodox faithful. The theoretical deviations of my Mexican days might be explained by an inadequate knowledge of the scriptures. The ideal of social justice was attractive by itself. One need not swallow the whole Marxist system in order to be
an advocate of social revolution. My approach to Marxism was neither political nor economic; it was philosophical. Several years later, a brilliant Russian Marxist expressed the opinion that any original contribution to the Marxist thought must be to its philosophical aspect, and that barring Plekhanov and Lenin, no European had until then made any. He expressed the opinion in course of a discussion of my doubt about the finality of economic determinism and the relation of culture to classes or to class antagonisms.

The striking phenomenon of proletarian revolutionaries cultivating conventional respectability was not confined to Mexico. I was surprised to find it also in Europe, where proletarian class consciousness was more a matter of intelligent judgment than of elementary emotion. If the ruling class puts its stamp on the pattern of culture, the proletariat must necessarily be bourgeois, culturally. That seemed to be the empirical truth which precluded the possibility of a new culture, new forms of human relations, new moral ideals, resulting from the proletariat capturing political power. Those reflections drove me to the conclusion that only the tradition of an older, more spontaneous, less conventional culture could enable one to reject the artificialities and vulgarities of the bourgeois social order, and look beyond for a richer pattern and higher ideals of human culture which will not be constricted by any class prejudice. Concretely, I felt that an aristocrat, intellectually emancipated from the prejudices of his class, might be a more disinterested and culturally more Dionysian social revolutionary than the most passionately class-conscious proletarian. In other words, intellectual aristocracy, being a common human heritage, could alone lay down the foundation of a really new social order.

It took years for these unorthodox ideas to develop in my mind. Meanwhile, I believed politically according to my new faith, a staunch socialist, as much as any, and getting redder every day. But socially and in personal relations amongst friends, I tried to live up to my heretical views; the healthy contagion was encouraging. In Mexico, we built up a small cosmopolitan community of free human beings. Later on, in Europe, communist friends taunted me as more European than
the natives, when I criticised their bourgeois habits and prejudices. I believed that the characteristically European culture reached its high water mark in the eighteenth century. It was the age of intellectual aristocracy, which heralded all the revolutions which took place since then. The nineteenth century was the age of the bourgeoisie; Karl Marx was a bourgeois; and so, therefore, were his disciples and followers.

The Mexican Socialist Party, rather its Executive Committee, recovered from the surprise at one of its members' elevation to Federal Ministership by giving him a banquet in the typically bourgeois fashion. I intervened to prevent the indiscretion of inviting the President of the bourgeois republic to a politically motivated social function of the Socialist Party. The spectacular march of events during the short period of half a year naturally turned the heads of the more ambitious socialist leaders. Obscure agitators, if not actual outcasts, of yesterday, they behaved as if they were the masters of the situation. Some of them went to the extent of proposing that President Carranza should be asked to join the Socialist Party to prove his bona fides. However, supported by the moderating influence of Santibanez and Don Manuel, I managed to restrain the impetuosity of the wild men without dampening their enthusiasm.

Don Manuel.deputised for the President as the official guest at the Socialist party banquet. He drew thunderous applause by mentioning in the course of his after-dinner speech that, soon after the Socialist Conference, Don Venustiano wanted to appoint a Minister of Labour and had enquired if a suitable candidate could be found amongst the Socialists. The chief guest appeared to be somewhat deflated. His dramatic rise to prominence then was not entirely due to his own merit—not a reward for the record of his short-term State Governorship. It is doubtful if he ever realised that he made rather a nuisance of himself. However, I intervened with a short speech to soothe the feelings by disowning any credit and to reassure Calles that he was in power on his own right, and none claimed it by proxi. But my sincere modesty did not seem to carry conviction with others, although Calles was satisfied. After all, he was the Minister.
A programme of legislation for the protection of labour, particularly against exploitation by foreign imperialist capital, was drawn up, of course, by the Minister in consultation with the head of the legislative branch of the State. The principles having been approved by the President and the full Cabinet, I was asked to draft the bills with the co-operation of trade-union and socialist leaders. The texts were then to be finalised by the legal experts and law officers of the Republic. One of the proposed measures was to legalise strikes to enforce the workers' demand for collective bargaining. As soon as the news leaked out, industrial centres throughout the country were swept by a wave of strikes with all sorts of demands, legitimate, imaginary, coercive. That was the Mexico of my time.

A general strike on the petroleum fields and in the neighbouring ports, from where the strategic material was exported, would create an inflammable situation. The war in Europe had reached the decisive stage. The eastern front having collapsed upon the assumption of power by the Bolsheviks in Russia, the Germans had mounted their last desperate offensive to break through in France. The least interference with the flow of supplies across the Atlantic at that crucial moment tipped the scales. Therefore, it was almost certain that, should there be any threat to stop the flow of petroleum from Mexico, U.S. marines would be landed to counteract it. As a matter of fact, ready for the emergency, war ships were cruising off the ports of Tampico and Veracruz. If the issue was forced by any rash act, the Mexican Government would be discredited because it simply had no power to prevent American marines occupying the entire oil fields.

It was an occasion for statesmanship. How to save the situation without losing face? I suggested that the Minister of Labour, vested with emergency powers, should rush to the scene to handle the crisis on the spot. Garranza was nervous to unleash the watch-dog of labour. Would the latter bear in mind that he was to bark as loud as he pleased, but not to bite? I would accompany him to see that the interests of the proletariat were protected according to the programme of the Socialist Party, without endangering the safety of the Republic. The President was reassured, and signed the decree investing
the Minister of Labour with the emergency power to bark fiercely. On
the way, something unexpected happened—very dramatic, very
Mexican.

We had to pass Orizaba—the centre of the textile industry owned by
French capitalists. There was a strike involving about 12,000 workers.
The train halted overnight; early in the morning, I went to the town to
see the local trade-union leaders and report the situation to the party
headquarters in Mexico City. I was told at the local party office that,
having heard that the Labour Minister was passing, a deputation of
 strikers had gone to the station to see him. I hurried back to find the
Ministerial Saloon surrounded by a crowd shouting slogans; presently,
the Minister appeared at the door, and started making an inflammatory
speech, in the course of which he informed the delirious audience that
he had sent for a representative of the employers to tell them what the
Government proposed to do for the protection of labour.

After a few minutes, the watch-dog of labour fiercely faced two well-
dressed men inside the saloon. The latter looked frightened and sulky
at the same time. The interview was short, but not at all sweet.
Standing majestically in front of the visitors, with one foot on a chair,
the Minister, who was also a General, barked that " the Government
of the United States of Mexico would no longer allow exploitation of
labour by foreign capital. You are hereby ordered to settle the dispute
to the satisfaction of the workers ". The employers' representatives
mumbled that the demands were unfair and exorbitant; they would
rather close down the mills. The ministerial retort was a threat to bite:
"In that case, the Government will take over and run the mills." The
visitors were dismissed with an imperious gesture. During the short
interview, the General had taken out of the holster his pistol and laid it
on the table. The handle of the weapon was decorated with a mother-
of-pearl.

I went out to meet the prospective victims on the station platform. It
was easy to persuade them to make a compromise. In their presence, I
told the strikers' delegation that the employers had provisionally
accepted their demands; therefore, the strike should be called off the
day after. The Socialist Party would carry on the negotiations for a
final settlement of the
dispute. The audience applauded the victory, and the employers shook hands with me in relief.

Calles was very much pleased with his performance. He had frightened the fellows out of their wits, so that I could come to terms with them. I wondered if the tactics would work when a more powerful and arrogant party had to be dealt with. In the first public meeting after we reached Tampico, Calles told the story of his performance at Orizaba. It immensely delighted the audience and placed them in a happy mood. No strike had as yet been declared. In a hurriedly convened meeting of local workers' leaders, I pointed out the danger of any rash action. The counsel of caution convinced them, because the workers really had no legitimate grievances, wages being higher than elsewhere in the country. I pleaded that a representative of the revolutionary proletariat was in power; he should not be embarrassed. It was just the beginning. We must not gamble. The point went home. There was no occasion for the watchdog of labour to do more than bark. The Carrazana regime survived a severe crisis and the Socialist Party gained prestige and a reputation for wise leadership.
ALTHOUGH anti-clericalism had been a major political issue ever since the days of Juarez, the Catholic Church remained a formidable power, ruling the domestic life of practically the entire population. In my time, even the wives of firebrand social revolutionaries, such as anarchists and syndicalists, were all devout Christians. They attended church service regularly, and went to the confessional. Sermons from the pulpit might be disregarded in practice; but whatever the priests whispered from the confession box was the deadly voice of a wrathful God; the penitent sinner must obey even if she was enjoined to pester the domestic life of her husband and discredit him publicly by insisting upon superstitious practices. The coercive religious institution is known to have always been used by the priesthood for political purposes.

The Qitrretarro Constitution had introduced universal suffrage; but fortunately, no general election had as yet taken place under it. Fortunately, because, given the influence of the Church on women, the latter's vote might have overthrown the liberal Constitution which had enfranchised them. It actually happened in Spain about fifteen years later. The Constitution of the short-lived Spanish Republic for the first time enfranchised the women in a European Catholic country. They promptly exercised their democratic right by voting for the restoration of the monarchy. Not used to making political judgments, the freshly enfranchised women of Spain could not have voted so unless it was done under priestly injunction whispered from the confessional throughout the country.

The democratic order in Mexico as a whole did not experience a similar counter-attack. The Obregonista insurrection
which overthrew the Carranza Government in 1920 gave some temporary hope and comfort to the Catholic Church as against the threat of a wholesale confiscation of its extensive properties, and secularisation of education decreed by the *Queretarreo Constitution*. But the reactionary interlude ended when in 1922 Calles rose to the Presidency of the Republic. He delivered a frontal attack on the Catholic Church, which had been the stoutest bulwark of the *status quo* ever since the Spanish conquest.

However, even at the time of Carranza, when the Church enjoyed only a quasi-legal position, it was a standing menace to the yet unstable democratic order. Operating through the confessional, the priesthood incited the women against their husbands who were known to be hostile to the Church. Leading members of the Socialist Party were all placed on the blacklist. None of them even conformed with the hypocritical practices of drawing-room revolutionaries aspiring for social respectability. But mostly working men themselves, their wives were ignorant and illiterate. As such, they were saturated with religious prejudices, prone to plague the menfolk under priestly instigation. A particular case of the disturbance of domestic harmony due to priestly interference gave me the occasion for an amusing experience.

Juan Baptista Flores was a member of the Executive Committee of the Socialist Party. A cobbler by trade, he was a robust artisan of the jolly mediaeval European type rather than the melancholy native Mexican. He was tall and well built, with a handsome dark face, adorned with a magnificent pair of moustaches which seemed to enhance his masculinity. As a matter of fact, he was said to be Don Juan amongst the women of his social circle. Whatever might have been his success in extra-marital relations, masculine attractiveness failed him when he had to deal with his own wife. She was the common type of female of the urban mixed race, illiterate and generally ignorant. The dark brown pigment of the skin and facial features testified to her native parentage, while influence of the faint touch of Spanish blood expressed itself in a bigoted attachment to the Church. Though she spent more time at the shrine of the Mother of Jesus than at home, her religious
bigotry and superstitious practices made the domestic life of an avowed atheist rather irksome. Flores believed and his comrades agreed that she pestered the life out of her husband on the injunction of the priest. However, the experience being the common misfortune of all revolutionaries in Catholic Mexico, Flores did not complain. But presently the pious lady precipitated a crisis in his life.

They had two or three children, and the next one was coming. As a silent protest against priestly tyranny, exercised through his ignorant wife, Flores, as he told me later, had resolved to claim the coming child for his own. The elder ones had all been properly baptised in the Church, and to avoid a domestic crisis, the irreligious father attended the ritual, though with great reluctance. Believing that there was some witchcraft in the ceremony, that it made of the child a lifelong slave of the priest, Flores was determined to rescue one to be dedicated to the cause of social revolution and human liberation.

The child was born, and the day of its baptism drew near. It seems, at the crucial moment, courage failed Flores. He was afraid of facing the pious vixen with his sacrilegious intention. He approached me for advice and help in carrying out his resolution. The mothpr would rather kill the child than allow it to be placed on the road to hell. She would run away from home with the infant and both fast unto death at the foot of the altar of the Mother of God. (With the backward Catholic masses, the Virgin Mary is the supreme deity: Christ being her son is naturally subordinate). How to avoid the scandal without Flores having to abandon his resolution? He also became dramatic. He would rather kill himself than be so humiliated. Having expressed my fullest sympathy with him, I asked for time to think over the delicate situation and plan a possible way out.

The brotherhood of American Radicals and a few selected members of the Socialist Party Executive met in a council of war to plan an assault against the tyranny of the Church. The more adventurous warriors advocated the picturesque strategy of kidnapping the child to be rescued from the witchcraft of the baptistry. But the problem of the physical survival of the infant
after its soul was saved compelled rejection of the plan. A good deal of deliberation led to the general agreement that the only feasible way out was to stage a mock baptism. There was plenty of talent amongst the American Radicals to plan the play and stage it. As a matter of fact, the very idea fired their poetic imagination and stimulated histrionic ambitions. But the initial problem had still to be solved: How was the conservative lady to be persuaded to take the infant to a new place for baptism? Old Santibanez, as the patriarch of the party, undertook the difficult task. He would not take anybody into confidence, but was sure of delivering the goods.

The plan was to hold the mock ceremony in the drawing room of my house. The play was still to be planned in detail, roles distributed and learned and the stage actually set. Pending the preparations, Santibanez accomplished his task with no difficulty. The credulous lady avidly swallowed the story that Socialism being a movement for the salvation of the poor, it had naturally received the blessing of the Pope. Accordingly, the priest of an exclusive Church in Colonia Roma had received an order from His Holiness to baptise her infant, which was the child of a leading Socialist. The purpose of the holy order was symbolic; it was to demonstrate to the proud rich inhabitants of Colonia Roma that the Kingdom of Heaven belonged to the poor and the meek and the faithful.

It was a longish room with several tall windows looking on the street, quite suitable for transformation into the semblance of an exclusive private chapel in a fashionable church. The walls were draped all in red. A guilded Louis XV table, placed against the wall at the far end of the room, served the purpose of pedestal of the Mother of God. The American Radicals' talent for stagecraft filled in all the details of an appropriate appointment, and lively imagination imitated the atmosphere of a Catholic Church. Flickering candles, soporific fumes of incense, so on and so forth, everything was there. A copy of Capital by Karl Marx, neatly wrapped in a piece of red silk cloth, occupied the place of the Holy Bible on the altar.

Charlie was the technical director of the show as well as the stage manager. He had allotted to himself the role of the presiding priest. When the curtain rose, that is to say, the main
door to the room on the entrance hall of the house was thrown open by the usher, Charlie was standing by the shrine, meticulously dressed in the appropriate black robe. But for the nose of his race, he looked every inch an ordained preacher of the Gospel on the point of saving a soul. Green satin-upholstered gilded chairs, placed in rows like pews, were occupied by leading members of the Socialist Party together with their wives, all properly clad in sombre black.

My cook Maria led Senora Flores carrying the infant into the room and conducted her down the passage in the middle to the shrine. While all the rest in the room looked sepulchral, I detected the flicker of a sardonic smile on Maria's broad handsome face. A pure-blooded child of the soil, she was a pagan, although she never missed the weekly mass. But she kept away from the confessional, suspecting that no priest was immune to the temptation of taking liberties with penitent young women. The fact is that, being a pagan, she was never tormented by the sense of sin.

Charlie played the star role like a consummate actor, to the point of touching the infant's forehead with the Book of the Gospel of the Social Revolution and punctuating the ritual by reciting a verse in the Jewish Jargon which the illiterate mother must have taken for blessings in Latin.

When it came to naming the mortal coil of the salvaged soul, there was no unanimity. The father wanted it to be named after Rabindranath Tagore. The more revolutionary and less sentimental would choose Lenin-Trotsky. The majority voted for Manavendranath. The priest, of course, had the last say: his was the voice of God. But it needed some prompting. Raising his arm over the head of the infant, in a sonorous voice, suppressing a hearty laugh, Charlie announced: “I name thee Karl Marx Flores.” There was all-round satisfaction. Only, none could divine what was going on in the mind of the poor deluded woman. Otherwise, everybody was happy, spontaneously, so much so that the priestly refrain "Amen " was drowned in a lusty " Long Live Social Revolution ".

A small crowd had gathered in the street. It was a strange spectacle in the highly respectable and conventionally religious
Colonia Roma. But the house had come to be known as the centre of all manner of mysterious activities—high politics, international intrigue, secret diplomacy, revolutionary conspiracy. As the congregation emptied out in the street, the crowd dispersed. Flores took his wife and child home—a proud father who had refused to deliver his flesh and blood to the tyranny of the Church.

The party which had put up the successful show would not disperse before giving themselves a good time. Granwich produced bottles of Chianti wine and declared: “Now let us have the Communion. Here is the blood of Jesus: Maria, you produce the flesh.” She dived into the kitchen and returned with loaves of bread and a chunk of cheese, obviously laid in beforehand on instruction. There followed a merry evening of song and dance, sustained by a supper of bread, red wine and cheese. The Red Baptism was reported lyrically in *El Heraldo* the next morning.
A Mysterious Visitor

DURING THE last months of 1918, exciting news kept on coming across the Atlantic. The Central Powers were defeated in the war. A revolution in Germany overthrew the Kaiser, who fled from the country. Defeat disintegrated the German army. The dilapidated structure of the Austro-Hungarian Empire also collapsed. The hoary Hapsburg Monarchy fell along with a number of other old dynasties which ruled in the States of the German Empire even after Bismarck. The most important event was the German revolution. In October, the Communists, who at that time called themselves the Spartakists, made an attempt to capture power and set up a Soviet Republic under proletarian dictatorship on the Russian model. All the parties, from the monarchists to the Social Democrats united against the Communists. The Social Democrats did not want the revolution to go farther than replacing the monarch by a democratic republic. The Communists were too weak to succeed by themselves, and Russia was not yet in a position to help. If the revolution went further, the victorious allied armies would have intervened, as they did in Hungary. The Spartakist leaders, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, were brutally massacred by Prussian army officers, and local insurrections were suppressed bloodily also by detachments of the defeated army.

The communist revolution held out a little longer in Munich, to be killed eventually by the Catholic Bavarian peasants refusing to feed the city. Inspired by the Russian example, the pioneers of the communist movement practically in all the capitals of Central and Eastern Europe tried to imitate what had happened in Petrograd during the "ten days that shook
the world". In Budapest, a Soviet Republic was actually set up, but also to be overthrown before long.

In the earlier months of 1919, the revolutionary storm had blown over, leaving Central Europe, exhausted by four years of war, to lick its wounds in peace. In Germany and Austria, proud old imperial regimes had been replaced by republics with Social Democratic Presidents and Governments. A Constituent Assembly met at Weimar to frame the Constitution of the German Republic, which was to be the model of the fundamental law of democracy after the war waged to end all wars. The Weimar Constitution was indeed a masterpiece of liberal jurisprudence and socialist thought. But it was not enough to consolidate the Republic. Experience proved that the letters of the law could neither reconstruct society nor revolutionise national psychology. The Social Democratic Republic could not curtail the power of the industrial magnates, and the Prussian Military caste, though, for the time, without an army to command, remained intact. Both the bulwarks of the old order enjoyed the aid and connivance of the Entente Powers, who regarded them as the only guarantee against any possible revolution. The Versailles Peace Conference carved out of the fallen Hapsburg and Romanov Empires a whole string of new national States from the Baltic to the Black Sea, to constitute the cordon sanitaire between Europe and Bolshevik Russia.

Early in summer, a ripple of the receding flood of European revolution reached the Mexican backwaters. One afternoon, Charlie and Irwin rushed in to disturb my post-matinal siesta. They were full of excitement: A Russian Bolshevik leader had secretly come to Mexico—a real Bolshevik in flesh and blood, coming straight from the land of the Proletarian Revolution. Though myself sufficiently agitated by the news, their naive enthusiasm provoked the jocular question: How did they recognize him? Did he wear a beard and carry a knife in his teeth? The others brushed aside my flippancy. No, he was clean-shaven, dressed in a best-tailored suit, and carried only a walking stick, in hand, of course. Seriously, I enquired, how did they know that he was a Russian Bolshevik, and why had he come all the way to Mexico? My terrorist blood was up:
every stranger must be suspected. He might be a British or an American imperialist spy trying to worm into our confidence with a cock-and-bull story.

My suspicious attitude somewhat deflated the enthusiasm of the bearers of the great news. They had presumably expected me to jump and dance the Carmagnole around the bed, themselves ready to join in. However, I was also curious. So I asked them to sit down and tell the story of their encounter with the intriguing apparition, so that we could soberly think what to do with him and about him.

A well-dressed man, not very young, with a dignified mien, had called at the office of *El Heraldo* earlier in the day to enquire how he could meet M. N. Roy. He looked like a foreigner, but not an Indian, although with a rather darkish complexion. He spoke excellent English with a slight American accent: but his manners and bearing were distinctly European. He said that he had come to Mexico from the U.S.A. a couple of days ago on some important business, for which he wanted to contact the Indian (he used the term *Hindu* like the Americans) General Secretary of the Socialist Party. His name was Brantwein and he was putting up in a downtown hotel. He would not give any more information about himself. In the Jewish ears of Charlie and Irwin the name sounded familiar. In those days, the general idea abroad was that all Russian Bolsheviks were Jews. On being asked why he came to the *Heraldo* office for the information he wanted, he offered an interesting explanation. While searching for the press organ of the Socialist Party, he came across a paper which had an English Section. He purchased it to get some local news; he did not know Spanish. He gathered that the editor of the English Section of *El Heraldo*, whoever he might be, had socialist sympathies, and therefore would most probably know the Secretary of the Socialist Party. Then, looking straight in the eyes of his interrogators, he challenged—was he not right? Getting up to leave and casting a glance around to make sure that there was none else in the room, he walked up close to the fascinated pair, to whisper: “Please don't worry. I am a friend—coming from Russia. Deliver the message to Roy as soon as you can. I shall call again tomorrow this time.”
Irwin with his poetic imagination exclaimed: “Gosh, he was like a snake-charmer!" No wonder that the young fellows felt like that. For them, Russia was the revolutionary heaven and a Bolshevik, a god. Was it not great luck to have been the first in the New World to meet one? I was not quite untouched by their emotional exuberance, but I did not share their worshipfulness. It would certainly be an interesting experience to meet a Russian Bolshevik and get some first-hand information about what was happening in that distant country. BUT why did he come all the way to Mexico and want to meet me of all people? And how and what did he know of me? It was all very intriguing. However, there could be no harm in seeing him. I was not afraid of snake-charmers, because I did not believe in their magical power. But it might be wise to take some precaution against any possible danger. I had been confidentially informed that there were several attempts to kidnap me.

The decision was made: I would call on Mr. Brantwein at his hotel the next evening. He was to be informed accordingly when he returned to the Heraldo office. Charlie should come out of the gate to see him off. I was to wait across the street to have a look at the man from the moon. The light-hearted Irwin joked: “His looks? If you were a girl, you would fall in love with him." Charlie's budding Bolshevik soul deplored his friend's levity and my die-hard conspiratorial habit. What could I possibly make out just from the looks of the man? But, I protested, you said that he did not look like a Bolsheyik; of course, if he really had any serious business in this strange land, he would come disguised. I wanted to find out if he was a camouflaged Bolshevik or a genuine gentleman. Once again I annoyed my friends; their revolutionary loyalty was outraged, and they deplored the lingering reactionary bent of an oriental mind. We finished the discussion and parted, pending further development of the dramatic situation, each having expectations according to his predisposition.

Mr. Brantwein called at the Heraldo office next morning at the appointed hour, and was pleased to have my message. In the meantime, something had happened, interesting though not of any great significance.
Charlie came to my house early in the afternoon. He looked serious. Unable to hold his revolutionary soul in patience, he had called on Mr. Brantwein at his hotel the previous evening after our conference. How could he forego the privilege of the company of a Bolshevik when one was right here in the city? He neither possessed the oriental calm nor had he the conspiratorial bug in his brain. He was a straightforward revolutionary and recognised another when he saw him. I requested him to tell me the story of his interview. With an air of triumph, he said that he had some stunning news for me. Mr. Brantwein was a friend of Lenin and had come to the New World as his personal emissary! How did he take a new acquaintance in confidence? Was he also endowed with the sixth sense to recognize a blood-brother whenever he met one? Charlie was piqued and plunged into the story of his interview.

Having called on him, Charlie had invited Mr. Brantwein out for dinner. The hotel dining room was a stuffy place and he did not want to be seen with the stranger. They went to our favourite Italian restaurant and had a gay evening on a bottle of Chianti. Charlie certified that the Bolshevik was a man of the world and good company. His talk was instructive as well as interesting; one could learn many things from him—all about music, painting, theatre, food. And he knew a mighty lot about the U.S.A., as if he had lived there all his life. But what about the revolution? Did he not talk about it? Of course, he wanted to, but it would not be wise to do so in public. Then, how did Charlie pick up the important news that Mr. Brantwein was a friend of Lenin? Oh well, he did say something about his past life, revolutionary activities and his associates. From what little he said, one could gather that he was one of the top Bolsheviks, having been closely associated with Lenin. I wondered at Charlie's credulity, but said nothing to shake his faith or dampen his enthusiasm. Only, my curiosity about the stranger increased. Well, only after a few hours I would be face to face with the enigma. But why was he anxious to meet me? Had he really come all the way from Russia for that purpose? To believe that he had, would pander to my vanity; but I was not vain enough. The story did not make sense.
A MYSTERIOUS VISITOR

I asked Charlie if they had talked about me the previous evening. Of course, they had. Mr. Brantwein was full of admiration for the young Hindu who had acquired an important position in the public life of a foreign country. But he would not say anything about his business with me. What he did say was that this young Hindu should go to Russia; Lenin would like him. Though still suspicious about the whole affair, I was flattered. The idea of going to Russia and be liked by the great Lenin was intoxicating.

I was waiting impatiently for the day to end. Some sort of a fever seemed to have attacked my body. I felt the blood rushing through my veins—in anticipation of meeting the first Bolshevik. For some unknown reason, I had no longer any doubt that the man was a Russian Bolshevik, and it was evident that he wanted to meet me. Whether that was his sole purpose in coming to Mexico was still to be proved. In any case, until then he did not seem to have any other business.

I had picked him up when he came out of the Heraldo office in the morning and followed him until lunch time. He wandered aimlessly, looking not at shop windows, but at the people, and returned to his hotel. A man of distinction and rather striking personality, he nevertheless appeared to be dejected, particularly so when he called at the post office and found no letter waiting for him. He was obviously disappointed and worried. A man of early middle age, hardly above forty, he rested on the walking stick from time to time. I felt like stepping up to him and asking him if he was unwell. But discretion counselled caution; I must wait until the evening. However, I returned from my imitation Sherlock Holmes expedition with a liking for the stranger and a keen desire to cultivate his acquaintance. Somehow I got the feeling that there was a good man in some distress. He probably needed help and possibly hoped to get it from me. I could not imagine what sort of help he might want, but I knew that in those days in Mexico I could do a lot to help any good cause. And presently it did turn out that my relation with the Bolsheviks began by helping them financially, instead of receiving the legendary Russian roubles as reward for the revolutionary profession.
Meeting the First Bolshevik

IN THE evening, I went to the hotel where Mr. Brantwein was staying. It was one of those gloomy places which had seen better days. The dingy lobby, though a spacious room with high ceiling, was littered with old-fashioned furniture covered with soiled and tattered pink satin. The high walls were decorated half-way up with gilt-framed mirrors which were either cracked or dusty. On the whole, a depressing atmosphere. Why did a man, evidently of means and good taste, choose such a place? Perhaps, being a stranger he did not know of any better. Now he must be thinking of changing.

Upon my telling the hall-porter whom I wanted to see, he said: “Oh, the Rumanian gentleman!” I was conducted to a door on the first floor, which opened as soon as I knocked. Mr. Brantwein ordered the attendant out and himself came forward to receive me. He did not release my hand after shaking it with warmth, not physical, and I could somehow feel it. He must have been my senior by a dozen years or so, rather heavily built, but not taller. At last, letting my hand go, he placed his on my shoulder and said: “You are very young.” I protested that it was not my fault. The answer was flattering: No, it went to my credit; I would have so much more time to realize my dream.

Another surprise—a Bolshevik calling revolution a dream. He seemed to read the puzzled feeling on my face, smiled benevolently and asked me to take a chair. I noticed another strange thing about him: he spoke and behaved like a man much older than himself. Was it a pose, or had the hardships of the life of a revolutionary left their mark? In any case, I was disturbed by the sense that there was some artificiality in the
manners of the man, not dishonest nor deceitful, but a bit pompous, and stagey.

It seems that when I carne he was dressing for dinner. The man he ordered out must have been a temporary valet hired with the room; to be more accurate, it was a suite of rooms. Having seated me in an armchair, with broken springs and shabby upholstery, Mr. Brantwein excused himself to withdraw into the bedroom and presently returned clad in a gorgeous silk dressing gown, which only accentuated the ravaged beauty of the once-upon-a-time well appointed drawing-room. If he only looked like the Bolshevik of popular imagination, the room might be taken for a replica of Russia after the revolution—the uncouth new ruler lording it over the ruins of the old order.

There was an awkward moment of silence. Mr. Brantwein did not sit, but paced up and down the room, fidgeting mentally, I surmised. But why? Suddenly, he stopped in front of me and said with disgust: “It is a filthy place. Is it not? All these gaudy ruins must be swept away by the towering rage of the proletariat.” Another surprise—such a passionate declamation from a man who looked every inch a bourgeois. He again read my thought and gave me yet another surprise: He did not know when the new world would be built, if ever. Meanwhile, it was a matter of taste.

He apologised for having seated me in that chair; it must be infested with bugs. I began to feel them crawl all over me, in imagination, of course. But it was not easy to free oneself from the uncomfortable ease of the chair. Mr. Brantwein laughed and helped me out. The ice was broken and we began conversing more to the point and more at ease.

Why did he want to see me? What had brought him to Mexico? Did he know me before he came? He parried the straight questions, and suggested postponement of any business talk until he felt the ground under his feet in this strange country. And what did he wish me to do for him in the meantime? The answer was frank and disarming: “Oh, let us be friends. I feel so very lonesome, and I am in some difficulty.” I proposed that then we should go out for dinner. He was cheered up. "That's a jolly idea; nothing like a good meal.”
Should we go to the Italian restaurant, where he had been the previous evening with a friend of mine. No, he did not like the place although the food and drink were good. Too many long-haired males there; he detested the Bohemians. We agreed to go to a more conventional place run in the French style. He would prefer German; but there was none. Mr. Brantwein again dived into his bedroom, and this time stayed there for a longer time, presumably finishing his toilet. He was a man of very fastidious habits. That much about him I had learned already.

Looking around the drawing-room, while he was absent, I found some copies of *Gale's Magazine* lying on a table. I knew the journal pretty well, and also its editor. He was what the Americans call a queer fish, and these memoirs of my Mexican sojourn ought to be spiced with some reference to him, and his fair partner.

The majority of young Americans who crossed over to Mexico to evade conscription during the war called themselves pacifists or conscientious objectors. They were mostly cranks — vegetarians, spiritualists, nature-curists, nudists, so on and so forth. Amongst them there was a man named Gale. He was a class by himself — an evangelist of the New Thought. He actually rented a room and advertised the establishment of the New Thought Church in Mexico, where every Sunday morning he preached his sermons. By physical appearance he was quite appropriate for the role—a tallish man, slightly built, with a thin pale face, adorned by a tapering red beard. If he did not wear his cut-away black morning coat while he mounted the pulpit, one could take him for Jesus Christ preaching the Sermon on the Mount. The attendance was never much more than a dozen. His wife played Magdalena by standing worshipfully at the foot of the pulpit dressed in a white flowing robe, plaits of blond hair hanging on both sides of her face. The weekly show was the talk of the town. So, out of curiosity, I went once to see it. I was told that the evangelist of New Thought published a monthly magazine named after himself

— *Gale's Magazine*.

One morning, the pair called to invite me for tea at their home. It was not a very attractive proposition, but I could not
refuse without being unnecessarily rude. Mr. Gale vouchsafed, and
Magdalena blushed agreement, that as pacifists for religious reasons,
you were deeply interested in Indian spiritualism, and would love to
hear some words of wisdom from a son of that holy land. I was in for
a boring couple of hours, but could not back out. The invitation was
for the next day, I came at the appointed hour and was received at the
doors by the charming (I thought rather insipid) Magdalena who had
bundled herself clumsily in a loose garment, presumably to be taken
for a sari. She had painted her feet red and went without shoes and
wore a garland of white flowers on the head. It looked all very
dramatic. The room was full of thick incense fumes, through which
one could dimly see pictures of gods and saints and prophets hanging
on the walls. The host led me towards one which looked like the
picture of an Indian—a handsome face with sharp features and longish
black hair, on the background of a yellowish circle which I imagined
was meant to be the halo. Standing worshipfully in front of the
picture, the host enquired if I had the good fortune of ever meeting
Lord Krishnamurti. Who was he? My naive question dumbfounded
the host, and Magdalena nearly fainted. Commiserating with my
sinful ignorance, the host informed me that on the authority of the
Great Souls who lived in Tibet, Mrs. Beasant had picked up a bright
Madrasi boy as her successor and sent him to Oxford for education.

"Well, it was getting more than I had contracted for, and there was no
sign of tea as yet. The pious pair was visibly disappointed. I was sure
that they suspected me to be an impostor, not an Indian at all. I made
no secret of my impatience and asked permission to leave. Oh no, I
must have some refreshments. Magdalena produced glasses of thin
lemonade. Did I mind the clean beverage? They did not drink tea; it
was a stimulant, not good for spiritual composure. The
accompaniment was one lettuce sandwich each. One should not eat
much in the evening. (The American petit bourgeois call the evening
meal 'tea'.) The evangelist of the New Thought was always
sermonising, completely oblivious of how others reacted. A
worshipful listener was always there in Magdalena. At last, I got up
with a firm determination to
end the ordeal. While showing me out, the host enquired if he could call on me the next morning for some business. I was curious, and consented.

The purpose of the visit next morning was indeed mundane. Could I secure from the Mexican Government a subsidy for his magazine? I was taken aback by the unabashed request. Disowning any influence with the Government for such matters, I argued that the Government was not likely to be interested in his ideas. Why not? As a pacifist, he would do anti-war propaganda, and boost Carranza in the United States where his magazine had a large circulation. Moreover, he was also a socialist and as such expected me to finance his publication out of the funds at my disposal. The insolent demand was the prelude to an out-and-out blackmail. If I did not help him, he would expose me as a British spy who had cheated the Germans of a large amount of money. I kept my temper and asked the blackmailer to leave the house quietly if he did not want me to call the police. I placed my hand on the telephone receiver, and the despicable fellow took himself away.

Thereafter, *Gale's Magazine* became a medium of vile propaganda against me. All my friends were outraged; they wanted to give the rogue a good hiding. The American Radicals were sure that he was a British spy paid to carry on propaganda to discredit me. I could not imagine why he should be so venomous against me. I had done him no harm. However, few took his campaign seriously, and the matter was soon forgotten.

Mr. Brantwein emerged from his bedroom correctly dressed for dining out. Seated comfortably in the restaurant, he looked at the menu and before giving the order asked me a strange question: Did I carry enough money? His pocket was empty. Why, he would explain in due time. On my reassuring him that there would be no difficulty in paying the bill, he ordered an elaborate meal and selected some exquisite white wine in a long bottle. For the first time I tasted Rhine wine—called *Hock* in English.

During dinner, I tried to find an opening to talk business. Curiously enough, notwithstanding his strange behaviour and
flauntingly bourgeois tastes, I had lost all suspicion about the man. Now I was eager to get under his skin. As he would not open up, I returned to the personal question: What did he know about me before he came to Mexico? The blunt answer was the greatest surprise of the evening: Nothing. He had never heard the name of M. N. Roy. It was more than a surprise: it was a rude shock. I was completely deflated. It seemed that subconsciously I had believed that an important Bolshevik had come all the way from Russia to see me for some serious business. The bubble having burst, I instantly regained composure and asked why did he then go to the *Heraldo* office to enquire how he could meet me. There must have been a slight hint of challenge in my tone. The answer was entirely irrelevant, but reassuring at the same time. He was mighty glad to have met me and sure that the meeting would yield important results. He took my hand and pressed it hard.

But I pursued the question: How did he come to know my name within two days of his coming to the country, and why was he eager to meet a man about whom he knew nothing. Mr. Brantwein laughed, then said that in the first meeting he only wanted to get over his lonesomeness. The warmth of human contact was so much more than one could have in one evening. However, as I insisted, he would tell how he discovered me, on condition that there should be no supplementary questions for the time being. We would have plenty of time to talk; what was the hurry?

He was compelled to land in an American port. He knew the country, had many friends there. But it was not safe to stay on. Mexico was the only escape. Neither he nor his friends knew anybody there. One of his friends, a leading Socialist, gave him a warning which eventually turned out to be the clue for him to discover me. The friend had told him that many young American Radicals had escaped to Mexico; he would contact them in course of time. But he must keep away from a man called Gale.

The first day in Mexico, Mr. Brantwein went in search of newspapers; they were all in Spanish except one in English called *Gale’s Magazine*. He purchased a few copies. Going
through them, he found at least one article in every issue abusing M. N. Roy, who was described as the General Secretary of the Socialist Party. Mr. Brantwein put two and two together: He had been warned against a man called Gale; now that shady man was carrying on a scurrilous campaign against another man who was a leading socialist. The latter, then, was his man, whom he must contact. But how? Not well conversant with the politics of the country, he thought it might be risky to go to the office of the Socialist Party. For his business, he must maintain a bourgeois appearance. The English Section of *El Heraldo* gave him a clue, and he followed it up—with success.

It was getting late. We left the restaurant and walked back to the hotel. Before parting, it was agreed that we must meet again the next day. Where? He did not like the hotel; would he mind coming to my house? It was perfectly safe there. He would be delighted. I suggested one of my friends from *El Heraldo* would call for him. No, he would rather see me alone. I wrote my address on a slip of paper, and advised him to take a taxi.

I returned home still mystified. The excitement of meeting the first Bolshevik kept me awake most of the night. I had spent a whole evening with him without learning anything about the purpose of his visit; but I felt that the experience was worth having. Now I must wait for developments with patience. Mr. Brantwein evidently could not be hustled.
THE AMERICAN friends were naturally impatient to hear the story of my interview with the mysterious visitor. They were also a little jealous. Why should I have all the honour and they be excluded? After all, he came to them first, and they had for years dreamt of social revolution. When I told them the next day that a whole evening with Mr. Brantwein had made me no wiser about the object of his visit, they evidently felt like having been kept out of the secret. I hastened to reassure them that whoever might be the newcomer, we were old friends. Perhaps out of a subconscious spitefulness, their revolutionary credulity appeared to yield to a critical attitude towards the exclusiveness of the visitor. The born proletarian Irwin remarked that the chap was too much of a bourgeois to be a Bolshevik; that in any case he put on airs, which did not blow in the proper direction.

The proletarian poet's picturesque language put us all back in a good mood. Well, the man was there and seemed to count on our help and friendship. Until there was definite proof of his unreliability, we could not be niggardly. After all, he might be in a dangerous position which compelled him to be over-cautious. He would, indeed, find himself in a tight corner if it was known that an emissary of Soviet Russia was in the country on some secret mission. Duly flattered that he had taken us into confidence, we should wait patiently until he showed his hand. Meanwhile, we must keep the secret so as not to endanger him.

I made the remark for the benefit of garrulous Charlie, who would find it extremely difficult to keep such a world-shaking news all to himself. It would be irresistible for him to drop at
least some broad hints to particular friends, of course with the warning that they should not talk to others. He protested, and pledged to keep the secret with the utmost rigour. Thinking that he should be rewarded for the promise of good behaviour, and also to remove any possible jealousy, I suggested that Charlie and Irwin might drop in about 9 o'clock in the evening so that we could have a bite together with the guest. That would give me a couple of hours alone with him, to get out some definite information.

Mr. Brantwein did not come until it was dark, although the precaution was pointless, because the quiet streets of the exclusive Colonia Roma were well lighted. Conspiratorial habits cultivated over a long period of time tended to overdo things, as I knew from experience. Obviously, having realised that his earlier caution was useless, Mr. Brantwein followed it up by another. I was watching out of the window of the drawing-room. Hardly the taxi had pulled up, and a man in a long coat, with the hat pulled down on his face, jumped out and ran into the small courtyard. I was at the entrance before he rang. Throwing off the coat, Mr. Brantwein remarked: “What a deserted part of the town this is; one can't come here unwatched.” I reassured him that there was no reason for anxiety, because anybody frequenting the house enjoyed the best possible protection. It was my turn to be mysterious, and the fellow-conspirator controlled his curiosity.

I had noticed that the taxi had not been paid off and enquired if Mr. Brantwein meant to keep it waiting. He did not; only he though it would be unwise to exhibit himself counting coins in the blazing electric light. Would I mind sending a servant to pay off the man. I rang for Maria and asked her to do the needful. Having seen through the window that she was speaking some energetic words to the driver, Mr. Brantwein said that she should not attract a crowd with her flirtation in public. I explained that she was scolding the driver for demanding more than his due.

Presently, the taxi rattled off, and I asked the visitor to make himself comfortable in "this house of yours", as the hypocritical formula of Spanish hospitality ran. The reply was equally cynical: “So you don't believe in these conventional
lies of modern civilisation? " In the first few minutes of our second meeting, I felt a closer kinship with the mysterious stranger. He had not yet seated himself, but was standing in the middle of the room inspecting it with a look of approval hidden with feigned criticism. He was still carrying his walking stick which I resented as bad manners for a man like him. He irritated me still more by pointing the stick towards a green satin-upholstered sofa, remarking that it was not exactly a proletarian household. The rebuke of my retort was hardly concealed: Who told you it was? In fact, it was the residence of a man who was generally known as the unofficial adviser to the President of the Republic. The ironical censor received the information with frank admiration: So I was that also, in addition to being the General Secretary of the Socialist Party? Well, that was indeed creditable for a young man in a foreign country. It was like the initial stage of a fencing duel; two strangers trying to take the measure of each other. At last, we settled down; drink was served, and the atmosphere relaxed. Mr. Brantwein appeared to be in a more communicative mood, and expressed the desire to change his hotel. That was easy; but in a better class hotel, a foreigner without anything ostensible to do was likely to attract attention before long. Strangers were suspect in a country which had suffered much from foreign intervention. Mr. Brantwein saw the point; yet, he could no longer live in that filthy place, which was beastly expensive too. Eventually, he would most probably move into a private house; meanwhile, he must take some risk, which could be minimised by clever simulation. I felt that the moment had come to catch the bull by the horns. Why not invite the mystery-man to come and stay in the house until he made his permanent arrangements? That would give me the chance to watch him from close quarters. To my great surprise, he welcomed the offer with unconcealed relief. Until then, my impression was that in public behaviour he was rather conventional, not likely to accept hospitality as soon as it was offered. But in the second meeting, I learned much more about him. In the most nonchalant manner he said that it was, indeed, rather unusual for him to accept my invitation. But, as he had mentioned the day before, he was
in some difficulty; to explain it was the least he could do as a token of sincere appreciation.

He had reached Mexico City practically penniless, he said, and did not know how long the predicament would last. One could see that the confession was a bitter pill for a proud man. Yet, once the unpleasant truth was blurted out, he seemed to feel at ease, and dropping the temporary solemnity, laughed, though still with some embarrassment. So, I had picked up a stranded man without knowing anything about him. I could still back out; he would not insist on holding me to my rash promise. I knew he was trying to be flippant in order to get over the embarrassment. Stilt I thought that it was time for some serious talk. Pretending to be offended by his insinuation, not meant to be taken verbally, I rebuked; if the place was not good enough for him, I would find a better hotel; but my hospitality was offered to a man whom I expected to like on closer acquaintance. Should the expectation prove unfounded, I would have no hesitation to throw the undesirable guest out in the streets. Mr. Brantwein laughed, for the first time without any reservation, and said: "Well, we have met our match—a Marxist materialist and a Hindu spiritualist!" Then he hastened to add that he did not know anything about the East, but had heard while living in the United States that the Hindus were a spiritualist race.

That was an opening. How long did he live in the U.S.A.? He did speak with a slight American accent. He protested that he did not speak through the nose and massacre "King's English", although he had lived in "God's country" for quite a long time. He emigrated from Russia after the defeated revolution of 1905 and lived in the U.S.A. until 1918, when he returned home. The ice was broken, and I thought it was wiser not to press for more confidence. Not only to disown inquisitiveness, but also to exchange confidence, I told him something about my relation with the Mexican Government, and hinted that I happened to be in a position to help any good cause. As regards money, he could be at ease; I had laid in some reserve for revolutionary purposes. It was his turn to be discreet and not to ask any question, which must have naturally arisen in his mind.
The door bell rang, and Mr. Brantwein looked uneasy. I reassured Mm that it was no stranger, but the friends from *El Heraldo*. They were much older social revolutionaries than myself; it would be unfair for me to monopolise the company of a friend of Lenin. They were coming on invitation for supper. My stratagem for the verification of the information got through Charlie, of course, did not escape Mr. Brantwein. He guffawed: “So, Charlie has been gossipping.” He was evidently embarrassed. Had he then been humbugging, I wondered. Well, time would tell the truth. For the moment, the twins walked in full of cheers and the atmosphere cleared up. Mr. Brantwein relapsed into his bantering mood, and enquired what the proletarian revolutionaries were doing in a bourgeois salon. Irwin's silent reply was to pour himself a drink, and then declare that spirit had no class. Charlie backed up his friend's wisdom by the utterly irrelevant remark that Lenin was not the first to finance revolutions with German money: Roy did it before him. I asked them to shut up and called Maria to serve food.

On instruction, she had prepared a classical Mexican meal, and knowing that an illustrious guest was expected, had done her best, and her best cooking could not be beaten in Mexico, as far as I knew. Mr. Brantwein, however, was more attracted by the cook than her art. For the special occasion, she also had not allowed the devotion to culinary art make her neglect the necessary attention to her own attractiveness. Later on, Mr. Brantwein confided that, when she came to announce: “Sir, the, soup is on the table ” (the Spanish way to announce that tffe dinner was served), he did not know if it was an invitation to embrace her or to go to the dining table. The food was too exotic for the European taste; I warned Mr. Brantwein that he must learn to eat Mexican food; otherwise he would starve. Maria would make no compromise. The gallant reply was that he would eat anything out of Maria's hand, even poison.

When we reassembled in the drawing room after the meal, Charlie and Irwin were duly surprised by the information that Mr. Brantwein was moving to stay with me from the next day. The naive Charlie could not contain his jealousy and
exclaimed: “So, you have landed the big fish! " I consoled him, with the tacit connivance of the catch, that it was due to his decoying. Moreover, I promised that, according to the Bengali custom, he would get the head when the fish was slaughtered. The prospective victim, however, did not seem to be worried by our plan of division of the spoil. In the course of the light-hearted conversation that followed, he gave us some glimpses of the situation in Russia, but pleaded for time when pressed for details. It was getting late. I asked Maria to phone for a taxi and the twins to accompany Mr. Brantwein to his hotel. It was agreed that the next day evening I would call for him and he would be ready to move out.

I found him waiting with a couple of big trunks and several suitcases—rather a surfeit of luggage for a conspirative traveller. Somewhat apologetically, he explained that the purpose of his travel and its circumstances required elaborate disguise. That- might be true to some extent. But evidently, there was a bit of overdoing. In the course of time, I came to learn that to enjoy bourgeois luxuries, on the pretext of conspiracy, was a common failing of the average run of Russian Bolsheviks. Perhaps it was an expression of inferiority complex—the proletarian revolutionary could match the bourgeois by the latter's standard.

However, I called for the bill, paid it and ordered the baggage downstairs. As our taxi started off, I noticed Charlie seated in another one across the road which followed. The loyal soul wanted to see me through an adventure which he must have imagined might be somehow dangerous. But he was sensible enough to leave us on the way where he thought that we were on safe ground. Reaching home, while his luggage was being carried upstairs, where he was to live, Mr. Brantwein enquired if foreigners were required to register in Mexico. In that case, his name was Gruzenburg, an Austrian lawyer, who had lived many years in the United States. On my saying that no enquiry would be made about any resident of my house, he surprised me by saying that, in any case, let Brantwein be forgotten, and if no police registration was necessary, he was Michael Borodin, who had come to the New World as the first emissary of the newly founded Communist International.
Thus began my association with a man who subsequently attained a good deal of notoriety for his activities in China. Ever since we met under the curious circumstances, until I left Russia in 1929, Borodin was one of my closest friends, although politically we often disagreed very strongly, as ultimately it happened in China. It was a human relationship with no illusion on either side. We learned from each other; in the beginning, I was the gainer. He initiated me in the intricacies of Hegelian dialectics as the key to Marxism. My lingering faith in the special genius of India faded as I learned from him the history of European culture.
THE DAY after he moved to my house, Borodin let me have just a glimpse into the mystery of his visit. He also told me something about himself. After the revolution of 1905, he had emigrated from Russia to the United States, and lived there until 1918, when he returned home. In America, he had studied law and philosophy, and later did teaching and research in some University. He would not be more explicit; nor did I tax his secretiveness which, though often overdone, was a second nature with the Russian Bolshevik, as I came to know subsequently from experience. Originally, it might have been necessary during the years of conspirative activity at home and abroad. But later on, it was cultivated as a revolutionary virtue, most probably to make the impression of importance.

It did not take me long to discover that, with all his admirable intellectual excellence and cultural refinement, my illustrious guest was a *poseur*. As we became friendly before long, I did not make any secret of my critical appreciation of his character and personality. He remarked that I was too cynical for my age.

While in America, Borodin had married. His wife was living in Chicago with two fairly grown-up children. He confided, obviously with a good deal of embarrassment, that since he left for Russia a year ago, he did not know how his family was maintaining itself. The first thing he wanted to do on his return to the United States was to go to Chicago. Lest that confession of domestic attachment should detract from his stern devotion to revolutionary duty, he reluctantly said something obviously more than he wanted to, as yet, at any rate. He had come to the New World with a good deal of valuables
(again he would not be more explicit). He could not carry them personally, and entrusted them to a reliable courier who was to deliver them to Mrs. Gruzenburg at Chicago.

It seemed that Borodin said more than he had wanted to. But it was too late to rectify the mistake and he took me into confidence about himself. He had lived in the United States as Michael Gruzenburg, with which name he was born in a Hebrew priestly family. He further confided that Lenin knew him with that name. The more I came to know him, the more strongly I felt that heredity had put its indelible stamp on Borodin's mind. He was born to be a Jewish Rabbi—a clever casuist, fanatically devoted to the dogmas of his faith (Bolshevism), but with no moral scruples. An assiduously cultivated intellectualism, which made a cynic of him, however, could not altogether kill the racial trait of emotionalism although he controlled it successfully, except on a few occasions when he nearly broke down. And I have always been happy to remember that those rare occasions were most probably limited to his personal relation with me, and they enriched it by diminishing its disappointment for me and bitterness for him.

Immediately on landing in New York, Borodin was spotted by the U.S. Secret Service as a dangerous alien. He could not go to see his family without exposing the courier who was to deliver the valuables. If he did, his family would be placed under surveillance and the courier also spotted when he came eventually to deliver the precious cargo. He wrote to his wife and waited in New York until he had to escape to evade deportation. His wife was to report as soon as the courier came to her. She knew that Borodin had escaped to Mexico. His daily call at the post office was with the expectation of getting a letter from her. The story helped me to understand why Borodin was so very dejected when he found no letter for him at the post office. A couple of days before, he had received from her a letter. It was a tale of woe. The family had been without any means of subsistence ever since he left for Russia.

I thought that was enough for one sitting. The proud man was evidently having a very unpleasant experience. He might have had other obligations and revolutionary dudes, which should override domestic devotion. I knew nothing of them as
yet. For the moment, he would evidently like to send a word of cheer to his wife and children in distress. Even Bolsheviks sometimes fell for human weakness. I changed the subject of our conversation, and sent the distressed man to sleep after a good dinner and some better drinks. Next day, we went to the post office and sent five hundred dollars to Mrs. Gruzenburg. Borodin tried to protest, and gave in with the remark that I was a dictator.

Resuming his *story* next evening, he said that I had relieved him of the smallest of his worries. He hastened to reaffirm his thankfulness for what I had done, but could not expect me to do more. He had much bigger responsibilities, which could not be discharged before the mysterious courier turned up with the precious trust. Disowning any inquisitiveness about the latter, I said that if he gave me some idea of the bigger responsibilities, and provided that they were not too big for the means at my disposal, I might be of some help in relieving them, pending the arrival of the expected larger resources. Instinctively, I felt that it was a requirement of the revolution, and was very happy to have a chance of being instrumental in meeting it at least partially. Borodin was sceptical about my ability to help; but could not reject my evidently earnest offer without insulting me. So, he took me a little more into his revolutionary confidence.

In the middle of 1918, the Bolshevik Government of Russia had sent a trade delegation to Washington. Acting on the favourable report of William Bullit, who went to Russia as the personal envoy of President Wilson, the American Government had granted *de facto* recognition to the Soviet Trade Delegation. Since then, civil war had broken out in Russia, the Entente Powers actively intervening to support the enemies of the revolution. Bolshevik Russia was blockaded on all sides, and her trade delegation in Washington as in other countries was cut off from all connection with home. For a time, it was sustained with the financial assistance of American friends and sympathisers. But eventually, it was stranded in a hostile and expensive capital.

The distressing news reached Moscow. It was a matter of prestige. Adequate means for the upkeep of the trade delegation in Washington, as long as it enjoyed the *de facto* recognition
of the American Government, must be sent. But how? International banking facilities were denied to the new regime in Russia. The service of diplomatic couriers was also not allowed. Smuggling was the only means available. Borodin, having lived in America for so many years, was selected for the risky venture. He was to smuggle a large quantity of crown jewels to the United States. The precious cargo, of course, had to be sold illegally. The proceeds were to be used firstly to relieve the distress of the stranded trade delegation, and the remainder to finance the communist movement in the New World. But the plan miscarried at the last moment; and Borodin had to part with his precious trust in order to save it. Pending its recovery, about which he seemed to be quite confident, but which took some time, some money had to be sent to the people stranded in Washington.

Once again, I suppressed my curiosity, and offered to help, hoping to know the whole story in the course of time, and to be of some service to the cause of the revolution. Borodin was pleasantly surprised. How much money could I spare? He asked rather indiscreetly for a cultured and secretive man like himself. Recklessly, I pressed him to name the sum and assured him that it would reach Washington as fast as the post travelled. On the next day, five thousand dollars were remitted with the intimation that another instalment of the same amount would follow as soon as the receipt of the first was acknowledged. There was no hitch in the transmission, which was made through Mexican diplomatic channels and within a few days my first contribution to the cause of the revolution was completed.

Since the Bolsheviks captured power, Russian gold went to all the corners of the world, far and near, to promote the communist movement. At least once the traffic was reversed; the first instalment was soon followed by larger ones to finance the adventure of recovering the crown jewels lost by Borodin.

It seems that the initial experience convinced my guest that he had made a lucky hit by having imagined that I might be of help to him in a strange land. Although it was like the proverbial drowning man catching hold of a straw, Borodin thought that his discovery of me was the result of logical
thinking. When it came to a discussion of such points, he was inclined to be conceited, and I compared him with Meredith's Egoist. He did not resent the simile, being an Epicurean, philosophically and in taste. However, confidence in a new-found friend put an end to his secretiveness, and the revolutionary conspirator became communicative. I had to know the whole story of the lost crown jewels so that their recovery could be planned and attempted.

In those days, the Soviet Foreign Commissariat and the Communist International worked in close collaboration. The Vice Commissar of Foreign Affairs, G. Karakhan, and the Secretary of the Communist International, Angelica Bala-banova, both were Borodin's old friends. They chose Borodin for the secret mission to the New World. The mission was to smuggle crown jewels worth about a million roubles (approximately 5,00,000 dollars at the then prevailing rate of exchange). The precious stones were sewn in the sides of two stout leather suit-cases. With them Borodin travelled through Europe (with assumed names and false passports) to Holland where the underground West-European Bureau of the Communist International was situated. The members of the Bureau—Henrietta Rollant-Holst, the famous poetess; Rutgers, a distinguished engineer; and Wijncoop, an advocate and M.P.—were influential public figures. The astronomer Anton Pannekoek and the writer Herman Gorter were the leading Marxist theoreticians of the time. With their help, Borodin was to cross the Atlantic in a Dutch ship under such circumstances as would enable him to evade customs inspections which were very rigorous in those days.

At Vienna, Borodin had made friends with a young Austrian aristocrat who had been an officer of the defeated Imperial Army. Frustrated, disillusioned and embittered, the young aristocrat wanted to leave Europe which he believed was doomed to destruction, and emigrate to South America in quest of peace in the solitude of some remote hacienda. He joined Borodin in the transatlantic voyage on board a Dutch freighter bound for the West Indian island of Curacao to bring back a cargo of gin. On the way, the ship was detained and searched by American customs officers in Haiti. Borodin and
his fellow-passenger were taken off the boat as "undesirable aliens" and held in custody, pending investigation. After a few days, the vigilance slackened and Borodin managed to escape and reach Jamaica in a sailing boat. There he caught a ship for New York. His purpose was to draw the suspicion to himself, so that the Austrian ex-officer might be let off. The suitcases were left with him to be delivered to Mrs. Gruzenburg in Chicago whenever he would be set free and allowed to travel.

Meanwhile, pending their arrival, Borodin wanted to make the necessary arrangements for clandestine sale of the jewels in New York. He had old friends there. The East-side Jewish ghetto was the social basis of the Socialist Party. Through the intermediary of socialist pawnbrokers, the stones could be smuggled back to Amsterdam, there to be recut preparatory to being placed on the market in Paris. But immediately on landing at New York, Borodin was spotted and arrested. The Jewish community provided the Socialist Party with clever and skilful lawyers as well as clandestine connections with pawnbrokers with transatlantic link-up. Borodin was soon released on bail, and on the advice of legal and political friends fled the country to the safety of Mexico. He did not take any of them into confidence except to say that he had returned to the New World with an important mission, and that they would hear from him before long. The circumstances of the last lap of his journey from Haiti explained why he reached Mexico practically penniless.

It was undoubtedly an interesting story, which promised further adventures if the lost "property of the revolution" was to be recovered, as it must, we agreed. Borodin was anxious to send a reliable man to Haiti to ascertain if the Austrian aristocrat was still there. Then an attempt should be made to help him escape with the suit-cases, or to steal the latter with or without his connivance.

On enquiry, I discovered that an old member of the party was employed on a Mexican ship which went to the West Indies. Having taken some of the senior members partially into confidence I ascertained that the sailor was an iron-willed anarchist of the type to be enthused by the idea of a risky
adventure. Within two months, he returned to report that the Austrian was still in Haiti but no longer under police surveillance. He was living as a hermit, in a hut on the beach. The report worried Borodin. Why had the man not gone to Chicago to deliver the suit-cases? He did not know what they contained, and therefore could not have stolen the treasure. It was all very puzzling. We must send another man to stay on the island for some time and find out what had happened to the suit-cases. There followed several months of adventurous activities, which ended with the discovery that, when he was set free, the Austrian had left the suit-cases behind as no use for a would-be hermit.

Borodin naturally was terribly upset. But in the meantime had made bigger political plans, and the immediate requirement of the revolutionary movement in the New World had been partially met with the resources at my disposal. That consoled him to some extent. He would have a good political report to make on return to headquarters of the World Revolution. I was a part of the report.

The adventure of recovering the jewels did not succeed immediately; but Borodin's trust was misplaced. The courier eventually turned up by himself with the precious cargo. He was not a fool. Travelling several weeks with Borodin, he must have sensed the man's ideas and connections. Many embittered young officers of the defeated Austro-German armies had the Russian orientation, as recommended by Bismarck. Communism did not matter; they were "national Bolsheviks", ready to ally even with the devil to avenge defeat and humiliation. Our persistent enquiry about the suit-cases and attempts to recover them at any cost must have set him thinking. None would be so much disturbed by the loss of two ordinary suit-cases, however, good; and risk so much for recovering them. They must be of particular interest and value. The story of the Bolsheviks smuggling out crown jewels to transform into cash was whispered throughout Europe in those days. The aristocrat would be loyal to his adventitious friendship. The American police on the island took him for a crank, and he had won the confidence of the native negroes. He ascertained that the suit-cases were lying
unguarded where he had been held prisoner. American customs officials were too well paid to care for loot. With the help of Negro subordinates, he regained possession of the suitcases and took the first ship to an American port. The authorities did not bother about the movements of a man with a loose screw ".

Meanwhile, we had reached Moscow. Borodin was to face a most malicious charge; and in those days, "revolutionary justice " was swift and cruel. My second contribution to the cause of revolution was his life. On my evidence, he was exonerated, and it was corroborated before long by Mrs. Gruzenburg's report that the courier had at last called to deliver the described cargo. She was asked to come to Moscow at once with the suitcases. The contents were intact. Another innocent head might have been added to the long list of those fallen. But even revolutionary cruelty is not always immune from retributive justice. The man who thirsted for poor Borodin's blood and never excused me for having denied him the perverse pleasure, faced the firing squad, years later, as a follower of Zinovieff. In reality, he was the worst type of Stalinist.
First Communist Party Outside Russia

IT WAS difficult to guard the secret of Borodin's visit. We kept the news out of the press. But some members of the Socialist Party had to be taken into confidence. Their co-operation was indispensable for the attempts to recover the lost property of the revolution. The exciting news of a Bolshevik emissary's presence in the country as the guest of the General Secretary trickled down the ranks of the Socialist Part/. There was a demand for an extraordinary conference of the party to define its attitude towards the Russian Revolution and make a declaration about its international affiliation. I had to introduce Borodin to a secret meeting of the Party Executive specially convened for the purpose. He felt very awkward on the occasion and refused to make any speech.

On his behalf, I explained the object of his visit: it was exploratory and to announce the foundation of the Third International, which had reverted to the term "Communist" used by Marx and Engels, to distinguish itself from the pseudo-revolutionary left wing of the reformist Social-Democratic Second International. The Inaugural Congress of the new International was held in Moscow in the winter of 1918-19. In addition to the Russian Bolshevik Party, representatives of the left wings of Social-Democratic Parties and independent revolutionary left-wing groups, such as the Spartakists of Germany, had attended the international Congress, which resolved to organise Communist Parties in all the countries of the world. But until the middle of 1919, no Communist Party had been formed anywhere. Why should not Mexico, true to her revolutionary tradition, take the lead? The response was deliriously enthusiastic. On my motion, it was resolved
to convene a Special Conference of the Socialist Party and associated organisations (anarchists and syndicalists sympathetic to the Russian Revolution) to found the first Communist Party outside Russia.

Borodin was very much pleased and wanted to transmit the news to the headquarters of the world revolution. His mission to the New World was bearing fruit. But it could not be done without the help of the Mexican Government. In those days, Russia had no postal connection with the rest of the world. The only way to transmit any news to Moscow was through the Scandinavian countries where Mexico had diplomatic agents. But that channel could not be used for our revolutionary purpose, except on the order of the President of the Republic. It was a delicate position for myself. For opportunist reasons, and perhaps also for class solidarity, Carranza was pro-German. But could I expect the colonial aristocrat's dislike for the Entente Powers to go to the extent of helping the Bolsheviks? I decided to take the bull by the horns.

After the defeat of Germany, President Carranza was in a difficult position. As against the powerful neighbour, he had no longer any ally. It was too late to reconcile his relation with the U.S. He had burned his boats, and must stick to his position until the bitter end. With the patronage of the powerful neighbour, Obregon was openly on the war path. In that desperate position, Carranza might welcome the possibility of an alliance with the new regime in Russia. But what concrete help could the latter offer him? However, with Borodin's consent, I planned his meeting President Carranza. He readily accepted an invitation to a dinner party, on which occasion a friend of mine who had recently come to Mexico, would have the privilege of being presented to him. The President of the Chamber of Deputies, Don Manuel, the Rector of the University, Maestro Casos, and the Foreign Minister were the other guests.

Borodin rose to the occasion and made a very good impression on the President and other distinguished guests, who were surprised to meet a highly cultured man calling himself a Bolshevik. He announced that the new regime in Russia fully
sympathised with the struggle of the Latin American peoples against Imperialism and was eager to help it in every possible manner. With that purpose, a Latin American Bureau of the Communist International should be established in Mexico, provided that His Excellency the President of the Republic consented. I was to be in charge of the proposed Centre to organise resistance to American Imperialism.

Carranza saw the prospect of his dream of a Latin American League being realised in a different form. He would not miss the opportunity and requested Borodin to transmit his good wishes to the head of the new regime in Russia. For Carranza to say so might not have been more than a gesture of courtesy. But made in the presence of his Foreign Minister and the head of the Legislative branch of the State, it could also be taken for a de facto recognition of the new regime in Russia. In subsequent talks, the latter two dignitaries hinted that it was meant to be so.

Borodin felt that he had scored a diplomatic victory which would raise his prestige in Moscow. Regarding the Presidential gesture of courtesy at the dinner party as the green signal, the Foreign Minister granted the facility for Borodin to contact the West-European Bureau of the Communist International through the Mexican Legation in Holland. The good offices of the Mexican Government enabled him also to get in touch directly with Moscow via Scandinavia, which had de facto diplomatic relations with the new Government of Russia. He reported his diplomatic achievement as well as the failure to carry out the original mission, but also mentioned that all possible attempts were being made to recover the loss, and that in the meantime most urgent requirements had been met out of unexpected local resources.

While writing his reports, which I transmitted through the Mexican Foreign Office, Borodin relapsed into his habitual secretiveness, sometimes approximating pomposity. He never showed me the reports nor discussed them with me. I could only guess what he wrote. The clue was the happy and optimistic mood which replaced his earlier dejection and gloominess. Now he often talked about his friends in Moscow and imagined how they would react to his reports: Lenin
would ring up Karakhan to enquire about the man M. N. Roy in Mexico; or he would send word to Balabanova to invite the Indian Marxist to Moscow.

How did I like the idea? It was, of course, very tempting. But I was also tempted to pay Borodin in his own coin and keep him guessing my intentions. Indeed, I pretended to be rather sceptical about the usefulness of my going to Moscow. What should I do there? Remaining in Mexico, I could do more for the revolution. The work started must be continued. A Latin American Bureau of the Communist International would be very useful for the purpose. It could be developed as an effective instrument for combating American Imperialism. I had persuaded the Carranza Government to back up such a scheme, and a good deal of spadework had already been done. It would not be quite proper for me to go away at that stage. I would not like to be disloyal to the country which had offered me such a generous hospitality. Once the war in Europe was over, the Americans would surely want to settle accounts with the Carranza regime which had crossed their will to dominate the New World through the instrumentality of the Monroe Doctrine. I was largely responsible for having pushed Carranza to his present position. I must be there to stand by him when in the near future he might have to fight for his life and the freedom of his country. Previously, I had worked according to my ideas; now I could continue under the guidance and direction of the Communist International.

The plan of converting the Socialist Party was still to be carried out. I was not very optimistic on that score. There would be opposition. Calles, for example, would not prejudice his chance of succeeding as President of the Republic by calling himself a Communist. Much of the apprehended opposition would be disarmed if Carranza's attitude was publicly made known. But he could not be asked to go so far. It would be fool-hardy to the extent of being suicidal. The Americans had put up with a pro-German regime in Mexico. But one sympathetic to Soviet Russia would be like a red rag to the bull. The war in Europe over, American Imperialism would militarily intervene in Mexico, if it was provided with a pretext.
For these reasons, the possibility of a semi-official patronage for the Communist Party, as enjoyed by the Socialist Party, had to be ruled out. At the same time, I did not want that the Socialist Party should split on the issue of converting itself into the Communist Party. For all practical purposes, the programme of the Socialist Party was no less revolutionary than Communists should advocate under the given circumstances of the country. Therefore, with some patience, tactfulness and behind-the-scene wire-pulling, a split of the Socialist Party could be avoided. In that case, the first Communist Party outside Russia would, from its very birth, be an effective factor in the political life of the country.

Sponsored by it, as continuation of the policy of the Socialist Party to mobilise the peoples of the Spanish-speaking New World in defence of national sovereignty and social justice, and backed up materially, though not patronised publicly, by a democratic Mexican Government, the Latin American Bureau of the Communist International could be a powerful instrument to promote the proletarian World Revolution. American Imperialism, after all, was its greatest enemy, which had to be laid low before Communism could triumph even in the Old World.

Borodin was amazed and full of unconcealed admiration when I argued my case. We had been discussing the matter for days. He was a brilliant conversationalist and skilful debater. I had guessed what was in his mind but was annoyed by his unnecessary secretiveness. He knew that he could trust me. Why should he beat about the bush instead of telling me what he might have heard from Moscow in reply to his report? Most probably, he had been directed to ask me to go there. I argued the case for my continued stay in Mexico with the purpose of forcing him to lay his cards on the table. I did succeed in that sly stratagem; but at the same time, I was myself impressed by the force of my arguments. Consequently, Borodin had to say more than he would have liked to for overcoming my reluctance to accept the proposal to accompany him to Moscow. He had to tempt me with the prospect of more exciting work there. But he also wanted that the programme of immediate work in Mexico must be completed before we left, I, inquest of more alluring adventures and he, to report that the failure of his original mission had been compensated by unexpected political achievements. So, with a tacit agreement about our future movements, we turned to the plan of founding the first Communist Party outside Russia. That by itself
would be a feather in the cap of any Bolshevik emissary in a foreign land.

Before proceeding with the plan, I consulted Don Manuel and ascertained from the Foreign Minister that a Communist Party would be tolerated provided that it eschewed provocative activities which might embroil the diplomatic relations of his Government with the powerful neighbour to the north. He further confided that his Government would like the projected Latin American Bureau of the Communist International to function *sub rosa* through the instrumentality of the Latin American League to promote the purpose of the latter. That was a broad hint which could not be given except with the consent of the President. It was that, if the new Russian regime directed its supporters in Mexico to behave reasonably and act discreetly, co-operation between the two would be assured, preparatory to the establishment of formal diplomatic relations.

My consultation with Don Manuel was about the attitude of men like Calles, who had joined the Socialist Party with opportunist motives, but might not go further, prejudicing their personal ambition. I was more concerned about the attitude of others the sincerity of whose profession of social justice was beyond doubt, and whose membership of the Socialist Party was not selfishly motivated. The proletarian, that is to say, the die-hard anarcho-syndicalist members of the Socialist Party held that the parting of ways had been reached; they pressed for forcing the issue. Together with the smaller number of wiser heads, I thought differently. If the Communist Party was not to be a politically ineffective propaganda group, it must not be weakened at its birth by courting the open opposition of the honest advocates of social justice, who might not be prepared to endorse the programme of a violent civil war. Don Manuel was the leader of the numerous sympathisers and members of the Socialist Party whom I did not want to antagonize. But at the same time, their reluctance
to join an organisation committed to a programme of insurrection and civil war could not be dismissed as counter-revolutionary or petit-bourgeois pusillanimity.

Don Manuel promised to help me out of the dilemma. Having discussed the matter with a few intimate friends, he would make it known in the circle concerned that the Socialist Party would be converted to a Communist Party with the consent of Don Venustiano, and in practice pursue the old policy although sometimes its public pronouncements might be enlivened by verbal fireworks. I was assured that there would be no public opposition to the Socialist Party changing its name and affiliating itself with the newly founded Communist International.

The Extraordinary Conference of the Socialist Party met with me in the chair. Under pressure from all sides, I reluctantly agreed to step into the limelight for the first time during my two and half years' sojourn in Mexico. Not only the wild men of the Left had to be kept under control without rubbing them on the wrong side; the more important consideration was to reassure the Government and the numerous "fellow travellers" of revolutionary Socialism that the flamboyant resolutions of the conference did not really mark a break with the past.

The first point on the agenda was consideration of the manifesto issued by the First World Congress of the Communist International. It reminded the workers of the world of the clarion call of the original Manifesto issued by Marx and Engels. Therefore, no party could refuse to endorse the new manifesto and yet claim to be Marxist, devoted to the cause of Social Revolution.

With honest conviction, I argued that with its revolutionary programme, the Socialist Party of Mexico could not but endorse the *New Communist Manifesto*, and that a resolution to change the name of the party would be a corollary to the endorsement. Both the resolutions were passed with acclamation; nevertheless, nothing more than a change in the name of the party took place. The Communist Party remained committed to the revolutionary democratic programme of the defunct Socialist Party.
Thus, the apprehended opposition of "opportunists and petit-bourgeois reformists" was disarmed. By tacit agreement, Calles was called away from the capital on urgent ministerial duty. In the delirious atmosphere of proletarian enthusiasm, the absence of "respectability" was not noticed. A message from the Secretariat of the Communist International was the highlight of the conference. It was drafted by Borodin in consultation with me. It outlined the Communist policy of backing up the anti-imperialist struggle of the oppressed and subject peoples. The policy was elaborated in the Theses on National and Colonial Questions adopted by the Second Congress of the Communist International, a year later.

Having declared its affiliation to the Communist International, the inaugural conference of the Communist Party of Mexico naturally resolved to send a delegation to the Second World Congress to meet in Moscow. The composition of the delegation was not publicly announced. None could travel to Russia legally in those days. But with the approval of the leading members of the party executive, Borodin had been insisting upon my heading the delegation. Therefore, by previous agreement, my plea of the inability to continue as the General Secretary of the Communist Party was provisionally accepted, and an Acting General Secretary was elected with the tacit understanding that I should hold the post de facto until I actually went out of the country, and in the meantime train my successor.

For several days after the conference, Borodin sat at his typewriter for hours behind closed doors. I made impatient enquiries about the nature of his mysterious literary labour. The reply was that he was writing the history I had just made. The day his report to Moscow went off, he ceremoniously invited me for a drink in the evening. But he was in a mood much too serious for the occasion. The reason for the apparent incongruity was presently known, when he blurted out that he must return to Europe soon and I to follow him. That was the latest instruction from Moscow, received weeks before the party conference. Why then did he keep me guessing for so long? Anyhow, I was not going, for reasons already explained.
He laughed: "Bolsheviks don't argue, but obey discipline." Immediately relapsing into seriousness, he added: "Don't forget your own country. Moscow will be on the way." An entirely new vision flashed before my mind. It was of a new chapter of my life.
Preparing for the Pilgrimage

FOR THREE and more years, ever since I left China, I was cut off from all relations with India. While in the United States, I still dreamed of the mission with which I had left home and was associated mostly with Indians. But as hinted already, it was neither a fruitful nor a pleasant association. However, after reaching Mexico, I was completely out of touch with India. For two years, practically no news had reached me, and I was entirely ignorant of what might be happening at home. Nor did I care very much, having realised the narrowness of the vision of my earlier life. In any case, it would be silly to sit at the antipodes bemoaning the inability to do one's patriotic duty. I chose a wider field of activity in pursuance of a new ideal of revolution, and the experience was gratifying.

In the summer of 1919, I felt that the time had come for me to leave Mexico, just as I had gone away from the land of my birth. I did not come to that conclusion light-heartedly, lured by the temptation of new adventures. Mexico still offered plenty of them. The situation was heading towards a renewed civil war, and the cards appeared to be stacked against the Carranza regime. If there was some chance of my being of any substantial help, I would certainly have stayed on. Whatever I could possibly do, would be done even in my absence. That much had been accomplished as the concrete result of two years' work. The democratic middle class as well as the industrial proletariat was no longer indifferent to the political fate of the country. There was a will to resist foreign intervention, direct or indirect. The growing opposition to the Carranza regime, led by Obregon, was known to be
patronised and materially helped by American vested interests. Therefore, the Carranza Government could count upon a greater measure of intelligent popular support than any government in Mexico had enjoyed ever since the fall of Francisco Madero in 1911. The achievement was mainly due to the realistic policy of the reorganised Socialist Party. The sentiment indeed was rather anti-American than pro-Carranza. In any case, it could not influence the armed struggle for power. But eventually it did assert itself. With all the American patronage and backing, Obregon did not last long in power. Led by Calles, the Nationalist Revolutionary Party took over the radical democratic programme advocated by the Socialist and later on by the Communist Party. It put an end to Obregon's short-lived military dictatorship, and gave the country a civil government after years of chaos.

Having helped the preparation of the way in that direction, I could do no more immediately by remaining in Mexico. If I left the country, following Borodin's advice, I might incidentally help the Carranza regime by improving its international position, in addition to finding a wider field of activity for my own satisfaction. But quite a lot of mental reservations had to be cleared away before I took the plunge. I was of course fascinated by the idea of being on the way back to India, this time not only with arms, but also with a definite programme of revolution for which they should be used. The opportunity to visit the land of the first proletarian revolution, and the privilege of possibly participating in the impending civil war, were additional inducements.

But Borodin's remark that Bolsheviks did not argue but obeyed discipline, had rubbed me on the wrong side. Sensing my reaction, he had tried to make the impression that he was joking. When subsequently I pressed for clarification, the Bolshevik had to defend his faith—in the unchallengeable authority of the party and the revolutionary duty of its members to submit themselves unquestioningly to discipline. It appeared to me that the revolutionary faith of Bolshevism had a religious fervour, which did not harmonise with its materialist philosophy. My preceptor of Bolshevism benevolently smiled at my naivety and undertook to initiate a willing novice into the
mysteries of the revolutionary faith and lead me through the intricacies of the labyrinth of its philosophical background. It was an intellectual challenge to the tradition of my Brahmanical heritage, and, as I discovered before long, also to die-hard cultural Nationalism, still lingering in my subconscious mind. As a devout revolutionary, I was a willing pupil, but I was also a rational human being, who aspired to think for himself. It was no easier for a born heretic to accept a new faith, albeit materialist and atheistic, than for the Biblical camel to pass through the eye of a needle. It was my last resistance to Marxism.

The attempt to recover the lost jewels was a slow process. We had to wait patiently for weeks before some report of progress or set-backs came. The news of the foundation of the first Communist Party outside Russia surprisingly did not create more sensation than scared headlines in the American yellow press. In Mexico, the repercussion was on the whole favourable. Even the Obregonista press did not try to make political capital out of the event by raising the bogey of Bolshevism. Every civil war in Mexico started with the cry of agrarian revolution. That was the central point in the immediate programme of the Communist Party taken over from the Socialist Party. Except for editing the party organ and attending occasional public meetings and private conferences, I had not much to do. There was plenty of time on hand. It was spent in daily discussions of the theory and practice of Communism, in which some selected friends participated. The discussion of the philosophical aspect of Marxism was confined to Borodin and myself. Beginning after dinner, it usually continued until late in the night. It was the most memorable period of my life. It was during the months immediately preceding my departure for Moscow that the foundation of my subsequent intellectual development was laid.

From time to time, we interrupted the discussion to transport ourselves in imagination to Central Asia. Borodin confessed that he had no idea of what existed on the other side of the Ural mountains and the Ural river, which divided the Eurasian continent. After the revolution, the vast Central Asian Empire of the Tzars was cut off from Metropolitan Russia. But the
revolution must spread there also, and eventually reach the borders of India. A new vision of carrying out the mission with which I had left India early in 1915, opened up before my eyes of imagination. Only I would return home not through the north-eastern, but the north-western gate. I was naturally eager to send the good news to friends in India. There was no way to do so. Tormenting ideas rushed into my mind: What might they be doing? How many of them were still alive? I did not know until after several years.

Meanwhile, I had to curb the imagination and suppress my sorrows. There were many immediate difficulties to be overcome. I must not forget my duty to Mexico. A plan to reinforce her international relations so as to counteract American hostility must be worked out. To cross the Atlantic was not an easy problem. Not many passenger ships went to Europe directly from Mexico. The usual practice was to go to New York and travel from there on a transatlantic steamer. That way was closed to me. After the first hurdle was taken somehow, I would be confronted with the difficulty of travelling through Western and Central Europe occupied by Entente armies. Finally, there was the problem of reaching Moscow by running the Allied blockade. The pilgrimage to the land of revolution must be carefully planned. The fervour of faith and the impatience of enthusiasm were not enough.

In autumn 1919, a message came through Scandinavia and Holland inviting the Communist Party of Mexico to send a delegation to the Second World Congress of the Communist International, and asking Borodin to return at the earliest opportunity. He was to await my arrival in Berlin. The Second World Congress was due to meet in Spring, 1920. In order to reach Moscow well ahead of time, so as to participate in the preparatory work, I must leave Mexico before the end of 1929. One could not travel fast in devious ways, as I must, to evade arrest. All the delegates to the Second World Congress were to assemble secretly in Berlin early in the New Year and wait there indefinitely to be transported further through various clandestine channels.

It was not difficult to send off Borodin. He pretended to be ill, and remained confined to the house. A doctor called daily
to treat the patient. In the meantime, armed with a Mexican passport, he crossed the frontier into the United States. A messenger had gone ahead to New York and booked his passage on a Norwegian transatlantic boat. By the time those who might be interested discovered that the Bolshevik agent had quietly disappeared, he was already on the sea. Before he left Mexico, we had a conference with the Foreign Minister who hinted that he would soon take steps towards the restoration of regular diplomatic relations between the two revolutionary countries and hoped to receive before long a duly accredited ambassador of New Russia. About three weeks later, a cable came from Rotterdam to the effect that Borodin had reached there safely.

As the day of my departure drew nearer, the feeling of loss became keener. I had been in Mexico for only two years and a half. But it seemed as if I had lived there since my childhood. I never made many personal friends, Mexican exuberance, heavily tinged with conventionality, though not always hypocritical, was incompatible with my temperament. Nevertheless, I could not possibly help being moved by the facts that it was an extremely hospitable country, the government friendly beyond expectation, out of proportion to the little service that I could render out of gratitude, and a large number of highly developed individuals treated me with kindness, consideration and affection. On the whole, it was a rich and gratifying experience. In a sense, Mexico was the land of my rebirth. It is true that before coming there I had begun to feel dissatisfied with ideas and ideals of my earlier life. But it was during my stay in Mexico that the new vision became clear and the dissatisfaction with a sterile past was replaced by a conviction to guide me in a more promising future. It was more than a change of political ideas and revolutionary ideals. I acquired a new outlook on life; there was a revolution in my mind—a philosophical revolution which knew no finality.

The fundamental change in the outlook on life enabled me to overcome the emotional attachment to the land of my rebirth. The new ideal of freedom was not to be attained within national or geographical boundaries. The struggle for
its attainment must take place throughout the world, the entire
civilised mankind participating in it. I could do little more by staying
on in Mexico. The local field of activity had its limitations. From a
larger field with greater possibilities, I might still be of some help to
the country, its government and people that had been so very good
and kind to a helpless exile. Of course, I must see Carranza before
leaving and get his permission to do so. He was as considerate as ever,
and expressed sympathy with my desire to seek a wider field of
activity and wished that before long I might be again in a position to
serve my own country. I reaffirmed my determination to serve Mexico
in future as in the past and my loyalty to himself personally. I detected
a touch of dejection and sadness in the Spartan proud old aristocrat.
Perhaps he was already aware that he was playing a losing game. Yet
he must see it through until the bitter end, and, alas, the end was
indeed bitter. Whatever little I did in Mexico could not save the old
man; but it did make some contribution to the crystallisation of social
forces which before long freed the country from the curse of civil war.

The old man presently recovered his composure and talked business.
He had no doubt about my loyalty and would count upon my services
abroad. I should go to Europe in a semi-diplomatic capacity, as the
President's personal emissary. The Ambassador in Berlin was his man
of confidence. I should see him to discuss the question of resuming
diplomatic relations with Soviet Russia. The Foreign Ministry would
be directed to make all the technical arrangements for my journey. I
should travel through Spain, where friends would help me proceed to
Germany without running any risk. The old man put a hand on my
shoulder, and in a voice slightly choked with suppressed emotion,
said: “You are still very young. Don't gamble with fate. I wish you a
long, successful life.” He turned on his heels abruptly and walked
away.

Some days later, the Foreign Minister told me that early in December
a Spanish passenger ship was due to sail from Veracruz, and he had
ordered the reservation of a cabin for me. A diplomatic passport, of
course, on a different name, would be ready in time. He advised me to
disappear from
Mexico City a couple of weeks ahead, and reach Veracruz incognito on the day of the departure of the ship. For the rest of the preparation, I had to take a few party members in confidence. The Acting General Secretary proved to be a very dependable man. I entrusted to him a sufficiently large sum of money to run the party organisation for a year. It was hoped that in the meantime, some one would come from Moscow to set up the Latin American Bureau of the Communist International.

Five years ago, I had left India in search of arms with naive ideas about revolution and international relations. Subsequent experience was bitter and destroyed a lot of illusions. During my short stay in the U.S.A., I became painfully conscious of the ignorance which concealed the contradiction between the social idealism of the early revolutionary movement which drew inspiration from Bankim Chatterji's *Anatid Math*, and the cultural Nationalism which it also professed. It dawned on me that Nationalism, whether revolutionary or constitutional, cultural or political, relied mostly on emotion because it was intellectually weak. Its appeal, at home as well as abroad, was not to the head but to the heart. It tried to move, not to convince. While in New York, I did a good deal of reading and soon acquired a fairly comprehensive and critical understanding of the political and economic issues of contemporary history. The result was conversion to Socialism. But there was no change in the fundamental outlook, in the philosophy of life. That became evident when, in the discussions with Borodin, I put up my last resistance to Marxism from the point of view of cultural Nationalism. The Bolshevik dialectician, with his keen psychological insight, did not find it difficult to show that I was defending a point of view in which I no longer believed, that it was a sheer die-hard prejudice.

I left the land of my rebirth an intellectually free man, though with a new faith. But the philosophical solvent of the faith was inherent in itself. I no longer believed in political freedom without the content of economic liberation and social justice. But I had also realized that intellectual freedom—freedom from the bondage of all tradition and authority—
was the condition for any effective struggle for social emancipation. Before long, I might be in the position to help revolutionaries in India with arms. But I had lost faith in the original mission with which I had left India. I still believed in the necessity of armed insurrection. But I had also learned to attach greater importance to an intelligent understanding of the idea of revolution. The propagation of that idea was more important than arms. With the new conviction, I started on my way back to India, round the world.
Part 2
The New Faith
Crossing the Atlantic

EARLY in November 1919, I boarded at Veracruz the Spanish transatlantic liner, *Alfonso XIII*, armed with a Mexican diplomatic passport issued to Roberto Alleny Villa Garcia. The imposing name was not chosen to prove that the bearer of the passport was an aristocrat deserving the diplomatic status. It was a sheer accident. In order to make the procedure correct, the passport had to be issued on the presentation of papers proving the physical existence of the person concerned. I personified a brother of the comrade who succeeded me as the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Mexico, who bore the name derived from a mixed parentage. An eccentric Englishman had married an aristocratic Mexican lady. The mixed parentage came in handy because it explained the flaws in my Spanish. The wayward Englishman had fallen for beauty as well as the riches of a Mexican socialite. But he had refused to learn the lingo of a coloured race. They spoke French at home.

The transatlantic voyage was an experience entirely different from my journey across the Pacific four years ago, except for the first lap. Even the biggest ships did not move so fast in those days; and *Alfonso XIII*, though the pride of the then Spanish mercantile fleet, was not in the class of luxury liners. Ordinarily, it took ten days to cross the Atlantic. Our voyage lasted two days longer, because the ship was held up by a strike of the harbour workers at Havana. It was due to call there, but only for a few hours, to pick up passengers and mail. That short stoppage was the bottleneck of my journey. That is why all the precautions were taken to make a secret of my travelling on the ship.
The Anglo-American Secret Police had made attempts to kidnap me when the Mexican Government evaded the demand for my extradition. Having figured so prominently in the Rowlatt Report, I was, of course, wanted by the British police. Over and above this, I was also a "fugitive from justice" in America. Cuba was an American protectorate for all practical purposes. The war-time practice of searching neutral ships, at the port of Havana, was still in force. If it was known that I was travelling on a ship due to call at Havana, the danger of my being taken off there was almost certain. Therefore, the harbour authorities at Veracruz had approached the Captain of the ship for protection to obviate any possible danger, and he had promised to keep me out of sight as long as the ship stopped at Havana.

The strike confronted us with an unexpected situation. Like other ships, ours also might be indefinitely held up, and I could not for days keep away from the deck without attracting attention. On the second day, I resolved to take the bull by the horns, and make an attempt to contact the Secretary of the Cuban Federation of Labour, who was a Socialist and had visited Mexico several times while I was there. The Strike Committee had posted pickets at the foot of the gangway. I managed to engage one of them in conversation. My sympathy for the strike won his confidence. He carried to the Federation Secretary the message that a friend of the latter was travelling on the Alfonso XIII. The hint did the trick. The Secretary came on board in the evening. He was furious at the Mexican comrades for not having given him previous information so that I was not exposed to the danger of arrest by the Yankees. However, he reassured me that our ship could sail as early in the morning as the Captain wished. The pickets were withdrawn on the ground that Alfonso XIII was a passenger ship, and it was not the intention of the strikers to inconvenience harmless travellers. The Captain got in touch with the harbour authorities to comply with the formalities, and we were off before dawn.

All on board were intrigued by the experience. It was not usual for Latin American labour, mostly anarcho-syndicalist, to be so considerate of the convenience of bourgeois passengers.
Only the Captain knew the secret. Discreetly, he kept it to himself. But a fellow-passenger sensed it and buttonholed me in a secluded spot to congratulate and thank me in behalf of all the passengers. He was headmaster of the German school in Mexico, going home on leave after the four years of war. Presently, I discovered that there was yet another fellow passenger who also knew the secret. He was a Mexican diplomat, a genuine one, going to Vienna, with his French wife. I had never met him, but he seemed to have known a good deal about me and my mission to Europe. His deferential attitude towards a personal envoy of the President made me feel awkward. He was my senior by many years. The conventionality wore off in a couple of days, and, assisted by the two Mexican diplomats, the Parisian wife became the centre of the small society afloat for a week on the Atlantic.

Only four years ago, I had made the longer voyage across the Pacific as a shy Catholic novice from Pondicherry. It was an ordeal. In the intervening short period, I had lived through a couple of centuries of cultural history. I had landed in America a complete stranger to the ways of life of the country. I would be a newcomer also to Europe, but culturally, it was not a terra incognita to me. My journey to America was meant to be the means to an end. I was not interested in the country. I halted there not voluntarily, and escaped at the earliest opportunity. I had no conscious antipathy or deliberate dislike. But spiritually still living in a different world, which I believed to be so much better, I was naturally unable to benefit by the new environment. I was going to Europe with an entirely different outlook. Therefore, the trans-Atlantic journey was enjoyable, and the perspective exciting, whereas the voyage from Asia to America had been depressing. Then I was going from the known to an unknown world. Now it was a pilgrimage; on the way, I would have the privilege to witness capitalist Europe collapsing, and, like Prometheus unbound, the revolutionary proletariat rising to build a new world out of the ruins.

Our floating international community was a homogeneous group composed of Mexicans, Spaniards and Germans.
The French wife of the Mexican diplomat was the sole representative of the *Entente* Powers. Although a Mexican citizen by marriage, she had lived most of the time in Paris, where her husband was posted previously. Therefore, she did not share the pro-German sentiment of our floating community. The Spaniards were even more pro-German, The Germans had lost the war, but not the sympathy and admiration of their camp-followers.

However, Spanish chivalry made the Parisian lady feel at home even in the company of the Germans. There were quite a few of them on board, all going home after four years of forced exile in Mexico. Most of them for all the time had no news from relatives in beleaguered Germany. They did not know what awaited them there, certainly nothing cheerful. Yet, they were a boisterous lot, who enlivened our days on board.

The schoolmaster, whom I met in Mexico, was particularly gay. He made friends with me and was inquisitive about my destination in Europe. Was I going to Germany? Which way did I intend to take? I should not risk travelling through France. For my benefit, he informed me that all the railways from Paris to Germany passed through frontier stations which were occupied by the British army. As if I did not know all that! Yet, I must be thankful for his solicitude for my safety, and could not altogether rebuff his well-meaning though slightly patronising attitude. All Germans still looked upon Indians as their proteges. None of them believed that the military might of the Fatherland had really been broken. That was simply inconceivable. They were all furious against the Jewish financiers and Social Democratic politicians who had conspired with the *Entente* Powers to betray Germany. But the great military leader Hindenburg and the master-strategist Ludendorff were still there; and the Kaiser had not abdicated; before long, he would return to Berlin- The invincible German army must be secretly preparing for a new offensive to take revenge. The wrath of German patriotism would punish the Jewish traitors and Social Democratic cowards who had signed the Versailles Treaty.

The smoking-room and bar on board the ship reverberated with this bravado until the small hours every night. It was a
voice of frustration; but now I realise that it was also the echo of the
rumblings of a calamity which cast its shadow ahead. In daytime,
while the temperature of Teutonic blood did not reach the boiling
point with the heat of Spanish wine, my German fellow-passengers,
mostly prosperous traders and well-to-do ranchers (land-owning
farmers), were not in a warlike mood. Their behaviour was
punctilious, though stiff and pompous. My friend, the schoolmaster,
was the only intellectual amongst them. In addition to the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, he carried in his face the token of having been
to the University. It was a scar on one cheek. German students in the
classical seats of learning like Heidelberg, even in the earlier years of
the twentieth century, fought duels with rapiers. A scar on the face,
therefore, came to be the badge of intellectuality. At the same time,
there was a cynical belief that the scars were made by some artificial
process as the duels were never more murderous than the beer-house
brawl. The belief was borne out by the fact that the conventional mark
of intellectuality, supposed to have been attained in a mediæval seat
of learning, was to be found on the faces of most Prussian army
officers, while it was rare amongst really educated people.

Thinking that it would be helpful to have a German friend in Berlin
until I discovered Borodin there, I took the schoolmaster partially into
confidence. I found out from him that all the Germans would travel
through Italy and Switzerland, as I also had planned to do. But I
would prefer to travel alone, and meet my German friend in Berlin.
We must part company anyhow at La Coruna, the small Spanish port
on the northwestern tip of the Iberian Peninsula, where our ship
touched for the passengers to disembark and take the train to Madrid.

The Mexican diplomat with his French wife was going straight to
Paris. They could travel on the ship as far as Santander, very near the
French frontier. It is the most fashionable seaside resort of Spain.
Madrid was my immediate destination; yet I preferred to avoid the
direct route and was also tempted to see a fashionable' seaside resort
as the first place in Europe.

For the last two days of the sea voyage, the three of us were the only
passengers on board. We could speak more freely.
and the French lady was amazed to learn that there was at least one amongst her fellow-passengers who was not a pro-German. Her husband was also surprised. Was I not going on a political mission to Berlin? It seems that he did not know that I was going—further, and pro-German sentiment was not a condition for the success of my mission. I kept my secret, but told him that I had known many Germans much too closely to retain my earlier illusions about the motive of their old government. Could any sensitive man help being disgusted with the vulgar outbursts of German patriotism during our voyage? I was glad that the Imperial regime had collapsed, and was eagerly looking out for the privilege of witnessing a renascent Germany—the home of philosophy, poetry, music, science, purged of the scourge of Prussian militarism.

The wife of the Mexican diplomat brightened up for the first time since I had met her on board the ship. During the voyage, she had worn a mask of the cultivated charm of a society lady distributing impersonal favours with cold calculation to a galaxy of gallants, which included Germans who were presumably detested by her. She was amazed to know that I was not going to Paris. How could one come so near to the capital of cultured Europe and turn back? She would love to show me around and was sure that I would feel completely at home in Paris. Several years later, I discovered that she was mistaken. I did not like Paris when I went there. However, she deplored my bad luck or wrong choice, whatever it might be.

Her husband suggested that, while the ship stopped at La Coruna, we should go to the town for dinner. He knew a restaurant where fried fresh sardines were served. We had excellent food and better drink in a rather modest place on a narrow lane inaccessible to the dilapidated taxi which drove us from the harbour. Afterwards, we drove through the main thoroughfares of the town. The taxi rattled on cobble-stones and reeled from one kerb to another of badly lit narrow streets. La Coruna was certainly not a good recommendation for Europe to newcomers. When we returned to the harbour gate, the Mexican diplomat remarked that his wife had after all shown me around Paris. She was infuriated by the
remark which was either cynical or malicious. I did not know.

Santander was an entirely different world. Coming from the backwaters of Mexico, I was simply dazzled by the ostentatious display of what struck me as the vulgarities of European life. In daytime, the golden sand of the extensive beach was decorated with innumerable semi-naked beauties sprawling under brightly coloured huge umbrellas. What struck me more was that the men also went with practically no clothes, although the naked bodies of most of them could not possibly help repelling females with the least aesthetic sense. After nightfall, brightly lit broad boulevards, palatial hotels, scintillating dance halls and wicked casinos were thronged with hilarious crowds who seemed to be eager to drink the joy of life to the dregs lest they missed it the next day.

Well, I was thoroughly bewildered like Mark Twain's Innocents Abroad. Not that I was very innocent. What puzzled me was the disturbing feeling that La Coruna seemed to approximate my mental picture of Europe more than the seaside capital of one of the oldest ruling dynasties. Santander attracted the *nouveaux riches*, the disgusting excrescence of the latest ordeal of Europe, because it was the seat of the Spanish Court for several months in the year. There bourgeois vulgarity could come in contact with a decadent royalty and a dilapidated nobility.

After three days of the puzzling experience of my first direct contact with Europe, I parted company with the Mexican diplomat. His wife protested against my indecent hurry to run away from the excitement of life. I pleaded guilty on the ground that I had to keep a time-table until I reached my destination. In the meantime, I had something to do in Madrid.
TRAVELLING by the Paris-Lisbon Express, I reached Madrid early in the morning. On the short overnight journey, I was surprised by the bounty of food served in the dining car. Spain seemed to be out of Europe, impoverished by four years of war. Once upon a time, she was not only the proud possessor of a vast overseas empire; she was also the ruler of Europe. Spain is a country with a glorious past; but her present is doubtful and the future not promising. In 1919, a lineal descendant of the Most Catholic Majesties of the Middle Ages still sat on his ancient throne, when crowns were tumbling all over Europe. After the dramatic disappearance of the Romanovs, Hapsburgs and Hohenzollemms, how long could the decadent Bourbons last? But the Spaniards seemed to be free from the ' gloomy foreboding. The time was long gone when the fate of a country was tied up with that of the ruling dynasty.

Madrid was the first European capital I visited. It was a gay city, all the more so because of the coining Carnival—the popular spring festival in the Catholic countries of Southern Europe. The merchants and industrialists had made money out of the war, and they flaunted their newly acquired riches with a reckless extravagance and graceful abandon. The numerous cafes and luxurious restaurants along the Puerta del Sol—the main thoroughfare of the city were crowded practically for all the twenty-four hours. Milk actually flowed and honey was replaced by cubes of shining white sugar which were littered on the floor. When one ordered a cup of coffee, a waiter came carrying two big kettles and poured out simultaneously boiling milk and the steaming brown brew until as much splashed on the table as in the cup; another
waiter threw on the table half-a-dozen sugar cubes neatly packed in paper. Each guest left several of them on the table to be swept on the floor. There was a similar surfeit and wastage of all other articles of food. Dandified young men lounged for hours in red plush sofas and easy chairs smoking, drinking and playing domino for money. It was a spectacle fascinating as well as disgusting. But I could not watch it for any length of time, because of the noise and the smoke which filled the places. But the incongruity of an oriental bazaar in the heart of a European city, crowded with people of Western habits, was so very captivating that during my first short stay in Madrid I dropped in at one after another of the cafes, whenever I could spare the time.

Spain, indeed, is a semi-oriental country. Geographically, it could just as well be a part of Africa as of Europe. The narrow Strait of Gibraltar is certainly less forbidding a frontier than the Pyrenees. Until the thirteenth century of the Christian era, the Kingdom of the Most Catholic Majesty of Mediaeval Europe was a part of the far-flung empire of the Arabs. Spain had her Golden Age before she grew rich by plundering the New World and her ruling dynasty became the leader of European reaction. That was when, as an Arab Kingdom, she was the centre of learning and culturej which inspired the rise of modern European civilisation. The University of Cordoba was the seat of the efflorescence of Arab culture of Greek heritage, which was taken over by the pioneers of the European Renaissance. Spain was the meeting place of the East and the West.

Later on, Christian bigotry eclipsed the light of Spain's past glory, and after a period of mediaeval power and predatory conquests, she receded into the backwaters of modern Europe, She has languished there until our time. Eventually, the degenerate Bourbon dynasty collapsed, but the short-lived Republic was followed by a military dictatorship which has lasted longer than any other of its kind in Modern Europe.

My keen interest in the past of Spain, however, could not detain me in'the journey to the land where the present lived riotously, promising a future of a fuller and richer life. But I was not just passing through. Having taken my place in the
scheme of the great World Revolution, I had a little mission in Spain.

The First World Congress of the Communist International was only so in name. Except the Spartakus Bund (The League of Spartakists) of Germany, no organisation sent properly elected delegates. Virtually, the Communist Party of Russia, which until after the Revolution, was itself known as the Bolshevik wing of the Social Democratic Party, announced its resolution to found a communist world organisation and issued to the workers of all countries the Second Communist Manifesto. Even during the War, Russian Bolsheviks, still in exile, had maintained that the Second International was destroyed when the Social Democratic Parties voted for the defence of their respective countries, instead of calling upon the working class to prevent the War by declaring a general strike, according to its own resolution. On their initiative, left-wing Social Democrats from different European countries had met in two international conferences to denounce the right-wing leaders for betraying the proletariat and the principle proclaimed in the first Communist Manifesto that the working class had no country to defend; they had nothing to lose but their chains and a world to gain. Having captured power in their own country, the Russian Bolsheviks would revive proletarian internationalism in its pristine purity. The vast resources of Russia being at its disposal, the International no longer needed to content itself with passing revolutionary resolutions; it could now actually organise the revolution throughout the world. With the crusader's zeal, Lenin declared that the Russian proletariat would sacrifice itself in order to promote the cause of the World Revolution. Otherwise, what was the use of capturing power in one country?

The Second World Congress, due to meet a year and a half after the first, which had only proclaimed the resolution to organise the Communist International, was to inaugurate it. It was, therefore, a historic event—a Red Letter Day in the annals of the age-long struggle for the liberation of the disinherited. It was an honour as well as a privilege to participate in it. But I was more fortunate, having had a share in its preparation, organisational, programmatic and theoretical.
The downfall of Czarism had electrified the democratic and liberal world. The October Revolution, in the beginning, was hailed as the logical development of the process of the destruction of the old despotic order. Proletarian dictatorship was only a theoretical dogma. In practice, for a year and a half since the Bolsheviks captured power, unrestricted freedom for all reigned in revolutionary Russia. It was abused in all possible manner by members of the old ruling class under the protection of foreign powers extended through their embassies. Foreign intervention to support armed rebellion against the new order compelled the transformation of the amateurish Red Guards into an improvised army. Having captured power with the slogan "Peace, Bread and Land ", the Bolsheviks did not want war unless it was forced on them. They signed the humiliating treaty of Brest-Litovsk, dictated by the arrogance of die-hard German militarism, in order to have peace so that they could implement the other two items of their simple programme. Proletarian dictatorship was not put into the practice of Red Terror until the abuse of unrestricted liberty culminated in the attempt on Lenin's life.

Whatever might be its provocation and justification, terror turned the democratic and liberal world against the October Revolution. The European Social Democratic Parties, though theoretically wedded to Marxism, had grown up in the tradition of liberalism. Illogically enough, they disowned the practice of the Marxian theory and denounced the development of the October Revolution as a manifestation of Russian despotism. Consequently, they would not join the revived proletarian International under the leadership of the Russian Bolsheviks. But at the same time, the October Revolution galvanised the waning faith in the possibility of capturing power through armed insurrection organised and led by a determined minority. Lenin's party of professional revolutionaries became the ideal of a section of the European working class movement. The splitting of the Social Democratic Parties and the organisation of their revolutionary left wings into independent parties became the condition for the development of the nascent Communist International.
The Second World Congress promised to be representative. The German Social Democratic Party, which dominated the Second International, had split towards the end of the War. The left wing, which called itself the Independent Social Democratic Party, had agreed to send delegates to the Second Congress of the Communist International. Outstanding leaders of the Socialist Parties of France and Italy were also expected to attend the Congress—Marcel Cachin and Paul Frossard from France, and Scrrati from Italy. Thanks to the generally respected personality of its leader, Iglesias, who was also the doyen of European liberalism (the term is of Spanish origin), the Socialist Party of Spain enjoyed an international prestige disproportionately greater than its influence at home.

To beard the lion in his den was a part of my mission in Spain. If Iglesias could be persuaded to come to Moscow and bless the birth of the Communist International, the liberal opposition to the October Revolution would be demoralised and disintegrated. But he proved to be too hard a nut to crack by my youthful enthusiasm. The fervent faith of a new convert could not move the mountain of classical rationalism, which was interpreted by my fanaticism as senile rationalisation of reaction. The old patriarch of Socialist liberalism was surprised by the strange phenomenon of a young man from the land of ancient wisdom coming to him as a spokesman of the bloody cult of Bolshevism. But, as I lived long enough to learn, a good-natured cynicism is the faith of all consistent liberals. Sophism can lead nowhere. Therefore, the veteran liberal Iglesias soon recovered from his initial surprise and regained his native equanimity. With a benign smile, not free from a degree of sadness, he commiserated with the victims of a new fanaticism and sent me away full of righteous indignation and contempt for an old fool, as most uncharitably I thought he was.

But I must not go away from Spain without recruiting some delegates to the Second Congress of the Communist International. I was by no means beaten by the failure of my attempt to win the hardened rationalist, Iglesias for the new revolutionary faith. There was more than one string to my bow. A visit to the Anarcho-Syndicalist centre at Barcelona
was sure to be fruitful. But previous to falling back upon that last resort, I must look up more reliable recruits. There was a left wing of the Socialist Party. While still in Mexico, I had contacted its leaders through correspondence. They had taken the initiative by sending a message of fraternal greetings and congratulations to the first Communist Party organised outside Russia. They had received previous notice of my arrival. They were angry over my seeing Iglesias before them, and would not meet me openly. Because they were sure that the old reactionary would betray and the Spanish police would hand me over to the British authorities at Gibraltar. Even to an old conspirator, the suspicion appeared to be rather far-fetched and morbid. However, I had several clandestine meetings with half a dozen young men all belonging to the working class. They assured me that Iglesias had no influence in the Socialist Party, a majority of which would follow them to join the Communist International.

My mission in Spain completed, I was eager to go farther on the pilgrimage. But I had to stay on at Madrid yet for a few days awaiting a letter from Mexico which was to bring me a message from Borodin. The letter was to be written in a previously agreed code. It came as expected and was written in a cypher; but it contained a handwritten note signed by the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Mexico. He regretted that, the key to the original code having been mislaid, the letter was written in a new code, the key to which was enclosed therein! Suppressing the chagrin by a hearty laugh to myself, I went out to buy a walking stick.

It was not easy to accomplish this minor mission. I had to walk the whole length of the Puerta del Sol until I found a stick long enough for me. The Spaniards were a race of warriors. Even today they are excellent horsemen. But the obvious deduction from my tiring experience was that not many male members of the Spanish upper classes were more than six feet tall. However, finally, in one shop near the Royal Palace, I found what I wanted, took a taxi and went back to the hotel. For money to pay off the driver, I put my hand in the pocket. The wallet was not there. It was a bolt from the blue. All the money I carried was in it. Of course, a duplicate
of the letter of credit could be obtained from the Bank in Mexico which had issued it in return for the cash deposited. That would take time and meant delay in my reaching Berlin. Meanwhile, I would be completely stranded. A couple of thousand dollars in cash was also in the missing wallet; and it contained the most precious possession—the passport. I could not get a new one from the Mexican Embassy in Madrid, because I carried no other document to prove my identity. It might be possible to borrow some money from the newly found local friends. But without a passport, one was totally helpless in those days when a foreigner had to register himself with the police every week to obtain a certificate of identity.

It was obvious where the wallet was lost. I had taken it out of the pocket to pay for the stick. Immediately thereafter, I entered the taxi, just in front of the shop. The most skilful pick-pocket could not possibly perform his operation while I walked two steps across the footpath. It was not in the taxi, somehow dropped out of my pocket. All other possibilities of its loss eliminated, there remained no room for the least doubt that I must have left it on the shop counter. But would it be still there? Any other customer might have picked it up. No use speculating. I drove back to the shop and rushed in. No sooner I reached the counter than the shop-keeper stretched out his hand holding the thing. I snatched and opened it to make sure that the passport was there. The shop-keeper was standing in front of me with a broad smile, expecting to be thanked. In my excitement I forgot to express gratitude instantaneously, and made a gesture which evidently offended Mm. The smile on his face gave way to proud sternness. In a voice which cut like cold steel, he said: “Please, do count your money carefully, Sir: the Spaniards are no thieves.” I apologised for my shameful behaviour, and tried to placate the insulted benefactor by an explanation, which most probably did not convince him. How could anyone, who was not in my position, believe that a sheet of parchment was worth more than two thousand dollars!

A couple of days later, I left Madrid for Barcelona, there to board a ship for Genoa. No further mission on the way until I reached Berlin via Milan and Zurich.
FOUR years ago, I had started on the journey to Berlin. In the meantime, it had ceased to be the end of my journey. I reached there at the end of 1919, no longer in quest of arms. The experience in the U.S.A. and Mexico having revolutionised my idea of revolution, I had lost the incentive to return to India in the near future.

According to my new faith, revolutions took place of necessity. No individual was indispensable. They were brought about by the operation of new social forces. The maturity of the latter was the objective condition for a revolution. Until that basic condition was created, no armed uprising should be undertaken because it was sure to fail. Social forces antagonistic to the established order must, in the first place, be politically mobilised and recruited in the army of revolution. Only then would arise the question of arming the soldiers ready to fight for liberation.

Our old idea of revolution put the cart before the horse. It attached the decisive importance to arms, and when the opportunity of getting them appeared to present itself, we believed that revolution was round the corner. We did not stop to consider the problem of recruiting men to carry arms. The number of members of an underground party was too small to compose an army of revolution.

The new idea of revolution and the mental picture of how it should take place made me feel that there was no sense in my going back to India in a hurry. From the scanty news available, I gathered that, under the economic and psycho-logical impact of the War, social discontent was growing under the surface of the purely political anti-British nationalist
movement. Surveying the Indian scene from a long distance in the light of the Marxist theory of social evolution, I discovered the spread of class struggle in the countryside, which had been subjected to an intensified economic exploitation during the War. I further imagined that the subjective revolutionary factor of political consciousness was sure to reinforce the developing objective condition of social discontent when demobilised soldiers would return to their villages with the experience gained on battle-fronts in foreign countries. This perspective of the process of revolutionary development in India, opened up by the new faith of Marxism, was pictured in my book *India in Transition*, written two years later, as soon as sufficient statistical material reached Moscow.

While still in Mexico, I thought that the incipient social discontent in India would take time to be crystallised into a revolutionary social force. That process, which I believed to be inevitable, would result from the post-war economic development. But it could not be expedited politically; indeed, premature revolutionary political action might affect the country. I had lost interest in the limited objective of purely political Nationalism, and come to believe that not much could be achieved unless the middle-class agitation was backed up by a mass movement; that national independence could be attained only as a stage in the development of the inevitable social revolution. Pending the unfoldment of the process in India, I had found a field of fruitful activity in Mexico. Apart from the immediate satisfaction, the experience would qualify me for my share in the Indian, revolution, when the time came.

But having outgrown the prejudice that the accident of being born in one particular country imposes the moral obligation to prefer it to any other, I might have stayed on in Mexico indefinitely, had it not been for the attraction of the pilgrimage to the Holy Land of Revolution. On the way, I had to pass through Berlin, which was once to have been my journey's end. By the time I came there, it was no longer the Mecca of Indian revolutionaries, the place I was so very eager/ to reach until three years ago. But it was no disappointment for me, because I no longer wanted what I did previously.
At the end of 1918, the final grand German offensive on the Western front having failed, Ludendorff threw off the sponge, and Hindenburg advised the Kaiser to sue for peace. Defeat rapidly disintegrated the German army, until recently believed to be invincible. The mighty war lord who had terrorised Europe by brandishing the mailed fist, got funky and escaped to neutral Holland to save his skin and a considerable part of his personal treasury.

During the whole period of the War, the German navy, except the submarine fleet, had remained in the safety of the Kiel Harbour, entirely undamaged. Ludendorff having declared early in October 1918 that the army could no longer hold the western front, the General Staff of the Navy resolved to defend the honour of Germany by dashing out in the open sea and engaging the British fleet in a last-ditch battle. "The Death Cruise" of the Grand German Navy was held up by the sailors who rose in a mutiny, refusing to share "honourable death" with the officers. The Red Banner was hoisted on the Flagship of the Admiral. On November 9th, the mutinous sailors went ashore to join the workers in a mighty demonstration. Thus begun, the revolution spread like wild fire to the great northern ports and industrial centres.

On the same day, in Berlin, soldiers joined a mass demonstration, having refused to fire on it. In the afternoon, a vast mass of workers, soldiers and sailors appeared before the Imperial Castle guarded by the most loyal corps of the army. The castle guard lay down their arms and went over to the revolutionary demonstrators, flying a forest of red flags. At that dramatic moment, the Kaiser's abdication and flight were officially announced.

While the Social Democratic Party, under the leadership of the former saddle-maker Fritz Ebert and Philip Scheidemann, backed up by the liberal members of the old order, was trying to take over the decrepit state provisionally, the Spartakist chief, Karl Liebknecht, just out of prison, proclaimed from the balcony of the Imperial Palace the establishment of a Soviet Republic on the Russian model. The dramatic declaration was lustily applauded by the largest crowd ever gathered in Berlin. An officer of the Castle Guards
tore off his ribbons and hung out an imperial red blanket from the balcony.

At the same time, a band of armed workers broke into the Reichstag building, where the last Imperial Chancellor, Prince Max von Baden, was entrusting Ebert with the task of forming an interim Social Democratic Government under the Grown Prince. They got hold of Scheidemann and dragged him out to speak to the crowd. The Spartakist leader had proclaimed the Soviet Republic. The Social Democrats, opposed to violence and dictatorship, must make a bold counter move. While his senior colleague was committing the party to a constitutional monarchy, Scheidemann declared: “The old and rotten monarchy has broken down. Long Live the German Republic!”

But the surging tide of Red Revolution swept over the capital. The Social Democratic leaders got panicky and considered the idea of removing their fortuitous nascent Republic to Kassel, where the headquarters of the defeated Imperial Army was situated. Although the impetuous Ludendorff had withdrawn to Munich, there to lick his wounds and hatch devilish plots against the revolution, the old foxy Hindenburg remained at Kassel, surrounded by the elite of the Prussian military caste, watching from a distance the ominous developments in Berlin. The whole of the year, 1919, was a period of fierce civil war which followed the revolution. By the time I reached Berlin, the Versailles Treaty had been signed and a sort of precarious order established on the basis of the Weimar Republican Constitution. An ex-saddle-maker as President of the Republic had replaced the Emperor, who not only claimed the inheritance of the proud tradition of the mediaeval warriors from Charlemagne to Friedrich the Great, but aspired for the status of the Roman Caesars. A middle-class intellectual, Phillip Scheidemann had taken the place of Bismarck as the Chancellor (Prime Minister) of Germany. The Allied Control Commission, stationed in Berlin, was the supreme authority according to the Versailles Treaty. Branches of the all-powerful Commission were established throughout the country to enforce the term of a complete disarmament of the defeated enemy.
Naturally, the prevailing social and psychological atmosphere was of humiliation, frustration and bitterness. Extreme privation, complete absence of all the primary necessities of life, was the most outstanding feature of the situation. It was accentuated by the flaunting of luxury goods in the shop-windows in the fashionable parts of the city. The surrounding drabness of broken windows, bullet-ridden walls, potholes in the streets, old rattling tramcars, added to the incongruity of the ensemble.

The most striking spectacle was the large number of street beggars in frayed military uniforms, men with mutilated limbs, faces disfigured beyond recognition, many of them suffering from "shell-shock" as evidenced by the various symptoms of a shattered nervous system. Many of them could not speak, either for physical reasons or for shirking the humiliation of begging. They simply sat, lining the streets like a mute monument to the gruesome experience of war. What a contrast to the famous *Siegesäule* (Avenue of Victory) between the two rows of the statues of mediaeval Teutonic warriors, whose saga, embellished by the poetic imagination of patriotic historians, was the source of inspiration for modern militarism. The macabre spectacle on all the other streets of the city was a standing condemnation of the wickedness of the latter. There were Socialists and would-be Communists amongst the honest men thrown in the streets with the sole asset of their mutilated bodies and deranged minds. The bolder and more embittered ones hung on their breasts pieces of cardboard with the inscription: “I fought for the Fatherland”. To evade the law forbidding public begging, all held in their hands or displayed on the ground where they sat a few pencils or shoe laces or some such trivialities which they pretended to hawk for sale. None believed the obligatory subterfuge, and the same, uniformed beggar carried the same token of his respect for the law for weeks or months.

I reached Berlin rather late in the evening. The dimly lit city was blanketed with snow. The streets were full of slush, which covered dangerous potholes. I was to go to a particular hotel, according to the agreement with Borodin. It was called Hotel Fuerstenhof, one of the biggest, situated on the Potsdamer
Platz, the nerve centre of the city traffic system. The vast but gloomy station was swarming with military officers, German as well as Allied. The former bore the shame of defeat with affected dignity, which often verged on insolence. I was surprised that the Allied officers put up with it, though not always with good grace. But generally, a degree of civility marked the interrelation amongst the members of an international military caste.

By the time I came out of the station, the few dilapidated' taxies were commandeered by men wearing the largest quantity of gold braids and ribbons; Berlin was still a happy hunting ground of military men, those of the higher ranks dominating the scene. A poor civilian, an obscure foreigner to boot, had to hire a rickety vehicle drawn by a horse which could hardly stand on its legs—a gaunt frame of bones covered by almost hairless skin. If I knew my way to the hotel and did not have some luggage to carry, I would have preferred walking. However, a good deal of merciless whipping convinced the helpless animal that life would be less intolerable if it jogged along. Fortunately for all concerned, the distance was very short, less than half a mile; our steed made it within a quarter of an hour, and I was dumped with my luggage in front of the imposing swing-door of a large four-storey building.

The huge lobby, visible through the glass door, was crowded with military officers. After some hesitation, I ventured nearer to the entrance, and asked the liveried footman to take my bags. He grunted that there was no room and disdainfully turned his broad back on a lowdown civilian standing in ankle-deep slush at the risk of catching pneumonia. I got angry, pushed the chap, a typical German drill-sergeant, aside and forced my way in. Walking up to the Manager's counter, I spoke rather loudly in French: “I am a citizen of a neutral country, just arrived in Berlin," and demanded a room in the hotel. A number of ornate gentlemen nearby turned their heads to have a look at the civilian intruder. Presently, one of them stepped up to me and enquired for my nationality. He spoke French, but obviously he was a German. Giving him the monosyllabic answer: “Mexican”, I pulled out my passport and shoved
it under the nose of the reception clerk. The officer took a furtive look at the impressive sheet of parchment, and murmured at the clerk: “Please try to accommodate the gentleman.” The latter's attitude immediately changed; very politely, he pleaded inability to do anything for the night. If I could call next morning, he might be able to give me a room. He called the hall-porter and asked him to help me out of the predicament for the night.

My guardian was a massive middle-aged man in frock coat, its lapels trimmed with gold-ribbon. His behaviour was affable and kindly. Leading me to his own counter, he enquired if I was an Indian. I replied, "Yes, but from Mexico.” I avoided telling a downright lie and my friendly interlocutor was satisfied. He whispered: “We are friends; don't worry; Germany cannot be defeated.” He ordered one of his underlings to bring my bags in, and took them in custody. I was to take only my handbag to a nearby boarding house, where a room would be available for the night. The Saint Peter of the Heaven into which I wanted to find my place opened his bruised heart. Fierce hatred reflected in his bloodshot eyes. He informed that the Headquarters of the Allied Control Commission was situated in the hotel. The damned foreigners behaved like lords of the realm. They have a lien on all the rooms; therefore a good many must remain always vacant to satisfy their demand any time. The Manager was naturally loth to take in civilian guests unless they were distinguished persons. But he would fix me up, and advised (not asked) me to leave, with him some money. The reception clerk was a poor man, but must keep up appearances. I took the hint. How much? I imagined that it must be enough to be divided between the two, and slipped a five-dollar note into his hand. Oh, dollars! His eyes smiled happiness. I was handed over to a liveried lieutenant to be conducted to a nearby boarding house. The imperious message for the landlady was that her best room must be given to this distinguished visitor from India, who would take up residence in the Fuerstenhof from the next morning. The old order had disappeared from the streets; but it still remained enthroned in the German hearts.
The best room in the boarding house was shabbiness kept tolerably clean by the diligence of the landlady—a kindly old woman. She also lamented the shame and misery which had overtaken Germany, once so very powerful, prosperous and happy. She looked up with tearful eyes at the faded picture of the Kaiser still hanging on the wall. I felt very cold and looked at the empty fireplace. The landlady read my thought and complained that it had not been lit for a year; there was no coal. Poor thing! she would not realise that misery had overtaken Germany even when the Kaiser ruled! I was also informed that there would be no hot water—not even a jugful for washing one's face. But she would bring me some coffee and a slice of bread, but no butter; even she had not seen any for years. The brown brew neither smelt nor tasted like coffee. But it was steaming hot; I gulped it down; and warmed up the body benumbed overnight under a couple of frayed blankets. A small tablet of saccharine was served for sugar. Milk was, of course, out of the question. And the so-called slice of bread looked like a thin lump of gray earth. My first meal in Berlin was, as I learned presently, representative as far as a vast majority of Germans was concerned. A proud people had indeed fallen on bad days.

The next morning, my reception at the hotel counter was very much different. The hall porter gave me a military salute and informed me that my luggage was already in my suite. I had asked only for a room. The reception clerk also clicked his heels when he handed to me the key and ordered a porter to show me up. While entering the lift, I met the German Officer who had helped me the previous evening. He greeted me like an old friend, and passed his card—Hauptmann (Captain) X, Liaison Officer with the Allied Control Commission. Wishing that we should meet again, my new friend walked away. Evidently, he did not like to be seen fraternising with a foreigner. A corner suite on the third floor, overlooking the centre of the Potsdamer Platz was reserved for me. The passport seemed to have done me a good turn once again.
THOUGH the revolutionary proletariat captured power first in Russia, according to the Marxist horoscope of history, Germany should have had the priority. As the oldest industrial country, Britain was the birthplace of the economic doctrine of Socialism. The brain-child of Karl Marx was born in the British Museum. The political ideals of Socialism and its humanist ethical inspiration were deduced from the traditions of the French Revolution. But modern Socialism attained theoretical maturity in Germany. An organised socialist movement developed first in that country. Original contributions to the theoretical system of Karl Marx were made by Bernstein, Kautsky, Hilferding—all Germans. The number of thoroughly indoctrinated, ideologically class-conscious industrial workers was much larger in Germany than in any other country. When the first World War broke out, there were 111 socialist members in the German Parliament. The German Social Democratic Party was naturally the leader of the Second International.

Germany was also the cradle of Communism—the most uncompromising form of Marxist scientific Socialism. Time and again, the Second International had resolved to oppose war by declaring a general strike of workers in the belligerent countries with the slogan: “Workers of the world, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains.” On the outbreak of the War, the Second International was disrupted. Socialist Parties stood behind the governments of their respective countries. In France, the Socialist leader Juares was assassinated for opposing the War. Six out of the thirteen socialist members of the Russian Duma, the Bolsheviks, were arrested.
and banished to Siberia for their "defeatist" attitude. Out of the one hundred and eleven socialist members of the German Reichstag, fourteen advocated that their party should vote against war credits. But only one of them, Karl Liebknecht, disobeyed the party whip and voted according to the principle of international Socialism. Liebknecht was imprisoned; but his boldness inspired a mass anti-war movement under the leadership of Rosa Luxemburg, Franz Mehring and Clara Zetkin, who constituted the nucleus of the *Spartacus Bund* later to become the Communist Party of Germany.

The war resistance movement gathered strength during 1915. The rank and file of the Social Democratic Party, particularly the younger members, grew more and more critical of the patriotic policy of the party leadership. They challenged the policy of defending the Fatherland with the question—Had not the prophet of Scientific Socialism declared that the workers had no country? Inspired by the boldness of the pioneers of German Communism, the anti-war movement provided «mass sanction for their activities.

In January 1916, the pioneers of modern Communism, who called themselves the International Group, issued a manifesto with the caption—"The Main Enemy Is in Our Own Country". This highly significant development took place when Lenin was still an obscure exile in Switzerland.

The example of the anti-war movement in Germany encouraged the crystallisation of an international left wing of European Socialism. The internationalists held two conferences in Switzerland (at Zimmerwald in 1915 and at Kintzhal in 1916) to plan the salvaging of Socialism from patriotic degeneration. Lenin was the leader of a small minority in both the conferences. As against the general desire to end the war by concerted action of the Socialist Parties, Lenin demanded "revolutionary opposition to war" and complete break with Social Democracy, that is, with orthodox Marxism. In opposition to the perspective of a spontaneous mass uprising overthrowing the capitalist order, Lenin had developed his theory of professional revolutionaries organising themselves into a rigidly centralised party as the instrument for capturing power in behalf of the proletariat. The leader of German
Communism, Rosa Luxemburg, rejected Lenin's theory as of the Blanquist tradition. Consequently, until after the Bolsheviks captured power in Russia, Lenin had little influence on the mass anti-war movement in Germany except a few intellectuals through the intermediacy of Karl Radek.

In 1916, Liebknecht was called up for compulsory military service. On May 1st, wearing the soldier's uniform, he appeared in front of the Potsdamer Platz Railway Station to address the troops waiting to be transported to the front. He exclaimed: “Down with the imperialist war! Leave the army! Long live Socialism! " A lone man defying the authority of the mighty Prussian army was a spectacle never to be forgotten. It electrified the atmosphere. The anti-war movement spread. The Government retorted by arresting all the leaders. But the rising tide of mass discontent could not be stemmed by persecution. Underground Workers’ Committees sprang up in all important industrial centres. The movement found a response from the soldiers and sailors. It undermined the morale of the army and heralded the eventual defeat of Germany.

In the beginning of 1917, Russia became the scene of dramatic events. Heavy defeats having demoralised the Russian army, the Entente Powers were afraid that the Tzarist Government might sue for a separate peace. The abdication of the Tzar under the pressure of Pro-Allied politicians, who wanted to wage the war more energetically, opened the floodgates of revolution. The Bolsheviks were also "defeatists". Lenin, with his small band of followers, was allowed free passage through Germany to Russia, there to agitate for an immediate termination of the war. The pro-Allied politicians, who had succeeded the Tzarist regime, denounced Lenin as a German agent. In the beginning, he was opposed even by the Bolsheviks. But he was swimming with the powerful current of war-weariness and a general desire for peace at any price. The first session of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants’ Deputies, which met on March 27th, appealed to " the peoples of Europe for concerted decisive action in favour of peace.”

On the overthrow of the Tzarist regime, a bourgeois-democratic revolution had taken place. It was a historical
necessity; the working class must support it. In an industrially backward country, it would be a stupid adventure for the proletariat to bid for power. That was an orthodox Marxist view. Therefore, the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party rejected Lenin's demand for an armed insurrection. He fought his battle single-handed with the argument that the Russian masses wanted peace; the people's will must prevail, but the Bolshevik Party could not do what the masses wanted unless it controlled State power. Lenin's boldness resulted from the belief that, whatever might happen in the Russian backwaters, Germany was in the throes of the proletarian revolution, which would enable Russia to skip over the period of capitalist development within the framework of a bourgeois-democratic republic.

The spontaneous popular movement for peace, powerfully reinforced by mass desertions from the army pushed the Bolsheviks closer and closer to Lenin's position: failing to ride on the crest of the wave, they would be out of the political picture, whereas swimming with the mighty current they could capture power. The faith in the imminence of the revolution in Germany emboldened them to take the plunge. Lenin's plan was to decompose the German army with peace propaganda. Reunited behind the leader, the Bolsheviks believed that once Russia was out of the war, the working class of the Entente countries would force their respective governments to negotiate peace on the basis of the Soviet terms — "no annexation, no indemnity, and the right of self-determination". The faith in the historical mission of the working class was the only sanction of the Russian Revolution.

Lenin believed that the base of the world proletarian revolution was Germany. Notwithstanding his Bakuninist or Blanquist passion for armed insurrection and reliance on a wilful minority (the party), Lenin was the most orthodox Marxist. His faith in the Master's prophesy was unbounded. He did not believe that in a backward country like Russia the proletariat could hold power for any length of time. Yet he stubbornly advocated an apparently adventurist policy with the firm conviction that it would help revolution in Germany which, in its turn, would enable the Russian Bolsheviks to consolidate themselves in
power. But even then, the leadership would pass on to the German proletariat, the capital of the Communist World would shift from Moscow to Berlin.

Defending his policy of capturing power prematurely in Russia, Lenin argued: “We know that Karl Liebknecht will be victorious; we know that he will come to our assistance, and that revolution in Germany will liberate us from all international difficulties and from the necessity of revolutionary war. But the German revolution needs time. It needs preparations, propaganda, fraternisation in the trenches, a period of development.”

One of the first acts of the Soviet Government was to set up a machinery to carry on propaganda among the German soldiers. Trainloads of printed matter were daily despatched to the fronts. In the name of Liebknecht, the German soldiers were asked to lay down arms and fraternise with their Russian comrades. Nevertheless, the German Government was the first to respond to the peace proposal of the Bolsheviks, of course, not out of any love for them.

America had joined the war. Vast masses of men and materials were pouring across the Atlantic to reinforce the western front. The Russian army had completely disintegrated. The new regime could not possibly build up an effective military force in the near future, even if Bolshevik peace propaganda was a camouflage. It was, therefore, no longer necessary to keep a large section of the German army on the eastern front. It must be withdrawn and deployed to hold the all-important western front.

But the German Generals who met the Bolshevik delegates at the peace conference had no intention of treating them leniently. They behaved like bullies. Taking advantage of the Soviet Government's decree granting all national minorities in the Tzarist Empire freedom of separation, the Germans demanded recognition of the independence of the Baltic States, Poland and the Ukraine as the condition for the conclusion of a peace treaty. Those provinces of the fallen Tzarist Empire were occupied by the German army. Their independence would mean German protectorate, if not formal annexation. In reply to the German demand, the Soviet delegate Trotzky
made a flamboyant speech addressed "To All", who were exhorted to compel the predatory bourgeois governments to make peace under the threat of an international mass uprising.

The Bolshevik Party would not accept the humiliating terms dictated by the arrogant German Generals. Led by Bukharin and Radek, a majority of the Central Committee of the Party advocated a revolutionary war against Imperialist Germany until the German proletariat rose in revolt. Though in a hopeless minority, Lenin pressed for peace at any price. His argument was to point out the fact that there was no longer any Russian army to carry on the war. He charged the majority with acting against the will of the people. The people had voted for peace; the Bolsheviks must obey the popular mandate and sign the peace treaty. How did he know that the people had voted for peace? Lenin retorted, that they had voted with their feet: Look at the peasants in uniform, throwing away the guns and rushing back home to take possession of the land that the revolution had given them! Notwithstanding Lenin's realistic argument, the advocates of revolutionary war, to be waged with guns and the Communist Manifesto, carried the majority in a meeting of leading party members. But Lenin's realism had shaken the fantasticism of the revolutionary war-mongers. A minority, as many as were following Lenin, voted for Trotzky's formula: "No war, no peace".

To press their demand, the Germans practically annexed the Ukraine. Thereupon, the Bolsheviks broke up peace negotiations and proclaimed that, while refusing to sign a humiliating peace treaty, Russia declared that she was no longer at war with Germany. The Germans retorted by giving the ultimatum that, unless their terms for peace were accepted within forty-eight hours military operations would be resumed. The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party had no alternative to accepting Lenin's advice to sign the treaty. The treaty was signed, but the German army continued to advance eastwards, until they reached the foothills of the Caucasus. Their Turkish allies from the south captured Armenia. Petrograd was threatened by the advancing German army.
A few days after the signing of the peace treaty, the headquarters of the Soviet Government was moved to Moscow, which before long was hemmed in from all sides—by the perfidious German invaders and counter-revolutionary Russian armies backed by the Entente Powers.

The Seventh Congress of the Bolshevik Party met in that critical situation. As against the left-wing criticism that the humiliating peace treaty had not helped the Soviet regime, Lenin reiterated the argument that there was no alternative. The German brigands could not be stopped; but the Bolsheviks had won a respite. The perspective was so very gloomy that optimism failed Lenin. He anticipated "a series of tortuous defeats". But the German Revolution was in the offing. The Bolsheviks must somehow hold on; time was in their favour; not only Germany, but the whole of Europe was heading inevitably towards a revolutionary cataclysm—"inevitability", the magic conception of Marxism, which sustained the courage of Lenin even when everything seemed to be lost.
The faith which sustained the heroic courage of the beleaguered Bolsheviks for a whole year was not misplaced. The revolution did break out in Germany in November 1918. But it belied the great expectations of the Bolsheviks.

The responsibility for the defeat of the proletarian revolution in Germany has been thrown on the accursed heads of Social Democratic leaders by the Communists and their sympathisers. But objective historians must judge them more charitably. As followers of Karl Marx, they also believed in the inevitability of social revolution, and cherished the ideal of the liberation of the working class from capitalist exploitation. Their behaviour in the fateful days of 1918 was predetermined by what they believed to be the correct interpretation of Marxism. It is unfair and unreasonable to accuse them of having betrayed the proletarian revolution because, for years, they had maintained that the revolutionary theory and practice advocated by the pioneers of Communism were contrary to the teachings of Karl Marx.

The conflict between Socialism and Communism resulted from the contradictions in the gospel of their common prophet. Gradualism is inherent in the doctrine of inevitability; it rules out the communist conception of revolution. If history is a determined process, rationally it makes no room for revolutions. The bourgeois social order would break down under the pressure of the contradictions of capitalist economy, and be inevitably followed by Socialism. Where is then the necessity for a revolution? Guided by the rationalist tradition of modern European culture, the German Social Democratic theoreticians, some of whom had learned directly from the
Master, came to the conclusion that by preaching violent revolution he had contradicted his historicism. But the Social Democrats also contradicted themselves. Having supported the mass violence of the War, they opposed the violence of revolution and connived at its violent suppression.

Marx and his more fanatical followers had in mind the picture of the French Revolution, when they imagined that the bourgeois state would be overthrown by an armed insurrection of the proletariat. They did not reckon with their host. The military power of the modern state is incomparably greater than the mercenary armies of the decrepit monarchies which were brought down by popular uprisings in the eighteenth century. In Russia, a determined minority could seize power thanks to the disintegration of the army. The Tzarist State was a medieval monarchy, corrupt, inefficient, weakened by factional feuds in the Court. Therefore, the Russian Revolution was cast very largely on the pattern of the French Revolution. The conditions in Germany were entirely different. The army had survived the defeat and disappearance of the monarchy. It proved to be the decisive factor in the critical period of 1918-19. It was a professional army, officered by politically minded members of a traditional military caste. The anti-militarist appeal of the Communists found a response from the conscripted soldiers; but the officers' corps was impervious to it.

The news of the establishment of the Workers' and Soldiers' Council in Berlin, which for days controlled the great city, flashed over Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The example was imitated in numerous cities and towns. The insurrection was on the model of the Bolshevik uprising a year ago. Public buildings, railway stations, communication centres, newspaper offices were seized by the insurgents, who proclaimed the advent of a Socialist Republic. It was a mighty challenge to the Social Democratic leaders, who were trying to nil up the political vacuum with caretaker governments in Berlin and in provincial capitals pending the election of a Constituent Assembly to proclaim the establishment of a democratic Republic. In order to placate the insurgents, the head of the Social Democratic Government, Fritz Ebert
offered Liebknecht a seat on the Cabinet. The latter did not accept the offer. Thereupon, in panic, Ebert took a step which sealed the fate of the revolution of the communist conception.

From a safe distance, the General Staff of the defeated army was watching the ominous events in Berlin and other places throughout the country. Ebraert telephoned to General Groener, who had replaced Ludendorff asking for the co-operation of the army in restoring order. The alternative story is that Groener took the initiative and volunteered the co-operation; Ebert welcomed it as the drowning man seizing at a straw. In any case, the army stepped into the political field with the belief that the danger of revolution offered a chance for the resurrection of Germany as a military power. The hope was that, confronted with the common danger, even the Entente Powers would desist from a complete demilitarisation of Germany. So, from the very beginning, the German revolution ran up against the potential alliance of the victorious and the vanquished capitalist Powers. It had little chance to succeed as in Russia.

The defeated German army was scattered all over the larger part of Europe. It was a tremendous task to demobilise millions of men and transport them back home in an orderly manner. The interim Social Democratic government simply could not tackle it. Even a skeleton of the machinery needed for the purpose was not there. The Government sought the cooperation of the General Staff, which readily undertook the responsibility. It was a chance for restoring discipline amongst the soldiers and reasserting the authority of the officers. On an order secretly issued by the General Staff, the so-called Freikorps (battalions composed exclusively of demobilised officers) sprang up throughout the country for maintaining internal order, in other words, to suppress the revolutionary movement. A detachment of the Freikorps, several thousand strong, marched through the streets of Berlin, fired on workers' demonstrations and arrested some members of the Workers' and Soldiers' Council. Leaflets instigating assassination of Liebknecht and demanding bloody suppression of the Workers' and Soldiers' Council were showered on the city. Huge posters on the walls bore the following text: “Workers, Citizens! Our Fatherland is close to ruin; save it! It is menaced not from outside, but from within, by the Spartakists. Kill its leaders; Kill Liebknecht; Kill the Jews. Then you will have peace, work and bread ".

THE DEFEAT OF THE GERMAN REVOLUTION

Our Fatherland is close to ruin; save it! It is menaced not from outside, but from within, by the Spartakists. Kill its leaders; Kill Liebknecht; Kill the Jews. Then you will have peace, work and bread ". The blood-curdling exhortation was signed by " Soldiers Returning from the Front ". 
Fury was let loose. There was confusion all around. The rising tide of terror demoralised the amorphous mass movement. The First National Conference of the Workers' and Soldiers' Councils refused to admit Luxemburg and Liebknecht. The tide had indeed turned. Although, taking advantage of the general confusion and demoralisation, the Social Democratic leaders had captured the conference, there was a strong opposition to the government's alliance with the imperial army. Ebert argued that the alliance was indispensable for the protection of the frontiers of the nascent Republic. Hindenburg backed him up by issuing a proclamation from his headquarters: “The army supports the Ebert Government and expects the Government to carry out its promise to preserve the army ".

Immediately after the conference, Ebert ordered the Commander of a garrison on the outskirts of Berlin to march into the city and disperse the armed workers' battalions which guarded the premises of the Workers' and Soldiers' Council and other public buildings occupied by the revolutionaries. The Imperial troops opened artillery fire on buildings in which revolutionaries had barricaded themselves. Berlin had its blood bath.

While the army began the attack on the revolution, its leadership failed to rise up to the occasion. Liebknecht was a man of the masses; he was superb on the platform. But the powerful emotional appeal of his oratory, which was backed up by individual acts of physical as well as moral courage, lacked the substance of a carefully thought out theory and practical ideas. Luxemburg was the brain of the Spartakus League.

A Pole by birth, while still a student, she had to flee her native land to escape arrest for secret revolutionary activities. Before long, the young woman attained a position of prominence in the German Social Democratic Party, and came to be recognized as the intellectual Leader of the leftwing of the
Second International, while the red-bearded Russian Bolshevik was treated as a dangerous fanatic. Theoretically a pupil of Kautsky, as regards revolutionary practice, Luxemburg took up a position midway between the peaceful gradualism advocated by the classical Marxists, and the conspiratorial method of the Russian Bolsheviks that eventually came to be known as Leninist Communism. It was an equivocal position.

As against the Social Democratic perspective of a gradual transformation of the State, Luxemburg advocated political mass strikes as the instrument for overthrowing the capitalist order. The fallacy of the theory became evident during the critical days of the German revolution. If political mass strikes were to be the final offensive of the revolutionary army, it must have a general staff to plan and direct the onslaught, previously trained for the purpose. Notwithstanding her undoubted cleverness, Luxemburg did not think out her idea of revolutionary practice to the logical conclusion. If she did, she would realise that, without Lenin's party of professional revolutionaries, political mass strikes were bound to fail. To attain the object of overthrowing the capitalist state, political mass strikes must lead up to armed insurrection, and there must be a sternly disciplined party to plan and direct the whole process of revolutionary development, and ultimately to capture power in behalf of the proletariat. That was the essence of Bolshevism, worked out by Lenin in the minutest detail, during the ten years of exile in Switzerland.

It was a rejection of the rationalist, humanist and democratic tradition of Marxism, indeed of the proletarian striving for social emancipation. But it was Leninism which succeeded in Russia. In Germany, the leaders of the revolution attempted a compromise between orthodox Marxism, loyal to the tradition of Western culture, and Russian Bolshevism, which subsequently came to be known as Communism. Luxemburg was a theoretician; in practical politics, she allowed herself to be swayed by emotional considerations. As a matter of fact, their political activity for years previously having been only to criticise the right-wing leaders, the pioneers of Communism in Germany were found wanting when they were required to lead a revolutionary mass movement to success.
Luxemburg would not support the Social Democratic Government nor would she approve of any attempt to seize power. She advocated a continuous series of political mass strikes, which would sharpen the class struggle. The naivete of this revolutionary tactics was evident; it expected a power vacuum to continue indefinitely until the majority of the working class would actively participate in the revolutionary movement, and raise the Communists to power without any violence. It assumed that in the meantime forces opposed to the revolution would remain inactive. They did not, and claimed Luxemburg together with Liebknecht as the first victims of their violence.

The great merit of Luxemburg's position was rejection of dictatorship, even when, on the authority of the successful Communist leader, Lenin, it had become the cardinal article of the revolutionary faith. She clearly preferred democracy; but it must be a revolutionary democracy as against formal parliamentarism. She failed to think out the form; yet, she would not travel the only democratic way open to her and her followers at that time. Luxemburg was an all-round non-co-operator. She even opposed communist participation in the Constituent Assembly. The result of the policy of uncompromising negativism isolated the Communists from the mass movement. Mass enthusiasm could not be kept up indefinitely. The Socialist Republic proclaimed by Liebknecht on the day the revolution broke out remained a utopia. Meanwhile, militarist terror demoralised the movement which, had no immediate objective. The cry for the restoration of order 'found response in the middle class masses. The working class was isolated.

In that hopeless situation, the democratic Republic promised by the Social Democrats held out the only chance of preventing a restoration of the old order. A vast majority of the working class veered around under that Social Democratic leadership. Encouraged by the isolation of the Communists, Ebert, Scheidemann and Noske, the last having joined the interim government in charge of its relation with the Imperial army, proclaimed that violence would be met with violence. That was the signal for an all-out attack on the Communists. Meanwhile,
a sizeable army had quietly moved up to the neighbourhood of Berlin. On January 9th, only two months after the revolution had broken out, the army marched in and occupied the city, practically without any resistance.

Like the last flare-up before the flame goes out, the Workers' and Soldiers' Council proclaimed the establishment of an alternative revolutionary government headed by Liebknecht. The Communist leaders disowned their responsibility for the adventurist decision of the Workers' and Soldiers' Council by forbidding Liebknecht to participate in the desperate gesture. Their last connection with the organised mass movement was broken.

A few days later, Luxemburg and Liebknecht were seized by a band of young officers and taken to the military headquarters. They were brutally treated and literally slaughtered. Their mutilated bodies, almost beyond recognition, were found floating in a canal the next day. The verdict of the Military Tribunal set up to investigate the crime was that the prisoners were shot while they tried to escape. The assassination was symbolic; it was the assassination of the revolution, which lasted for two months and was followed by a year of terror, civil war and counter-revolution.
Civil War and National Bolshevism

THE year 1919 was the darkest period in the history of revolution. The defeat in Germany was a seven, blow to the great expectations which had sustained the courage of the Russian Bolsheviks when the German Baltic Army reached the outskirts of Petrograd and even Moscow was in danger. But there was no going back. The boats were burnt. Having captured power, the Bolsheviks resolved to defend it to the last ditch, with the forlorn hope that the German revolution would recover from the defeat. The hope was sustained by the tenacious faith in the infallibility of the Marxist gospel. Meanwhile, they had to fall back on their own wits and resources.

In Russia, the civil war had begun. The more reactionary section of higher military officers had recruited mercenary armies which were converging on Moscow from different directions. The German army was still in occupation of the western and southern provinces. From Mongolia, the Japanese had invaded Siberia. The British army in Persia had occupied the petroleum town of Baku and set up a Menshevik Government in Georgia. An oil company force had landed in Murmansk on the Arctic Sea. In the summer of 1919, the railway line between Petrograd and Moscow had been cut off, and the army of the Cossack General Denikin had reached a point only sixty miles to the south of Moscow. The Soviet capital was veritably a beleaguered city, although points of resistance held out in more distant parts. The siege of Tzaritzina (now Stalingrad), for example, was an epic event of the civil war. A small garrison, commanded by Stalin, held out for nine months against almost overwhelming
odds. Guerilla war was waged behind the enemy lines all over the country. In February 1919, it was decided to transform the improvised "Red Guards" battalions of armed workers into the Red Army for the defence of the revolution.

In Germany also, civil war raged in all its fury. But counterrevolutionary terror could not extinguish the smouldering fire of mass revolt. In hundreds of places, big and small, throughout the country, Workers' and Soldiers' Councils had taken over the local administration. To suppress them all, the army had to march the whole length and breadth of the land. Working class quarters in industrial towns were pillaged. Countless local revolutionary leaders were either shot in the streets or executed after summary trials in military courts.

But there were some silver linings in the dark clouds which hung heavily on the European horizon. Early in April, a Soviet Republic was proclaimed in Bavaria as the focal point of resistance to the triumphant counter-revolution in Germany. But it did not last even for a month. About the same time, a socialist-communist coalition seized power in Hungary and established a Soviet Republic. It held out longer—for four months, until a Rumanian army, on order from the Entente Powers, marched in.

The old order of Central Europe, however, could not be restored. The economic impact of the war had undermined it. Military-defeat demoralised it. The crazy quilt of the Austro-Hungarian Empire fell to pieces. It was dismembered by the Versailles Treaty. In Germany also, about a dozen subsidiary monarchies followed the Hohenzollern Empire into oblivion. The fanaticism of the professional military caste could establish a reign of terror, but it could not set the clock of history back. The disintegration and spiritual demoralisation of the decayed social order could not be arrested by violence.

The Versailles Treaty aggravated the crisis of the old social order. The older generation of politicians, bureaucratic officials and military men of the higher ranks preferred to mark time. Meanwhile, they intrigued against the new regime. The Social Democratic government was afraid of signing the treaty. The army was vociferously against the humiliating clauses calling for demilitarisation of Germany. By signing
the treaty, the Government might forfeit the support of the army
without which it could not last for a day. Ebert appealed to
Hindenburg for advice. The old fox replied that the army was
absolutely incapable of continuing the war, but he would prefer the
honour of a soldier's death to an ignominious peace. The meaning of
the bravado was: Let the Social Democrats bear the odium of signing
a humiliating treaty; the proud soldiers wanted to keep their hand free,
their record clean, so that eventually they might rally the nation for a
patriotic war. At the same time, they expected that, notwithstanding
the terms of the Versailles Treaty, the Entente Powers would connive
at a rebirth of the German army for the creation of a buffer against
revolutionary Russia. As a matter of fact, the small armed force
allowed by the Versailles Treaty enabled the leaders of the defeated
German army to maintain the officers' corps intact.

The young officers were impatient with the temporising manoeuvres
of their superiors. Demilitarisation confronted them with the dire
perspective of unemployment. They opposed the Versailles Treaty
and advocated a war of liberation to be waged by the nation in arms.
Their attitude towards the Versailles Treaty was very much similar to
that of the left-wing Russian Bolsheviks towards the Brest-Litovsk
Treaty. They proposed guerilla campaigns against the Entente army of
occupation, terrorist plots for demonstrative assassination of the
internal and foreign enemies of the nation, and overthrow of the
republican government which had signed the humiliating treaty. The
ultra-nationalist German youth conceived the bold idea of an alliance
with Russia in the war against the Entente Powers for the liberation of
Germany and vindication of her honour Overthrow of the Social
Democratic Government and subversion of the bourgeois democratic
republic being also the objectives of the German Communists, the
alliance could begin at home, to be international in the course of time.
Young army officers sought the alliance of the revolutionary
proletariat to put up a resistance against the enslavement of Germany,
under the flag of National-Bolshevism.

The curious cult gained numerous adherents in the ranks of the
Spartakus League. The revolution was reeling undei
the attack of the army. It could survive if there was a defection in the
enemy camp, and the more active elements came over to join it.
Nothing could be more propitious. Had not Marx predicted that in the
final crisis decomposition of the bourgeois society would guarantee
the success of the revolution?

Radek was then a State prisoner in Berlin. He was enthused by the
new development. He had advocated a similar method of resistance to
the German, invasion of Russia after the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. Now it
could be applied in Germany against Entente Imperialism. Surely this
time Lenin would not oppose, as he had done on the previous
occasion. In Russia, the Bolsheviks were in a precarious position. If
the Entente Powers were engaged by a mass resistance in Germany,
they would not be in a position to rush reinforcements to the White
Russian armies marching on Petrograd and Moscow. A Russo-
German alliance in a revolutionary war could possibly liberate the
whole of Europe. Radek was the representative of the Russian
Bolsheviks and the Soviet Government. His attitude was a great
couragement for National-Bolshevism.

Luxemburg and Liebknecht dead, and its veteran outstanding leaders
in jail, the Spartakus League was finding it very difficult to recover
from the defeat. The possibility of an alliance with the militant
nationalist youth opened up a new perspective. In the then prevailing
atmosphere of confusion and disorganisation, the advocates of
National-Bolshevism gained a considerable influence in the Spartakus
League. German Communism was drifting in a dangerous direction,
just when the army was preparing a powerful attack to overthrow the
infant republic. The peaceful mass resistance to that attack and its
ignominious failure were (he most dramatic events in the early history
of the German revolution. Most of thr officers who sought alliance
with the Communists were also against the Social Democratic regime,
they were indifferent to its fate, and many of them actually
sympathised with the insurrection. In any case, for one reason or
another, the Communists were practically out of the picture in those
crucial days.

Already in the beginning of 1919, when the Social Democratic
Governmeni granted them the freedom of the City of
Berlin, the Freikorps had suggested establishment of a dictatorship under Ebert. But the General Staff wanted to move with circumspection, and reined in the impetuous young officers. The conclusion of the Versailles Treaty dashed the forlorn hope of the German militarists that the Entente Powers would allow Germany to retain a sufficiently large army to combat the danger of revolution. The original provision for an army of 4,00,000 had raised the hope. It could be a highly specialised professional army employing the entire officers' corps of the old army. But the number was reduced to 2,00,000, to be further cut down to half the size by the middle of 1920. Such a small army could accommodate not more than 25 per cent of the officers of the old army. More than 20,000 professional soldiers, who had occupied a privileged position under the old order, would be unemployed and lose their social status. Naturally, there was a great ferment in the army. The Republican Government had undertaken the responsibility of enforcing the terms of the Versailles Treaty under the supervision of the Allied Control Commission. It must be overthrown if Germany was to repudiate the dictated peace.

The army on the western front was demobilised. But many divisions were in far-off Russia, beyond the jurisdiction of the Allied Control Commission. The commanders of the Eastern Army refused to obey the orders of the Republican Government to demobilise and surrender arms. With the secret approval of the General Staff, they resolved to march on Berlin, overthrow the Republican Government and set up a military dictatorship. The younger officers, who had toyed with the idea of waging a revolutionary war in alliance with the Communists and Bolshevik Russia to vindicate the honour of Germany, were attracted by the plan. They operated in Berlin as the vanguard of the undefeated Eastern Army, which was moving towards the capital ostensibly to surrender arms and demobilise. It could not stay on in the Baltic provinces of Russia and Poland, which had become independent States according to the Versailles Treaty and under the protection of the Entente Powers. Nor could it operate indefinitely in the far-off Ukraine and Southern Russia, cut off from the base of supply in Germany. The Commanders of the
Eastern Army, therefore, decided to gamble; it was a gamble, because the Entente Army would march into Germany, if necessary, to enforce the Versailles Treaty.

Towards the end of 1919, a pamphlet entitled "Reflections on Dictatorship" was distributed in Berlin. It demanded the resignation of the Social Democratic Government, dissolution of the Reisckstag (Parliament), election of a new National Assembly under the supervision of the army; meanwhile, demilitarisation according to the Versailles Treaty must stop. Shortly thereafter, a typical Prussian army, wearing steel helmets with the emblem of the Swastika, flying the old Imperial flag, marched into Berlin. It surrounded all the government buildings and proclaimed the establishment of a new government headed by General Luettwitz of the Eastern Command and one Dr. Kapp, a high official of the old regime. President Ebert appealed to the Berlin representatives of the General Staff. They flatly refused to help; one section of the army would never fight another. They advised Ebert to come to terms with the insurgents. The latter were prepared to have the Social Democrat Noske as the figurehead of their dictatorship. Realising that the situation in Berlin was hopeless, the Social Democratic Government fled to Dresden, but there also it found itself in the danger of being arrested by the local garrison. The fugitive government finally took shelter in Stuttgart, far away to the south of the storm-centre of Berlin. A year of terror and civil war ended in a temporary triumph of counter-revolution. That was the State of Germany when I reached there.
IN December 1919, the political and psychological atmosphere of the German capital was surcharged with an indescribable tenseness. There was a feeling of uncertainty as well as of nervousness in the air. Yet, public life appeared to run its normal course, as normal as anything could be under the circumstances. The old order collapsed like a house of cards; everybody seemed to have lost faith in it. But nothing new was filling up the vacuum. A majority of the people neither lamented the past nor had any illusion about a better future. They needed all their wits to face the present with courage, the present of privation, hunger, uncertainty and anguish. People moved in the streets like ghosts.

During the last years of the war, consumers' goods, particularly food and clothing, had been in short supply. The war was over, but scarcity continued. A majority of the people were under-nourished, shabbily clothed, sullen. A whole generation of children had grown up without even the sight of milk. There was no sugar, no coffee, no butter. Rationed bread, a couple of slices per head per day, was made of anything but wheat. The scarcity had given rise to strange customs: Guests to a party took along their meagre ration of what was called bread and tiny tablets of saccharine. The hostess served coffee which was a brownish brew of some roasted grain. I remembered the plenty in Spain and even next-door Switzerland. The contrast was staggering. War certainly had done the majority of the German people no good. They had more than enough reason to be embittered by the experience.

Before long, I discovered that the same city was divided into two worlds—one of poverty, shabbiness and gloom,
the other full of riotous life, extravagant, gay and gaudy. Kurfuerstendamm, the main thoroughfare of the fashionable part of the city, was lined with shops full of all kinds of luxury goods, and most elegantly furnished spacious cafes, ornate cabarets and dance halls, which did not open till after midnight. In the afternoons, the traffic was jammed with latest model cars, and the cafes were crowded with prosperous burghers, dandified young men and swaggering officers, accompanied by the corresponding types of women. Men in smart uniforms displaying their decorations, some wearing the famous Iron Cross, which all soldiers coveted under the old regime, dominated the scene, as if Germany had not lost the war. No wonder that a country so divided was the scene of a fierce civil war. In the prevailing atmosphere of confusion, panic and suspicion, it was difficult for a foreigner to find his moorings. I was to contact Borodin through one Dr. Eduard Fuchs. He was the author of a monumental work on the history of social customs. A detailed erudite description of the various aspects of social and domestic life since the dawn of civilisation, Dr. Fuchs's book candidly dealt also with the problems of erotics. No library, private or public, was complete without the book, but no lady should read it; yet the wicked book was clandestinely read by the adolescent daughters of every, respectable household.

Though a distinguished academician, Dr. Fuchs was a friend of Rosa Luxemburg, Franz Mehring and other intellectual pioneers of German Communism, himself actually a member of the Spartakus League. All the Communist leaders whom I knew by name—Wilhelm Pieck, Ernst Meyer, August Thalheimer, Klara Zetkin, Paul Levi—were either in prison or underground. In any case, it would be dangerous for me to make any enquiries about them. Borodin knew that I was to put up at the Fuerstenhof Hotel, but he did not know the date of my arrival. I could do nothing but wait patiently until he contacted me.

Meanwhile, I made some discreet attempts to contact Dr. Fuchs, who also seemed to have made himself scarce. No information about his whereabouts was available from the most obvious places—his Berlin home, the University and
the public library. While waiting impatiently for someone to turn up, I had to do some financial transaction. For the purpose, I called at a private Bank recommended by Borodin. The banker was a Social Democrat who sympathised with Communism. Presently, I became quite friendly with him, and at his home met Bernstein, Kautsky, Hilferding and other veterans who were not very happy about the shape of things under the government of their party.

A new convert to Communism, I was full of prejudices against those men. At the same time, their reputation as great Marxist theoreticians called for respect; and I was struck by their humanness. There was neither malice nor rancour in their criticism of Communism. While they were rather contemptuous of what they called Liebknecht's “melodrama,” Luxemburg commanded their admiration. They all believed that she would never embrace Bolshevism, which they characterised as a new type of oriental despotism. As a matter of fact, the differentiation between Socialism and Communism was not yet sharp amongst the pioneers of the German revolution. An intellectual brotherhood, they cherished a common ideal—social liberation of the working class. Learned men of high culture and refined taste they kept their personal relations and social intercourse on the intellectual and humanist plane, untarnished by party politics. A good-humoured mutual tolerance held them together even when conflicting loyalties were pulling them apart.

Bernstein was very old, almost blind. Yet, every evening he joined the select gathering in the drawing-room of Herr Simon, the banker. The old man was perpetually in a combative mood, and Lenin was his bete noire. He did not believe that the Bolsheviks would hold out for long in Russia, and called Lenin a reckless adventurist who would disrupt the international socialist movement with his fanatical ideas, and was now gambling with the fate of his country. The refrain of the tirade, which was rather sorrowful than malignant, was: “Calling me a revisionist! The conceited fool. He is making a caricature of Marxism; he is the arch-revisionist.”

When I was introduced to Bernstein, he taunted me: “So, you are a convert to the Tartar's fanaticism?” None kept any
secret in Simon's drawing-room. He was the common confidant of the leaders of the three groups in which the German Social Democratic Party was breaking up. He speculated in the stock market in behalf of the three parties, as Bernstein once remarked caustically. He transacted business for all of them, though more for the Communists.

The Social Democratic Party was financed by the powerful trade-union federation which ran a far-flung chain of cooperative banks. The Independent Social Democratic Party, which split away from the mother organisation towards the end of the war, controlled a share of the vested interests. Conspiratorial existence of the Communists required them to have a legal channel for financial transactions. The legendary Bolshevik gold did not come directly from Russia. It came through devious routes, mainly from Scandinavia and Holland, where the precious proceeds of the expropriation of the expropriators in Russia were converted into cash. The money came to Berlin where it had again to be changed into the currencies of other countries where it was to go clandestinely. The value of the German mark was falling. The central fund of the Communist International had to be maintained in stable currencies—dollar and pound. All those transactions could be done legally only through a bank.

Eventually, I met Dr. Fuchs and contacted Borodin, who introduced me to the exclusively communist salon of the film star Erna Morena. There I met Karl Radek who had just been released from prison with the order to leave Germany within one week. He was bubbling with enthusiasm about the great possibilities of an alliance with the demobilised army officers. A small wiry man, full of vivacity, he could not sit still. Whenever he wanted to say something, he walked up and down the large room and spoke as if he was on the platform addressing an audience; and he always wanted to say something. Indeed, he occupied the centre of the stage, so to say, and outshone the film star who evidently adored him as the revolution personified. I noticed that her worshipful attitude was shared also by the men present. The Russian Bolshevik, although Radek was only a Galician Jew, was the oracle.
I was sceptical about National-Bolshevism, which appeared to me to be a fantastic idea. It was a lesson of my own experience that nationalist revolution was an equivocal ideal. Radek seemed to sense a discord in my silence. By way of driving his point home with an illustration, he walked up to me, placed his hand on my shoulder, which happened to be higher than his head, and said: “The Indian comrade is a personification of National-Bolshevism, which will not only conquer Germany, but win the whole of the East for Communism.” At that time, I did not realise how prophetic his opinion was. I disowned the dubious distinction, and said that at least in my case the nationalist had to fade out before Communism could be an honest conviction. There was a murmur of approval, which was brushed aside by the Russian Bolshevik's condescension for the erring opinion of an oriental comrade. I resented the condescension, but kept quiet for the moment.

Before long, the bubble of National-Bolshevism burst, throwing the Spartakus League in a crisis which it survived by the skin of its teeth. My scepticism about the fantastic cult most probably was helpful to some extent. In any case, I could influence Ernst Meyer, who had succeeded Luxemburg as the intellectual leader of early German Communism. Radek returned to Moscow, to be welcomed as the hero who had in his pocket the plan of conquering Germany. Lenin turned down the plan and condemned National-Bolshevism as arrant nonsense. His caustic criticism of the futility of the ultra-nationalist opposition to the Versailles Treaty was elaborated in the famous brochure "Left-Wing Communism—— An Infantile Disease.”

Early in March 1920, a section of the old German army made an almost successful attempt to overthrow the newly established Weimar Republic. One fine morning, it marched into the capital and without any resistance occupied all the strategic positions. The Social Democratic President, Ebcrt, with his Cabinet left Berlin in panic to avoid arrest. That was one of the most dramatic moments of the history of post-war Europe. From the window of my hotel—in the heart of Berlin (the Potsdamer Platz), I watched a typical Prussian army fanning out in different directions. People of
all classes stood by listlessly, as if paralysed by a sudden blow. The huge city was plunged into confusion.

But overnight, there appeared a bold leadership to take the situation in hand, and deal a counterblow. In the midst of that dramatic situation, I met Wilhelm Reck for the first time. At first, I took him for a military officer in civilian clothes—a middle-sized man with a stiff bearing, accentuated by brown bristles standing over the forehead. It was a secret meeting of the Communist Party. I went there with Ernst Meyer, a quiet, soft-spoken scholarly intellectual, who had replaced Pieck as the leader of the party. The meeting had to decide a rather ticklish question, and the decision had to be quick, before dawn. Something utterly unexpected had happened. The call to resist the counter-revolution had been issued by Carl Legien, President of the powerful German Federation of Labour, whom the Communists together with the entire left wing of the Social Democratic Party had for years denounced as a rank reactionary. He had decided to call a political general strike to be declared from the dawn. What should the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat do? Should it play second or third fiddle to reformist Legien, or simply fade out of the picture in that crucial moment? Meyer advocated the former course. Pieck hesitated, and then proposed consultation with the leaders of the Independent Socialist Party (the left-wing of the Social Democratic Party had broken away to form a new party under that name). A joint committee issued the call for the strike before dawn. Pieck and Meyer signed it in behalf of the Communist Party.

For four days, the big city was dead, shops closed, factories idle, streets deserted in the day, everything enveloped in complete darkness in the night. On the fifth morning, from the same hotel window, I watched the mass of steel-helmeted soldiers marching in the opposite direction, in sullen silence. The might of organised labour had triumphed over brute force. For days, there was not a soul in the streets; the insurgent army did not have the chance of firing a single shot. It was great luck to have had that experience. Naturally, it made an indelible impression on my mind. The acquaintance of Meyer and Pieck was a part of the picture. One has since then been
devoured by the blood-thirsty mother revolution, perhaps because he was a devoted as well as an intelligent child; and the other rewarded, not so much for devotion to the goddess as for obsequiousness to her high priests, which betrayed want of intellectual independence.

Having inflicted the crushing defeat on the monarchist militarist reaction, the reformist Legien made yet another bold move which, if supported by the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat and other leftist politicians, might have consolidated the Republic and consequently altered the subsequent history of Germany and also of Europe. He demanded reconstruction of the Cabinet to the exclusion of the notorious Noske and some others who, in the critical days, had behaved most unreliably. Following the Independent Socialists, the Communists broke the united front and refused to support Legien's demand. Pieck was their spokesman in that fateful negotiation. Had not Meyer come out of prison in the nick of time, Pieck might have led the party into a shameful position. The refusal to support Legien's demand for a reconstruction of the Cabinet went a long way in that direction.

The fatal drift was stopped by Lenin's intervention, who severely condemned the practice of painting nationalism red. Fortunately, by that time, the old guard of the Spartakus League had come out of prison. Pieck was replaced by Meyer and Thalheimer at the head of the German Communist Party, and the National-Bolsheviks were expelled from its ranks.
The Old Guard of German Communism

THE defeat of the Kapp-Luettwitz insurrection was a turning point in the civil war in Germany. Legien's attempt to reconstruct the government under direct control of the trade-unions did not succeed. But in the industrial districts of the country, there was a resurgence of the revolutionary movement. In the Rhineland, particularly in the Ruhr Valley, and in Saxony, it developed into armed uprisings, which lasted for months. To defeat the "Red Army of the Ruhr," General von Seeckt of the Imperial Army was authorised by the Social Democratic Ebert-Mueller Government to organise the Reichswehr, which, composed of professional soldiers, came to be the nucleus of a resurrected German army, to overrun Europe once again after twenty years.

The proletarian insurrection in the Ruhr, however, was a spontaneous movement. It had no political direction. Indeed, all the three working class parties were opposed to the *putsch* (adventure). They issued a joint declaration calling upon the workers to lay down arms so as to avoid a clash with the Reichswekri. In behalf of the Communist Party, Wilhelm Pieck signed the declaration. The Ruhr insurrection had little chance of success. The victorious army of the Entente Powers was on the alert. As a matter of fact, General von Seeckt organised the Reichswekr more with the connivance of the victorious enemy than with the legal sanction of the Weimar Constitution.

The movement in central Germany was pregnant with greater possibilities. It brought into prominence Heinrich Brandler, who before long became the leader of the Communist Party and held the position until after the defeat of the Second German Revolution in 1923. Brandier was not an upstart. A
building worker by profession, he had risen to the top of the trade as a highly skilled workman. In his youth, he had travelled extensively through Europe, earning his living as an apprentice according to the mediaeval tradition. He had met Lenin in Switzerland and lived there with the Bolshevik emigres. An active member of the Social Democratic Party ever since the early years of the century, he had finally settled down in Chemnitz, and built up a powerful industrial and political organisation of the local workers, which sided with the Communists when the revolution broke out. As soon as the news of the Berlin military officers' insurrection reached Chemintz, the local workers, under Brandler's direction, practically seized the town and made preparations for its defence. The City Hall was captured and a Workers' Council [Soviet] was set up there as the de facto government of the town. All who might join the counter-revolution were arrested and the local garrison was disarmed. Brandler's plan was to march on the great industrial city of Leipzig, join forces there with the insurgent workers from other towns of Saxony, and make a dash to besiege Berlin, which was believed to have been occupied by the Baltic Army.

While Brandler was pursuing this strategic plan, a more colourful person appeared on the scene. It was Max Hoelz, who recruited a fairly numerous guerilla band from the poor peasantry of the Saxon Uplands. Meanwhile, the counterrevolution had been defeated in Berlin. Brandler would avail of the respite to build up a strong communist base in the industrial towns. He disapproved of the provocative activities of Hoelz and expelled him from the Communist Party. But the name of the Saxon guerilla leader acquired a romantic reputation throughout the country and the headquarters of the Communist Party decided to send a representative to contact Brandler personally and make a first-hand report of the situation in Central Germany.

The legendary figure of Max Hoelz and the colourful accounts of his guerilla activities appealed to my imagination. I was anxious to meet him and observe his operations from close quarters. The dry humour of August Thalheimer, who had replaced Pieck as the leader of the Communist Party,
benevolently smiled on my romantic predisposition, and arranged for
my journey. But I did not meet Max Hoelz until 1928, when he came
to Moscow, having served seven years' imprisonment after his arrest
in 1921. Instead, I met Brandler in Chemnitz.

I had travelled from Berlin together with one Guralsky, who had
recently come from Moscow as a representative of the Communist
International. Borodin introduced him to me as such. But he preferred
to pass as a German under the assumed name of Klein. He was a poor
substitute for Borodin, in personal appearance as well as
intellectually: a typical East-European Jew, inclined to foppishness in
dress, pompous in behaviour, secretive as regards his mission.
Nevertheless, he did acquire a position of some importance not only in
Germany, but also in France, as the personal agent of Piatnitsky who,
during the early twenties, controlled the underground machinery of
the Communist International and doled out money to the national
sections.

Brandler and Guralsky spoke in German, which I could not follow.'
The former hardly took any notice of me, but I was struck by his
appearance and the deep guttural voice which sounded like the growl
of an angry bull-dog. He resembled one—a massive head with a broad
strong face on a rather short but powerful torso which carried a
pronounced hunch on the back. As a builder's assistant, still in his
early youth, Brandler had slipped from a high scaffolding and suffered
an injury to the spine. Psychologists say that consciousness of
physical deformity creates complexes. Though painfully ignored
while we met for the first time, subsequently I came to be intimately
associated with Brandler. There was nothing abnormal in him except
an excessive shyness, which he tried to hide behind a gruff voice and
apparently rough manners. Shyness on the part of a man of the masses
was perhaps the expression of a psychological complex.

It was a curious coincidence that there was another hunchback
amongst the most outstanding communist leaders. It was Antonio
Gramsn of Italy. I met him in Moscow. He was not a worker, but an
intellectual, a professor of philosophy. He also was terribly shy—
more so than Brandler. In private
company, he seldom spoke. Arrested in the earlier years of the fascist regime, he spent twenty-two years in prison, and died soon after his release, on the liberation of Italy. The hardship of long imprisonment had shattered his delicate health, but could not daunt his spirit. Pondering over the fact of Croce's popularity with the progressive younger generation even after he had turned a critic of Marxism, Gramsci came to the conclusion that the philosophical aspect of Marxism should be revised so that it could offer the idealistically inclined all that Croce gave and much more. Gramsci had left behind about 2,000 pages of manuscript as the result of a profound study in prison. It may turn out to be the greatest contribution to philosophical thought hitherto made by any Communist.

Brandler is not an intellectual. He is the type of working man ideak'sed in Marxist literature—self-educated to a high degree, proud of belonging to a class destined to build a new social order, full of confidence in himself as also in the proletariat. Others who shared with him the leadership of the Communist Party in the early twenties—Ernst Meyer, August Thalheimer, Paul Levi, Paul Froelich—were intellectuals, well versed in arts and letters, law, philosophy, economics. They were impressed by Brandler's sound commonsense with which he approached all theoretical as well as practical problems.

I watched him with mixed feelings while he talked to Guralsky. The latter evidently was trying to assume an air of authority. Brandler treated him with scant respect; growling curt replies to questions which he treated as of no importance. At last he took some notice of me; a typically European prole, he had never thought of the possibility of Communism finding adherents in colonial countries. I resented his attitude, and went away from the first meeting with an antipathy which lingered even after I came to know him well enough, and that was not until 1922, when he came to Moscow. The next year, I was quite closely associated with him in the preparation of the Second German Revolution. Even then, we could not be personally friendly. Something intangible stood between us. It was his shyness and my original antipathy as I realized later. My subjective reserve broke down when in the Fourth World
Congress of the Communist International the Russians unfairly saddled him with the entire responsibility for the defeat of the German Revolution in 1923, and he was removed from the leadership of the party. Thereafter, he was detained in Moscow for two years. But naturally embittered by the experience, he lived like a recluse. We met again in Berlin in 1929, and at last discovered each other, so to say. He proved to be the most loyal and warm-hearted friend.

My relation with August Thalheimer, from the very beginning, was of personal friendship. He was more of a scholar than a revolutionary, although his dedication to the cause of the social liberation of the working class was by no means amateurish. But for the dedication, he would have risen high in the academic profession. When in the Fourth World Congress of the Communist International, together with Brandler, he was held responsible for the failure of the Second German Revolution, the flippant Radek ridiculed him as the typical German professor who lived in a dreamland. The criticism was malicious, but the description not wide off the mark. Often Thalheimer was absent from the sessions of the Politbureau of the party. But we knew where to find him. He would be sitting in a small cafe with a glass of beer, which was never emptied, absorbed in some problem of higher mathematics. But the call of duty brought him out of the dreamland of abstraction, and his mind turned to the problems of the theory and practice of revolution with equal keenness. In addition to mathematics, philology was also a subject of his studies, and he was recognised in the academic circles as an authority on Panini. Barring Bukharin, he was the topmost theoretician of the international communist movement, and retained the reputation even after his expulsion from the party.

Thalheimer was the first German Communist leader I met soon after my arrival in Berlin. It was at Eduard Fuchs's home, the rendezvous of communist highlights who did not frequent Erna Morena's fashionable Salon. The Fuchs home in a pine-wooded suburb of Berlin was like a miniature art gallery and a cultural museum. He was the proud possessor of the largest collection of original Daumiers. His large private library specialised in the history of art and culture. Every
OLD GUARD OF GERMAN COMMUNISM

room was furnished in a particular style, the ensemble being of refined taste and sober luxury. Fuchs attached great importance to his well-stocked wine cellar. On the whole, it was the home of a Sybarite; there was something Greek about it. Introducing me to Thalheimer, who stood up from a deep arm chair contemplating the glowing bowl of his pipe, Fuchs remarked that, having heard about me from Borodin, he thought I should meet the August before others. After a while, Ernst Meyer joined us. All the three spoke English. The conversation was of a general nature. Bits of news about the non-co-operation movement in India were appearing in the German press. My new acquaintances were curious, very keen to know more so as to understand what exactly was happening in that distant land. I could not enlighten them much as regards facts of the contemporary situation. But they were palpably surprised to meet an Indian who did not believe that things were essentially different in his country. They were also surprised at my eagerness to be fully informed about the situation in Germany. It was midnight before we left as friends and comrades with a common purpose.

Thereafter we met frequently and I was invited to secret meetings of communist leaders discussing the current problems of the revolution. I was immensely benefited by the experience, and before long could participate in the discussions. Thalheimer took great pains to give me the English rendering of the discussions, and asked for my opinion, which he translated into German. He was the leader of the party. Paul Levi was still in prison, and Brandler away in Saxony. His attitude naturally won for me a place amongst the leaders of the Communist Party. They all treated me with kindness, affection and respect.
THE Social Democratic government did not dare sign the Versailles Treaty until the General Staff of the defeated army advised it to do so. It was clear that the High Command of the army disapproved of the play of the younger officers to seek an alliance with Russia with the object of continuing the war. The conclusion of the Versailles Treaty, for the time being, scotched National Bolshevism as far as the ultra-nationalist youth was concerned. Two years later, it again flared up when nationalist youth joined hands with communist workers to resist with large-scale sabotage the French army occupying the industrial Ruhr Valley.

In the Third World Congress of the Communist International, Radek delivered an impassioned speech eulogising Schlageter, the leader of the sabotage movement, who had just been executed by the French. He described the representative of ultra-nationalism as the embodiment of the revolutionary plan of the German people rising in revolt against the Versailles Treaty, which had reduced their Fatherland into a colony of Entente Imperialism. Radek spoke in behalf of the Russian Communist Party, and the Congress applauded his speech, which was prominently featured in the communist press throughout the world. I wrote an article in the Pravda extolling the revolutionary role of anti-imperialist nationalism. My Schlageter article was also prominently published in the world communist press. That article and some knowledge of my earlier political views and activities made me very popular with the ultra-nationalist German youth.

Inside the Communist Party of Germany, National-Bolshevism was eAljOunded by Heinrich Laufenberg and 278
Fritz Wolfhein, both old members of the Social Democratic Party. Disgusted with the policy of the party leaders during the war and after the defeat and fall of the old regime, they joined the Communists. But in the revolutionary crisis of 1918 and throughout the following period of civil war, the policy of the Spartakus League was also weak and vacillating. Luxemburg thought that the time for the proletariat to capture power in Germany had not yet come. Moreover, she was decidedly opposed to the Bolshevik programme of armed insurrection. She believed that, in the course of time, the proletariat would revolt against the treacherous reformism of the Social Democratic leaders and transfer their powerful support to the Communist Party, and then the time would come for the latter to take over power constitutionally. Until the Second World Congress, the Communist International was to a considerable extent influenced by Luxemburg’s opinion.

National-Bolshevism, therefore, appealed to the militant membership as an alternative to what was believed to be a Social Democratic tradition. Laufenberg and Wolfstein gained a considerable following inside the party. Wilhelm Pieck and Paul Levi were then the leaders of the party; they expelled the exponents of National-Bolshevism on the eve of the Second Party Conference at Heidelberg in October 1919. The mantle of Luxemburg had fallen on Levi’s narrow shoulders. Of all the Spartakist leaders, he was the most intimately associated with her, and fully shared all her opinions. Being very closely associated with Radek at the same time, he must have also shared the latter’s attitude to National-Bolshevism. Laufenberg and Wolfstein had seen Radek in prison and obtained his sanction for the plan to ally with the ultra-nationalist movement in a revolutionary struggle, which would ultimately establish proletarian dictatorship. Levi expelled them from the party, because National-Bolshevism meant negation of his strategy of capturing power constitutionally. In the Heidelberg Party Conference, National-Bolshevism appeared as Left Communism. A majority of the delegates rejected the policy advocated by Levi and Pieck as reformism. They split away from the party and formed the Communist Workers’ Party, committed to the Bolshevik programme of armed insurrection to capture power.
When I reached there, Borodin was away from Berlin to attend the Heidelberg Conference, which was held in secret. He told me what had happened there. I also learned that Herman Gorter of Holland was the theoretical leader of the Left Communism, which Lenin criticised as "an infantile malady" in a pamphlet published on the eve of the Second World Congress. Meanwhile, the civil war in Germany intensified and counter-revolution received a setback in the bloodless battle of Berlin in March 1920. The organisers of the Ruhr "Red Army" were members of the Communist Workers' Party. My sympathy was for Left Communism, and I wanted to meet Gorter. Himself a writer of repute, he belonged to a small group of Dutch Marxists who were held in high esteem in the earlier years of the history of the Communist International. Other members of the group were Henriette Roland-Hoist, Anton Pannekoek, J. Rutgers and H. Sneevliet. I could not go to Holland immediately, but before long met Sneevliet, who came to Berlin on his way to Moscow as a delegate to the Second World Congress of the Communist International. Rutgers also came to Berlin to see me on Sneevliet's suggestion. I met Roland-Hoist in Moscow at the Second World Congress. Pannekoek and Gorter I met only in 1922, when I went to Holland.

Henriette Ronald-Hoist acquired fame as a poetess before the First World War. There was a talk of her getting the Nobel Prize. But her poems, originally written in Dutch, and some even in Flemish, were never translated in any main European language. So her fame as a poetess remained very largely confined to her native land. Herself belonging to an aristocratic family, she married a Flemish nobleman who did not share her political ideas. She was a delegate to the Second World Congress of the Communist International, but did not take any part in its discussions. Through our common friends, Rutgers and Sneevliet, I came to know her personally very well. Her adhesion to the cause of social revolution was primarily emotional, although she did not lack an intellectual appreciation of Communism also. But she would feel much more at home with the pre-Marxist Utopians. As a Left Communist, she disapproved of Lenin's New Economic Policy,
and returned from Moscow rather disillusioned. Thereafter, she retired to her country home on the Flemish border. I spent a few days there in 1922, and made the acquaintance of her husband. He was an interesting character, not hostile to Socialism or Communism, but indifferent. He worked on the farm together with other labourers, and often spent the evenings in a nearby pub with some of them, instead of coming home for dinner. The relation between the two was rather Platonic than conjugal, although both were quite happy. They had no children. Like many emotional Communists, she supported Trotsky against Stalin, and was expelled from the party. Thereafter, she completely withdrew from politics, and ultimately joined the Catholic Church as a devout Christian.

Anton Pannekoek was an astronomer of European reputation. He was never politically active, being interested only in the philosophical aspect of Marxism. He lived like a recluse at the Hilversum Observatory, where I visited him whenever I went to Holland. Gorter was a particular friend of Pannekoek, who evidently thought that Left Communism, condemned by Lenin, was more consistent with Marxism than the revolutionary opportunism of the Bolsheviks.

Rutgers was an engineer. He joined the colonial service and spent some years in Indonesia early in the century. Shocked by the consequences of colonial exploitation, he returned home and joined the Socialist Party. On his suggestion, the latter turned to the task of organising the colonial labour, and sent Sneevliet out to Indonesia. Rutgers came in contact with the Russian Bolsheviks in Switzerland before the revolution. Soon after the Bolsheviks had captured power, he went to Russia to help the reconstruction of the country. But during the years of War, Communism and civil war, little work of construction could be undertaken. After the First World Congress, Rutgers returned to Holland entrusted with the task of setting up the West-European Bureau of the Communist International. Rolando Hoist and David Wijnkoop, a member of the Dutch Parliament, joined the Bureau.

Rutgers was keenly concerned with the revolutionary movement in the colonies and saw me in Berlin to discuss how the
Communist International could help the liberation of the subject peoples. He urged that I must insist on the question of the liberation of the subject nationalities being given prominence on the agenda of the Second World Congress. Sneevliet, who had recently been to Indonesia, would be a delegate to the Congress; but the initiative must be taken by me. Rutgers himself did not attend the Congress. He returned to Moscow in 1921, and was the first engineer to point out the vast industrial potentialities of Siberia. After a tour of inspection, he submitted the plan of developing an industrial colony in Kurbas, where coal and iron lay side by side, miles long coal seams bursting out on the surface of the earth. The plan was to develop a new industrial centre exclusively with foreign engineers and mechanics recruited from the communist movement in different countries. Rutgers went abroad to recruit personally the first batch to do the spade-work. Three Indian students, who had studied engineering in Germany, but were doubtful about getting suitable employment at home, joined Rutgers pioneering army, which began the industrial development of Siberia.

Sneevliet was the most colourful and ardent member of the small group of Dutch Left Communists. He was the first to bring the message of Socialism to Asia. He went out to Java in 1913 as Secretary of the Dutch Chamber of Commerce. That was a disguise. Before long, he gathered a small group of young men and trained them to organise a trade-union movement and a Socialist Party. He was arrested and tried on the charge of conspiring to subvert the Dutch authority. He pleaded guilty and personally argued his case. His speech in the Court was a scathing condemnation of colonialism and a vindication of the right of the subject people to rise in revolt against Dutch Imperialism. He was convicted; but the punishment was only externment from the colony. Any more severe punishment was precluded by the consideration for the prestige of the white man. It would be such a scandal to put him in prison with native criminals!!

During the war, he carried on Socialist propaganda amongst the Indonesian students in Holland and built up a trained trade to return home and take up the work of organisation.
He wanted to go out to India and set up there a centre of revolutionary activity throughout the East. He was waiting until the Second World Congress of the Communist International with the hope that he might return to the East as the representative of an international organisation. He met me in Berlin to discuss his plan and to secure my approval and co-operation. I was deeply impressed by his palpably sincere enthusiasm. It was so very much like the evangelical zeal of the Christian missionaries. We became close friends, and did not allow the personal relation to be affected by our subsequent political differences. Through him, I came to know many leaders of the Indonesian revolutionary movement, such as Samaoen, Sudarshana, Tan Malaka, Alimin, Hatta, Sjaahir, to mention only the best-known few. They were mostly students in Dutch Universities; some were revolutionary exiles. From time to time, I went to Holland to lecture in study circles organised by Sneevliet. The Communists amongst them looked upon me as their teacher, and most were Communists.

Eventually, Sneevliet left the Communist International and became an important lieutenant of Trotzky. During the Nazi occupation of Holland, he was taken prisoner and shot dead.

When I met him first in Berlin, Sneevliet, together with his friend Gorter, was closely associated with the newly formed Communist Workers' Party of Germany. Through him, I contacted some leaders of the new party. They were mostly young people who had not inherited the tradition of the Spartakus League. They respected the memory of the martyred Luxemburg, but disapproved of her opposition to Bolshevism. They were bitterly against Paul Levi, who was, in their opinion, not a revolutionary, but a reformist parliamentarian; on the strength of his friendship with Luxemburg, he was ruining the young Communist Party. But their main complaint was that Levi had inherited Luxemburg's antipathy for the Russian Bolsheviks, particularly Lenin. They further alleged that Levi attached much greater importance to the reformist Independent Social Democratic Party than to the revolutionary mass movement, and had driven the Bolshevik left
wing out of the Communist Party to secure the affiliation of the Independent Social Democratic Party with the Communist International. They claimed that a large majority of the Communist Party in Berlin, Hamburg and the industrial Rhineland had joined the new party.

Until early 1920, there, indeed, was no properly organised Communist Party outside Russia. Although the working class movement throughout Europe as a whole sympathised with the new regime in Russia, only small left-wing groups would endorse the Bolshevik programme. Even the Spartakus League was a loosely organised propagandist group. It was madness to talk of organising insurrection and capturing power, following in the footsteps of the Russian Bolsheviks before Communist parties won the support of the masses. To build up the Communist parties as mass organisations was the immediate task. The masses of workers were still organised in trade-unions controlled by the Socialists. The difficulty of weaning them away from the reformist tradition encouraged National-Bolshevism among the younger leaders of the Communist Party. They thought that in alliance with the ultra-nationalist youth, who had contacts in the army, it would be easier to capture power. The alliance did not materialise, but the impatience of the younger elements was there to provide the foundation for the theory and practice of Left Communism. It was a token of the immaturity of Communism, "an infantile malady," as Lenin characterised it. But for the moment, the organisers of the Communist International could not alienate the Left-Communists, Anarchists and Syndicalists who, at that time, were the most enthusiastic supporters of the Russian Revolution and were eager to emulate its example in their respective countries.

Thalheimer and Ernst Meyer were inclined to take this view; but the final judgment was suspended until Levi came out of prison. The Independent Social Democratic Party, which in those days commanded the largest mass support, was considering the proposal to send a delegation to the Second World Congress of the Communist International. Levi was in charge of the negotiations. Nothing should be done to queer his pitch. I was not at all impressed by the would-be
Lenin of Germany. He was undoubtedly a very intelligent man, a clever lawyer and a skilful parliamentarian. He argued his case well, with a degree of overbearance; but whenever opposed, he tended to be hysterical. He vehemently rejected the idea of any reconciliation with the Left Communists, whom he branded as "hair-brained adventurists." When I pointed out that, if the Communist Workers' Party sent a delegation to the World Congress, none could stop it, Levi flared up; he would not allow the delegation to be admitted. The matter was left at that, to be settled in Moscow.

Levi's performance at the Second World Congress was disappointing. He quarrelled practically with everybody. Before long, the blazing intellectual was replaced by the workingman Brandler as the leader of the German Communist Party. Frustrated and embittered, Levi returned to the Social Democratic Party. There also he was not trusted for his past record. In 1929, he committed suicide by jumping out of the window of his Berlin residence on the fourth floor of a building.
ALTHOUGH no longer interested in the mission with which I had left India five years ago, yet, having reached Berlin, I wanted to contact the Indian Revolutionary Committee set up there on the outbreak of the War. Towards the end of 1914, an emissary of the Committee brought to us in India the news that the German Government would help our struggle for independence. The message naturally electrified us, and I was sent out to receive a shipload of arms in the Dutch Indies and arrange for landing them somewhere on the Indian coast.

We knew little about the men who constituted the Berlin Committee, although it claimed to represent the revolutionary nationalist movement in India. Except for a few, such as Hardyal, Virendranath Chattopadhyaya and Bhupendranath Dutta, they had not taken any active part in the movement either at home or abroad. Some of them were connected with anti-British propaganda in America and Europe. Nevertheless, the members of the Berlin Committee were looked upon by us in India with respect and admiration due to great revolutionaries. It was not a mean achievement on their part to have acquired in Berlin the status of the representatives of a belligerent power, so as to enlist the support of the German Government for India's struggle against British Imperialism. It seemed that the Committee proposed to function as a provisional government in exile, and believed that it was recognised as such by the German Government.

The illusion on its part, and the deceitfulness of the German propaganda department, created an atmosphere of unreality. The Committee was completely isolated from India and could do little in Europe which promoted the cause of
Indian independence. The Germans utilised it for propaganda purposes. Some of its members were sent to Turkey with the mission of carrying on propaganda to incite the Indian troops in Mesopotamia to revolt against the British. There was singularly little response to the inflammatory appeal. The failure was due not so much to the loyalty of the Indian troops as to the ineffectiveness of the propaganda. In any case, there was no mutiny of Indian soldiers, and the number of those taken prisoner was not large enough to compose an army of liberation. Presumably, neither the Turks nor the Germans were interested in such a plan, if there was any, because of its evident futility. No such army could ever reach anywhere near the Indian borders. Doomed to isolation and inaction by the circumstances of its very composition and existence, the Committee before long was disintegrated by internal feuds fed with the jealousy amongst its leading members.

Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, a brother of Sarojini Naidu, was the live-wire. As a student in England, he had been a member of the terrorist group to which Savarkar also belonged. After the latter's arrest and deportation to India, as a sequel to the senseless assassination of Curzon Wylie, Chattopadhyaya found asylum in France, where he associated with Mme. Cama and Krishnaverma, who carried on anti-British propaganda there. On the outbreak of the War, Chattopadhyaya moved to Berlin either on his own initiative or on the invitation of the Germans. Mme. Cama and Krishnaverma called themselves Socialists. They did not follow Chattopadhyaya to the compromising alliance with Prussian militarism as against British Imperialism. As professed Socialists, they had attended international Congresses which denounced militarism and passed anti-war resolutions. I met Mme. Cama in Paris in 1924. The lovable old lady was still an anti-British fire-brand; but there was little of Socialism in her ideas. Krishnaverma had died in the meantime.

When the War broke out, there were a few Indians studying in German Universities. As British subjects, they were enemy aliens and should have been interned as such. Chattopadhyaya approached them with the tempting offer that they could escape internment by joining him. A further inducement was
the grant of doctorate degrees before they had finished their studies. The original Indian Revolutionary Committee was thus set up; One Mohammad Mansoor, who had gone to Germany to study philology on an Indian Government scholarship, was elected the President. Because of the alliance with Turkey, the Germans were inclined to give prominence to Muslims in their relation with India.

Dr. Mansoor spent some time in Turkey during the war. But eventually he was pushed to the background, when Indian revolutionary exiles from America came over to join the Berlin Committee. I did not know where he was when I came to Berlin. After a couple of years, he turned up in Moscow with his German wife, and called himself a Communist. His former colleagues of the Berlin Committee suspected him of British espionage, though there was little evidence to substantiate the charge. Nevertheless, he was not trusted in Moscow. Moreover, I could not make out why he came there, and left him to his wits. Several months later his wife came to inform me that he had been arrested, and she was not allowed to see him. Naturally, in distress, she appealed for my intervention. In those days, nothing could be more terrible in Russia than to be suspected of espionage. Even Lenin could not save one from the fatal consequences of being arrested on that charge. The Cheka (the Extraordinary Commission to fight counter-revolution) was all-powerful like the Committee of Public Security at the time of the French Revolution. It was the instrument of Red Terror, and it functioned relentlessly. However, I did intervene and obtained the permission for Dr. Mansoor to leave Russia. He was not allowed even to see me before his departure under guard. Thereafter, he lived in Germany until 1930, and did not seem to have been any too thankful to me for having snatched him from the jaws of death—the inescapable fate of one arrested for espionage during the period of Red Terror in Russia.

I returned to India in December 1930, and was arrested in June next year. During my trial in the Kanpur Jail, Dr. Mansoor appeared as a prosecution witness to identify me as the "M. N. Roy" whom he had met in Moscow. He had returned to India a few months before and had been
appointed professor in the Aligarh University. Dame Rumour wagged her tongue to insinuate that the permission to return to India and the appointment were Dr. Mansoor's reward for services rendered. It may or may not have been the case. There was no evidence to judge one way or the other, except that identification of the man on trial as "M. N. Roy" was the crucial point of the case against me. Dr. Mansoor died while I was still in prison. One must not speak ill of the dead. He must be given the benefit of doubt.

Early in 1915, the German Foreign Office decided to send a mission to Afghanistan with the object of detaching that country from British influence and establishing there a centre of propaganda to incite trouble in India. The plan was to set up at Kabul the so-called Provisional Government of Independent India, which would call upon the Indian people to revolt against the British rule. German oriental experts thought that, in order to be representative, the Provisional Government of India should be headed by a member of the princely order. Virendranath Chattopadhyaya's resourcefulness produced one. Raja Mahendra Pratap of Hathras, U.P. was stranded in Switzerland. Before the war broke out, he had left India for a tour of Europe. He agreed to come to Berlin, provided that he would be received in audience by the Kaiser. With the consent of the Indian Section of the German Foreign Office, Chattopadhyaya accepted Mahendra Pratap's terms, and the latter came to Berlin to be elected chairman of the Indian Revolutionary Committee. The coveted and promised interview with the Kaiser did not materialise; the pretext was that the Supreme War Lord was away at the front directing operations. The President-designate of the Provisional Government of Independent India was, however, awarded a consolation prize; he was received in audience by the Crown Prince.

The Indo-German mission travelling through Persia reached Kabul. It was headed by Baron von Hentig of the German Foreign Office. In the meantime, Amanullah had disposed of his pro-British father and ascended the Afghan throne. He welcomed the German mission and allowed the establishment of the Provisional Government of Independent India with Raja Mahendra Pratap as its President and Maulana
Obeidullah as Prime Minister. The latter had come to Kabul directly from India. Although British pre-occupation with the military operations in Europe and the Near East enabled King Amanullah to win the so-called Third Afghan War, he could not throw off the British influence completely until after the Russian Revolution. Meanwhile, under British and Czarist Russian pressure, he expelled the German Mission, although the presence of Indian revolutionaries was tolerated still for some time. The proclamation of the Bolshevik Government of Russia that it stood for the freedom of all subject nationalities encouraged King Amanullah and improved the position of the Indian revolutionaries at Kabul. Before long, a diplomatic mission of the new Russian regime reached there. But notwithstanding all the moral and material help, the so-called Provisional Government of India could not influence events inside India. Its propagandist activities remained confined to inciting the frontier tribes against the British.

In 1919, Raja Mahendra Pratap left Kabul for Berlin to consult the Central Revolutionary Committee there about the future plan of action. He travelled through Russia and was received by Lenin in Moscow. The interview was amusing. I had a first-hand report from Lenin himself. It seems that, from his youth, Mahendra Pratap was obsessed with the belief that he was a prophet. While at Kabul, he had written a tract on what he called the *Religion of Love*. He presented a copy to Lenin with the remark that unless the latter guided the new regime in Russia according to the principles formulated therein, the Revolution would fail. Lenin promised to read the tract and see its author again to give his opinion. In the second interview, he advised the prophet of the religion of love to go to England and preach his gospel there. In addition, he remarked that the Bolsheviks did not believe in God; they would listen to the admonition of the prophet only when the latter had accomplished in his country what they had done in theirs.

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Barring Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, Hardyal was the most important member of the Berlin Committee. Intellectually,
he was by far the superior, but eccentric in emotion and erratic politically. From an orthodox Hindu he became an anarchist—a close associate of Alexander Barkman and Emma Goldman in the United States. But anti-British nationalism was still the dominating passion. Therefore, Hardyal went over to Berlin to join the Indian Revolutionary Committee there. Before long, he clashed with Chattopadhyaya who, backed by the Germans, bossed the show. The scope of anti-British activity could easily transcend the direct promotion of the cause of Indian freedom. Chattopadhyaya was a restless soul of indomitable energy and adventurous temperament. He travelled secretly in the neutral countries of Europe, and seems to have rendered valuable assistance to the German Secret Service, which won for him the predominant position amongst the Indians in Berlin. Consequently, he easily got the upper hand in the struggle for leadership with Hardyal, who was arrested and interned as an enemy alien. On the defeat of Germany, he escaped to Sweden and wrote a sensational book in which he narrated his experiences in Berlin.

The more significant part of the book was a passionate declaration of loyalty to Britain. One can only guess whether it was yet another proof of Hardyal's political instability or a sober judgment informed by experience. In any case, it required a good deal of moral courage for one who had won legendary popularity as an uncompromising revolutionary nationalist. The moral courage cost Hardyal his popularity and he spent the remaining years of his life in political retirement as a professor in the Upsala University. I never met him; but from whatever is known about his life, one can come to the conclusion that his was a remarkable personality. He was a misfit in politics; but when at last he found the profession congenial to his character, premature death put an end to his life. Perhaps that was a blessing in disguise. Successful nationalism is not particularly grateful to its heroic and martyred pioneers who today live in obscurity as embittered old men.

Champakraman Pillai was the "most colourful member of the Berlin Indian Revolutionary Committee. I did not meet him when I first came to Berlin. Later, in 1922, I found him keeping a shop of oriental antiquities. As an orphan
in Travancore, he had been picked up by some English missionary, who subsequently brought him to England for studies. But he did not seem to have done much of studying, and I could never make out how he got mixed up with Indian revolutionaries. There was little of a revolutionary in him. On the contrary, whatever ideas he had were conservative, which had won him some friends in the most reactionary Prussian monarchist circles. Count von Reventlow was his patron. That distinguished patronage enabled him to hold his own against Chattopadhyaya's jealousy and escape the fate of Hardyal. When I met him in 1922, most of his former colleagues on the Indian Revolutionary Committee had transferred their hope from the Kaiser's Germany to Bolshevik Russia. Some actually called themselves Communists. Pillai was a diehard nationalist and ridiculed his former colleagues for their new-fangled ideas. In so far as Germany was concerned, he was more scornful of the new regime than the most rabid monarchist. With Count von Reventlow's patronage, he had actually been enrolled a member of the Pan-German Nationalist Party—the only non-whiteman to have the honour; and Pillai, who had a shining black complexion, was proud of the distinction. He had perfect drawing-room manners, which were curiously lacking on the part of other Indians who lived for years in Europe. Dressed up in a black frock-coat and striped trousers, his waving black hair oiled to shine, he looked the most attractive display in his curio shop. He spoke German to perfection, and also French fluently, having lived in Paris before coming to Berlin. On the whole, he was a typical parlour python, and as such fascinated me. Whenever I had some time to waste, I called either at his shop or where he lived. He found the attention flattering and used to regale me with stories about his high social connections. An unabashed braggart, he claimed close friendship with men like Hindenburg and Ludendorff, whom he mentioned with their Christian names.

Of all the members of the Berlin Committee, only one had participated in the revolutionary movement in India. It was Bhupendranath Dutta, a brother of Swami Vivekananda. As the editor of Tugantar, the organ of the revolutionary

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movement, he had been arrested and sentenced to imprisonment in 1907. On his release, he left India either to escape fresh prosecution or to seek celebrity in the United States, which his more famous brother was believed to have conquered for Indian spiritualism. However, he lived there a rather uneventful life until the outbreak of the First World War, when he went to Berlin to join the Indian Revolutionary
Committee. As a youngster at home, I had admired him as a martyred national hero. Years of mysterious revolutionary activities abroad had added to the original glamour. But the man I met in Berlin early in 1920 was disappointing—a sort of Rip van Winkle, who was still enjoying his blissful slumber. He received me in his shabby lodging with a degree of pomposity and admonition. He was the only member of the august Revolutionary Committee present in Berlin, and in that capacity demanded a full report of my activities ever since I left India. The emphasis was on the large amount of money I had received from agents of the German Government in various places. It must be accounted for. Not wanting to annoy him, I promised to do all that in the course of time, and tried to raise our conversation on the political level. He was quite indifferent to what was happening in Germany and to all the talk of class struggle. Nor did he believe that the Bolshevik regime in Russia would last long. Therefore, he ridiculed my desire to go there, and would not think of his ever doing so. He did go after a year, with other Indian nationalists, to come back disappointed. However, I managed to placate the superannuated hero by promising the report he demanded. Meanwhile, a good meal in a better-class restaurant was enough to cheer him up; then gossip and anecdotes about the past created an atmosphere of intimacy.

Thereupon, I told him a little about experience with the Germans and other Indian revolutionaries in Mexico, and also of Borodin’s mission and the money I spent in that connection. He strongly disapproved of my having used the Indian revolutionary funds for an irrelevant purpose, and would not be impressed by the argument that the requirements of an actual revolution should have priority. However, he could feel that there was no sanction for the defunct Berlin Committee to
assert its fictitious authority on me, and reluctantly abandoned the attitude of superiority.

Before long, I discovered that the Berlin Committee was not a happy family. Dutta also had his grievances, not only against Chattopadhyaya, who seems to have been a bully, but against others as well, particularly Mansoor. True to the tradition of the early revolutionary nationalist movement, which drew inspiration from Bankim Chatterji's *Ananda Math*, he did not trust the Muslims. He also warned me against Filial, because of the latter's connection with the monarchist-militarist party, which might hand me over to the British. They would never forgive one who had used German money for promoting Socialism and helping the Bolsheviks. On my laughing at his morbid imagination, he remarked that I should be thankful that Chattopadhyaya was away. Did I not know what happened to poor Hardyal? I did; but in the meantime, the old regime had been overthrown, and I had friends among the Socialists. Dutta had no opinion of the latter; they were not interested in anything except class struggle, he complained repeatedly.

Having heard so much about Chattopadhyaya, I was naturally eager to meet him. But he was away at Stockholm. I had to go there if I wanted to see him. I might have, on the way to Moscow. But at the last moment, a new and safer route opened up. I travelled to Leningrad on the first Soviet ship calling at the German port of Stettin.
BORODIN informed me that the plan of our early journey to Moscow had miscarried. It was to hire an aeroplane with the help of some German military officer with National-Bolshevik inclinations. The overland route through Poland was blocked by the newly established Pilsudsky regime, which was waging against Soviet Russia a war of intervention. The Polish army, equipped by the Entente Powers and directly under the command of the French General Weygand, had marched into the Ukraine and set up a counter-revolutionary separatist government there. The sea route to Leningrad was also closed because the northern Baltic and the Gulf of Finland were still icebound. Moreover, except a few Swedish ones, no foreign ships were yet going to any Russian port. Stockholm was the only western window, so to say, of beleaguered Bolshevik Russia. But it was not easy for many to slip through that way, which was legally open exclusively to the holders of diplomatic passports.

Under the circumstances, it appeared that I must wait indefinitely in Berlin. It was a depressing perspective, and I was annoyed when Borodin said that, although the plan of our journey had miscarried, he was leaving immediately on order from Moscow. He was unhappy, but not, as I came to know later, for leaving me behind; it was for a more serious reason. For the failure of his mission to the New World, he was under suspicion. The inquisitors in Moscow did not want to take the chance of his escaping their revolutionary justice. Provided with the passport of a diplomatic courier, he travelled through Sweden practically under escort. Guralsky took his place as responsible for arranging my trip to Moscow.
But I was not the only one so stranded. Delegates to the Second World Congress were reaching Berlin from all directions. They had also to be despatched to Moscow. Many of them travelled illegally under various disguises and with diverse devices. The general plan was for them all to reach Holland somehow and there report themselves to the West European Bureau of the International. The latter then smuggled them across the frontier to Germany. Quite unexpectedly, an Indian delegate arrived in Berlin that way. It was a surprise for me; but a pleasant surprise. He came with a letter from Rutgers who introduced him as Dr. Shaheer. He had reached Holland from the Dutch Indies with introduction from common friends there. In reply to my enquiry, the newcomer told the following story about himself.

His real name was Abani Mukherji. Before the war, he had gone to Germany for study, and managed to leave the country as soon as hostilities broke out. Travelling through the United States, he reached Japan in 1916-and waited there until the middle of the next year when, with the help of Rash Behari Bose, he got a chance to proceed homewards together with Shiva Prasad Gupta of Benares. According to Mukherji’s story, Gupta had come to Japan in response to a call from Rash Behari and was returning home with an important message and money for secret revolutionary activities. Both were arrested and detained at Singapore. Before long, Gupta was released and allowed to proceed to India. After days and days of gruelling cross-examination and some occasional physical tenure, the police were convinced that Mukherji was not connected with the revolutionary movement. Thereafter he was granted leave to go walking on the beach near the fort. Availing of the relative freedom, he managed to escape in a fishing boat to a Chinese junk which took him over to Java. There he changed his name to Dr. Shaheer in order to pass as a Malay and contacted some revolutionaries who had heard of the Russian Revolution and been influenced by the message of Communism. It appealed to Mukherji also, to the extent of inducing him to abandon the idea of returning home, and start on an adventurous journey to the land of revolution. Employed as a steward on a Dutch ship,
he reached Holland and saw Rutgers with the letter of introduction from common friends in Java.

The story was hardly convincing. There were gaps which could not be easily filled up. Yet, he was the first Indian Communist I met. The temptation to trust him was strong. Perhaps in excitement, he did not tell his story coherently. He was a man bubbling with enthusiasm, though probably naive—of the type who would draw upon imagination, to the extent of departing from the truth for dramatising his adventures, and he might do so without any evil motive. Most probably, being satisfied that he had nothing to do with the revolutionary movement, the police set him free. But he was afraid of returning to India, where he was sure to be suspected of betrayal for having been released, and consequently in the danger of being punished by the revolutionary party. Others similarly suspected were assassinated; revolutionary justice was relentless. Instead of running that great risk, Mukherji must have crossed over to Java, and from there found his way to Europe. While in Java, he could easily make the acquaintance of people who helped him.

However, I thought that it might be useful to give him a chance to prove that he was better than his story. A little conversation revealed that his Communism consisted in a burning desire to go to Moscow. I put that down to curiosity or perhaps the spirit of adventure. But at the same time, I had no hesitation to resolve that he should not be allowed to proceed to Moscow before his bona fides were established. In any case, how could he go? I could not claim for him priority of passage, when so many invited delegates were waiting for their charce. Therefore I advised Dr. Shaheer to go back to Holland to wait there for instructions. If he wanted to serve the cause of Communism and believed that it should be introduced in India, he should return there at the earliest opportunity. The problematical journey to Moscow would prejudice the chance of his doing so. If he desired to learn and equip himself for organizing the Communist movement in India, our friends in Holland would be very helpful. My intention was to re-establish contact with India, so as to reinvigorate the revolutionary movement with new ideas and
ideals. The Second World Congress of the Communist International was going to adopt a programme to help the struggle of the colonial peoples for national liberation. The message must reach India as soon as possible. Dr. Shaheer could be the messenger, provided that, in the meantime, more about his past was known, so as to inspire confidence. He was very disappointed and stayed on in Berlin until I left for Moscow.

To my great surprise, Dr. Shaheer turned up in Moscow on the eve of the Second World Congress as a delegate from India certified as such by the West European Bureau of the Communist International. He brought for me a letter from Rutgers who wrote that Dr. Shaheer was extremely eager, and the Bureau did not think it would be wise to disappoint him; however, a larger number of delegates from Asia would enhance the international character of the Congress. As I was a delegate from Mexico, he was admitted as the sole Indian delegate; together with others of a similar status, individuals not representing any organizations, he was entitled to participate fully in all discussions, but not to vote. He thought that it was a "discrimination against colonial people" and went about busily canvassing support of the different delegations for his demand for equality with others.

For me it was an embarrassing situation; none knew that the obstreperous Indian delegate was acting on his own initiative, and I could not stop him making a nuisance of himself even if I tried. Actually, I did try, but failed. Dr. Shaheer was undaunted and indefatigable. A corpulent man with a dark complexion, a round head and bloodshot protruding eyes, he was called the "Indian steam-roller." His next demand was for Indian representation on each and every committee. That demand was granted, but the choice fell on me. Formally, I was a delegate from Mexico; but everybody knew that I was "the wise man from the East," who had come from the New World on Lenin's special invitation. Nevertheless, Dr. Shaheer's second demand to vindicate the honour of India was also embarrassing for me. It would be quite natural for all to think that Dr. Shaheer was acting as my tout. However, the embarrassment caused by his initial
naive pomposity was nothing compared to what came soon afterwards.

The Commission on the National and Colonial Question of the Second World Congress was in session under Lenin's chairmanship. One of the Secretaries of the Congress tiptoed up to him and whispered something in his ear. He was annoyed at the intrusion and waived the man away. But the latter presently re-entered the hall, closed the door gently behind himself and stood there apologetically, waiting until he caught Lenin's eye. Instantly, the door behind opened just a little to let through a head which nodded at Lenin. This time, looking not annoyed but rather serious, he got up, asked the Dutch delegate Marring to take the chair, and briskly walked out. After a while, the Secretary came to me and whispered that Lenin wanted me in the next room for a minute. I went out to find him talking in a very low voice to a tall, lanky man with an extremely ugly face. He was introduced to me as Com. Peter, a Vice-President of the *Cheka*, as the instrument of the Red Terror was called. The name was familiar; "Bloody Peter," as he was mentioned in whispers, was Terror itself.

Lenin turned towards me and asked what I knew about the Indian Mukherji who was going under the name of Dr. Shaheer. I was taken aback by the suddenness of the question, and briefly recapitulated the story as told to me in Berlin. Did I keep track of his movements in Russia? No. It was suspicious and Peter wanted to arrest him, Lenin blurted out with obvious uneasiness. Peter growled that the man contacted questionable characters as soon as he reached Leningrad and saw them again when he returned there for the ceremonious opening of the Second World Congress. I did not think that there was anything really serious, and promised to find out why Mukherji saw those people. Peter added that in Moscow also Dr. Shaheer was keeping bourgeois company. Lenin intervened to say that it would be awkward to arrest the only Indian delegate to the Congress; the news would leak out. I agreed. Peter reluctantly agreed to leave the man alone, for the time being, on my responsibility, but he would be under surveillance.

On my asking, Mukherji naively admitted that he had seen a couple of aristocratic ladies in Leningrad. Why? Oh, he
wanted to find out how they felt about the revolution. They were very kind and nice, full of admiration for India and her culture. So, out of sheer politeness, Mukherji called on them during his second visit to Leningrad. They gave him the names and addresses of some similar persons in Moscow, whom he visited from time to time. I reported the story to Lenin. He seemed to be satisfied with the explanation, but was afraid that it would not go down with Peter, who would, however, not molest Mukherji in deference to my wish. It was a heavy responsibility, which before long caused me still greater embarrassment.

Next year, at the time of the Third World Congress a numerous Indian delegation, headed by Chattopadhyaya, came to Moscow. In the meantime, I had been to Central Asia and returned for the Congress. They declined to have anything to do with me, because of my relation with Mukherji, whom they accused of betrayal in the past and espionage thereafter. The charge was that he saved himself from the clutches of the police at Singapore by divulging the names of a number of revolutionaries in India, to whom he was to deliver a message from Rash Behari Bose; they were arrested on his information and hanged. It was a serious charge, but there was no \textit{prima facie} evidence. By dropping Mukherji to placate his denouncers, I would automatically hand him over to the tender mercies of "Bloody Peter." I refused to do so. It would not be fair to trifle with the life of a man before the charge against him was proved. But I could no longer escape the feeling that Mukherji was not a desirable associate. He might or might not be a traitor; but he was evidently an adventurous fortune-seeker, the fortune being a place of honour and distinction in the international Communist movement. I would not throw him to the hungry wolves, so to say; at the same time, neither could he be trusted as a comrade.

For some time, he was employed in collecting statistical material for my book \textit{India in Transition}, But he was not to be content with such unspectacular work. Eventually, he asked for permission to go out to Germany, and then proceed to India. I thought that it would be a good riddance. And if he did venture to return to India the charge of betrayal would
fall through. He came to India in 1922, moved about the country seeing a number of people secretly, and returned to Germany after a few months. How he travelled to India and back was his secret. However, he had made some personal friends in the German Communist Party. With their help, he reappeared in Moscow and tried to act as the Indian representative independently of me. I was away from Moscow most of the time, first in Europe, and then in China. But none would take him seriously, even when he went to the incredible extent of insinuating that revolutionaries in India did not trust me. To challenge my representativeness was pointless. I did not claim to represent anybody but myself, and held my position in the International as an individual.

I never knew if the charge against Mukherji had any foundation in fact. I never cared to investigate. The charge and counter-charge of betrayal and espionage is frequent amongst revolutionaries in exile. Indians were no exception. However, Mukherji's own behaviour and inordinate ambition proved to be his ruin. Having failed to acquire, by hook or by crook, a high place in the headquarters of the Communist International, he settled down to a private life in Moscow. The last I heard of him was that he was engaged as a teacher in Leningrad. What happened to him thereafter, I do not know. It is reported that in his last days Chattopadhyaya was also non-politically employed in Leningrad about the same time as Mukherji. It would be a cruel irony of fate if ultimately they both were victimised by revolutionary hysteria. Chattopadhyaya certainly deserved a better fate.
A CONFERENCE which met in Moscow in March 1919 has gone down in history as the First Congress of the Communist International. It was a misnomer. Except for the Russians, only thirty-two delegates attended it, and none of them represented an organised Communist movement in any country. John Reed of America, who had gone to Russia as a journalist, and Hugo Eberlein of Germany were the only men of any importance except the Russians.

The defeat of the German Revolution had shattered great expectations. It might have had a demoralising effect in Russia. The news of the revolution in Bavaria and Hungary came to cheer up the drooping spirits of the Bolshevik leaders. It is reported that Lenin himself dashed through the city of Moscow to announce the establishment of the Soviet Republic in Hungary. The so-called First Congress of the Communist International met in that atmosphere, to issue a manifesto calling upon the European proletariat to rise in a mighty revolt and overthrow the bourgeois order undermined by the imperialist war. The manifesto was a paraphrase of the inflammatory document composed by the prophets of Communism and issued in the middle of the nineteenth century.

A resolution to found an International in the tradition and on the model of the first formed by Marx to organise the expected world revolution was opposed by the German delegate. A follower of Luxemburg, he expounded her view that the time had not yet come for the German proletariat to capture power. Whatever might have been the feeling of other non-Russian delegates, the Bolsheviks did not believe in the spontaneity of revolution. The necessity of a party
of professional revolutionaries to organise the revolution is a fundamental principle of Leninism. To organise and lead the world revolution the party must be an international body. Such an international organisation to function as the organiser of the World Revolution was founded by the Second Congress of the Communist International, which came to be called the General Staff of the World Revolution. But until the end of 1919, nothing much was done to prepare for the inaugural Congress of the new International.

Having miraculously survived the civil war and foreign intervention, the Bolsheviks were preoccupied with the all-important task of consolidating the new regime in Russia. They had little organisational connection even with the nascent Communist Party of Germany. After the conclusion of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, diplomatic relations between the two countries were restored. Adolf Joffe came to Berlin as the first Bolshevik Ambassador in a capitalist country. He was accompanied by Bukharin, Rakowsky and Radek. Their object was to establish contact, in the first place, with the revolutionary movement in Germany, and later with that in other European countries. But Bolsheviks dressed in the Russian peasant blouse of coarse linen occupying the lavishly appointed mansion where the Tzar's Ambassadors had lived in luxury, and walking along Unter den Linden, rubbing shoulders with Prussian military officers, could not be long tolerated by the latter's arrogance. As soon as the militarist terror followed the defeat of the German Revolution, the Bolshevik Embassy was accused of doing subversive propaganda and asked to leave Germany. A Pole by birth, Radek had lived most of his life in Germany. He claimed German citizenship and refused to leave the country. Thereupon he was arrested and imprisoned. From his prison cell, he encouraged National-Bolshevism and established contact with high German military officers who toyed with the idea of a Russo-German alliance against the Entente Powers.

Meanwhile, the nascent Communist Party of Germany continued to be weak and confused, still without any organisational connection with Moscow. Having rejected Radek's grandiose plan of linking up the revolution in Europe with a
Russo-German military alliance, the Bolshevik High Command resolved to set up a secret centre of propaganda and communication in Berlin, which was to take over from the Dutch Left Communists the functions of a West European Bureau of the Communist International. In the spring of 1920, delegates to the Second World Congress from different countries reached Berlin. In the meantime, apart from the Left-Wing Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany, the Maximalist (majority) Socialists of Italy and the Socialist Party of France had agreed to send delegates to the Second World Congress to negotiate their affiliation with the new International. All the three were influential parties, having numerous representatives in the Parliaments of their respective countries. Their delegations would travel legally, equipped with regular passports, which would enable them to pass through Poland or Sweden. Delegates from the Scandinavian countries and Britain could also travel by themselves. The rest of the delegates, who had assembled in Berlin clandestinely, were to be despatched through secret channels.

The nominal diplomatic relation between Germany and Soviet Russia was not broken up after the expulsion of the first Bolshevik Embassy. A skeleton staff remained in Berlin, and the Red Flag flew proudly on the mansion on Unter den Linden, within a stone's throw of the Embassies of the Entente Powers and the German Chancellery. The house, with its rather plain frontage, looked like a castle; the main entrance was always closed; so were the windows, facing the broad avenue which connected the Imperial Castle with the Brandenburg Gate, the entrance to the city in mediaeval days. The heavy wooden doors studded with big iron knobs opened slightly to let in or out furtive figures armed with special passes. More mysterious visitors used less conspicuous entrances and exits. Inside there were offices busy with the preparation for the despatch of delegates to the Second World Congress. False passports and other documents manufactured in Moscow reached the Berlin Embassy in sealed bags of diplomatic correspondence.

About the middle of May, the Berlin Embassy received a message from Angelica Balabanova, who was the first
Secretary of the Communist International. I was to proceed to Moscow immediately. The diplomatic courier who had brought the message saw me in the small residential hotel where I had shifted on Borodin's departure. He introduced himself as Boris Schlipkin, a middle-aged man, rather stout, with the typically Russian sandy hair cut short; much too well dressed for a Bolshevik diplomat.

In those days, and for several years thereafter, the diplomatic representatives of the Soviet Government demonstratively disdained to adorn their proletarian appearance with badges of respectability, such as gold braids, dinner jackets, morning coats and striped trousers. The aristocrat Ghicherin, who had Belonged to the Tzarist diplomatic service, encouraged the proletarian pride. The first Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Government, he himself never put on the diplomatic regalia even when he attended formal functions during international conferences. The revolutionary tradition was broken in Litvinov's regime. He went to the extent of writing articles in the official organ of the Government *(Izvestia)* defending his point of view that, while dealing with bourgeois governments, it was wise to remove all visible tokens of distinction. But from the beginning an exception was made in the case of diplomatic couriers, who were entrusted with the correspondence of the Communist International. For several years, Soviet diplomacy and communist propaganda could be hardly distinguished.

Schlipkin was a diplomatic courier attached to the Communist International. He was charged with the task of transporting the delegates to the Second World Congress, who could not travel legally. I was not amongst them, because I still possessed my Mexican passport. But Schlipkin informed me that he had just travelled from Leningrad on the first Soviet passenger ship to come to a German port since the revolution. The ship, which was called *The Soviet*, would sail on her return journey in a few days from Stettin. I was to travel on her as far as Reval, capital of the Estonian Republic, and from there to Leningrad by rail. Schlipkin confided that there would be an important fellow passenger on board, and that *The Soviet* would carry no more passengers. She would return to transport
the other delegates. I was rather mystified, but glad at last to have the opportunity of proceeding on my journey.

The stay in Berlin was useful. I learned much and made many new friends and acquaintances. For several weeks before I left the German capital, there were numerous conferences in which newly arrived delegates reported the situation in their respective countries. While the general enthusiasm was admirable, the optimism was amazing. Having personally experienced the debacle of the German revolution, I could not share the optimism that the proletariat in a number of other countries would capture power as soon as the World Congress meeting in Moscow sounded the tocsin. What I learned during my several months' stay in Germany about the conditions in Europe and their immediate perspective fostered in me the feeling that the proletariat in the metropolitan countries would not succeed in their heroic endeavour to capture power unless Imperialism was weakened by the revolt of the colonial peoples. To be defeated, it must be attacked on two fronts. I suspected nationalist atavism in the feeling. Out at the same time was exasperated by the insularism of the average proletarian revolutionary, who sympathised with the struggle of the colonial peoples for national liberation, but did not believe that it would succeed before Socialism was established in Europe. I wondered why the revolution should not spread eastward, and resolved to rush to the exciting task of opening the second front of the World Revolution.

*The Soviet* was a middle-sized passenger ship which had been completely renovated. As soon as she was out of the harbour, I was conducted to the saloon to be welcomed on the "Soviet Land" by the Captain and officers of the ship. (On the high seas, a ship is legally part of the territory of the nation to which it belongs.) The Captain was a handsome young man with a pink and white baby face, evidently a scion of the aristocracy. As such, he had been an officer of the Tzarist Navy, and participated in the Kronstadt revolt which signalled the Petrograd insurrection. During the voyage, he told the story of the battleship on which he was stationed, steaming up the Neva to bombard the Winter Palace.
Presently, Schlipkin came in with the "important fellow passenger," a simply but elegantly dressed youngish woman, and introduced her as Madame Sadoul. The assembled officers jumped to their feet to pay homage to the wife of a man who had attained fame as a minor hero of the civil war. Captain Jacques Sadoul was a member of the French Military Mission which went to Russia after the downfall of the old regime to help the Provisional Government reorganise the demoralised and disintegrating army. He went over to the Bolsheviks when they captured power, helped the organisation of the Red Army, and rose to the position of Trotzky's *de facto* Chief of Staff. In France he was court-martialled in contumacy for desertion and sentenced to death. As he could not return to his native land, Madame Sadoul was waiting for the first opportunity to join her husband in Russia.

The voyage on the Southern Baltic was pleasant and uneventful. We were approaching the land of the midnight sun. It never got dark before midnight, and a couple of hours the eastern horizon was aglow with the red light of dawn. The gulf of Finland was still ice-bound. But the Captain proudly informed us that *The Soviet* was a powerful vessel capable of ploughing through several feet deep floating ice-fields. Before long, we could observe her performing the feat. Our first stop was at the Finnish port of Abo at the entrance to the Gulf of Bothnia. Only a few hours later, the ship reached Helsingfors. Passengers could disembark there, and travel to Leningrad by train. But the route was closed to any Communist. Finland then was under Mannerheim's terror regime, backed by a German army which had refused to disband itself and withdraw as required by the Versailles Treaty. It was midnight when our ship reached Helsingfors; we were all on deck watching the dusk of the evening dispelled by the red glow of the dawn. It was a familiar experience for the Russian crew of the ship. For me it was a legend turning out to be real. Madame Sadoul was terribly excited.

In the morning, the ship ploughed across the ice-field which blocked the entrance to the Gulf of Finland, to reach Reval. Blocks of ice, which looked like huge chunks of glass several feet thick, were turned up on both sides of the ship's
prow. I was told that she was moving under full steam, yet the speed was not more than a few knots an hour. The major part of the power was used for breaking the barrier of frozen water which would crush any ship if she was not capable of breaking open her way ahead. Further in the Gulf of Finland, navigation would be still more difficult, and the ship might be ice-locked, unable to move except with the help of an icebreaker. It was to avoid the risk that I was to travel on the land route from Reval. Esthonia was not a safe country for Communists; but I was to travel with diplomatic immunity—in the entourage of the Soviet Railway Commissar, Lomonosov, who had come to Reval for some international transport conference. After Madame Sadoul and I disembarked at Reval, The Soviet might or might not proceed further towards Leningrad at the risk of being ice-locked. If the ice-field in the Gulf of Finland was still very solid, she would return to Stettin to transport the delegates to the Second World Congress, right up to Leningrad. In the meantime, advancing summer would soften the ice.

We reached Reval early in the afternoon. It was a quaint little town which reminded me very much of the Spanish port of La Coruna, where I had set foot on European soil about half a year ago. The Soviet legation was a modest old house, where we were welcomed by the Minister and his staff. The Commissar was living in his saloon car at the station. In the evening, we joined him there and the train for the frontier left soon afterwards. Lomonosov was a jolly old man, in his middle sixties I guessed, who had served under the old regime, and offered his services to the new one as an expert, perhaps as a patriotic duty. However, he was delighted to have for his guest a lady coming direct from Paris. To celebrate the occasion, he produced a meal rare in Russia in those days; a bottle of French wine replaced the vodka; when similar feasts were repeated in the day time, he pulled down the window curtains. Outside on the station platform, there were hungry eyes and austere revolutionaries.

Next morning, we reached Leningrad. I was naturally very anxious to visit the cradle of the Revolution. But Schlipkin told me that his order was to bring me straight to Moscow.
He could only drive me through the city on the way to the other terminus of the Leningrad-Moscow railway. Lomonosov's saloon car would be detached and shunted on to the other station. Madame Sadoul preferred to stay in it. She was obviously amused by the flirtation of the host.

I had a number of hours to run over the city escort by Schlipkin. It looked like a haunted place. The main thoroughfares were practically deserted. The wooden pavement of the famous Nevsky Prospect was torn up in many places. Only two years ago, it was lined with luxury shops and palatial houses. They were boarded up and closed. The bullet-riddled Winter Palace presented a sombre spectacle. Across the river Neva, at some distance, there still stood the twin church steeples of "Peter and Paul," which had for a century guarded the subterranean dungeons where hundreds of political prisoners had languished. But the prison had been emptied by the revolution. The doors of the great cathedral with the golden dome were open. Out of curiosity, I peeped in. A few old women were praying at the altar. Armed sentries stopped us at the iron gates of the Smolny Palace, which was the original seat of the Revolutionary Government.

Before I had seen enough of the cradle of the Revolution, now called the City of Lenin, it was time to rush to the station and catch the train for Moscow. A night's run and I was there.
Part 3
In the Holy Land
First Day in Moscow

IT was about noon when the train reached our destination. Lomonosov looked at his watch and declared that it was exactly in time. The railway system of Russia had been very badly dislocated by the civil war. It was years before regular train service was restored, and trains ran according to any time-table. In 1920, the entire railway system was still reserved for military transport. There was no private passenger traffic. None could simply go to a station, buy a ticket and board a train to travel. The Revolution had abolished money; consequently, there was no distinction between the rich and the poor. Only pass-holders could use the railway for travel on official business. In order to get a meal in a restaurant or a pair of boots in a shop or board a train-car in the city, one must produce the certificate of labour. Public life was governed by the principle of revolutionary social justice: “No work, no bread.”

While leading us out of the station, Lomonosov apologised that it would take years to run a regular train service on all the lines, and proudly reminded us that Russia had the second largest railway mileage in the world. But one thing had been already achieved: on the line connecting the two capitals, no less than three trains were run daily, and they all kept the time. He added in a whisper that the second important man of the country travelled three times a week in the train which had brought us. But our privilege did not go to the extent of travelling in the same train with him. No private person was allowed to do so.

I learned later that the awe-struck reference was to Zinoviev, who travelled between the two capitals three times a week because he was President of the Leningrad Soviet, Membe;
of the all-powerful Political Bureau of the Communist Party and Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. A man who wore the imposing triple crown (none else had the distinction) was naturally regarded as the most important person next only to Lenin.

The political capital of the Republic had been shifted to Moscow, because Leningrad was exposed to the danger of invasion. A powerful German army was still entrenched in Finland, just across the frontier, only at a distance of a few miles. The White Army of the Tzarist General Yudenitch, backed by the German Baltic Army and encouraged by the Entente Powers, had reached the southern suburb of the city in the summer of 1919. Situated deep in the heart of the country, Moscow could not be so threatened. But being traditionally the centre of feudal power and reaction, its social and cultural atmosphere was hardly congenial for the rise of new revolutionary institutions. The mediaeval walled city of the Kremlin was the most incongruous seat for the headquarters of the Workers' and Peasants' Republic.

Leningrad, on the contrary, was a modern city with an industrial periphery which was the social base of the revolution. The revolution began there and spread to the rest of the country. Not only was the Petrograd proletariat the first to capture power, they also defended the new revolutionary government with their lives. Therefore, the Soviet and the Party organisation of Leningrad were given the pride of place in the revolutionary State, and dominated the political life of the Republic. A man who controlled them commanded great prestige and wielded enormous power. In 1920, that man was Zinoviev, and naturally enough he believed himself to be only next to Lenin in the hierarchy of the new regime, and aspired to succeed him as the supreme leader. When I met him a few days after my arrival in Moscow, I could not help wondering whether he possessed the intrinsic greatness to be worthy of the position he occupied. I had no prejudice against him. On the contrary, I shared the general belief that he was Lenin's right-hand man. But history proved that he did not deserve the distinction. Once again, first impressions did not mislead me.
Schlipkin conducted us out of the station. The idea that at last I was in Moscow was so very overwhelming as to make me walk as if in a dream. It was good that the keenness of my perception was for the moment blunted by the elation of having reached the journey's end. Otherwise, I might be disappointed and disillusioned by the experienced reality of disorder, dirt and drabness. A new order could not be built overnight.

The vast open space in front of the station was crowded with men in uniform; rickety carriages pulled by emaciated horses lurched on the cobble stones at the risk of being smashed by motor cars which defied all usual traffic regulations. The recklessness was all the more remarkable because the madly dashing cars were all occupied by military men. I suppose the recklessness demonstrated the feeling of power which, as I lived to learn, bred callousness to other people's lives. I was jolted out of a daze caused by the impact of first impressions, expected and unexpected, when a large black limousine stopped in front of us. The driver was in a soldier's uniform. Lomonosov opened the door for Madame Sadoul to get in. Schlipkin gave him an address and the car moved on. We followed in another with the hood down. In the front seat by the driver sat a grim-faced soldier holding a gun in his hand. The heavy car bounced and rattled as it dashed on the cobbled road at a high speed. The streets looked deserted because all the shop windows were boarded up. Nobody seemed to loiter; all the passers-by looked purposeful.

Presently, we crossed an iron bridge on a rather narrow stream. It was the Moscow River. Driving along the river for a short distance our car swung through the iron gate into the spacious compound of what looked like a large private house. Borodin came out in the portico and led me up the magnificent wooden stair into a suite of rooms which simply took my breath away. It was not a palace; but who lived in the regal comfort and luxury of the gorgeous mansion? Borodin answered my unspoken question. In the old days, it had been the town residence of Count Gutchkov. A nobleman taken to business, he had a large share in the beet sugar industry and was known as the "Sugar King" of Russia. The revolution having abolished private property, the "Gutchkov Mansion"
belonged to the State; the ground-floor was the private residence of Karakhan, Vice-Commissar of Foreign Affairs. The upper-storey was reserved for distinguished State guests. Before I could ask more questions which were rushing to my mind, Borodin conducted me to a tall window and pushed aside the thick pink satin curtain. The Moskwa was flowing in front of the house; along the other bank there ran a high wall behind which, in a forest of proud minarets and high church steeples, several huge golden domes glistened in the afternoon sun. That was the Kremlin. It was built several hundred years ago as a castle, but large enough to be a walled city within a much larger fortified city. So, I was in Moscow, and living right under the wall of the Kremlin.

Borodin was occupying the adjacent suite. He withdrew so that I could get ready for dinner, which was served at 5 P.M., after office hours. In the evening, I was to meet Karakhan, who was my host. The dinner was a striking contrast to the house. Served on a magnificent table in a spacious room, whose high walls were panelled with reddish brown wood, the meal consisted of cabbage soup, a slice of black bread and kasha (a kind of very dark grain, broken and cooked), Borodin informed me with grim humour that the last dish was a luxury, and the tiny bit of meat in the soup was not always available. That was the standard meal served in all government establishments. Equality had been attained, though on a very low level, but now that the civil war was practically over, the level would rise.

Compared with the conditions in the previous winter, when counter-revolutionary armies were marching on Moscow from all sides, the situation had improved considerably. In addition to the scarcity of food, there was an extreme shortage of fuel, and the temperature was far below the freezing point. Some peasants took pity, and came to the gates of the Kremlin with a cartload of wood for Lenin. The hardships experienced in Moscow were mainly due to the resistance to war communism in the countryside. The entire surplus produce of nationalised land was claimed as the share of the State. The peasants simply would not produce more than they needed for subsistence. The result was scarcity and starvation in the urban
areas. Moscow with its inflated population was the worst sufferer.

Karakhan was a young man, hardly yet on the wrong side of the thirties, too young for the position he occupied. Formally one of the several Vice-Commissars, he was the \textit{de facto} head of the Foreign Office. Chicherin did nothing without consulting him. And he was the liaison between the Foreign Office and the Communist International. His particular interest, however, was to establish diplomatic relations with Asiatic Governments and use the relation as the medium of Communist propaganda. He was an American by birth, and the finest specimen of Caucasian manhood. Radek's merciless sarcasm once described him as the handsomest ass of the Soviets. He was not stupid but preferred to avoid the limelight of popularity. Therefore very few knew him well. At the same time, his important position made other ambitious young men jealous, who tried to malign him. Perhaps because of his extraordinary good looks, he tended to be rather meticulous about his clothes, and was scornful of the fashionable affectation of dressing shabbily as the token of revolutionary fervour. His jealous detractors called him a bourgeois. No epithet could be more damaging in those days of demonstrative proletarian purity. By birth, Karakhan did not belong to the working class, and he never tried to make a secret of his non-proletarian parentage. Before the revolution, he was a librarian in Petrograd. He seldom went out of his residence except to the office, and then he invariably wore a black coat and a spotless white collar. In retort to the silly charge that he preferred the badge of bourgeois respectability to the proletarian practice of being with the people, Karakhan said that the white collar never kept him away from the barricades, because he did not put it on his ankles. Most probably, there was a good deal of stubbornness in his attitude, although neatness in habit and cleanliness of clothes should be any day preferable to the belief that dirt and slovenliness were the tokens of revolutionary austerity.

After dinner, I accompanied Borodin to his room. He had to continue some very important work. Two days ago, Balabanova had charged him with the task of translating into
English Lenin's latest brochure on Left Communism. The original was in Russian. Already in Berlin I had heard about the sensational publication. There had been some misunderstanding and wrong interpretations, because the German rendering was not quite accurate. The English and French versions must be better. It was not easy for the very best of professional translators to grasp the dialectics of condemning Left Communism and yet not to prejudice the foundation of the Communist International by alienating groups advocating it. A dialectic approach to the problem of Left Communism which, in plain language, meant revolution a ry impatience and proletarian puritanism, was the fundamental issue facing the Second World Congress. Lenin's brochure therefore was a piece of communist literature of historic significance. It must be read and understood by all the faithful. In those early days, communist conviction, though very largely emotional, did not exclude attempts at understanding. Lenin's was an appeal to reason as well as to faith. That was dialectic. But he wrote in a very clumsy style, which resulted from the habit of compressing too many ideas in one sentence. The habit was aggravated when one wrote in a hurry as all Bolshevik leaders did in those hectic days. Dictating to stenographers replaced the practice of writing. They made speeches either on the platform or while dictating an article or a book to the stenographer. Some of them, Radek for example, used to walk up and down while dictating. In the hectic atmosphere of the early days of the revolution, Lenin's style became more involved and declamatory, although he retained the practice of writing. For that conservative habit, Radek taunted that the old man never learned to lartale a letter.

Borodin was wrestling with the title of the brochure. The literal translation would be "The Infantile Sickness of Left Communism"; but the faithful rendering would miss the dialectics of the content. Because it conveyed the impression that Left Communism was roundly condemned in the book. I suggested the appositional form, which was approved by Lenin and adopted in all subsequent translations.

It struck ten and Borodin remembered my appointment with Karakhan, I felt it was too late, and wondered why
the host could not find time to see me earlier. He was sleeping until
dinner time and thereafter had to attend to some official business
before going to the Commissariat. Then what was the use of seeing
him now? There was no time to talk. Borodin explained the position.
The Foreign Office worked in the night, because Chicherin preferred
to sleep in the day. He was in the habit of granting interviews to
Foreign diplomats and journalists in the small hours of the morning.
We were to accompany Karakhan to the Foreign Office, where we
would have plenty of time to talk and see Chicherin also. That was an
unexpected privilege. For his thundering notes to the imperialist
Powers, Chicherin had become very famous and a favourite of the
revolutionaries throughout the world.

Karakhan was standing in the middle of the spacious drawing room
which was also his office at home, dressed meticulously in a black
cost which rested on the famous white collar. He wore a neatly
trimmed tapering beard. A shock of shining black hair was carefully
brushed back. He stepped forward and shook hands with me. After the
exchange of a few words about my journey, he suggested that we
must start. Borodin acted as the translator. Karakhan at that time
spoke no foreign language. A big limousine was waiting in the
portico; in a few minutes, we were at the entrance of the Foreign
Office, which then occupied a wing of the biggest hotel of Moscowl.
Karakhan pulled out of Ms pocket a card and showed it to the armed
guard, who carefully compared the photograph with the face of the
holder before letting him pass the barrier. Borodin and myself had to
wait until an official came down with the permit for us to enter and
identified us as the persons to whom the permit was granted.

When after the necessary delay in getting admission to the sanctuary
of Soviet diplomacy, we were shown into the Vice-Commissar's
office, Karakhan was seated in a deep leather arm-chair behind a huge
desk on which stood three telephone-eceivers. During our
conversation, he sometimes took up two receivers and spoke
simultaneously. I wondered what he did when all three rang at the
same time.
KARAKHAN sat in his capacious red-brown leather chair, which must have previously decorated the lobby of the Hotel Metropole, and passed to me across the green baize top of the huge desk a large tin box of gold-tipped tiger brand cigarettes. Suritz, the first Soviet Ambassador at Kabul, had sent them, and Karakhan kept them for me, because he thought the brand was symbolic. To back up the frivolity of his friend, Borodin quite pointlessly added: “Yes, the royal Bengal tiger.” Not knowing what to say, I opened the rather ornate box packed with exceptionally large cigarettes, and offered one to the host. He had already sat back comfortably in his all too easy chair, and was lighting a cigar out of the box which, he trustingly informed, had come in the diplomatic post-bag brought by Schlipkin.

Before long, I came to know that the revolutionary diplomacy of those delightful early days sent out its couriers with bags of communist propaganda literature, which came back filled with all sorts of more useful commodities, as for example, cigars for the Commissars and cosmetics and silk stockings for their wives. The main duty of the Special Comintern courier Schlipkin was, as the, flippant tongue of Madame Rumour wagged, to supply the demands of Zinoviev's harem. The man who wore the triple crown, however, was a puritan; he neither drank nor smoked. The talk about his harem was unfounded. He was politically too ambitious to attach any importance to his private life, which therefore might be promiscuous. But culturally Zinoviev was a typical petit bourgeois; he was very particular that public knowledge about his private life should strictly conform to the standards of conventionality.

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To return to Karakhan, he preferred the newly arrived cigar made in Hamburg, and shared the privilege with his friend Borodin. To my annoyance, they talked for a few minutes in Russian. I occupied myself with the "Royal Bengal Tiger" and incidentally had a good look at the man sitting across the table languidly puffing at a long cigar—a perfectly shaped oval face, pale olive complexion, fringed with a black beard which, though neatly trimmed to taper, tended to curl; it was the picture of young Christ transplanted in a civilised setting. But Karakhan was not a Jew, and did not have the legendary, though most unlikely, golden hair. Suddenly he sat up, leaned over the desk and spoke to me, in Russian. Borodin translated.

The first Soviet Ambassador, Suritz, had requested to be relieved of his post at Kabul. No civilised man could live long in that mediaeval atmosphere. His request must be granted. What did I think of Borodin going to Kabul as the new Soviet Ambassador? The question was unexpected; and I was particularly surprised by its being put to me.

Karakhan explained: on his return from Mexico, Borodin had reported about my eagerness to contact fellow revolutionaries in India. According to its famous proclamation to promote the struggle of the colonial people for national liberation, the Soviet Government was prepared to help me in every possible manner. But the whole of Central Asia was still a no-man's land, which had yet to be conquered by the Revolution. Meanwhile, the diplomatic relations with Afghanistan provided an access to the frontiers of India. A good deal of preparatory propaganda had been already done from the Soviet Embassy at Kabul. But the Indian comrades there had no contact with the anti-British non-co-operation movement developing inside the country. My presence there would be of great political importance. In order that I could have the fullest facility to function effectively, the new Soviet Ambassador at Kabul should be a man keenly interested in my mission.

It seemed that Suritz could not get along very well with all the Indian revolutionaries at Kabul. They were divided into rival groups, and Suritz took sides instead of trying to bring
them together. He said that he could not, and had rather a low opinion about most of the members of the so-called Indian Provisional Government set up under German patronage. They demanded arming of, and financial help to, the Indo-Afghan frontier tribes, so that the latter could raid British territories. A new group of Indians at Kabul, led by a man called Acharya, who had been sent by the Berlin Committee to do anti-British propaganda among the Indian troops captured by the Turks at Kut-el-Amqra, had lately appeared. Having failed in the mission, at the end of the War, he had proceeded to Afghanistan together with an old Indian trader named Abdur Rab who claimed to have relations with influential people among the frontier tribes. Acharya called himself a Communist and opposed the plan of the Provisional Government. Suritz seems to have backed him up and antagonised the majority of the Indian revolutionaries at Kabul who were all nationalists. It was reported that Acharya wanted to accompany Suritz because he was afraid of being assassinated by the fanatics.

The situation at Kabul was obviously bad. It had to be considerably improved before the Afghan capital could be the advance base of revolutionary operations in India. Karakhan thought that if Borodin went as the new Soviet Ambassador to Afghanistan, it should be possible to begin on a clean slate. Chicherin had approved of the idea, which would be submitted for the sanction of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party, after I had discussed it personally with Lenin.

Since Borodin had suggested it to me already in Mexico, the idea of resuming contact with friends in India from Russia had been taking shape in my mind. But it was still very vague. For the near future, I was more concerned with the preparations of the Second World Congress of the Communist International. The pattern of the revolution in India according to my new ideas was still to be conceived concretely. Consideration of the ways and means of materially helping the development of the new pattern of revolution in India was to follow. Karakhan's proposal, therefore, found me unprepared with a:lear answer. The plan was very attract iv But I must think it over, and discuss it with Borodin.
As, for the moment, there was nothing more to talk about and Karakhan must have other business to attend to, I suggested that we should break up for the night, to meet again before long. Karakhan stood up, I thought, to say good-bye. But his eyes were turned to the big door at the other end of the long room. It slowly opened a little, to let in a face which appeared to be afraid of intruding. On Karakhan's repeated request, the apologetic midnight caller stepped in, still looking like a scared rabbit, very gently closed the door behind himself and diffidently approached the big desk. Comrade Chicherin, the Commissar of Foreign Affairs, was introduced to me by his Deputy.

The terror of European diplomacy did not at all live up to his reputation. One could not imagine how such an extremely gentle, self-effacing man appeared in the nightmares of the Foreign Ministers of capitalist countries as the legendary spectre of Communism casting its shadow over Europe. In those days, the Soviet Government frequently issued diplomatic notes which thunderingly denounced the inequities of Imperialism and predicted its early downfall. The author of those unprecedented diplomatic documents was generally imagined to be one of those fantastic figures who abound in Russia: long-bearded ruffians holding in their teeth knives dripping with the blood of the innocent children they had massacred.

- I had never believed the malicious stories popularised by the yellow press of the capitalist world. Yet, Chicherin Was a surprise. A man of middle height, rather carelessly dressed, with a very attractive face decorated with the tapering short red beard a la Lenin, and finely shaped long head thatched with reddish-blonde hair, rather thin on the dome, Chicherin was the picture of the highly cultured European gentleman, so very conscious of the nobility of his inner self as made him oblivious of his physical appearance. But he was neither arrogant nor insensitive. On the contrary, he appeared to be always apologising for his being there. Yet something radiated from his personality to surcharge the surrounding atmosphere. It was palpably the man's honesty, devotion and moral integrity. He had an ideal, which he pursued with the faith of a fanatic. But it was a faith based on an intellectual conviction,
which ruled out the vulgarity, grossness and blindness of fanaticism.

Lenin was the archetype of the ideal Bolshevik. His faith was of the order of that of the Paulian early Christian—tempered with Platonic intellectualism and stoic moral austerity. Not many early Bolsheviks measured up to the archetype, and I am doubtful if Lenin himself could, if the merciful hand of a premature death did not spare him the trial.

From what is known about him, the First President of the Soviet Republic Sverdlov belonged to the category. I did not have the privilege of meeting him. He died before I came to Russia. Many of the early Bolsheviks, who had fanatically dedicated their lives to the exacting ideal of revolution, did not long survive its triumph. It seems that their lives were consumed by the fire of a fanatic devotion to a cause. They all suffered from one form or another of heart disease or tuberculosis.

Curiously enough, Dzerzhinsky, the organiser and first chairman of the Cheka, the dreadful instrument of Red Terror, was another archetypal Bolshevik. But there was nothing really curious in his behaviour. It was the logical corollary to fanaticism; stoic moral austerity can imperceptibly degenerate into Jesuitic utilitarian ethics. That happened with Bolsheviks, even of the early Lenin generation. But it was a moral shock which few of them could survive. Dzerzhinsky was a victim. He was a consumptive; but in his case, the conflict between the individual's moral judgment and his fanatical faith in a collectivist secular religion, proved to be more deadly than tuberculosis germs. I can express this opinion because I had the privilege of knowing him personally, though for a short time. There was a man who was burning his candle at both ends. Only on the eve of his own death did Danton feel the cruelty of the terror. Dzerzhinsky was a more sensitive man; he wept his heart out every time he sent a man to the gallows. Otherwise, he might have lived longer. But one can imagine that he did not want to live, because the life of a dedicated revolutionary was such a tragedy.

Immeasurably smaller Bolsheviks belonged to the class of Sverdlov and Dzerzhinsky. Their experience made a grand
tragedy of the Russian Revolution. Yet, without their devotion and silent service, it might not have succeeded. I am thankful for the chance of having had the privilege of meeting and working with many of those martyrs of history. Chicherin belonged to that category. Having made a great splash in contemporary history, he quietly disappeared. Fortunately for him, and also for those who appreciated the culture and moral values he personified, he was not devoured by revolution in its spectacular blood-thirsty manner. He was not a lesser revolutionary than others who succeeded him; but he would not compromise his intellectual judgment for a successful career. Neither Litvinov nor Vishinsky is his peer. The one believed that a revolutionary order could live peacefully with the capitalist status quo, whereas the other is an unscrupulous demagogue. Chicherin quietly disappeared in the oblivion of history because he would not dramatise his devotion to the cause of revolution at the risk of destroying the revolution itself. In other words, Chicherin was not as great a man as Trotzky, for example; and, on the other hand, he was too good and noble to stoop to the level of the intrigue and factional fight carried on by men like Zmoviev and Kamenev.

It took me years to arrive at this judgment about the personal traits and historical significance of the many leaders of the Russian Revolution. My first meeting with the legendary personality of Chicherin was a part of the experience which ultimately enabled me to form this judgment. The impression of the first meeting was deep enough to influence subsequent judgment.

Karakhan having done the formality of introduction, Chicherin spoke to me in perfect English. He was very glad that I had come to Moscow; the colonial world was in flames; revolution must spread eastwards; a second front of the world revolution must be opened in Asia.

I felt terribly flattered, but did not quite know how Asia would honourably discharge the role allotted to her. Of course, I felt very diffident to give expression to my doubt as against the enthusiastic optimism of a member of the race of modern prophets. Chicherin said that we must meet soon and discuss the great possibilities of the world revolution being
helped by the revolt of the colonial peoples. I was very much gratified to be so invited by the legendary Soviet Commissar of Foreign Affairs for consultation. The idea of doing something in India, which might promote the cause of world revolution, was very attractive. I had myself conceived the idea; but it must still be thought out in details and in concrete form.

Ghicherin had some whispering conversation with his Deputy, bade me good-bye for the moment, and went out of the room as quietly as he had come in. Karakhan obviously thought that the behaviour of his Chief needed some explanation. Why should he come down to consult his Deputy? None knew; but he did, instead of calling his subordinates to his office. The dawn was breaking when the exciting meeting at Karakhan's office ended for the day. He excused himself for the inability to accompany us back. He must still do some work which might detain him in the office for several hours still. That explained why he could not be seen at home during the day time.

The next day I did some hard thinking. The result was a plan for the opening of the second front of world revolution. I would go to Kabul immediately after the Second World Congress of the Communist International, provided that Borodin was sent as the new Soviet Ambassador. But I must have at my disposal enough arms, equipment and money to raise an army from the frontier tribes which would be strong enough not only to raid British territory, but to seize certain parts of it and hold them as the base of operation for advancing further. Karakhan thought that the plan was very audacious, and felt that it must be worked out in detail in consultation with the Revolutionary Military Council. Its Chairman, Trotzky, was away on the battle-fronts. His Deputy, Klansky, was in Moscow. I could see him whenever I wanted. But first of all, I had to discuss the plan with Lenin.

Borodin raised a ticklish question: Why should I not be sent as the new Soviet Ambassador to Afghanistan? The Soviet Republic was not a National State. Anyone could be its citizen. If an Indian revolutionary was sent to Kabul as the Ambassador of the Soviet Republic, the latter's popularity in India would be unlimited., and the fact have a repercussion throughout
the East. Karakhan liked the idea, and did not see why it should not be acted upon. I was, of course, simply fascinated. The innumerable technical difficulties were not realised until Chicherin pointed them out. In any case, nothing could be done before Lenin had time to consider the matter.

For the moment, he was engrossed in the problems confronting the Second World Congress in addition to the cares and worries of the newly established Bolshevik regime in Russia. The plan for opening the second front of world revolution, therefore, had to be suspended, pending the grand pageant of the Second Congress of the Communist International,
ON the second day after my arrival in Moscow, I was received by Angelica Balabanova, first General Secretary of the Communist International. It was not an official interview in her office. She had invited me to go for afternoon tea in her private quarters in a small hotel situated in front of the entrance to the park which skirted the Kremlin wall.

Borodin accompanied me in Karakhan's black limousine. On the way, which circled practically the whole distance around the great fortress, he briefly described the various buildings inside, and pointed out historical landmarks in the neighbourhood. At the southern approach to the famous Red Square in front of the main entrance to the Kremlin, there stood a twin-steepled quaint old church. In the neighbouring forest of towering temples, which appeared to touch the blue sky with their glistening golden domes and Byzantine minaretttes, the old church was an ugly dwarf. It was the Basilica of St. George, of blood-curdling memory, built by Ivan the Terrible, presumably to enshrine the Patron Saint of the Muscovite monarchy in a position of vantage wherefrom he could guard the gates of the fortress in which so many gory deeds of Satanic subtlety were committed.

The apparently unimpressive monument was partially damaged when the Bolsheviks stormed the Kremlin in October 1917. That incident, unavoidable at the time, caused a minor crisis in higher Bolshevik circles. When the news reached Petrograd, Lunacharsky rushed to Lenin in great anguish to protest vehemently against the Revolution destroying an old monument. He threatened to resign from the party, and the Revolution would forfeit his sympathy, if such acts of
vandalism were not stopped. Lenin is reported to have assuaged the outraged soul of the revolutionary aesthete by promising to build new monuments replacing the old.

Few Bolsheviks in those days would have had the least compunction to raze down a monument built to commemorate the cruelties of a mediaeval despot. However, the Basilica of St. George escaped destruction. A decree of the Soviet Government ordered the preservation of all historical monuments which survived the civil war. Palaces were converted into museums and churches into schools. The Basilica of St. George, being too small for any such social purpose, stood there in its gaunt ugliness, no longer as a shrine nor as a monument to mediaeval barbarism, but as a curious type of Byzantine architecture.

The Revolution has discarded much of its original faith. Its ideology has transcended the narrow limits of Marxism, only in the wrong direction. The Bolshevik regime set up on the ruins of Tsardom has resurrected mediaeval Muscovite traditions as its historical heritage. History is re-written to create new legends. Ivan the Terrible is re-christened as Ivan the Great, to be glorified as a national hero. His cruelties are justified as the harbinger of the Red Terror, perpetrated with the purpose of purging the nascent Slav State of disruptive elements and protecting it against Tartar infiltration. In addition to the inventive acumen of official manufacturers of history, the artistic genius of Eisenstein has constructed a fascinating monument to Ivan the Great, which cast on thousands of silver screens, kindles in the millions of emotionally regimented souls the nostalgia for an imaginary past to fan the fire of a flagging faith.

I had got out of the car to have a close look at the Basilica of St. George. Suddenly the vast square resounded with the tune of the International—the anthem of the revolutionary proletariat. I looked around to see where the music was being played—on a powerful and obviously unusual instrument. Amused at my bewilderment, Borodin pointed at the massive clock-tower on the main entrance to the Kremlin. The huge timepiece, with arms as long as of a grown-up man, told that it was five o'clock. The bell in the tower was proportionately
It was pealing away to produce the mighty music which, echoed back from the tall buildings surrounding the spacious square, was swelling into a tremendous volume. One could not but be overwhelmed by the experience. Before the revolution, the Tzarist anthem used to be played on the same bells. As the technique of radio transmission improved, the *International*, played three times a day on the bells of the Kremlin clock tower, calling upon the workers of the world to rise against poverty and slavery, could be heard from any place on the globe.

As late as in the earlier years of the Second World War, I used to tune in Moscow every evening to hear the stirring music, which came thousands of miles over the Himalayas. Day after day came the news of the Red Army falling back before the Nazi war machine. On the outskirts of Moscow, t was touch and go; Leningrad might fall any day; the Ukraine was overrun; a whole army corps was trapped in fCiev; the Germans reached Stalingrad and the gates of \sia at the foot of the Caucasus. And every evening the music from the clock tower of the Kremlin restored my faith in the ultimate outcome of the War. Suddenly, one evening, the message of hope failed to come. I tuned in the next evening, and the next. The message of hope came no more. At the same hour, the bells in the Kremlin clock tower began playing the new Russian national anthem instead of the *International*. Not only was a hope dashed; a period of history was over; I lost my faith in the liberating significance of the Russian Revolution. That was twenty-two years after the day when I stood in the Red Square overwhelmed by the music of the bells ringing before my own eyes. So many things happened in the intervening period which, for me, closed in 1942.

In reverential silence I climbed back in the car and proceeded to my first interview with the General Secretary of the Communist International, which marked the opening of a new period of my life.

Balabanova was alone, waiting for us. I was afraid that she might be annoyed for my coming late. But, as I learned before long, one could never be late in Russia, and every time was tea-time. In every household, the samovar is kept boiling
practically throughout the day, so that tea can be served whenever wanted, and there is no end to the Russian capacity to drink glass after glass of amber-coloured hot water.

A cheerful woman of uncertain age received me at the door of the small, neatly furnished apartment. She was short and rather stumpy, not a ravishing beauty like Alexandra Kolontai who walked through the history of the Revolution, leaving a succession of lacerated hearts in her wake. Balabanova's plain looks were more than compensated, however, by extremely pleasant manners and an optimistic disposition which did not harden into fanaticism. Dedicated to the cause of Revolution since her early youth, she belonged to the Old Guard of Bolshevism. Yet, she had not cultivated the hauteur of the party aristocracy. In her case, the austere simplicity of life was not highlighted by vulgar exhibitionism. With her, slovenliness was not a revolutionary virtue; nor did she put on a sour face as the token of a firm determination to die for an ideal.

Speaking fluent English, she conducted me to a sofa near the table on which the shining samovar was hissing impatiently, and immediately turned to the operation of making tea. It was a novel procedure for me. Out of a small china pot which perched on top of the samovar, a few drops of tea liquor were poured in silver-framed glass half-tumblers; these were then filled with steaming water out of the faucet of the brass boiler. After a cube of sugar was added to each glass, the hostess offered thin slices of lemon, which was a rare luxury.

The Russians never mix milk with tea; presumably because they drink it too weak to be diluted. Nor is the tea generally used of a high grade. Therefore, the practice is to flavour it with a slice of lemon, which used to be imported from Italy before the Revolution. During the years of Civil War, when Russia lost her foreign trade, lemons came to be one of the most precious necessities of daily life. They could be had only in the black market at the fantastic price of one million roubles a piece; and one had to risk imprisonment for the luxury. The black market being illegal, buyers as well as sellers were rounded up from time to time by the Cheka. The price was fictitious because paper money had no value in those days.
A million rouble note was called a lemon, because it could buy only that much.

The General Secretary of the Communist International, of course, did not go to the black market to buy lemons. Borodin had brought a few from Germany, so that the austere life of his friend might be relieved by the touch of a harmless luxury. Anticipating Borodin's rebuke for her squandering the rare thin slices on an Indian who was corrupted by the English habit of mixing milk with tea, Balabanova informed him with great joy that the Italian delegation to the Second World Congress would bring a whole basketful of lemons for Ilyitch (Lenin) and herself. She banteringly promised to give to Borodin out of her share twice as many as he had brought for her.

Having served tea, Balabanova apologised, evidently for my benefit, that she had nothing more to offer. Then, with indignation, she asked if Borodin had seen the shameful spectacle of pastries displayed in some shop windows, and clusters of hungry people looking at them. What would happen if Ilyitch insisted on the New Economic Policy? The Spartan lady shook her greying head as a token of anxiety about the future of the Revolution.

The consequence of War Communism, aggravated by the blockade of the country, had brought it to the verge of economic collapse. In another year, revolutionary Russia was ravaged by a widespread famine. Lenin was pleading for a halt, and advocating a new economic policy relaxing the rigours of War Communism. He was opposed practically by all his old associates and leading lieutenants. Balabanova was one of them. But hers was the most loyal opposition. Though a Spartan in personal habits, and an old firebrand politically, she had not identified her life with the party. A warm-hearted human being herself, her relation with fellow party members was not entirely impersonal; it had a tangible human touch. She was the veritable matriarch of Bolshevism.

Angelica Balabanova belonged to the Old Guard of Bolshevism, having been closely associated with Lenin for years in exile. Most of the time she lived in Italy and was regarded as the Patron Saint of the Socialist Party of that
country. Angelica is not a Russian name. She was so called by her Italian followers, whose love and adoration for her amounted to worship. Nor was it mere Latin effervescence. The Italian Socialist Party was the first mass organisation of considerable political influence which joined the Communist International. It followed her defying the opposition of the veteran right-wing leader Turatti. Little was known or spoken about Balabanova's private life. The most flippant party gossip would not dare go further than to whisper that, but for Angelica's personal influence, the Italian Maximalist leader Serrati would not break away from Turatti.

Balabanova turned out to be one of the selfless and sensitive early Bolsheviks who could not square their conscience when experience revealed the ugly realities of the revolutionary Utopia. She was mortified particularly by the struggle amongst old comrades for power and position inside the party. On his return to Moscow, Radek aspired for the General Secretaryship of the Communist International. He was backed by Zinoviev, who was eager to attract the Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany, and for that purpose wanted to invest Radek with prestige and authority. Believing that, owing to her old relations, Balabanova would attach greater importance to the Italian Socialist Party in the hierarchy of the International, the German Communists supported Radek's candidature for General Secretaryship. Balabanova was disgusted with the intrigues, and requested Lenin to relieve her after the Second World Congress. But the ambitious and impetuous Radek would not wait until he was raised to the coveted position according to the regular procedure. Practically he staged a little coup d'état in the headquarters of the Communist International, pushing gentle Balabanova into the background.

Before long, she completely faded out of the Russian picture. Until Lenin's death, she lived in retirement in Stockholm, still a loyal Bolshevik. The ruthless struggle for the leadership of the party which followed thereafter destroyed her illusions. She was also distressed by the communist tactics of splitting the Socialist Parties of Germany, France and Italy, because their veteran leaders would not accept dictation from Moscow.
Her personal friendship with Serrati as well as moral sensitivity finally got the better of her lingering party loyalty. Lenin's death snapped the old personal ties and blasted the human foundation of doctrinal conviction and organisational fidelity. Believing that Bolshevism died with Lenin, she reverted to the older faith of Socialism, and went over to the New World, to publish her autobiography under the title *My Life as a Rebel*. 
BEFORE we left, Balabanova asked me to see her the next day in her office at the headquarters of the Communist International. Lenin's draft of an important document was in her custody to be given to me on my arrival. It was the Theses on the National and Colonial Question prepared for consideration and adoption by the ensuing Second World Congress. The original was written in Russian. Borodin had translated it into English before I reached Moscow. But he had not breathed a word to me about the document. He was even more secretive at home than abroad. Secretiveness was a Bolshevik virtue, as I came to learn eventually, and this doubtful characteristic has done them a good deal of harm.

The headquarters of the Communist International in those days were accommodated in a palatial private house situated on a narrow street far away from the Kremlin and the centre of the city. Originally, it must have belonged to some aristocrat or a rich businessman. After the conclusion of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, a German Embassy was sent to the capital of the Russian Soviet Republic. But Moscow had no suitable accommodation for foreign embassies, which previously in the Tzarist days were situated in St. Petersburg. The building subsequently occupied by the headquarters of the Communist International was allotted to the German Ambassador, Count Von Mirbach.

The Socialist Revolutionary Party which had allied itself with the Bolsheviks for a few months after the latter captured power condemned the peace treaty with Germany as a treason against the Revolution and surrender of the sovereignty of Russia. They carried on a campaign against
the Soviet regime with the allegation that proletarian dictatorship had been replaced by the dictatorship of Mirbach. Relapsing into the terrorist tradition of his party, a Socialist Revolutionary desperado assassinated the German Ambassador in his office. The German Government held the Bolsheviks responsible for the criminal outrage, and withdrew its Embassy from Russia. Thereafter the headquarters of the newly founded Communist International moved into the vacant building with an old and a recent history, the one forgotten, but the other still fresh in everyone's memory. The room in which Mirbach was assassinated remained closed with the bloodstain on the thick Persian carpet still unfaded. It was treated as a sort of museum, visited, under armed vigilance, by foreign communists. Some of them saw in it the monument to an audacious act of revolutionary violence; for others it was the scene of the administration of retributive justice: the representative of vindictive German Militarism was a personification of evil; to lay him low was an act of justice, whoever might do the meritorious deed.

Although a State guest, I must not use the car of the Vice-Commissar of Foreign Affairs for my official visit to the headquarters of the Communist International. In those days, none owned any car, not even the powerful party functionaries nor high State officials. All motor cars in Moscow belonged to the City Soviet. Highly placed and privileged persons only had the right to use them. The Commandant of the Central Garage, which was called the "Auto Base," had a list of such persons drawn up by the Moscow Soviet. Whenever one of them needed a car, he had to telephone the garage. For the use of party leaders and superior State officials, cars were reserved, a particular one for each. An old model Rolls Royce was allotted to Lenin. Several were earmarked for the use of the Secretariat of the Communist International. One of them came for me. It was an old-fashioned Fiat, not good-looking, but very powerful, almost like a railway engine. Moscow streets being mostly cobbled in those days and Russian chauffeurs prone to drive at top speed, heavy cars were more suitable for fairly comfortable locomotion. As I preferred comfort to luxury and aesthetics, the old Fiat was allotted for
my use from the first day. It roared and jolted while dashing through miles and miles of cobbled roads. I apprehended an accident at each crossing and corner which the military driver turned without slowing down.

Fortunately, the streets were not crowded with pedestrians. Male adults were mostly at the battle-fronts, and the able-bodied women had taken their place in the factories which were situated on the outskirts of the city. The non-proletarian population, which was still quite numerous in the Soviet capital, kept indoors like scared rabbits. There was nothing to tempt them out, not even shop windows to look at. Loitering in the streets or idling in the public parks might be regarded as proof of shirking the social responsibility of doing productive labour, and persons so suspected were liable to be in the danger of provoking the wrath of revolutionary justice.

Swinging into a narrow street, the old Fiat pulled up with a jerk in front of a double-storied red stone building. The massive door of beautifully carved wood at the top of a few steps was closed. It was thrown open from inside by two armed guards in Red Army uniform. As I stepped on the threshold, they crossed their bayonets in front of me. Just then another car pulled up by the curb, and I heard someone running up the few steps, shouting cheerfully: “Don't shoot, Comrades!” It was Radek. He slapped me on the back and enquired if a pass had not been sent to me. On my replying in the negative, he shook his head and remarked: “Angelica is messing up things.” I saw no warrant for the charge. However, the sentries removed the frightening barricade and allowed me to pass; with Radck, who seemed to have already won recognition as the supreme authority in the headquarters of the Communist International. He conducted me to the door of the office of the General Secretary. It faced across the high and spacious central hall, the room in which Mirbach had been assassinated. Rapping on the door with his long pipe, Radek left me aid ran up the broad marble stairs to the upper storey. Balabanova was not yet physically dislodged from the office. Her would-be successor had taken over the virtual command with an independent staff and establishment. There
was a dual authority—one *de facto* and the other formal. I obeyed the latter.

From our first meeting in Berlin, Radek was not a *persona grata* with me. On closer acquaintance, in the course of time, I learned to recognise his talents and appreciate his merits, but could never outgrow the original prejudice. His brilliance was superficial, lacking a firm intellectual conviction and consistency of judgment. An extraordinarily strong sense of humour was his *forte*. He won him his popularity, which was quite high in the party in the earlier years of the Revolution.-But it was not always free from malice, although he could laugh at himself also. Lacking the qualities of leadership and not belonging to the Bolshevik Old Guard, he had to rely on opportunism in the attempt to realise an insatiable ambition. He did not succeed. Although elected to the Central Committee of the Party in 1921, with the largest vote next to Lenin, he never reached the all-powerful Politbureau. But for his doubtful personal loyalty, demonstrated in more than one political crisis, Radek might have won Stalin's confidence. He had no moral scruples, and therefore could be ruthless; he would do anything for satisfying political ambition, and a volatile temperament would enable him to sail gaily the adventurous course of the famous Stah'nist zigzag. But he missed the bus by overplaying his hand, by trying to be much too clever. His ultimate downfall was not due to any political conviction, as it was in the case of not a few old Bolsheviks. It was due to wrong political judgment. He changed sides too often to be trusted by any group. Radek has gone down in history as the most brilliant communist journalist and the Court Jester of Bolshevism.

In her office, Balabanova was not so very angelic as at home. She kept sitting at the desk when I entered and nodded me to a chair opposite. In the official environment, the charming hostess of the day before bore the dignity of the famous organiser and efficient Secretary of two international conferences which had heralded the formation of the Communist International. She was engrossed in reading some papers, and took no more notice of me for a full quarter of an hour. I waited with growing impatience and some annoyance until she pushed aside the...
papers and looked up with a flickering smile, obviously of satisfaction. Still ignoring my presence, she took up the telephone receiver and asked the exchange for a connection with the Kremlin. There was a conversation in Russian, at the end of which my name was mentioned. Having made a short note on the blotting pad, she put down the telephone receiver and spoke to me, first to apologise and then to confide that, when I came, she was reading the latest report from Italy. It brought very good news, and she had to communicate it to Ilyitch immediately. The Maximalist (majority) faction of the Italian Socialist Party had definitely resolved to send a large delegation, headed by Serrati, to the Second Congress of the Communist International. Then, with unconfined self-satisfaction, she added that her attempt had succeeded despite Bordiga's sectarianism and Bombacii's extravagance. The latter were leaders of the Italian Communist Party.

Abruptly changing the subject of conversation, she informed me that I must see Lenin in an hour—at 12-30. She had just fixed the appointment on the telephone. Before going to the Kremlin, I must read the draft Theses on the National and Colonial Question. Of course, there would be no serious discussion at the first meeting. Lenin was eagerly awaiting my arrival; and when she told him on the telephone that I was in her office, he had suggested an immediate meeting. The ill-fitting mask of official dignity fell off, and Balabanova was angelic again. With the benevolent look of a patron-saint and the tone of motherly affection, she said: "Young man, you have reason to be proud; but don't lose your head. I wish you luck." The remark made a deep impression. I always remembered it verbatim, never forgot the warning, and fondly cherished the angelic blessing.

Balabanova pulled a few sheets of paper out of a drawer of her desk and gave them to me. That was the English translation of a document which was to make history. Recovering her official poise, she behaved like a school teacher ordering a youngster: Now I must withdraw to a distant corner of the room and read the document before going to see Ilyitch. I obeyed, also like a schoolboy. A note in the left-hand top-corner of the front page first attracted my attention.
"Com. Roy, for criticism and suggestions," signed by V. I. Lenin. It was indeed a glass of very heady wine; but the angelic warning was still ringing in my ear. I tried to read the document, but was too excited to concentrate. In less than an hour I was to be face to face with the greatest men of the time, perhaps (as I then believed) of all times, who, an obscure exile until a couple of years ago, had captured the centre of the world stage by unparalleled boldness. My imagination flew ahead of me to the Kremlin Palace and presented me with a picture of the man. I had seen photographs and portraits of Lenin and had a mental picture of the man. How could a great revolutionary dictator have the modesty and tolerance underlying the note at the top of the document? The insignificance of the addressee ruled out the necessity of conventional politeness or hypocrisy. Balabanova's secretary came up to me to say that it was time to go. He would accompany me to look after the formalities of a stranger entering the Red Forbidden City.

At the Kremlin gate, my companion showed a card to the sentry. Presently an officer appeared on the scene and I was identified. He ran his finger down a list of names, and nodded. The formality was not yet over. The next stage of the procedure was to ring up Lenin's Secretariat for a confirmation of the order that so-and-so should be allowed to pass. I was received at the entrance to the Palace in which the Tsars used to be coronated. Now it accommodated the Sovnarkom (Soviet of People's Commissars). The reception at the entrance was not a token of special privilege. It was a measure of security. No newcomer, however distinguished he might be, was allowed to enter the sanctum sanctorum except under the stricter, though discreet, vigilance. Armed guards were posted at the top of the red-carpeted broad marble stairs to cue first floor. We passed through long corridors and huge halls. But I scarcely noticed anything, preoccupied with the exciting anticipation of seeing and speaking, in the very next moment, to the great leader of the World Revolution, venerated by his followers as die Higli Pnt"?1 -if a new faith.
First Meeting with Lenin

THE entrance to the office of the President of the Council of People's Commissars was guarded by an army of secretaries headed by an oldish woman. Unassuming in behaviour, plain in looks and rather shabbily attired, she was evidently efficient with her unobtrusive authority. Pindrop silence reigned in the large room occupied by Lenin's personal Secretariat, which was composed of about a dozen people. The grey-haired chief moved silently from one desk to another whenever she wanted to speak to any of her subordinate colleagues. They all spoke in the lowest possible whisper. None but the chief was privileged to enter Lenin's office. No ordinary person could occupy the position of great trust. The quiet and rather colourless Saint Petch of the Bolshevik heaven was a senior member of the party, a well-known figure in Moscow, and respected by all.

The way to Lenin's Secretariat lay through a well-appointed ante-room which was always empty. No expectant visitor was ever kept waiting there. Lenin did not share the proverbial Russian disregard for time, which is a national characteristic the Bolsheviks had inherited. Punctuality seemed to be blacklisted as an abominable petit bourgeois prejudice. The disregard for time was the greater the more eminent was the leader. It was justified by his manifold duties and engagements, /inovici/ beat all records. There were occasions when he kept sessions of a Congress of the Communist International or meetings of its Executive Committee waiting for hours.

Lenin was the only exception. As regards the attitude towards time, he was most uri-Russian. That explained the emptiness of the ante-room of a man who received numerous
callers ever)' day. Generally, interviews were brief, often allotted unusual fractions of time, such as nine or thirteen or seventeen minutes, and the limitation of time was rigidly enforced. A couple of minutes before a particular interview was due to end, Comrade Maria (the head of the Secretariat), pressed a button and a small electric bulb flashed on Lenin's desk. But the latter was not given any chance to risk his reputation for punctuality. Having given the signal, Comrade Maria would usher in the next caller; if there was none to follow immediately, she would herself appear with some paper and lay it in front of Lenin. In the inner circle, it was said in joke that Comrade Maria treated Ilyitch like a schoolboy.

Passing through the empty ante-room, I was escorted into the Secretariat. Engrossed in their respective preoccupations, the inmates took no notice of me. But St. Peter of the Bolshevik heaven was always on the alert. She stood up, looked at the big clock on the wall, and silently came forward to take over the charge from the subordinate colleague who had escorted me from the entrance of the palace. She conducted me towards a tall silver and gold door, pushed it open gently, just enough for one to pass, and with a motion of the head bade me enter. I stepped in, and the door silently closed behind me.

It was a vast rectangular room, with a row of tall windows giving on a spacious courtyard surrounded by other wings of the palace. The ceiling was so high as almost to touch the sky. The room was practically bare; only the floor was covered with a thick carpet. My attention was immediately attracted by the bald dome of a head stooping very low on the top of a big desk placed right in the middle of the room. I was nervous and walked towards the desk, not knowing what else to do. By silencing my footsteps, the thick carpet sympathised with my anxiety not to cause the least disturbance. It was quite a distance from the door to the desk. Before I had covered hardly half of it, the owner of the remarkable head was on his feet and briskly came forward with the right hand extended. I was in the presence of Lenin.

Nearly a head shorter, he tilted his red goatee almost to a horizontal position to look at my face quizzically. I was embarrassed. did not know what to say. He helped me out
with a banter: “You are so young! I expected a grey-bearded wise
man from the East.” The ice of initial nervousness broken, I found
words to protest against the disparagement of my seven and twenty
years.

Lenin laughed, obviously to put an awe-struck worshipper at ease.
Though much too overwhelmed by the experience of a great event to
observe details, I was struck by the impish look which often relieved
the severity of the expression of a fanatic. It belied the widely held
view that in Lenin's personality the heart was choked in the iron grip
of a hard head; that the great revolutionary was a wilful machine
without the least touch of humanity. The impish smile did not betray
cynicism. Lenin was the most unmitigated optimist. Not only was he
convinced unshakably that Marxism was the final truth, but he
believed equally firmly in its inevitable triumph. He combined the
fervour of the prophet with the devotion of the evangelist. Otherwise,
he could not advocate capture of power, single-handed, as against the
stubborn opposition of all his followers, when there appeared to be
very little chance for the Bolsheviks to hold it longer than a few days
or weeks. At that juncture Lenin was guided more by faith than by
reason; and it was faith not in the secular Providence of historical
determinism, but in man's unlimited capacity to make history. In the
most crucial moment of his life and also of contemporary history,
Lenin acted as a romanticist; and that one act of extraordinary
audacity raised him to the pinnacle of greatness, and won for him a
place amongst the immortals of human history.

Danton and Lenin are the two greatest revolutionaries of modern
times, and Danton was also a romanticist. The soul of the Great
French Revolution was killed when the jealousy of the hypocritical
High Priest of Reason sent Danton to the guillotine. Like his great
predecessor, Lenin also had the audacity to call for moderation before
the cup was drained to the dregs, before it was too late. He had no
rival, though Trotsky might pretend to imitate Robespierre's
fanaticism after Lenin's death, if he had the chance. Therefore, had not
the cruel hand of a natural death removed him prematurely Lenin
might have turned the course of the revolution to a
more fruitful direction. The New Economic Policy was the signal. Its unfoldment might have headed off the subsequent relapse into terrorism and coercion, which destroyed the Utopian ideal of Communism. But Trotsky's Left Opposition compelled Stalin to kill the Dautonist spirit of Lenin. The two contenders for the succession to Lenin together did for the Russian Revolution what Robespierre had clone for the trench. These ideas about Lenin's personality and iiis place in the history of revolution Look shape in my mind gradually, years after I met liim for the first time. But their roots can be traced to the initial impression. The man whose ominous shadow was cast athwart the capitalist world", in reality, did not at all live up to his frightful reputation. The crown of dictatorial power sat on his head very lightly. Therr was nothing of a dictator in his physical bearing or manner of speaking. Nor was IIis remarkable modesty;in ailectation—a repulsive demonstration of the consciousness of superiority. He was frank in speech and friendly in behaviour. For years he had been the undisputed leader of the Bolshevik Party. More than once, a majority of the Central Committee of the party disagreed with him. But none ever dreamed of replacing him as the leader of ihc party. He was more than a leader, he was the preceptor—High Priest of Bolshevism. He was friend and philosopher for the old cadre of the party. They loved him.

Since the early years of his political career, Lenin had fought bitter factional fights inside the Russian Social Democratic Party and the Second International. His polemics against the right-wing leaders were charged with brimstone and fire. He expounded the dangerous theory diat the party of the proletariat must be an iron cohort of professional revolutionaries. But his behaviour inside the Bolshevik Party was always democratic. Whenever he failed to persuade the Central Committee to agree with his view, he referred the issue to the rank and file of the party and in those days, there was no bureaucratic machinery to manipulate the party and manufacture a rank and file endorsement for the opinion of the leader. In July 1917, a majority of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party rejected Lenin's proposal that it should call for an armed insurrection preparatory to capturing
power. He returned to his place of hiding in Finland, and wrote a series of articles in the party organ, Pravda, expounding his thesis. Within a couple of months the All-Russian Soviet of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Deputies met to issue the slogan, ALL POWER TO THE SOVIETS!

In discussions inside the party, Lenin used to drive his point home with picturesque arguments. He backed up his view that the new-born Soviet Government should sign the Brest-Litovsk Treaty with the argument that the soldiers had voted for peace with their feet. How? By running away from the fronts. While defending the New Economic Policy in the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, he pleaded: "We must now learn the housekeeping of the Revolution." Expounding in the Second World Congress his thesis that the movement for the liberation of the Colonial peoples was a revolutionary force, he warned: “But don't paint Nationalism red.”

Having helped me out of the initial embarrassment and nervousness, Lenin returned to his seat at the desk and asked me to take a chair across it. As he turned back to walk to his seat, I had a good glance at the man. I had by then recovered my wits and poise. The height of the room accentuated the shortness of the man, so much so that he looked almost like a dwarf. His big head was quite appropriate to the deceptive picture. The picture was deceptive because Lenin was not a dwarf, being well above five feet. He was 5 feet 4 inches, I believe. Another habit made him look shorter than he really was. He walked with a stoop, without turning the head either to the left or to the right; nor did he raise his eyes to see what was ahead. The posture suggested that he was engrossed in thought even when walking; and the quickness of his steps seemed to synchronise with the swift rhythm of his mind. He seemed to be always in a great hurry as if keenly conscious of the magnitude of his mission and the inadequacy of time at his disposal. One may wonder if he had a premonition of early death. He was so very impatient to get things done quickly that he restricted the freedom of the tongues of the members of the all-powerful Politbureau. In his time, it had only seven members. In its weekly meetings, none was allowed to speak more than twice, fifteen minutes for the first time and
five for the second. Though he thought quickly, his speech was
deliberate and sometimes even slow. Except when addressing the
masses, he spoke like a teacher lecturing in the classroom or an
advocate arguing a case in the law court.

Having resumed his seat, Lenin leaned forward on the desk and fixed
his almond-shaped twinkling eyes on my face. The impish smile lit up
his. I felt completely at ease, as if I was Accustomed to "sitting by the
desk, not in the presence of a great man, a powerful dictator, but in the
pleasant company of an old friend. Indeed, it might be that of a
benevolent father Smiling benignly on a son who has made good and
promises to do better. The remembrance of Balabanova's
congratulation made me somewhat dizzy, but her motherly
admonition was also fresh in my memory.

Lenin's voice disturbed my introspection. Borodin had reported my
activities in Mexico. I must give a more detailed account. It was a
highly interesting experiment in revolutionary strategy. Surely I was
reluctant to leave the work so well begun. But there were more urgent
revolutionary tasks which must have priority. It would be long before
revolution could succeed in the New World. Conditions might mature
in Mexico and other Latin American countries in the near future. But
American Imperialism was on the alert to intervene as it had done in
the past. We must for the present concentrate on the Old World; and
the oppressed and exploited masses of Asia have to be mobilised in a
gigantic revolutionary movement. My experience in Mexico was
extremely valuable for the purpose. In practice I had anticipated the
theory of revolutionary strategy in colonial and semi-colonial
countries outlined in the draft theses for the Second World Congress.
Had I read them? No, I apologised. Because the document was given
to me just before I was to see its author; but I would study it as soon
as I had the time. "Then we must meet again to discuss it", Lenin
added and proceeded to plead his ignorance of the conditions in the
colonial countries. Therefore, he needed my co-operation in the
preparation of a document which was destined to be a landmark in the
history of the revolutionary movement. My understanding of Marxism
was sure to throw a new light on the history and the present conditions
of the colonial countries.
The little electric bulb gave the signal—Lenin sat back and remarked that the interview must end on Maria's order. The impish smile returned in his eyes. I got up to say good-bye, and found Lenin by my side. Taking me by the arm, he conducted me towards the door which opened to let in a man with a lock of black hair, a sensitive face and a little paunch. He was dressed in baggy trousers and a soft white shirt, its collar held together with a black silk string instead of a necktie. He was earning a bulging leather portfolio under one arm. Lenin introduced me to the newcomer. It was Comrade Zinoviev, who took my hand in a limp grip. His was small and soft like a woman's. He spoke a few words in a high pitched voice and desired me to see him soon.

Outside in the Secretariat, a young man was standing guard on three big suitcases, each of which contained, as I learned later, important papers pertaining to one of the three high offices held by Zinoviev.
IN early summer 1920, most of the delegates to the Second World Congress of the Communist International reached Moscow. They travelled by various routes, legally and illegally; some through Sweden and Finland, others by sea from Germany to Leningrad. Those travelling without legal passports were mostly smuggled through the Baltic States or overland through Galicia. There were quite a few delegates from the Asiatic countries bordering on Russia, such as Turkey and Persia. The road from the Far East was blocked by a Japanese army which had penetrated deep into Siberia. Some Chinese and Japanese delegates nevertheless managed to travel through Mongolia. There also came one Korean.

In summer 1920, the roads from practically all the countries of the world led to Moscow. All the countries of Europe were represented. Delegates came from the New World including several Latin American countries. Nearly all the languages of the world were heard in the streets of the Soviet capital.

For the first time, brown and yellow men met white men who were not overbearing imperialists but friends and comrades, eager to make amends for the evils of colonialism. There were a few Negroes also; some from the U.S.A. and a couple of them came from South Africa. For them it was a novel experience to mix freely with white men, to the extent of dancing in public with white women without running the risk of being lynched. As a matter of fact, Negroes seemed to have the strongest attraction for Russian women. Perhaps it was a case of the harmony of contrasts.

The Italian was the largest delegation. It dominated the scene not so much by number as by joviality and boistcrousness.
It was the most heterogeneous also, including Socialists, Communists and Anarcho-Syndicalists. The doctrinal diversity was drowned in the depth of Latin emotionalism. For the lime being, they were united to support the first Social Revolution of modern history and in the fervent hope of its spread to other countries. The Socialists were led by the silver-bearded Serrati, ably assisted by a professor of philosophy from Milan. Ebullient Nicolo Bombacci and rumbustious Amadeo Bordiga headed the communist contingent. The Anarcho-Syndicalist chief was a strikingly handsome Neapolitan who appeared to be more preoccupied with amorous adventure than the problems of World Revolution. He was always surrounded by a numerous feminine retinue except when mounting the platform to make fiery speeches.

The delegates were lodged all together in a hotel. It was a newly built, three-storeyed house. In the Sugar King's palace on the Moscow River, I lived as a State guest. But a suite of rooms was allotted to me also in the hotel, so that I could join the international concourse of Communists. I retained the double residence while the ticklish question of my appointment as the Soviet Ambassador to Afghanistan remained pending until the Second World Congress was over. The days I spent in the hotel, and in the summer, daylight lasted until well after ten in the evening. There I made the acquaintance of all the Communist leaders of the time and made friends with some. Practically every morning, batches of delegates were taken out on excursions to the environs of Moscow to see "noblemen's country houses transformed into children's homes and palaces in the pine forests into sanatoriums. Visits to Red Army camps were also organised. Everywhere delegates spoke to deliver fraternal greetings of the proletariat of their respective countries to the great and glorious Russian Revolution, and also to admire its splendid achievements in such a short time. NDUC, of course, missed to denounce the capitalist and imperialist world for inciting civil war in Russia, to pledge the world proletariat to defend the first Workers' and Peasants' Republic and to punish the criminals at their own homes. Speeches made in a variety of foreign languages were all translated into Russian, heard with rapt attention and lustily applauded. It
was a message of hope and promise of help for the inmates of a beleaguered citadel, as Soviet Russia practically was in 1920.

On May Day, I addressed a mass meeting for the first time not only in Russia, but in my life. The early revolutionary nationalism in India had nothing to do with the masses. To address public meetings was not a part of our activities. Proud of our preference for telling acts of terrorism, we despised futile speech-making and the pathetic practice of passing resolutions which had no sanction. During the years I spent in an unsuccessful search for arms, there was no occasion to make public speeches. My ideas of revolution and political activity changed during my stay in the United States of America, but the sojourn there was too short for me to put the new ideas into practice. In Mexico, I got the chance. For the first time, I came in contact with a mass revolutionary movement and practised speaking as a form of revolutionary political activity. But the earlier inhibition against making speeches could not be overcome easily. My Demosthenean potentiality was not tested on a public platform. I did not venture outside a committee room or a small hall.

Given such a background, one is naturally nervous when asked to address a public meeting, which was sure to be very large. It was going to be a novel experience. There were two items in the May Day programme: a march past in the morning, leaders of the part) and heads of the government taking the salute; and a mass meeting in the afternoon, to be addressed by some foreign delegates to the ensuing Congress of the Communist International. Both the events were to take place in the Red Square under the Kremlin walls in front of its main gate, on which the giant clock chimed the *International*.

The grimness of the beleaguered city was partially dispelled by a temporary buoyant mood of the crowd moving towards the Red Square from dawn. Marching in processions, the young people lustily sang revolutionary songs. The most impressive spectacle was a mile-long procession of soldiers in uniform led by a small detachment which sang the famous Red Army song to the rhythm of the thousands of marching feet behind. After each verse was sung by the leading detachment, the marching chorus took up the refrain: “We soldiers
of freedom; we sons of the people.” A mighty wave of sound swept over the mile-long procession to resound in the distant horizon. Only a small fraction of the improvised Red Army took part in the May Day demonstration of 1920. The bulk of it was fighting on many fronts in different parts of the country, the major portion concentrated on the Western Front, personally commanded by Trotzky, to carry the banner of revolution into the heart of Europe. Everywhere the soldiers sang the Red Army song, while they marched to the battle. The text of another song, very popular in those early days of the revolution, was bad poetry. It ran as follows: “Our (locomotive) engine goes forward; there is no station before the Commune. There is no other way. But we have guns in our hand.” Lenin did not care much for music. But he was very fond of this one revolutionary song, which most probably was composed by some soldier when his regiment was being transported in a slow-moving train pulled by an aged engine.

On a high platform built for the occasion stood Lenin, right hand raised to the hood of his cloth cap. He was flanked by all the members of the Political Bureau of the party except Trotzky and Stalin, one away on the Western Front and the other commanding a depleted garrison in besieged Tzaritzina, a town on the Lower Volga. Processions coming from different parts of the city converged at the western entrance to the Red Square. The delegates to the Second World Congress, as the International Brigade of the Red Army, was given the proud privilege of leading the demonstration into the Square. They were followed by the Russian soldiers; after them, an endless stream of workers from numerous factories. Each detachment stopped for a while in front of the platform to salute the leaders standing to attention for hours until the vast crowd gathered at the entrance to the Square marched through it in an orderly manner, a forest of red flags floated on a sea of human heads. Before the Square emptied, the sun reached the zenith, and the lingering patches of winter ice thawed into slush.

The second part of the programme was to begin at 5 P.M. The masses must have the time to eat whatever was available in those difficult days of near-famine. Even the highest pitch
of revolutionary enthusiasm cannot defy hunger. Nevertheless, the Red Square was again full quite a time before the meeting was scheduled to begin. In the uncertain situation of the time, individual men and women were afraid of being alone, and eagerly sought security in the masses. International delegates chosen to address the meeting assembled at the foot of the platform, and waited for more than an hour for Zinoviev who was to preside. At last he arrived, perfunctorily apologised for being late, mounted the platform and let loose a terrific torrent of words. That was my first experience of revolutionary oratory. I marvelled at the performance, but at the same time was assailed by the doubt if ever I could imitate it. Presently the test came. It was crucial.

A thunderous applause, punctuated by slogans, filled the vast enclosure when Zinoviev mentioned my name, presumably by way of introducing the speaker who was to address the meeting after him. He stepped back and asked me to take his place. I had prepared no speech, nor did I have a clear idea of what one should appropriately say on that occasion. But I was not assailed by stage-fright. On the contrary, the applause at the mention of my name mysteriously gave me a tremendous self-confidence. There was no loud-speaker. This invaluable mechanical aid to platform oratory was not available. I raised my voice to the highest possible pitch. It could be heard from the farthest corner of the enclosure. I was flatteringly told later that it was a feat few others than Trotzky could do. I did not begin my maiden platform performance with the conventional false note of a claim to represent millions of the colonial down-trodden and an imaginary message of their, hypothetical solidarity with the Russian workers and peasants. I introduced myself as a new convert to the Communist faith who had come to the land of victorious revolution to be recruited as one of its loyal soldiers and to learn from experience how to carry the message of social liberation to the colonial peoples. I spoke in English, which very few in the vast multitude understood. My introductory remark was applauded by a few on the platform who understood English. The applause was mechanically endorsed by the entire audience. The rest of the speech, finished in ten minutes, was
an elaboration of the point of departure. The Russian rendering drew spontaneous applause, which was repeated several times. Zinoviev congratulated me with his conventional clammy handshake. The translator, a young Russian Jew, who had lived many years in England, was more intelligently appreciative. He complimented me for having said something new. I was pleased, particularly by the response of the audience.
International Concourse of Communists

IN July 1920, practically all the delegates to the Second World Congress of the Communist International had reached Moscow. The hotel set apart for them was over-crowded. Late-comers were accommodated elsewhere. In the adjoining countries—Finland, the Baltic States, Poland and the Balkans—Communist Parties were banned. Delegates from those countries had to live underground. Otherwise, they must return home at the risk of death. There was little liberty in those new States created by the Versailles Treaty according to the Wilsonian principle of self-determination of subject nationalities. A large number of revolutionary emigres from those countries sought asylum in Soviet Russia. They maintained connection with underground organisations in their respective countries. The Tzarist government used to have spies among the Russian revolutionary exiles. The practice was imitated by the governments of the secession States. They had spies amongst the Communist exiles in Russia. Therefore, the delegates from those countries had to be very careful. If spotted, they would simply be shot down while crossing the frontier clandestinely.

I made many friends amongst those exiled and haunted Communists. The famous Polish authoress, Wanda Waleskaya, who subsequently became the first President of the Provisional Government of Poland on its liberation by the Red Army in 1941, was one of them. She was a splendid type of woman; no longer very young already then, she was nevertheless a striking figure—tall, erect, with a beautifully built body, a handsome, intelligent face, and a proud head of blond hair turning grey. Her friend Walecki, was the then leader of the Polish
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Communist Party. But having been a close associate of Ro., Luxemburg, he was opposed by the younger generation of Leninist Bolsheviks led by an exceptionally brilliant young man who publicly called himself Brandt. It was whispered amongst the delegates that the rising leader of the Polish Communist Party was the son of a rich nobleman who occupied a high position under the Tzar. Branch's aristocratic parentage was betrayed by his attractive appearance and pleasing manners. He had studied mathematics and philosophy in a German University. Notwithstanding theoretical differences, Wanda and Walecki were very fond of the young man, both being also highly educated and cultured. Walecki, however, looked to be the very antithesis of his young rival to leadership. The older man was a cynic, slovenly dressed, and even pretended to be vulgar. The repulsive exterior camouflaged a wise man matured with age and experience.

My popularity with the Communists from Poland and the Baltic States was due to the "whisper that I disagreed with Lenin's view that nationalism was a revolutionary force. Although President Wilson was credited with it, the principle of the self-determination of subject nationalities was first proclaimed by Lenin. Accordingly, the Bolshevik Government recognised the right of Poland and the Baltic States to secede from Russia after the Revolution. The Communist Parties were suppressed in the secession States where white terror was let loose. Embittered by the experience, the native Communists felt that they had been betrayed by their Russian comrades. Lenin's theses on the National and Colonial Question reiterated the principle of self-determination. I disagreed with his view that the nationalist bourgeoisie played a historically revolutionary role and therefore should be supported by the Communists. The Polish Communists of the Luxemburg school used to remark in joke that I was a true Communist, while Lenin was a nationalist.

A bevy of young women was attached to the foreign delegations to act as interpreter:. Belonging to me upper classes, they had nil been educated in fashionable girls' schools where European languages were taught. Apart from the service they were lo render and which they did very sanslai (only,
most of them were physically attractive. Notwithstanding their bourgeois or aristocratic parentage, they were ardent Communists. Otherwise, they would not be chosen for the position where they had to do a job of great trust in addition to the apparent one. They were to spy on the leading foreign delegates, and with that purpose worm into their confidence through their cupidity, if not hearts. The abominable practice led to some happy unions, although generally it resulted in debauchery and some cases of heart-breaking tragedy. Amongst the women, there were some philanderers. As a rule, they hailed from the aristocracy. Those belonging to the bourgeoisie lacked the courage and the abandon. With the latter, the sudden conversion to Communism was a simulation. They welcomed the shameful job hoping that the affection of a foreign delegate might afford one the opportunity to escape from Russia. The derelicts of the fallen aristocracy embraced Communism as a passion. One of them fell in love with Brandt while she persuaded herself to believe that she was spying on him as a disciplined member of the Bolshevik Party.

Her father was the Governor of a province before the Revolution. He had sent his two daughters to the Eketrinsky School of St. Petersburg, where aristocratic girls got the chance of finding their future husbands amongst the military and naval cadets. She was exceptionally bright, but disdained the conventional gentility cultivated by women belonging to her class. Her tomboy behaviour disturbed the atmosphere of prudery which prevailed in the school, scandalised other pupils and outraged the teacher. She snubbed the aristocratic cadets and young officers whenever any of them asked her for a dance at the gala balls held with the purpose of giving the girls an occasion to show themselves in the marriage market. Once she actually slapped her partner on the dance floor for a silly remark he had made. He had whispered in her ear that she danced like a butterfly. With great gusto she used to tell the story to her friends and every time she finished with the indignant exclamation: “Fancy, calling me a butterfly! the idiot!” She was tall, heavily built and dressed sloppily—even when she was in the fashionable school.
When the Revolution broke out, she was eighteen. Some officers were firing at a crowd in front of the school. The crowd turned back, pounced on the officers and tore away their glittering shoulder straps. Begun by the mutinous soldiers on the front as the gesture of insubordination, the practice became very common in the early days of the Revolution. Lola watched the scene from a window of her room, dashed out to join the crowd, and after a few minutes found herself raised on an improvised platform to make a speech applauding the humiliation of the empty-headed fools swaggering in their ridiculous outfit. She had acted as if in a delirium, but remembered having used those words in her first public speech. A nobleman's daughter joining the insurgent mass in the streets, virtually on the barricade, was an event of great significance. It instantly attracted the attention of the local Revolutionary Committee, and almost overnight Lola became a very popular figure on the platform.

Subsequently, during the civil war, she was sent to the Ukraine, where the Germans fomented a counter-revolutionary separatist movement. Lola was selected for espionage behind the enemy lines. It was the most risky adventure. Only the most courageous and devoted members of the Bolshevik Party volunteered for the work. Lola returned from the adventure much more of a tomboy and heavier than ever. For a well deserved rest and relaxation, she was selected as an interpreter for the delegates to the Second World Congress. She spoke German and French fluently and a little of Italian and English. As a trusted party member, who had gone through veritable trials of fire, she was given the responsibility to keep an eye on all the other interpreters, most of whom were chosen for their ability to speak foreign languages and good looks.

Because of my friendship with Brandt, I came to know Lola very well. Her affair with the handsome young Pole was transitory, although they did care for each other. Whenever Brandt made any demonstration of his feelings, she would ridicule him and remonstrate: “Young man, in a few days you will go back to Pilsudsky's hell. Am I such a fool as to accompany you there? " Then, as if to prove how tough and hardened a revolutionary she was, she would add: “Don't
trust me. You don't know how many men went to bed with me to be found dead the next morning.” I heard her say those terrible words which none could ever forget. The Revolution was an exacting goddess. Her most fanatical devotees were put to the severest test which hardened them into moral callousness. But Lola was not so very depraved. Her hardened exterior and demonstrative cynicism concealed a sensitive soul saddened by experience. She was happy with Brandt; but he went away after the Second World Congress, and of course could not take her along. I don't know if they ever met again. Nor did I meet Brandt afterwards. But my friendship with Lola lasted until she was sent abroad in 1925 for some secret work. We were chums. With her I saw a Russian opera for the first time—Rimsky Korsakov's *Prince Igor*. It was a staggering experience, which finally destroyed my prejudice against music.

Except the Italian, all the important delegations, particularly the German and the French, came late. When they did at last arrive, a good deal of negotiations had to be carried on with them behind closed doors. The disputed issue was the acceptance of the famous twenty-one conditions for affiliation to the International. These conditions had been drafted by Zinoviev to be endorsed by the Second World Congress. The contention was that the Second International had disintegrated on the outbreak of the World War in 1914, because it had no centralised leadership. In the crisis precipitated by the War, patriotism prevailed over internationalism. Powerful Left wings of the mass Socialist Parties of Italy, Germany and France sympathised with the Russian Revolution and wanted to join the newly founded international organisation. But together they might swamp the latter if they were not subordinated to a rigidly centralised leadership. The twenty-one conditions for affiliation were formulated to guarantee against that danger. On the other hand, if those big parties did not join, the Communist International would be composed of small groups with little influence on the working class movements of the respective countries. It was a duel of wits between the Russians and the socialist leaders from Italy, Germany and France.
Thanks to Balabanova's influence, the difference with the Italians had narrowed down to one point; before it was admitted to the new International, the Socialist Party must expel its right-wing led by Turatti. The Communist members of the delegation, led by Bordiga and Bombacci, pressed for the point, and Balabanova hoped to enlist Lenin's support to help Serrati out of the difficulty. So while the Germans wrangled with the Russians and the French Socialist leaders, Marcel Cachin and Frossard, delayed their arrival until the last moment, the light-hearted Italians forgot their difference and fully enjoyed the pampering hospitality of the Russians. Knowing beforehand that the beleaguered headquarters of the coming World Revolution was likely to be short of the amenities of life, they came fully provided for—with boxes of macaroni, cases of Chianti wine and plenty of cheese. Every evening there was a riotous feast in Angelica's apartment. She had moved to the delegates' hotel to be with her beloved Italians. In the first years of the Bolshevik regime, alcoholic drinks were strictly prohibited. The proletariat must be taught to get out of the halit of drinking vodka, devilishly promoted by their exploiters. For the sake of the privileged guests, the delegates' hotel was placed beyond the reach of the prohibition law. The Italians did not like to monopolise the concession. Balabanova's apartment was thrown open to all the delegates. That was a boon for all. The authorities had made special arrangements to entertain the delegates with the best available food. In addition to rye bread, caviar and roasted fowl were plentifully served for each meal. But there was a flaw in the lavish hospitality. The caviar was rancid and the meat was so tough as to defy the strongest teeth. None could imagine what sort of birds had been slaughtered for the benefit of the delegates. Judged by the bulk of the muscles and the thickness of the bones, they might have been eagles or ostriches. The more patriotic Communists pretended to enjoy the fare. Though visibly baffled by the toughness of the meat, they managed the caviar with chunks of black bread. Caviar, after all, was an article of luxury. The Revolution had brought it within the reach of the workers. But on the very first acquaintance with this particular conquest of the Revolution, I was
repelled by the smell of rancid fat. Never since then could I get reconciled with this much sought for luxury.

There were daily excitements in the hotel. One day it was caused by the arrival of the Hungarian delegation—Bela Kun, Rakosi, Lukacs, Varga—ill famous irimes of martyrs of the Revolution. On the fall of the short-lived Soviet Government at Budapest, they were taken prisoner at Vienna. After a year's imprisonment, Bolshevik diplomacy obtained their release in exchange for a number of high military officers held in Russia as prisoners of war. The Hungarian delegation reached Moscow on July 14—the anniversary of the storming of the Bastille. They were received by the international concourse of Communists singing the sans-culotte song, the *Carmagnole*, led by Jacques Sadoul. The resonant voice of the handsome young hero electrified the company; men and women, old and young—all joined him in the historic dance of the Great French Revolution. That was an appropriate prelude to the Grand Pageant which began early in August.
THE delegates to the Second World Congress were entertained and honoured in various manners. For the day time, they were taken on excursions to places of interest outside the city. In the evenings, operas, ballets and plays were staged for the entertainment of the foreign comrades. They should be shown not only the achievements of the new regime, but also what the latter was doing for the preservation of art and the monuments of culture. In addition to its internationally famous Tetrakovsky Gallery, Moscow is rich in architecture, which harmonised the classical Byzantine style with the pure oriental. The Tartars ruled there until the fifteenth century. They had left the stamp of their influence on Muscovite culture, not only music and architecture, but even on the social life; and the pure patterns of Russian culture, modern as well as feudal, were cast in Moscow. St. Petersburg was only a window to the West. It was the seat of a hybrid culture. Anna Karenina belonged to the society of Peter the Great; but her creator was a Muscovite. Tolstoy lived on his estate in the neighbourhood of the capital of mediaeval Russia.

The tradition of pure Russian culture is matriarchal. The Volga is the matriarch. The saga of Stenka Basin is interwoven with the elemental love for Mother Volga. The agonised soul of the Russian people revolting against Tartar despotism cried out through it. The cry vibrates in Russian hearts even today. Bolshevism was inspired more by the native tradition of revolt against tyranny than by the outlandish cult of Marxism. The mediaeval revolt against tyranny hailed a robber chief as the liberator. That cultural tradition must have contributed to Stalin's triumph over his
rivals, whose mentality was shaped by the ideals of modern civilisation.

What is known abroad as the Russian ballet was very largely a creation of the modern Tzarist culture. But the fame of the Moscow Art Theatre was greater. Pavlova entertained the court of St. Petersburg and subsequently a sophisticated Western audience. Stanislavsky was a Muscovite and he was universally recognised as the greatest master of stage-craft of his time. And the Russian ballet is at its best as an integral part of the operas of Rymski-Korsakov and Borodin, which are musical and plastic presentations of the Slav cultural traditions. A whole act in each Russian opera is devoted to the depiction of its theme in the rhythmic movements of the human body. Even the westernised Tchaikovsky did not dare go against the tradition. Abstracted from the context of an integrated legend, the ballet becomes very artificial and as such satisfies only the jaded taste of the sophisticated.

Even during the worst days of the Civil War, when Moscow lived on the verge of starvation and froze for the want of fuel in the winter, the theatres remained open. They provided the only relaxation after the day's hard work. Money being abolished, the admission into the temple of Muse was not free to all who could pay, as under the old regime. The pleasure and the privilege were reserved for those who laboured for building a new order of equality and liberty. Blocks of seats in each theatre were allotted to various institutions—trade-unions, the Communist Party, the Moscow Soviet, Schools, so on and so forth. Taking into consideration the fact that a large sector of the Moscow population did not belong to any of these institutions, some seats in each theatre were sold in the free market, so to say. The number was very small, and there "was a great run for them. Daily there were long queues for buying the few tickets at fantastic prices.

A number of seats in each theatre was allotted for the delegates to the Second World Congress. In the Opera House and the Art Theatre, there were boxes reserved for the Tzar and his court. Under the new regime, those seats of privilege and distinction were allotted to the members of the Central
Executive Committee of the All-Russian Soviet Congress. On the eve of the Second World Congress, they were yielded to the foreign delegates. But the majority of them preferred open-air entertainment parks where variety shows were staged. In those days, the Art Theatre was staging classical dramas, Russian as well as foreign. Tchekhov, though in the most advanced stage of tuberculosis, was playing in Gogol's *Inspector* and in *Hamlet*. He was giving a new interpretation of the latter. A Spanish satire modelled after Gogol's *Inspector* was also staged with Tchekhov in the leading role. Very interesting experiments in stage-craft and dramatic art were made in the four studios of the Art Theatre where new artists rejected Stanislavsky's style with the master's sanction and indeed under his guidance.

There were concerts and highly intellectual chamber music for the connoisseurs. The delegates enjoyed the diversity of entertainment according to the taste of each. The taste and preference were not national, but individual. There were Englishmen fascinated by the grandeur of Rymsky-Korsakov's operas and Italians who appreciated Tchekhov's new interpretation of *Hamlet*. Frenchmen went to Beethoven concerts while Germans preferred the open-air variety show. Americans enjoyed highly intellectualised. chamber music, belying their preference for jazz.

Leading delegates from different countries were specially honoured. Some were made honorary officers of the Red Army by the soldiers of the regiments visited by them. They were given appropriate uniforms, which were not at all decorative in those austere days of the Revolution. It was not yet forgotten that one of the demonstrative signals of the uprising was to tear away the glittering regalia on the officers' uniforms as the badge of privilege. In the earlier days of the Red Army, privates and officers put on the same uniform. The latter's rank was indicated by simple red straps across the chest. An officer was called "Comrade Commander." The larger the unit under him the more the number of red straps. The honoured delegates were proud of their distinction and went about in their ill-fitting military uniforms. In the summer, high boots were replaced by puttees. The novice could not
tie them neatly, particularly when the legs were thin. They kept slipping down to the ankles or trailed behind on the ground when the inexperienced walker walked. The sight, verging on clownishness, naturally caused a good deal of fun among other delegates.

The alternative distinction was honorary membership of the Moscow Soviet. Other important cities visited by the foreign delegates also conferred the honour. Those so honoured in Moscow were given membership cards which entitled them to board tram cars through the front platform, and buy theatre tickets, if they went to the opera market, without standing in the queue. This particular privilege was utilised to oblige casual lady friends who could not get tickets through one or another institution.

As the dates fixed for the opening of the World Congress drew nearer, delegates turned to more serious things. National delegations held meetings to prepare reports for the Congress. There was divergence of opinion as regards the revolutionary possibilities of the economic conditions and political situation in each country. Conflicting views about the method of organisation and tactics of the revolutionary struggle followed from the difference in the appraisal of the objective possibilities. Delegations were also engaged in the examination of draft thesis to be discussed and adopted by the Congress.

The agenda of the Congress had been announced months ahead. In the earlier years of the International, no resolutions were passed. Fundamental principles had still to be clarified, theoretical issues settled, and a programme of political action elaborated. The method was to prepare theses on each of the questions and circulate them for preliminary discussion. Any affiliated party or individual delegate was entitled to submit a draft on any question. But the national organisations being still divided into rival groups with discordant ideas, none could take the initiative. Consequently, it was left to the Russians; and no draft thesis except Lenin's was available for examination by the delegates until a few days before the Congress met. That initial default of others laid the foundation of the Russian intellectual domination of the Communist International. Subsequently, it became the generally accepted
practice that the first word and the last on each question belonged to the Russians.

Having been drafted and circulated well ahead of time,

Lenin's Thesis on the National and Colonial Question could be discussed at length by the delegates. But the major European delegations took little interest in it. The pre-war Socialist tradition of ignoring the problems of the world outside Europe and America was still strong. Lenin wanted to disown that tradition and organise a new International which would embrace the whole world. But the nascent Communist parties of Europe were too preoccupied with their internal problems to share Lenin's broad vision. The delegates from the countries of Eastern Europe were concerned with the national question, but the Russian Revolution and the Versailles Treaty having settled the question, it was a historical and theoretical concern. The British delegation was interested. But there was no Communist Party in Britain as yet. The British delegation was headed by Tom Quelch, whose father was an associate of Hyndman. Tom was a very good-natured, but totally ineffectual person. He vaguely felt that Lenin's thesis would transfer the proverbial "White Man's Burden" on the working class in the imperialist countries. The sense of responsibility induced him to befriend the delegates from the colonial and semi-colonial countries. (The latter category was created by Lenin's thesis.) But obviously he did not feel quite at ease in their company, and the fault was not his. The others laboured under inferiority complexes, and mistook his demonstrative friendliness as patronisation. He was happy to find at least in one a normal response to his honest goodwill, and we made friends. Our circle was enlarged by the inclusion of the Dutch and the American delegates.

The business sessions of the Second World Congress were to take place in Moscow in the great hall where the Tzars used to be coronated. But the cradle of the Revolution, which had been renamed after Lenin, must have the place of honour. It was chosen as the scene of the ceremonial opening, which was a grand pageant—a most memorable event of contemporary history. To participate in it was a great privilege. Three special trains carried the delegates to the City of Lenin. They
were received at the station by the largest possible congregation of men and women. Practically the entire population of the great city was out in the streets to follow the delegates in a procession to the Smolny Palace, where the Bolshevik insurgents established their first government on the 7th November 1917. The capital of Tzarist Russia had a population of more than two million. War and Revolution had greatly depleted it. However, it could not be less than a million in August 1920.

In the Smolny, the delegates were ceremoniously received by the Leningrad Soviet, the host of the occasion. I happened to be standing by the side of Lenin in the Centre of a group of Bolshevik leaders photographed on the steps of the palace. The group included Zinoviev, Bukharin, Radek, Gorky, Dzerzhinsky and others. It was not deliberately composed. Nevertheless, the photograph secured historical importance. For years it was given a prominent place in the offices of the Communist Parties of all countries.

After the mid-day meal, the delegates marched to the Opera House where the opening Session of the World Congress took place in public. The spacious auditorium was packed hours ahead of time. As the stage, though large enough to make room for a chorus of 500, usual in Russian operas, could not accommodate all the delegates, a selected few sat on the platform with the Russian leaders. Their appearance on the stage was heralded by the two-hundred piece orchestra striking the first chords of the *Internationale*. The entire audience sprang to its feet, and for fifteen minutes the house resounded with the mighty music. Judged by the sensation which I experienced, everyone present must have felt like marching to battle for the liberation of the down-trodden of the world. I don't remember music having ever made such a terrific impression.

Speeches made thereafter all sounded flat. Zinoviev started off as the chairman of the Leningrad Soviet. He was a fiery speaker. The occasion was solemn, to inspire passionate oratory. Undoubtedly, Zinoviev did his best, but the atmosphere, already electrified by the music, could not be further agitated by his shrill voice. The terrific impact of the music
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had placed the audience in an introspective mood. Nothing could agitate them to a higher pitch of enthusiasm.

Marcel Cachin was the star performer of the occasion. His classical French oratory wafted the imaginative listener to the days of the Great Revolution. He seemed to step out of a great past to hail the promise of a greater future. Lenin was the last to speak. That was the first time I heard him address a meeting. There was no attempt to sway the audience with rhetorics or oratorical flourishes. But the sober impressive-ness of the speech broke the mystic spell of the music and brought the audience back to the world of realities. The thunderous applause at the end of the speech was a gesture of relaxation.
The delegates had a crowded programme during the second day of their visit to Leningrad. In the morning, they were taken to a place called the "Tzar's Village" sixteen miles outside the city. It was the country seat of the In.; crial Court, transformed into a children's colony after the Revolution. After lunch, the Winter Palace on the Neva and the adjoining Museum were visited. Then followed the most important function—a mass meeting addressed by the leaders of the world proletariat. Presiding over the meeting, which was a veritable mass of human heads, Zinoviev harangued for an hour. All other Russian leaders had accompanied Lenin back to Moscow the previous night. After Zinoviev, I had, for the second time, to go through the ordeal of making a public speech. It was an ordeal, because I mounted the platform once again without the slightest idea of what I should say.

I never got over the inhibition against platform-speaking. Even if I tried to think out previously what I wanted to say, once on the platform, I said something different, though not necessarily foolish or pointless. The habit of making extempore speeches in public meetings earned for me the undeserved compliment that I was an "inspired speaker," The compliment was not only undeserved, but undesired and undesirable. I never envied the mob orators' skill of casting a spell on the audience by working themselves up into a trance. I believed that the speaker should be more conscious of the audience than of himself. But in a mass meeting, it is difficult for the speaker to anticipate the expectations of the audience. I
therefore called forth some idea to my mind. It was stated in the opening sentence. The rest of the speech was a logical deduction. It was rather thinking aloud than a rhetorical attempt to move the audience.

However, judging from the applause, I must have uttered some platitudes appropriate to the occasion. Or, what was more probable, the audience did not listen to what I said, and the applause was a conditioned reflex. The feeling made me uneasy and unhappy. I wanted some distraction, if not consolation. The delegates’ special trains were to leave late in the evening. There was plenty of time to look up the famous American Communist John Reed. He had just returned from home and was living in Leningrad. In Moscow, I had met his wife, Louise Bryant, who was also a journalist. A clever, handsome and ambitious young woman, she naturally did not like to be famous as John Reed’s wife. She staked her claim to some reputation in her own right by publishing a book on the Russian Revolution. Presumably to assert her independent personality, she did not come to Leningrad to meet her husband. For personal reasons, she could not leave her journalistic assignment in Moscow.

A few days before, coming out of Karakhan’s office after midnight, I met Louise Bryant in the ante-room of the Chief of the Press Bureau. She had called, as all foreign journalists must, to submit her despatch for control. It was a summer night. We preferred to walk back to the hotel. She was furious with the arbitrariness of the Press Bureau. Just that evening her story had been censored beyond recognition, and she was refused the permission to seek an interview with Trotsky at the front. The night air having soothed her frayed nerves, she confided that Jack had cancelled a coast-to-coast lecture tour in the States to rush back because of some very important reason. She urged me to see him in Leningrad, where he was staying on to discuss the matter personally with Zinoviev. I would like Jack; oh, simply fall in love with him; everybody did, even men. But she was not jealous, not a bit. She was not rushing to Leningrad to chaperon him against forward women.

I found Reed alone in his hotel room. He hailed me boisterously like an old friend. He knew all about my splendid
revolutionary activity in Mexico. I had stolen a march on him by
organising the first Communist Party outside Russia. He wanted to
capture the trophy for the U.S.A. But he did not grudge me the
priority. It was not an easy sailing for him. On return home, he had to
herd together hoboes and wobblies and opportunists—all calling
themselves Communists, and eager to climb on the band-wagon.
Fellows who had idolised Kerensky, overnight became Bolsheviks.
One had to pick and choose; one could not follow Lenin on the road to
insurrection with an undisciplined army. There were theoretical hair-
splitters who would never go within miles of the barricades, but stab
you in the back if they ever got a chance.

Everybody knew that John Reed was the undisputed Communist
leader of America. I wondered who could behave as he described.
There was no malice in his tone, though it was of outraged innocence.
The famous American revolutionary was indeed like an over-grown
boy—tall, powerfully built, with a handsome face and extremely
friendly manners. No wonder that he was known to be a charmer, as
his wife had told me only a few days ago. He was happy that I had
met Louise. She must be angry because he was not running to her as
he was dying to. But he must stay on a couple of days longer in
Leningrad, and come with Zinoviev on the opening day of the
Congress. By the way, had I met Fraina? Yes, He thought so, but
would say no more. A very hearty handshake and resounding slap on
the back, both rather painful, ended my first interview with a minor
Hero of the Revolution.

John Reed was the leader of American Communism. His book, *Ten
Days That Shook the World*, had won the position for him. But he was
neither an organiser nor a theoretical Marxist. The early Communist
movement in the United States of America needed a more qualified
leader. Louis Fraina was the pretender. But he had little chance to
succeed as the rival of John Reed, who was fully backed by the
Russians for his brilliant journalistic services. The experience
disheartened Fraina. He took no active part in the deliberations of the
Second World Congress. He was naturally modest and retiring. As
there was no question of my returning to Mexico, Borodin
and I were looking out for someone else who could be sent there to continue the work. We thought Fraina would be an excellent choice. He also felt that he must wait for his chance. Meanwhile, it would be wise to keep out of the U.S.A. So, after the Second World Congress, Fraina was sent to Mexico to organise and head the Latin American Bureau of the Communist International.

Immediately after the Second World Congress, I left for Central Asia and was out of touch with events in the West until the middle of 1922. On my return to Europe, I tried to contact Fraina to find out what had happened in Mexico since he went there. I learned that he had returned to the United States, but could not be located there. His disappearance was due to the malicious method of hounding out rivals, which seriously impoverished communist leadership intellectually.

John Reed having died in Russia in 1921, Fraina returned to the United States, believing that he could now capture the leadership of the Communist Party. He had gone to Russia without a passport; therefore, he could not re-enter the U.S.A. legally, and had to live there underground. While labouring under this handicap, he was confronted with the serious charge of having run away from his post in Mexico with a large part of the funds of the Latin American Bureau of the Communist International. Evidently, the malicious story was spread for the sake of factional feuds inside the Communist Party. Fraina had committed the mistake of leaving Mexico without seeking the necessary sanction from Moscow. The bureaucrats at the headquarters of the Communist International were displeased by his behaviour and readily swallowed the story against him. It seems that the experience embittered him, and perhaps its cleverest pioneer dropped out of the American Communist movement in disgust. Several treatises on economics subsequently written under the assumed name of Lewis Corey proved Fraina's intellectual merit. I do not know if he ever vindicated himself morally also. For some time, he edited a high-class journal published by an educational institution, and is at present the educational director of a workingmen's Benevolent Association.
The choice of the Coronation Hall as the meeting place of the Congress of the Communist International had a symbolic significance. It was a demonstration of the fact that the working class had replaced the old rulers. The demonstration was meant to inflame the zeal of the non-Russian Communists to bring about a similar change in their respective countries. It was an intoxicating experience for the representatives of the down-trodden masses, many of them individually haunted and persecuted in their own countries. Conquest of power by the oppressed, expropriation of the expropriators, was no longer a dream. The imperial throne, broken up into pieces, was lying in a heap on the open terrace overlooking the Moscow River. The platform for the Presidium of the Congress was raised in the vacant place. The golden canopy of the throne was still there, but draped in red curtains. In an adjoining chamber, the imperial bed was still intact. Less serious delegates took their turns to test how luxurious it was. Refreshments were served in one of the smaller halls. The fabulous extravagance of court banquets was not repeated. But there was plenty of white bread, caviar, ham, cheese and exquisite pastries—rare things not only in Moscow of those days, but beyond the reach of the working people in prosperous and peaceful capitalist countries.

The first plenary session elected a number of committees to discuss the various draft theses and report back to itself. The proceedings of the plenary sessions as well as of the committees were conducted in three languages—German, French and English. Speeches made in any one of the languages were translated in the other two. Therefore, the Congress lasted nearly for three weeks. The organisation was inefficient; no machinery had as yet been built up. A lot of time was wasted. Batches of delegates wandered all over the palace; some held informal discussions here and there; bed-rooms were preferred by the; lazy or the retiring.

Lenin's pamphlet on "Left-Wing Communism", published shortly before the Congress, and the Twenty-one Conditions for affiliation were the two topics of passionate and heated discussions. The Germans, Italians and French were mainly preoccupied with the latter. They included members of
Socialist Parties who were reluctant to surrender the autonomy of affiliated organisations. The British, Americans, Spaniards and also the Germans were concerned mainly with Lenin's pamphlet on "Left-Wing Communism." It being an 'infantile disease" as characterised by Lenin, its defenders entertained the Congress with a plethora of fiery speeches. The most remarkable was delivered by Sylvia Pankhurst—a daughter of the famous leader of the British Suffragette movement. She came several days after the Congress had begun. Not willing to lose any time, she went straight from the station to the Kremlin. Soon after her appearance, she demanded the floor. Zinoviev was in the chair. Presumably for politeness, he allowed her priority over other speakers on the list.

Sylvia Pankhurst was in her early thirties—sparsely built and of medium height. Though herself hailing from the bourgeoisie, she was the most passionate type of proletarian revolutionary. As such, she disdained parliamentary or any other forms of reformism. The brand of pure proletarianism she represented was very popular with a certain section of the British working class in the years immediately after the First World War. Sylvia had come to the Second World Congress to defend the infantile sickness "of left-wing Communism against Lenin's "senile reformism." The latter sat just below the speaker's tribune when she addressed the delegates, and watched her rhetorical performance with unconcealed amazement. Time and again, she pointed an accusing finger at him to emphasise her arguments. The chairman rang the bell to notify the speaker that the allotted time was nearing the end. She took no notice. Zinoviev stood up to ring the bell for the third time. Sylvia turned towards him and snapped that it was not a bourgeois parliament; she would speak as long as she wanted. Enraged, but crestfallen, the dictator of Leningrad sank back in his chair. The whole audience laughed and applauded. A veritable fury, her thin face flushed, unkempt hair falling on her shoulders, Sylvia resumed her speech. But evidently on the verge of hysteria, she made a gesture of resignation and tumbled down the steps of the tribune. Lenin rushed and helped her to a seat by his side. To break the tense atmosphere and divert the attention of the scandalised
audience, he motioned Zinoviev to continue the proceedings. The next speaker was called. Lenin quietly took the exhausted young woman out of the hall, by a side-door, to one of the adjoining rooms.

Sylvia went away before the Congress ended, disappointed and embittered. She did not join the Communist Party, even when all the leaders of the anarcho-syndicalist Shop Stewards Movement—Tom Man, Willie Gallacher, J. T. Murphy, Jack Turner, etc.,—became sober. Gallacher, for example, came to scoff but stayed to pray. He sought election to the Parliament; and after several defeats was successful. Sylvia preferred to be the leader of a small ineffectual sect which championed all sorts of lost causes. Ultimately, she sank into oblivion, still quite young, having burnt her candle at both ends. She was consumed by the flames of her own impersonal passion. I know of other equally passionate souls who came to Russia only to be disappointed and embittered; because they would not learn that Utopia could never be reached.

Another star performer was the Irish labour leader Jim Larkin. He was, if anything, an anarcho-syndicalist, and remained one even when he joined the Communist Party. In the Second World Congress, he defended pure proletarian revolutionary politics as against Bolshevik reformism advocated by Lenin. But none took him very seriously. A big, hulking fellow, with a thundering voice, he had more brawn than brain. And in those early days, one could not have a place of any importance in the Communist movement without some intelligence. The Irish delegation included the young son of Jim Connolly, who received some special consideration because of the martyrdom of his father. For some years, he was the leader of the small Communist Party of Ireland, but, it was reported, turned out to be a bad egg. The third member of the Irish delegation was a keen young man, who had gone through the ordeal of the "Black and Tan" terror. He had some hair-raising stories to tell. He made a good speech in the debate on the National and Colonial Question. He maintained that the underground Irish Republican Army could be developed into a peasant uprising as against the bourgeois Sinn Fein.
Disagreement with Lenin over the Colonial Question

THE self-determination of subject nationalities was advocated by President Wilson and enforced by the Treaty of Versailles with the object of disrupting the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which had been the traditional bulwark of European reaction. It is not sufficiently well known that years before the War of 1914-18, Lenin incorporated the democratic principle in the programme of the Bolshevik Party. Immediately on capturing power, the latter put the principle in practice, and recognised the right of the national minorities, suppressed by Tzarist Imperialism, to secede from the Socialist Republic. The new national States carved out of the Tzarist Empire from their very birth became so many thorns in the side of the Russian Workers' and Peasants' Republic, which had given birth to them. Even after the defeat of Germany, large formations of the Prussian army remained in occupation of the newly founded Baltic States and utilised them as bases of interventionist operations against the Soviet Republic on the one hand and the German Republic, on the other. When the German Baltic Army disintegrated and the power of its fugitive Generals was broken the civil Governments of the secession States came under the political and economic influence of the Entente Powers and became centres of anti-Soviet propaganda. Under French patronage, United Poland aspired to the status of a Great Power and was made the military pivot of the cordon sanitaire against the virus of Bolshevism.

Before the Revolution, Lenin had insisted that Socialists must support the movement for the autonomy of the national
minorities subjugated by the Russian as well as the Austro-Hungarian Empire. But Socialists belonging to those minorities opposed him with the argument that the separatist movement was led by the nationalist bourgeoisie; and therefore it could not have the sympathy and support of the working class. There was a long-standing controversy inside the Bolshevik Party on this issue. Leading members of the branches of the party in Poland and the Baltic provinces disagreed with Lenin even after the Revolution. They argued that by conceding the right of the self-determination of subject nationalities, the Soviet Government deprived their homelands of the benefit of the great social revolution; they felt that the working class of those countries was delivered to the tender mercies of the reactionary nationalist bourgeoisie who, with the help of the Entente Powers, seized political and economic control of the secession Stales. Experience bore out their misgivings; but the doctrinaire in Lenin would not admit a mistake. Marx and Engels had supported the nationalist rebellions in Hungary and Poland. Their followers must be true to the tradition. After the Revolution, Lenin acted not as a doctrinaire, but as a practical politician, for opportunist and diplomatic considerations. In order to gain some breathing time, the Soviet Government had to sign the Brest-Litovsk Treaty dictated by arrogant Prussian militarists. They were in occupation of Poland and the Baltic Provinces. By recognising their right of separation, the Soviet Government did not lose anything. It would be doctrinaire to act otherwise—dangerously so because the breakdown of the peace negotiations would be immediately followed by a German invasion which the newborn Soviet Republic could not withstand even for a few days. Lenin's theses on the National and Colonial Question were meant to justify the policy on the old doctrinaire ground. A corollary to the policy in Europe was a demand for the liberation of the peoples subjugated by colonial Powers. In the Congress of the Second International, the Bolsheviks had put forth the demand. But the Socialists in the homelands of the West European colonial countries had mixed feelings. Inheriting the tradition of nineteenth century liberalism they sympathised with the national aspirations of the subject
peoples; at the same time, they could not ignore the fact that colonial expansion had considerably contributed to the improvement of the economic condition of the working class at home. Therefore, they advocated self-government of the subject nationalities within the Empire.

Ever since in 1907 the Japanese Socialist Katayama and Madame Cama of India appeared in the International Socialist Congress at Amsterdam, Socialist Parties in the leading imperialist countries of Europe, *viz.*, Britain, France and Holland, passed resolutions from time to time expressing sympathy for the aspiration of the colonial peoples and advocating self-government to be introduced gradually and peacefully. Leaders of the British Labour Party, like Keir Hardie and Macclonald came to India as messengers of goodwill, incurring the displeasure of the colonial rulers. Voices were raised in metropolitan parliaments demanding reform of colonial administration.

The Russian Bolsheviks denounced the attitude of the West European socialist leaders as reformist defence of colonialism. Lenin's pamphlet on Imperialism, published just before the War broke out in 1914, maintained that colonial expansion reinforced the foundation of the bourgeois order in Europe and delayed its inevitable downfall according to the prophecy of Karl Marx. As a matter of fact, capitalism did not impoverish the working class according to the prediction of the prophet of Socialism. The fact could not be ignored by socialist theoreticians who were anxious to deserve the reputation of being objective and scientific students of history. It encouraged the so-called "revisionism" of Eduard Bernstein and led to the rejection of the idea of dictatorship by Kautsky and Hilferding. Even Rosa Luxemburg's famous work "Accumulation of Capital" tended to be theoretically "reformist". She also rejected the idea of dictatorship and was a persistent critic of Lenin's programme of revolutionary practice, particularly the conception of the party as a highly centralised organisation of professional revolutionaries.

Lenin's orthodox defence of the infallibility of Marxism was that the revisionists relied on the rise of a "proletarian aristocracy" in the imperialist countries. He maintained
that this new counter-revolutionary social factor, unforeseen in original Marxism, was the result of colonial expansion. The exploitation of the colonial masses yielded a super-profit; capital exported to countries where labour could be purchased at a very low price earned a much higher profit than at home. A part of the super-profit could be conceded to a thin upper stratum of the metropolitan working class to secure their support for colonialism. From this analysis of imperialism Lenin drew the conclusion that successful revolt of the colonial peoples was a condition for the overthrow of capitalism in Europe. The strategy of world revolution should therefore include active support of the national liberation movement in the colonial countries. This view was set forth in Lenin's Theses on the National and Colonial Question. While presenting the Theses to the Second World Congress, he declared that the Socialist Second International was not a really international organisation, because it excluded the oppressed masses of Asia and Africa. By including in its programme the promotion of the national-revolutionary movements in the non-European countries, the Third (Communist) International would be a true world organisation—the General Staff of the World Revolution.

Theoretically, the Theses appeared to be sound. I was taken in by the appearance. Propaganda on that basis might weaken the position of the Social Democratic leaders and the Trade Union "aristocracy" in the imperialist countries. The inflammatory declaration of the Communist International would certainly make it popular in Asia and Africa. But I had misgivings about the practice of the theoretically plausible programme. How was the colonial national liberation movement to be supported? It was the question of the ways and means. The resolutions of the Second International were not necessarily insincere. But it had no means to enforce them. In that respect, the Communist International was in an entirely different position. Its founder and leader, the Russian Bolshevik Party, was the ruler of a large country with vast resources. Its resolutions, therefore, had a powerful sanction. They could be carried out. Lenin said that the historic significance of the Russian Revolution was that it made the resources
of at least one country available for the promotion of the world revolution. Once he went to the extent of declaring that having captured power before others the Russian proletariat had won the privilege of sacrificing itself for the liberation of the oppressed masses of the world. In the capitalist countries, there were Communist Parties which could be helped with the confidence that they were dedicated to the cause of social revolution. But in the colonial countries similar instruments for revolution were absent. How could then the Communist International develop the national liberation movement there as part of the World Proletarian Revolution?

Lenin's answer to my question appeared to me to be based on ignorance of the relation of social forces in the colonial countries. In our first discussion, he frankly admitted his ignorance of facts, but took his stand on theoretical grounds. He argued that Imperialism had held the colonial countries back in feudal social conditions, which hindered the development of capitalism and thwarted the ambition of the native bourgeoisie. Historically, the national liberation movement had the significance of the bourgeois democratic revolution. Every stage of social evolution being historically determined, the colonial countries must have their bourgeois democratic revolution before they could enter the stage of the proletarian revolution. The Communists, therefore, must help the colonial liberation movement under the leadership of the nationalist bourgeoisie, regarding the latter as an objectively revolutionary force.

I pointed out that the bourgeoisie even in the most advanced colonial countries, like India, as a class, was not economically and culturally differentiated from the feudal social order: therefore, the nationalist movement was ideologically reactionary in the sense that the triumph would not necessarily mean a bourgeois democratic revolution. The role of Gandhi was the crucial point of difference. Lenin believed that, as the inspirer and leader of a mass movement, he was a revolutionary. I maintained that, a religious and cultural revivalist, he was bound to be a reactionary socially, however revolutionary he might appear politically. Remembering my own past, I saw that Plekhanov's famous judgment of the Russian
Populist and Socialist Revolutionary Movements was applicable to Indian nationalism, particularly of the extremist and Gandhist schools. The Russian Populists and Socialist Revolutionaries believed in terrorism and in the special genius of the Slav race. They also denounced capitalism as a western vice, which had no place in Russia. They appealed to the younger generation to return to the village with the object of reviving the "Mirs" of the olden days. Plekhanov characterised them as politically revolutionary, but socially reactionary. Lenin had learned Marxism from Plekhanov, and had first attracted attention by writing a book in which he showed that capitalist economy was developing in Russia and maintained that capitalism as a social revolutionary force was inevitable.

By quoting Plekhanov's authority, I shook his theoretical position. After several discussions, he suggested that I should draft an alternative thesis. I was reluctant to oppose Lenin publicly. Our discussions were carried on in private. The delegates whispered mostly in awe, that the Indian upstart had dared question the wisdom of Lenin and cross verbal swords with the master of polemics. But Lenin's attitude was very kind and tolerant. In the beginning, he appeared to be amused by the naiveté of a novice. But before long, he was impressed by my arguments, and could not dispute the authenticity of the facts I cited. It was perhaps the most valuable experience of my life until then. I had the rare privilege of being treated as an equal by a great man who proved his greatness by doing so. He could refuse to waste his precious time in discussing with a young man of no importance. I would have no chance to make myself heard in the International Congress.

Lenin finally amazed me by proposing that, after a general discussion in the Commission set up to examine the question, he would move that his Theses as well as mine should be recommended for adoption by the Congress. Thereupon, I agreed to formulate my critical notes and positive ideas in a document, which, I insisted, should be presented not as the alternative, but as the supplementary Theses. Lenin agreed with the remark that we were exploring a new ground and
should suspend final judgment pending practical experience. I also agreed, but with a mental reservation: It was not a new ground for me. I was quite sure of my position, and Lenin's open-minded attitude gave me the conviction that I was right.

I drafted the supplementary Theses on the National and Colonial Question, and had only two typed copies made. One of them I personally delivered to Lenin when we met the next day. He read the document with the keenest interest and suggested some verbal alterations which I readily accepted. Obviously satisfied, he said that as Chairman of the Commission, he would submit both the documents for consideration. I was relieved. It would be very embarrassing for myself to stand up so as to dispute the authority and the wisdom of the High Priest of the New Faith.

The discussion in the National and Colonial Commission was also very interesting, though in a different sense. It was obvious that all the members except one (Snevliet) felt that Lenin submitted my Theses simply for politeness, and that they would brush the document aside without any discussion. But Lenin created a sensation by declaring that prolonged discussion with me had made him doubtful about his own Theses; therefore, he proposed that both the drafts should be considered together as the greatest possible approximation to a theoretically sound and factually valid approach to the problem. Evidently taking the cue from Lenin, the other Russian member of the Commission, Georgi Safarov, proposed that I should be elected its vice-chairman. On my counter proposal, supported by Lenin, Snevliet was elected to the position of honour, and Safarov, the Secretary.

Both proved to be very suitable and competent. The Dutchman was the only European Communist who had actually lived in the East Indies, acquired first-hand knowledge of the nationalist movement, and actively helped the development of the labour movement and a Socialist Party, until then the only one in the colonial world. With his unique experience and a thorough understanding of Marxism, Snevliet made valuable contributions to the discussion, and was recognised generally as one of the most outstanding figures amongst all
the delegates to the Congress. Safarov was a highly educated young man, already counted as one of the top theoreticians of the Bolshevik Party. He came to the Second World Congress as a delegate from Turkestan. He had gone there as the representative of the Bolshevik Party to organise a local branch. He was a passionate believer in the revolutionary significance of the colonial nationalist movement, particularly of the Islamic countries. He also took a prominent part in the discussion.

The third man to speak frequently was the Persian delegate Sultan Zade. He was more Russian than Persian except in complexion. Having come to Russia as a student before the revolution, he had joined the underground Bolshevik Party and settled at Baku to carry on revolutionary agitation among the Persian workers in the oil fields. Very talkative and pedantic, he was proud of his distinction as the first Marxist of Asia.

Pending the clarification of theoretical issues in the light of future experience, the discussion in the Commission brought out one practical point of difference between Lenin and myself. I concretised his general idea of supporting the colonial national liberation movement with the proposal that Communist Parties should be organised with the purpose of revolutionising the social character of the movement under the pressure of organised workers and peasants. That, in my opinion, was the only method of concretely helping the colonial peoples in their struggle for national liberation. I maintained that, afraid of revolution, the nationalist bourgeoisie would compromise with Imperialism in return for some economic and political concessions to their class. The working class should be prepared to take over at that crisis the leadership of the struggle for national liberation and transform it into a revolutionary mass movement. I again impressed Lenin by quoting Plekhanov, who had predicted in the closing years of the nineteenth century that the democratic movement in Russia should grow into a proletarian revolution or it would not succeed.

Lenin reported the discussion in the Commission to a Plenary Session of the Congress, and recommended the adoption of both the Theses.
The National and Colonial Question was placed at the top of the agenda after the Chairman's report on the international situation. Lenin was followed by the Dutch Delegate Snevliet, who attended the Second World Congress of the Communist International with the pseudonym of Maring. He was a powerful speaker in his mother tongue, but addressed the Congress in German, which he spoke also fluently. In the commission, he had spoken in English which was understood by a majority of members. From the platform of the international Congress, he denounced the bourgeoisie of his own country for the tyranny and outrages committed in the Indonesian colonies. It was a passionate speech. The Dutch are generally believed to be a stodgy people. Snevliet was a typical Dutchman with a rather flabby figure, well-nourished with plenty of milk products and a pink and white face, round like the full moon. But on the platform he worked himself up to the furious passion of the Spanish or Italian anarcho-syndicalists.

In the later Middle Ages, the Netherlands was a province of the Spanish Empire. Then, it was the birthplace of the first republic of Modern Europe. The Empire disappeared; but certain traits of the Spanish temperament survived. The passionate romanticism of the anarcho-syndicalist cult appealed to the effervescence of the Latin temperament. It found a response also in the Netherlands, even after its liberation, as the reaction to Calvinist bigotry. The departed Spanish conquerors left another cultural legacy. It was the liberalism of the Jewish artisans and traders who, driven out of the Most Catholic Kingdom, had migrated to the Protestant Netherlands. They introduced in Northern Europe the scientific
spirit and rationalism of the Arabs. Therefore, the first breach in the monolithic structure of the Holy Roman Empire was made in the Netherlands. It was not only the home of Erasmus and subsequently of Spinoza, both heretical sons of Israel; the Netherlands was the refuge of rebels like Pierre Bayle. And not a few of the pioneers of modern science were Dutchmen.

The cultural climate created by this tradition fostered the growth of anarcho-syndicalism and theoretical Marxism in Holland, the former in the labour movement, while the latter appealed to the rationalist intellectuals. Ernst Troeltsch was one of the foremost Social Democratic theoreticians of Europe. On the other hand, Anton Pannekoek and Herman Gorier founded the distinctive Dutch School of Revolutionary Marxism. The two trends blended in Snevliet. Intellectually a Marxist, temperamentally he was an anarcho-syndicalist. The dramatic personality and impetuous romanticism of Trotzky appealed to Its passionate temperament. He was one of the chief lieutenants of Trotzky when the latter tried in vain to organise a rival international Communist organisation. During the last years of his life, Snevliet was the head of the anarcho-syndicalist Labour Federation which embraced the majority of the organised workers of Holland.

No other European delegate of importance participated in the debate on the National and Colonial Question. Apart from the lack of genuine interest and adequate understanding, there was nothing more to be added after Lenin had spoken first. The question was settled. The European delegates were eager to pass on to the other items on the agenda, which concerned them directly. There followed a long, embittered and acrimonious debate on the German question, which figured prominently on (he agenda also of the subsequent international Congresses. The German Revolution was the fond hope of the doctrinaire Russian Bolsheviks. Scapegoats must be found to explain away its tantalising delay. The Social Democratic Party, of course, was the convicted offender. The delegates of the Independent Social Democratic Party,;is the dissident left wing of the parent body called itself, was the accused in the Second World Congress. Its leaders had failed to act with revolutionary resoluteness and unwavering
loyalty to the cause during the crisis of 1918-19. Were they prepared to admit their responsibility and mend their ways in the future? Otherwise, their party could not be admitted into the new International. The delegation of the Independent Social Democratic Party included veteran trade union leaders, past masters in demagogy and seasoned parliamentarians who were skilful speakers. The latter—Crispien and Dittmann—gave the leader of the Communist delegation, Paul Levi, a tough fight. Infuriated by the chagrin, he became hysterical and cut a ridiculous figure on the platform. He appeared in the uniform of the Red Army officer. As he gesticulated on the rostrum, the peaked cap with the emblem of the Red Star fell from his head, exposing a bullet-shaped baldness. The badly tied puttees slipped down his spindly legs to the ankles. Radek, of course, came to the aid of his friend. But his own record being not beyond rebuke, and still dreaming of opportunist combinations in Germany, he had to tread the ground warily. Falling back on his smart witticisms, he avoided joining issues. Lenin had to take the field to slay the adversaries with a masterfully demagogic speech, which occasionally rose to the height of rhetorics. Finally, Zinoviev's impetuosity challenged to beard the lion in his den. He would appear personally in a Special Congress of the Independent Social Democratic Party and join issues with its opportunist leaders who refused to accept the twenty-one conditions for affiliation with the Communist International. Soon afterwards, the Congress met at Halle, an industrial city in Central Germany. Zinoviev spoke for two days; but only a minority voted for unconditional affiliation with the International. The minority split away from the party and joined the Communists. At last the Communist Party of Germany became a mass organisation. The French Socialist Party was similarly split on the issue of affiliation with the Communist International, although both its delegates to the Second Congress, Marcel Cachin and Frossard, recommended acceptance of the twenty-one conditions. The Italian Socialist Party stood reunited in the resistance to Russian dictation. As the result of the policy of denying the least independence to the affiliated organisations, the Communist Parties of Europe were crippled at their birth,
very largely isolated from the masses of workers even when these were enthusiastic supporters and admirers of the Russian Revolution.

Except for Lenin, Zinoviev and Radek, no Russian of any prominence spoke at the Second World Congress, though several dropped in from time to time and some participated in the deliberations of different Commissions. They were preoccupied with the pressing problems of the Revolution at home. Though the end of the deadly civil war appeared to be within sight, the economic conditions were getting desperate. A considerable part of the country was devastated by the civil war; and War Communism had brought agricultural produce down to the subsistence level in the rest. The consuming fire of Civil War still smouldering in the vast tracts of Siberia and Turkestan, European Russia was swept by a full-fledged famine which took a heavy toll of life and further undermined national economy.

To drag one-sixth of the globe out of the chaos was a Herculean task, and the Communist Party had to face it weakened by the loss of its two topmost leaders: Uritsky was assassinated by a Social Revolutionary fanatic, and the first President of the Soviet Republic, Sverdlov, died of consumption while still in the forties. Stalin was on death bed in beleaguered Tzaritzina far away on the Lower Volga. Trotsky's talents were not yet available for tackling the problems of economic reconstruction. The leading men present in the Soviet capital at the time of the Second World Congress were Bukharin, still very young, though already recognised as the theoretical leader of the party; the President of the Moscow Soviet, Kamenev, not a very brilliant man, but a good administrator who took a hand also in diplomacy; Dzerzhinsky, the reluctant and tragic executor of the newly introduced Red Terror; the Rumanian-born Rakovsky who was called the Lenin of Ukraine because he organised and headed the Civil Government there after the German army and local insurgents were defeated.

All those men and lesser ones—Rhezanov, Rudzutak, Sokolnikov, Chicherin, Safarov—occasionally walked in the great hall, stood about or sat for a while, and went away
as quietly as they came. All looked tired and worried, their spirit weighed down by the heaviest responsibility ever undertaken in history by any group of men. Legendary figures themselves, they seemed to be living in a dreamland, unconscious of, or indifferent to, whatever happened in the immediate surroundings. Although united in the common faith and equally harried by the same anxieties, each bore the stamp of a distinct personality. Bukharin, for example, concealed the detachedness of a philosopher in juvenile cheerfulness; he mixed freely with the delegates to play and laugh. Dzerzhinsky and Chicherin were shy and retiring. Kamenev, demonstratively dignified and pompously polite; Rakovsky, grave and serene, but genuinely friendly; Ryazanov, pontifical as well as pedantic; Sokolnikov and Rudzutak, both still not well-known to outsiders, though high up in the hierarchy, were reserved; Safarov, the youngest of the lot, looked and behaved like a monk.

The last item on the agenda was election of the Executive Committee, which was to meet frequently between two Congresses, As there was no organised Communist Party yet in Asiatic countries, two seats on the Committee of forty-one were allotted to them. The list prepared by the Secretariat of the Congress included my name and that of the Persian delegate Sultan Zade. I declined to accept a seat because I was to go away soon after the Congress, perhaps never to return. On my suggestion, the Korean delegate Pak was taken on.

The Congress closed in an atmosphere of great enthusiasm and expectation. The Red Army, under the inspiring leadership of Trotzky, had thrown back the counter-revolutionary hordes which had in the previous winter reached within sixty miles of Moscow from the South and the East. The separatist movement in the Ukraine had been suppressed. Practically the whole of European Russia had been liberated. The revolution was to advance eastwards to free the Asiatic parts of the fallen Tzarist Empire, and westwards to the heart of the revolution in the former direction. But Europe must have the priority. The bulk of the victorious Red Army, under the personal command of Trotzky, was marking time on the frontiers of
Poland for orders to march westwards, carrying the message of liberation of the toiling masses. A crucial decision had to be made. Poland had been transformed into a bastion of international counter-revolution. The Red Army, though victorious in the civil war, was still in tatters and badly equipped. In the march westwards it must run the gauntlet of a formidable enemy. A well-equipped army under the command of the French General Weygand, a trusted lieutenant of Marshal Foch, based on Warsaw, guarded the eastern approaches of Central Europe. Trotzky was the field commander; but the final word was Lenin's. He was to give the order for the Red Army to march.

Meanwhile, Trotzky sent a message to the Second World Congress regretting his inability to attend, and suggesting that an international delegation should visit the front to encourage the army of the Revolution on the eve of a decisive campaign. Trotzky's message was received with great enthusiasm and the Congress passed a resolution to send an international delegation to Minsk. I was included in the delegation and met and heard Trotzky for the first time. His oratory was superb. In a trim military uniform and conscious of the confidence and admiration of the army he had created out of nothing, the man who had won his reputation as a revolutionary journalist and the prince of pamphleteers, looked every inch a soldier, by birth, as it were. The impassioned speech of the would-be liberator of Europe, of Red Napoleon, was delivered without any gesture or gesticulation. Trotzky stood on the platform immovable like a statue, while delivering a speech which moved all.

Having light-heartedly assured that the proletariat of Central and Western Europe would attack the enemy in the rear as soon as the Army of the World Revolution delivered the frontal assault, the delegates returned to the valedictory festivities in Moscow. Trotzky moved his headquarters to some place closer to the "Polish frontier. The situation was tense; but the military secret was well guarded inside the formidable walls of the Kremlin. Over a direct telegraph line, Lenin was in constant touch with the Commander-in-Chief on the front. One midnight, the latter reported that the
impatient Field-Commander of his right wing was marching on Warsaw from the North-East, and General Weygand had ordered his army to give battle, in which the relation of forces would be so very unequal that a crushing defeat was certain. But it was a blessing in disguise: Warsaw, the central pivot of the defence of Europe, was exposed to attack from a different direction. Trotzky was ready. Should he give the marching order? On the telegraph wire, Lenin said the one fateful word: Yes. The dice were cast. It was one of the greatest gambles of modern history. The fate of Europe hung in the balance. The Bolsheviks lost. The French General Weygand proved to be a more skilful Napoleonic tactician. He let his main assailant reach the outskirts of Warsaw, while deploying his entire strength to the North-East. Then having easily defeated the right wing of the attacking Red Army, as its leaderhart apprehended, Weygand's victorious troops wheeled southwards to attack the Central column of the Red Army in the flank and the rear. It was the Waterloo of Red Napoleon I; the hope of a revolution in Central and Western Europe was dashed until twenty-five years later it was revived by the victorious Generals of Red Napoleon II.
THE Executive Committee of the Communist International elected by the Second World Congress met in a formal session and dispersed, having set up a sub-committee of five which came to be known as the "Small Bureau." It was to be in permanent session as the supreme policy-making as well as executive organ of the International.

Having suffered a temporary setback in Europe, the Revolution must spread eastwards. The drooping spirit of the Bolsheviks was bucked up by Lenin's declaration that Europe was not the whole of the world; that London and New York might fall on the Ganges or the Yangtse. The Asiatic provinces of the fallen Tzarist empire were still to be brought under the jurisdiction of the Soviet Republic.

Then, Revolution should have easy victories in the neighbouring Muslim countries which, inspired by the message of the liberation of Central Asia, would rise against European Imperialism. Kemal of Turkey had already set the example, which was bound to inflame the entire Islamic world. A faint echo of the Indian Khilafat movement reached Moscow to encourage the view that Pan-Islamism was a revolutionary force and, as such, should be welcomed and supported as an ally of the proletarian world revolution. I disagreed; after days of discussions, Lenin advised me to suspend judgment until the benefit of Stalin's authoritative opinion was available. A strong detachment of the Red Army had been despatched to raise the siege of Tzaritzina. Though lying ill there, Stalin was expected to be back in Moscow before long as one of the greatest heroes of the Civil War. Meanwhile, I went to Turkestan and did not meet Stalin until summer 1921.
Planning the strategy of revolution in Asia was given a prominent place on the agenda of the "Small Bureau." I had declined to accept a seat on the Executive Committee elected by the Second Congress. But while still in Moscow, I was co-opted as a member of the all-powerful "Small Bureau." It passed two resolutions: (1) To hold the First Congress of the Oppressed Peoples of the East at Baku; and (2) To set up a Central Asiatic Bureau of the Communist International at Tashkent.

The Congress was Zinoviev's idea. Evidently, it could serve only the purpose of agitation, which alone was not enough to bring about a revolution. On that ground, I opposed the idea. It could not possibly be a Congress, competent to plan action on the basis of a deliberation by accredited representatives from the countries concerned. As a matter of fact, on such a short notice, revolutionary organisations even in the adjacent countries could not be expected to send delegates to the Congress. It would be a glorified mass meeting attended by the overwhelmingly Muslim oil-field workers and the local urban population. Why call it a Congress? But the idea was exotic and appealed to the curiosity of the western delegates to the Second World Congress still in Moscow. Radek, who had replaced Balabanova as the Secretary of the Communist International, was very enthusiastic. The poetic temperament of John Reed was worked up by a lively imagination.

It was a symbolic gesture to hold at Baku a gigantic mass demonstration against Imperialism. During the Civil War, British-Indian troops had seized the rich oil-fields. Before they were driven out only a few months ago, twenty-two leading Communist prisoners had been publicly executed on the beach of the Caspian Sea. The Congress was to meet where a monument had already been raised to commemorate the martyrdom of the victims of Imperialist violence. As a symbolic gesture, the projected show would have some significance. But I was eager for more serious work—actual organisation of the expected revolution in Asia, which would reinforce the position of the proletariat in the imperialist countries of the West. Therefore I attached greater importance to the resolution to set up the Central Asiatic Bureau of the
Communist International, charged with the responsibility, in the first place, of carrying through the revolution in Turkestan and Bokhara, and then of spreading it to the adjacent countries, particularly India. Obsessed with my own preoccupation, I stubbornly opposed the plan of the Baku Congress, characterising it as a wanton waste of time, energy and material resources in frivolous agitation, and went to the extent of calling it "Zinoviev's Circus."

Notwithstanding the temptation of being the star of the show, I refused to join the picturesque cavalcade to the gates of the mysterious Orient. Lenin smiled indulgently on my cussedness; Zinoviev was angry at the audacity of an upstart crossing his will; Radek ridiculed my precocious seriousness. It might not yield any lasting result, but why forgo the fun of a picturesque show, which was sure to give the then British Foreign Minister, Lord Curzon some sleepless nights. Karakhan, an Oriental himself, sympathised with my view; but Chicherin tried on me his gentle persuasiveness, unsuccessfully, in the small hours of several nights. Borodin was exasperated by my tardiness to learn that discipline was the highest Bolshevik virtue. I was impatient. The preparation of my mission to Central Asia would take time. Things did not move fast enough in those days in Moscow. I was not prepared to waste some more time for the fun of seeing Zinoviev's Circus at Baku. There were many others, more distinguished than myself, eager to join the cavalcade. I should not be missed. Let Abani Mukherji go as the Indian delegate. He was delighted, and on the way made some scenes to demonstrate his importance.

Sokolnikov, Safarov and myself were to constitute the Central Asiatic Bureau of the Communist International. Sokolnikov then held a high military position: he was the Commander of the Red Army in Central Asia—of the Turk front. He was also Chairman of the Turkestan Commission of the Central Soviet Government. The other members of the Commission were Safarov, who represented the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, Peter of the Cheka (the organ of Red Terror), Kaganovitch, in charge of the civil administration, and Rahimbaeff, President of the Central Executive Committee of the Turkestan Soviet.
Though still very young, perhaps less than forty, Sokolnikov had an imposing party record. A very handsome youth, in exile he earned his living as a window-decorator of a Parisian fashion shop. But he was intellectually qualified to be the editor of the underground party organ, *Prauda*, during the crucial period immediately preceding the capture of power by the Bolsheviks. Having taken a leading part in the Civil War, he was placed in command of the army which was to march through Galicia to the aid of the revolution in Germany in 1923, if it had succeeded initially. Thereafter, he went to London as Ambassador, and returned home to be the Finance Commissar. Stabilisation of the Soviet currency after several years of fantastic inflation was Sokolnikov's crowning achievement. There was no gold reserve; Sokolnikov stabilised the rouble on the basis of the three volumes of Marx's capital. That is how his feat was explained in joke. The "Chervonetz" was money. In the struggle for the leadership of the party after Lenin's death, Sokolnikov supported his former Chief Trotzky. On the latter's downfall, he sunk into political oblivion, eventually to be among the numerous unfortunate children consumed by their blood-thirsty Mother, the Revolution.

The second member of the Central Asiatic Bureau of the Communist International, Georgi Safarov, was a prodigy of the party. As the brightest young disciple of Lenin, he had gone abroad to sit at the feet of the Master. He worked as a gardener in the South of France to earn his living. Returning home on the outbreak of the Revolution, he rapidly won the reputation of an erudite Marxist, a prodigious writer and a brilliant journalist. During the years of the Civil War, he toured extensively as Commandant of the famous "Propaganda Train," which carried the message of liberation to the farthest accessible corners of the country. The train was equipped with films, cinema-projectors and a printing press. It also carried a complete exhibition. It held thousands of meetings, put up theatrical shows to entertain the curious and published a newspaper. It was profusely draped in yards of red festoons and huge posters. It moved under a military guard, and every member of the propaganda troupe was
armed, because very often they had to fight their way through enemy lines.

Owing to that experience, Safarov was recognised as an authority on agitation and propaganda, and elected to the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, the youngest until then to attain the second highest place in the hierarchy of power. Molotov, as yet an obscure party member, though senior in age, was Secretary to the redoubtable Commandant of the Propaganda Train.

Returning from Central Asia in 1921, for a time, Safarov acted as the head of the Eastern Section of the Communist International. Thereafter, he settled down in Leningrad as the editor of the party organ. He took a leading part in the fight against Trotsky. During the years of fierce factional struggle inside the party, he changed sides several times. After Stalin's victory, Safarov was expelled from the party with his chief, Zinoviev. The latter recanted; Safarov again followed him back to the party.

There was an amusing incident at that juncture. In 1929, Kuusinen, as the then General Secretary of the Communist International, dramatically declared that I had placed myself outside the organisation by writing in the organ of the Opposition in the German Communist Party, Safarov and myself had been very close friends for so many years. Yet, obviously to demonstrate the sincerity of his recent recantation, Safarov wrote an extremely abusive article with the heading "The End of Mr. Roy." The caption of my retort was "The Ravings of a Repentant Renegade." It caused great amusement amongst European Communists of all shades.

Safarov was a fanatic. Once he believed that Trotsky was a counter-revolutionary; then he was convinced that Stalin was betraying the revolution. On both occasions he was passionately sincere. Fanatical determination to save the purity of the faith and defend the integrity of the Church ultimately cost him his life, while still young and full of promise. Safarov was among the unnamed victims of the 1937 purge.

Soon after the Second World Congress, Sokolnikov and Safarov rushed back to their posts in Turkestan, where the revolution had still to be completed. Before they left, we
had the first meeting of the Central Asiatic Bureau of the Communist International. Both desired that I should be the Chairman. I pressed Sokolnikov to take up the position so that there might not be any conflict of authority. Moreover, I must stay behind in Moscow still for some time. The question of my going to Afghanistan as Soviet Ambassador was not yet finally settled. The ways and means of helping the revolutionary movement in India were still to be devised. I had no intention of leaving Moscow without being amply provided with the sinews of war—material to make a revolution. I had failed in a similar attempt in the Far East. Then the Germans duped us. This time, I wanted to succeed. The Russian Bolsheviks were reliable allies.

A period of slackness followed the hectic days of the Second World Congress. The failure of the first assault on capitalist Europe created an atmosphere of depression. I had to be patient. Meanwhile, the reports of Zinoviev's Circus at Baku were prominently featured in the press to keep up public enthusiasm and the faith in the coming World Revolution. Not only was a revolutionary government set up by Kuchuk Khan at the Persian port of Emzeli on the coast of the Caspian Sea; a number of Indian soldiers had deserted from the British Army in Kharasan and reached Baku to be hailed as delegates to the Congress. On the motion of the Persian Communist Sultan Zade, the Baku Congress passed by acclamation a resolution saluting Kuchuk Khan for hoisting the Red Flag of Revolution for the first time in Asia. It was with reference to this foolish enthusiasm, which swept Zinoviev off his Marxist moorings, that Lenin subsequently admonished: “Don't paint Nationalism red.”

Encouraged by the resolution of the Baku Congress, the exuberance of some minor Russian Bolsheviks actually attempted to set up a Soviet Republic under the bandit chichi Kuchuk Khan in a strip of Persian territory on the Caspian Coast. Not only were some arms sent with Russian military instructors and political advisers; there was a plan to land a detachment of the Red Army at the port of Emzeli. A couple of Russian gunboats did appear on the scene to scare the bandit chief painted red. Ghicherin's timely intervention saved the
situation. The detachment of the Red Army was switched off across the Caspian to Krasnovodsk, to garrison the strategic Trans-Caspian Railway, which had been cut off several times by the British Indian army based on Meshed.

The possibility of the Revolution spilling over the southern frontiers of Russia was anxiously watched by two fallen heroes of Pan-Islamism, who had come to Moscow for protection and help to recover their positions. They were lodged in the two outer wings of the Sugar King's Palace, where I lived also as a State guest, less distinguished, but more trusted.
ON Turkey's defeat in the First World War, the three men who had ruled the country ever since 1908 fled to seek refuge in Germany. But the great ally had also fallen, and was unable to offer any protection to the fugitive Turkish leaders. They were not attracted by Communism; the Russian Revolution, however, might be a blessing in disguise. The disruption of the Tzarist Empire opened up a new vision for the fallen heroes of Pan-Islamism; They dreamed of the possibility of founding a new Muslim State in Central Asia. Apart from the forlorn hope of rehabilitating their prestige in the Islamic world and perhaps of regaining political power, the Soviet Republic alone would and could offer asylum to the haunted fugitives.

Paris was the Mecca of the "Young Turks" in the earlier years of their career. They went to France for general education as well as military training. They all spoke French as their second mother-tongue, and behaved like the polished Parisian. Subsequently, they turned towards Germany, when France allied herself with Russia and Britain, the traditional enemies of Turkey. Germany's military power deeply impressed the Triumvirate who ruled the decrepit Turkish Empire in its last years. Imperial Germany replaced Republican France as their patron. The Berlin-Bagdad Railway transformed Turkey into a bridge over which the German army could in a few days approach the frontiers of the British-Indian Empire. Their country thus becoming a satellite of Germany, economically as well as strategically, the Young Turks forfeited the sympathy of France. The massacre of Armenians not only enraged public opinion in the United States, it alienated the
entire Christian World. Consequently, fleeing their country at the end of the First World War, the Turkish Triumvirate found themselves in the most helpless position.

They had friends and sympathisers in Germany; but the latter could offer no protection to their fallen proteges, except that of the chaotic state of affairs which favoured counterrevolution. The fugitive Turkish leaders might not be molested by the victorious Entente Powers, if they lived a retired life in Germany. The seniormost and astute of them, Talaat Pasha, would pretend political retirement, and wait until the tide turned in Germany. He believed in an early resurgence of German military power, which would afford him the opportunity to regain his position at home and internationally.

Enver Pasha was the most ambitious and restless. He was as yet too young to share the senior colleague's wisdom. Moreover, he was haunted by the fear of assassination, or capture by the British. Insatiable ambition fired his imagination about the possibility created by the disintegration of the Tzarist Empire. But to get the chance of realising his dream, he had to be diplomatic. He approached the Russians with the offer to co-operate in the plan of inciting the Muslim peoples of the Middle East to revolt against British Imperialism. He would establish contact particularly with the Khilafat Movement in India through the co-operation of the Muslim tribes living along the Indo-Afghan frontier. He was sure to enlist the support of King Amanullah of Afghanistan and before long take up his headquarters at Kabul. In response to his call, backed up by military operations based on the North-Western Frontier tribal territories, India would rise up in a mighty revolt and drive the British rulers out in no time.

The Russians appeared to be taken in by Enver Pasha's diplomacy. Barring a few at the top, they were naive about the conditions and revolutionary possibilities in India. There were many who actually believed that India was a Muslim country. However, the Turkish Triumvirate was invited to come to Moscow. Talaat Pasha had made up his mind; he did not go. Djemal Pasha accompanied his younger colleague. He was a man of few words and cautious disposition. Himself a military man of considerable experience, he presumably
did not share Talaat Pasha’s expectation of an early revival of German power. On the other hand, he shared Enver Pasha’s fear of assassination, with a greater warrant, having been personally responsible for the massacre of Armenians. However, a man of reserve, he kept his own counsel, and went to Moscow presumably with a reconnoitering purpose, to look around and judge the possibilities realistically by himself.

The circumstances of their journey to Moscow aroused suspicion. They were transported secretly in a German military aircraft. Evidently, the German army, still resisting disbandment by the victorious Powers, was interested in the adventure of the Turkish leaders. On arrival in the Soviet capital, they were received with marked coolness, put up in a modest place, and forgotten. In order to make a pretence that they were treated as State guests, the suspected visitors were accommodated in the compound of the residence of the Vice-Commissar of Foreign Affairs. The "Sugar King's" Palace on the Moscow River, facing the Kremlin, had two parallel wings flanking the spacious front yard. Originally, they accommodated business offices. The Pashas were lodged in those modest two-storeyed buildings, one in each with his respective retinue, which happened to be quite numerous.

They seldom went out, and I could notice that even the two parties did not mix. The summer days were warm; in the twilight of the long northern evenings, the exclusive guests sat out, each on the balcony of the respective house, overlooking the heavy iron gates of the Palace enclosure. I watched them from behind the thick silk curtains of the windows of my apartment in the main central building. Enver Pasha, who was always dressed in elegant military uniform looked disgruntled and sulky. He hardly spoke to his courtiers who were always in attendance. Djemal Pasha, a stockily built man in his fifties, was dignified and more composed. He was in mufti and chatted rather pleasantly with his men. Both the men, though evidently of different temperament, were equally lonesome and felt neglected. One could not but sympathise with the fallen great. Borodin's cynicism added humour to the tragic situation.
The distinguished guests believed that theirs was a diplomatic mission, and were waiting for a formal reception by the Commissar of Foreign Affairs. Until that ceremony took place, they would not make their formal debut in the society of the Soviet capital. They were still living in their world. Therefore, they kept to themselves until they could go out, sure of their status being publicly recognised. Each day's delay must have wounded their feelings. Every evening, sitting on their respective perches, they watched Karakhan go out without taking any notice of them. It was not his fault; apart from his shyness, Karakhan's apparent discourtesy was due to the fact that the visitors let it be known that their status and dignity demanded a ceremonious reception by Chicherin. The latter was in no hurry to rub Lord Curzon on the wrong side unnecessarily. Not willing to be snubbed, Karakhan took no notice of his guests. Borodin said that the Pashas licked their chops every time they saw Karakhan rush into his limousine taking no notice of them. They would massacre him, if he was caught in his native land. Karakhan was an Armenian.

The situation was absurd. Someone must break the ice. I was prepared to be snubbed, but was afraid of giving offence. I could not call on both simultaneously. Who should be preferred? Djemal Pasha was the senior, and watching from a distance, I liked the man. Borodin thought that, because the older man appeared to be more reasonable, I should try to assuage the wounded vanity of Enver Pasha. After all, he was the typical "Young Turk", and recognised leader of Pan-Islamism, I did not like the idea, but agreed to practise diplomacy to promote the cause of revolution. I might have to go as Ambassador to the Court of an Oriental King.

The next day, I called on Enver Pasha, of course having given previous notice. Borodin accompanied me. We were received with oriental courtesy, followed up with a sumptuous tea party, though not in proper time. The famous Turkish leader was still rather young, most probably below fifty. Though not above middle height and somewhat on the plumpish side, he was a handsome man. Dressed in a tight-fitting uniform, he spoke in elegant French. He was in Moscow on a short visit, and must return to Germany. He did not even
think of deserting the great ally of his unfortunate country, and would dedicate the rest of his life to vindicate the honour of both. But for that moral obligation, he would turn his back on the battle-field, to retire for good to his studies.

As he spoke with the typical gestures and gesticulations of the Parisian gentleman, light scintillated from large diamonds set in the several rings he wore. The flow of his polite salon conversation, enlivened with occasional bravado, did not give me any opening for a serious talk. It was clear that he was not at all disposed to talk business with a stranger who had no official status. Borodin played the silent observer, but I could see that he was very much amused by what he subsequently described as a comic opera. The first words he uttered when we came down the stairs were to ask if I had noticed that the hero wore a corset. On my expressing surprise at the strange question, he remarked that I was such an innocent abroad.

During our visit, the other Pasha's name was not mentioned. But the very next morning, I had a pleasant surprise. The older man called personally to invite me to have tea with him and a few friends in the afternoon. I gladly accepted the invitation, which turned out to be far more than an elegant tea party. Djemal Pasha did not cultivate the pomposity of his younger colleague. He was a man of simple habits and very pleasant manners, which made it difficult for people to believe that he was responsible for the massacre of Armenians. He did not disown the charge, but pleaded the extenuating circumstance of the political exigency of a military campaign in a land of hostile population. The frankness was disarming. However, the delicate matter was not raised until our relation had become quite friendly and familiar.

But even in the first meeting, he did talk shop. After tea, he dismissed his retinue and went straight to the point. I commanded the confidence of the Russian leaders. What did they think of men like himself? Would they trust him? I did not miss that he spoke in the first person singular, obviously wanting to differentiate himself from the pompous party in the other wing. I promised to ascertain; but what did he want? He wanted to serve his country. I got the opening to raise the
crucial issue. Would he be prepared to join hands with Kemal Pasha, who was receiving help from the Russians? He became grave. It was a difficult and delicate question. He must have time to consider. Meanwhile, it would facilitate matters if M. Chicherin granted a formal interview to his colleague and himself.

The relation between the new leaders of Turkey and the trio of old rulers was not cordial. When the latter ran away after defeat, Kemal Pasha withdrew into the fastness of Anatolia to organise the resistance against the victorious Entente Powers. Having attained a remarkable success in an audacious venture, he naturally would not recognise the authority of the fugitive old rulers. As a matter of fact, the Kemalist revolt was essentially against the old order under the Youn Turk rule. It was neither a Pan-Islamist nor a Pan-Turanian movement. It abolished not only the Turkish Sultanate, but also the Islamic Khilafat. The Youn Turks were the patrons of Pan-Islamism; as defenders of the integrity of the decayed Turkish Empire, they were also Pan-Turanians. They could not sympathise with the radical-nationalist programme of the Kemalist movement, unless they disowned their own past and tradition. To participate actively in the movement, they must forget that once upon a time Kemal Pasha was their subordinate and, reconciling themselves to the new situation, accept his leadership,

One could hardly expect an inordinately ambitious and insufferably self-opinionated man like Enver Pasha to pocket precious prestige for patriotism. But the first interview with Djemal Pasha made a good impression. He might be persuaded to behave realistically. The Russians were definitely committed to support the Kemalist movement. There was no inducement for them to transfer their patronage to the fallen heroes of Pan-Islamism. In an interview granted after a few days, Chicherin drove the point home. Enver Pasha became more sulky and hinted that he wanted to return to Germany. Knowing fully well that it was an empty threat and, in any case, he could not return even if he really wanted, I left him to stew in his own juice, and concentrated my power of persuasion on the older and more reasonable man. My effort
was successful. Djemal Pasha agreed to go directly to Anatolia, unconditionally to place his military talent and experience at the disposal of the new Commander-in-Chief, Kemal Pasha. That was a generous gesture which won for Djemal Pasha the respect of the Russians. Unlike his younger colleague, he had no fantastic plan to satisfy a burning ambition. He had to choose between the oblivion of an endless exile, haunted with the fear of assassination, and returning home to serve his country honourably. He made the wiser choice.

To reach Anatolia from the Caucasus, he must pass through a no-man's land. The Russians could not offer him any effective protection there. So the plan of his journey had to be kept strictly secret, particularly from Enver Pasha and his entourage. This amazing precaution was taken on Djemal Pasha's personal request, made to me privately. Under the circumstances, no ceremonious farewell party could be held. I invited him to have tea with Borodin and myself. He was to leave Moscow secretly that very night. His trail was to be covered by letting it be known that he was confined to bed with a chill.

After tea, he offered us his exquisite Turkish cigarettes. I passed round the light. As it reached my cigarette, the dignified portly gentleman leaned over the table with some excitement and blew out the match stick. It should not light three cigarettes—very unlucky for the third person. He would not allow any misfortune to overtake his new friend. The two unbelievers in the company were amused. The third was very serious about the superstition. He had seen it happen.

About two weeks later, on the day before I left for Turkestan, the Cheka received a secret report from its frontier organisation that somewhere in the no-man's land between the Caucasus and Turkey, Djemal Pasha had been shot dead by an Armenian. Not with cynicism, but sadness, I remembered his anxiety to save me from bad luck.

Before long, news came from Germany that Talaat Pasha met a similar fate at a Bavarian bathing place—also a victim of Armenian revenge.
ENVER PASHA'S continued sojourn in Moscow became a problem. None knew what was to be done with him because he failed to inspire confidence and command respect as his elder colleague had done. He could not be allowed to go back to Germany. He was almost sure to carry on propaganda against the Soviet Government, if he had the freedom to do so, and his opinion might still sway the Muslim world. Nor would he go, even if he was allowed. He had no hope of any greater opportunity elsewhere. The Republican Government appeared to have come to stay in Germany. The last attempt of the illegal military organisation to recapture power had been beaten down. With no friends and no official protection, the fugitive Turkish leader would be stranded in Germany, constantly exposed to the danger of vengeance, which presently laid its mortal hand on his less cautious colleagues. In despair, he contacted the Afghan Ambassador in Moscow, and met him frequently for secret conversations. The behaviour was against the unwritten rules of political asylum. But the leader of Pan-Islamism, though fallen, was still in a privileged position. The Russians dared not molest him, fearing thereby to inflame Muslim sentiments. The situation reminded me of the Bengalee proverb of a snake catching a mouse. It did not like the taste of the prey, nor would greed let it go.

I was having frequent conferences with Chicherin and Karakhan about the project of my going to Kabul. A satisfactory solution of the problem of Enver Pasha had an obvious bearing on the plan. It was too small a matter to be referred to Lenin. Stalin's advice was still not available. Nor could the question be placed on the agenda of the "Small Bureau" of
the Communist International. Chicherin banteringly challenged me to try my wits in an experiment in oriental diplomacy. I agreed to take the bull by the horns.

Enver Pasha was invited to one of Chicherin's past-midnight interview. He was visibly surprised by my presence, and pretended not to take any notice of the intruder. Chicherin took the awkward situation deftly in hand, and blandly informed the visitors that the purpose of the interview was to introduce him to Comrade Roy who might in the near future go to Kabul as the Ambassador of the Soviet Government. Enver Pasha was palpably taken aback, but promptly recovered his wits to compliment M. Chicherin for the excellent choice, which would be a resounding slap for Lord Curzon. Chicherin brushed aside the chivalry of the visitor and further informed him that, since he also desired to go to Kabul, he might discuss his plans with me.

The pompous Pasha looked like a deflated balloon. What an irony of fate—to be passed on to a man who held no exalted position in the State and therefore could have no power to meet the requirements of his ambition. The shrewdness of the aristocratic Bolshevik diplomat read the thoughts of the disappointed visitor and quietly dispelled his doubts about my status. It was still uncertain whether I should go to Kabul as the Ambassador; but that was of minor importance. I was immediately leaving for Tashkent to direct activities calculated to promote the revolt of the Asiatic nations against British Imperialism, and to assure its success with all possible help. As His Excellency M. le General (Chicherin was speaking in French) also intended to go to Central Asia with the same purpose, he would be well advised to discuss his plans with Comrade Roy. Karakhan came in and placed some papers on the desk before his chief. The latter got up to hint that the interview must end. I walked up to the non-plussed Pasha to say that, since we were both living in the same house there would be plenty of occasions for us to meet frequently. His attitude towards me changed; it was no longer aloof and condescending. There was a touch of warmth in his farewell handshake. Having ceremoniously showed the distinguished visitor out of the room, Chicherin remarked
that he had done his part; now it was for me to handle the gentleman.

The next morning, I received a written invitation from Enver Pasha to
dine with him. It was a charming host who entertained a rather
reserved guest with a sumptuous repast. The pompous man I had met
a couple of weeks ago was positively ingratiating. He was glad that at
last his mission to Moscow was going to yield concrete results. He
had been impatiently waiting for the chance to return to the battlefield.
"Where?" I ventured to enquire. The ready reply was to unfold an
elaborate plan. He was glad that Djemal Pasha had gone to Anatolia.
That was a wise decision. But Kemal Pasha should not be left to fight
British Imperialism single-handed. He must be helped by attacking the
enemy in the rear. India was the vital spot. Anticipating an
enthusiastic response from an Indian patriot, Enver Pasha sat back in
his chair with a broad smile of satisfaction on his fleshy, though still
handsome face. I had sized up my ward and put on a rather ill-fitting
air of superiority to impress him. What about King Amanullah of
Afghanistan? Would he ally with us? I did not expect an experienced
political intriguer to walk into the net so soon. He readily put his cards
down. He had been discussing the question with the Afghan
Ambassador, and was satisfied about the patronage of King
Amanullah. Given a substantial material support, the latter would let
his country be used as the base of operations against British India. But
it would be a bad strategy to put all our eggs in one basket. While
helping King Amanullah as a diversionary move, a powerful base
must be built up in Eastern Turkestan for a direct attack on India,
Russia must not be openly associated with the grand strategic plan of
a two-pronged attack' on India, The liberation of Asia was a task of
the Asians themselves. If the Russians were directly connected with
the plan, devilish British propaganda would incite the religious
sentiments of the Islamic world against the Bolshevik infidels. With
these considerations, Enver Pasha had worked out the plan of
establishing a Muslim State in Eastern Turkestan ostensibly hostile to
Soviet Russia. Behind the smoke-screen, with secret Russian help, he
would in no time build up the
I listened to the glib exposition of a grandiose plan with mixed feelings. Its plausibility stirred up old memories. Only a few years ago, I was thinking on those lines, though with a different motive. Mine was patriotic, whereas the fugitive Turkish leader was obviously moved by personal ambition and lust for power, though the ideal of Pan-Islamism might have sublimated his motive. Without a second thought, I would reject the fantastic idea of establishing a new Muslim State. Its strategic possibility was very remote. Politically, it was bound, indeed meant, to be dangerous. The real purpose of the plan quite clearly was to create the nucleus of a further Turkish Empire in the original home of the founder of the one just fallen. Enver Pasha desired to play the role of Ottoman all over again after six hundred years. He expected that the Turko-Mongolian peoples inhabiting the vast territory of Central Asia right up to the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea, would rally under his banner of revivalist Pan-Turanianism, enabling him to carve out of the fallen Tzarist Empire a kingdom for himself and perhaps his descendants. As he frankly sought Russian help for its realisation, the plan was obviously treacherous; and a traitor could not be the liberator of Asia.

The plan of using Afghanistan as a base of operations to promote revolutionary activities in India held out some promise. The Russians had helped King Amanullah to throw off the British influence during the war. Once their hands were free, the British would most probably try to recover their position. In that eventuality, King Amanullah must rely upon more Russian help, which had been promised. Therefore, he was likely to be a more dependable ally than the would-be founder of a new Turkish Kingdom. The latter had been intriguing, evidently to win King Amanullah's support for his treacherous plan. But it should not be difficult to counteract his mischief. As against the actual aid already given and promised by the Russians, Enver Pasha had no tangible benefit to offer to the Afghan King. Not belonging to the Turko-Mongol race, he was not very likely to be swayed.
by revivalist Pan-Turanianism. Nor was he a fanatic Muslim. During his short reign, he had proved himself to be a shrewd adept in statecraft. He could be expected to see that Enver Pasha's ambition might be dangerous for his own position.

My diplomatic dealings with the dangerous Turk, therefore, should be to plead for postponement of the plan of establishing a Muslim State in Eastern Turkestan and to allay suspicions by an unreserved acceptance of his proposal about Afghanistan. I had to do some very quick thinking to make this tentative decision on the spot. Enver Pasha had to agree when I said that the larger plan had to be referred to higher authorities, particularly to the military experts. Meanwhile, I should go ahead with the other plan, and was very glad to have the co-operation of a great soldier and a distinguished statesman. The shots went home. My opposite number in the game of diplomacy was genuinely pleased, feeling that he had won the first round. Small men invariably fall for flattery.

I reported the talk to Chicherin. Karakhan was also present. Both thought I had done a good job. But how to proceed further? Why not let him go to Eastern Turkestan, which was in a state of chaos? The Cheka would keep an eye on him. By that stratagem, he could be kept away from Afghanistan. At Kabul, he was sure to intrigue against Amanullah, should the latter not fall in line with his treacherous plan. If he failed to found a new Muslim State, the kingdom of Afghanistan would be good enough to begin with; and it was not impossible that he might enlist the co-operation of the fanatical Mullahs in a conspiracy to overthrow the modern king, who allowed his queen to appear in public without a purdah.

These ideas having crystallised out of a long discussion, we agreed that no decision could be made without consulting Lenin. In any case, the requirements for my mission to Central Asia and further would have to be sanctioned by the Political Bureau of the Bolshevik Party and the Soviet of People's Commissars. Whatever might be the final decision about Enver Pasha, it could be fitted into the general strategy of the liberation of Asia. It might incense Asiatic sentiments if he were compelled to return to Europe. His fanatical admirers would accuse the Soviet Government of having delivered the
greatest son of modern Asia to the vindictiveness of British Imperialism or to the bloody vengeance of the Armenian assassins. On the other hand, it would be very embarrassing to let him cool his heels indefinitely in Moscow. Karakhan was fed up with the continued presence of unwelcome guests in his courtyard. They certainly went to the black-market, an offence liable to capital punishment in those days, and carried on clandestine traffic with Germany through the medium of the Afghan Embassy. Of course, Peter would gladly take the matter in hand; but it would be an international scandal if Enver Pasha simply disappeared from Moscow. Chicherin would not allow such an awkward situation to happen. Let the embarrassing guest go to remote Central Asia, as he desired so very eagerly. There he should be kept under observation, though not molested in the least. All the honour and privileges of a distinguished guest should be ostentatiously accorded to him; but as regards material aid for his ambitious plan, nothing more than promises.

Before seeing him again, I must consult Lenin. Meanwhile, Chicherin would report the situation to the highest party and State authorities.

After a couple of days, I was invited to a dinner party at the Afghan Embassy. Enver Pasha was the guest of honour. The occasion was the arrival of a new Ambassador to relieve the old incumbent who was transferred to Berlin. Both were Generals, the newcomer being an uncle or cousin of the King. Curiously enough, no official of the Russian Foreign Office was present in the party. Being well-versed in the conventions of diplomatic social functions, Enver Pasha knew that the significant absence would be noticed by any outsider. I happened to be the only one. He took me aside to confide that the exclusiveness of the party was deliberate, to afford an opportunity to those with common interests to exchange ideas freely and intimately. I expressed gratification at the honour and confidence, but to myself wondered what might be up the sleeves of the hosts. Enver Pasha himself was obviously one of them.

The dinner was lavish in true oriental style. I was informed that most of the ingredients came directly from Kabul. What
was available in Russia of those days was simply not eatable. The Afghan Ambassador and his staff, after all, belonged to the aristocracy, some with royal blood in their veins. For the sake of friendly relations with the new Russian Government, they must stay in the country, putting up with the hardships of accommodation. But it did not harm anyone if they tried to provide themselves at their cost a little of the comforts and luxury they were accustomed and entitled to by birth. The dissertation was naive, but amusing. I listened to it in silence. Enver Pasha intervened to be jocular. "Comrade Roy has become a Bolshevik; but the leopard does not change his spots... ha ha ha!" The whole company joined in the laughter. I thought it was wise to play the game; only, I need not tell any outright lie. Yes, whatever my political faith might be, I was pursuing the ideal of the liberation of my country as well as of all other subject peoples. I should be very thankful to have the co-operation of Their Excellencies, the patronage of His Majesty King Amanullah and the hospitality of the land of the brave, liberty-loving Afghans. Again my shots hit the mark. My hypocritical oration, which avoided lying by skating on thin ice, pandered to the prejudice that an Asiatic could never honestly be with the Whites, whether Imperialist or Bolshevik.

The outcome of the following frank intimate exchange of ideas was that Enver Pasha would forthwith leave for Tashkent for a secret conference, and I must use my influence with the Russians so that he could go without arousing any suspicions. Another naivety. I agreed to do my part.

The next day, I saw Lenin. He was worried; but it would be unwise to force the issue. Let the chap go—with the illusion that he was deceiving his hosts. Sokolnikov and Safarov were already at Tashkent. I must join them soon. By putting our heads together, we should be able to handle the situation.

Enver Pasha was very pleased when I told him that I had discussed his plan with Lenin, and the latter always admired boldness. The would-be founder of a new Ottoman Empire left on his mission with the hope, if not belief, that I would follow him with the required sinews of war.
The Strategy of Revolution in Asia

The affair of Enver Pasha was a jolt for the naivety of the Russian leaders' expectation of revolutionary developments in the East. A picture of the colonial masses rising in a spontaneous revolt might be conjured up to frighten the imperialist Powers. But was it real? The Bolshevik leaders, who were Utopians notwithstanding their "Scientific Socialism", did not relish my stubborn pessimism, which refused to take nationalist anti-imperialism at its face value and regarded Pan-Islamism as a positively reactionary force. My scepticism was borne out by Enver Pasha's behaviour. He undoubtedly hated British Imperialism and was an ardent Pan-Islamist. None believed that he was a social revolutionary; but the naivety of the Russian Bolsheviks did expect him to be an ally.

Experience dispelled the illusion. The more discerning amongst them began to see the point of my disagreement with Lenin's thesis that the colonial nationalist movement, irrespective of its class composition, was an historically revolutionary force, and therefore should be helped as an integral part of the proletarian world revolution. Enver Pasha was the idol of the anti-imperialist and Pan-Islamist movement in the Middle East and India. But he sought the help of Soviet Russia with the object of checking the spread of revolution in Asia. The experience ought to be taken into account while planning the strategy of revolution in Asia. It was indeed, not going to be a proletarian revolution. But as a democratic movement, it must have a reliable social base.

I maintained that the nationalist bourgeoisie would not lead the democratic revolution in the colonial countries, and pointed out that the anti-imperialist movement even in the
most advanced colonial country, namely India, was not led by the bourgeoisie, who were ready for a compromise with Imperialism, accepting a junior partnership in the profitable business of exploiting labour under pre-capitalist social conditions. If the bourgeoisie was non-revolutionary, landlords and priests, who led the nationalist movement in the Near-Eastern Muslim countries, were positively counter-revolutionary. Enver Pasha corroborated my theoretical arguments.

Bolshevik faith in the revolutionary significance of Pan-Islamism was shaken. But India was in revolt under the leadership of the Hindu Saint, Gandhi and the Khan Brothers. Did it not prove that in the colonial countries religion might be a revolutionary force? I wrote an analysis of the structure of contemporary Indian society, which showed that capitalist economy had been superimposed upon feudal relations, and therefore the social conditions were not analogous to those of the late Middle Ages in Europe, when priests and princes led revolutionary movements. Religious appeal certainly moved the masses, and it was indeed the motive force of the non-co-operation and Khilafat movements. But the religious mentality, at the same time, made the masses subservient also to temporal authority and accept the earthly status quo as ordained by a divine Providence. The socio-cultural atmosphere, therefore, inhibited the growth of a democratic revolutionary spirit in the masses.

But I had also my illusion. As a new convert to the Marxist faith, I was a fervent believer in the revolutionary role of the proletariat. Native capitalism had grown within the framework of the British colonial economy, giving birth to the revolutionary class. Feudal relations were the social basis of colonial economy. Having a stake in the status quo, the native bourgeoisie could not lead the peasantry in a movement for its subversion. History had deprived them of the revolutionary role played by the European bourgeoisie. But the history of the world must conform with the horoscope cast by Karl Marx. India must have her bourgeois revolution, whether the bourgeoisie wanted it or not. History was moved by the objective forces of social evolution; subjective factors, such as the will or inability of a particular class, did not matter. Since the
bourgeoisie did not want it, the bourgeois revolution in India must take place over their head. Because of their default, history had conferred on the proletariat the honourable role of leading the bourgeois revolution.

My Marxist analysis of the Indian situation led to the conclusion that the nationalist movement was bound to end in a compromise with Imperialism, unless its leadership was captured by the proletariat. Chicherin thought that I was very pessimistic; but his optimism seemed to be founded on the sand of wishful thinking. Lenin was impressed by the fervour of the faith of the new convert, but his practical mind was eager to find a concrete approach to the obviously complicated problem of helping the movement for national liberation in India and other colonial countries.

I suggested that nothing concrete could be done from a distance. We must have an organisation inside the country through which the amorphous movement could be influenced. Before we talked of giving help, it must be known whom to help and how. The immediate task, therefore, was to establish a base of operations as close to the frontier of India as possible. The next step would be to establish contact with influential people inside the country with the object of discussing with them, first through correspondence, and then in a conference, the ways and means to carry out the democratic revolution. These preliminary steps would lead to the crystallisation of the nucleus of a purposeful revolutionary organisation to function as the driving force and the spearhead of the amorphous mass movement which was developing under the leadership of Gandhi with the negative slogan of non-cooperation. Unless the movement had a definite object and a positive programme, it was bound to disintegrate after the first defeat. I reminded Lenin of the dictum that I had learnt from him: that without a revolutionary ideology, there could be no revolution. I had also learnt from him that for leading a mass movement step by step towards a definite goal, a purposeful organization inspired by a revolutionary philosophy was of supreme importance. That decisive factor was still absent in India. Our endeavour therefore should be to bring it into being by placing before the national liberation movement...
a concrete picture of its objective aspiration. The more advanced section of the movement will then become conscious of their objective revolutionary striving, and feel the need of coming together to act as the vanguard of the movement.

That clearly was a long-term programme. Experience had taught me patience; and Marxism had given me the confidence of ultimate success. I did not believe that the non-co-operation movement led by Gandhi would achieve any result in the near future. But a continued state of turmoil would stir up dormant social forces which had to be canalised in the right direction and made conscious of their objective revolutionary significance by a systematic propaganda which, in the beginning, could be done from centres abroad. Kabul would be the most suitable base for the initial operations to stir up revolutionary forces inside India.

The Afghan Government expressed doubt about the wisdom of my going to Kabul as the Russian Ambassador. Not that I was regarded as a persona non grata but they suggested that it might estrange diplomatic relations with the British Indian Government. It was a well-founded apprehension. Lenin also was of the opinion that for making a gesture of goodwill and friendship for India, I should not be tied down to an official position. Moreover, as a member of the Central Asiatic Bureau of the Communist International I might have to stay indefinitely in Turkestan until the revolution was completed there. Though eager to reach the frontiers of India and resume direct contact with friends and comrades at home, I was much more excited by the immediate perspective of participating in the direction of revolutionary activities over a vast territory. Apart from the valuable experience I should gain, consolidation of the revolutionary power in Central Asia would bring revolution to the frontiers of several countries, including India. Having acquired the faith in the inevitability of revolution, I felt without any regret that India could do without me. Revolution would happen there in due time; meanwhile, I should prefer to be in the midst of a revolution.

By common consent, the plan of my going as Soviet Ambassador to Kabul was dropped. Borodin also refused to go, at the last minute. A Bolshevik cannot refuse a responsibility.
Something mysterious happened to keep him in Moscow. Raskolnikov was appointed to fill the Diplomatic post at Kabul. He was a very handsome young man, said to be the natural son of a Court Noble, whose famous name he bore. As a junior naval officer, he participated in the Kronstadt uprising, which signalled the insurrection in Petrograd. During the Civil War, he rose to the position of the Commander of the Volga Flotilla, which defeated the British in the battle of the Black Sea.

Raskolnikov's wife was one of the most remarkable women of the Revolution. Daughter of a famous University Professor, Larissa Reisner attained literary fame before she married Raskolnikov. Famous also for her beauty, she performed great feats of heroism in the Civil War as a comrade-in-arms of her husband. She actually served as a gunner in the forecastle of the flagship of the Volga Flotilla and often replaced Raskolnikov on the bridge. Friends of both banteringly said that she wore the trousers in the family and won the battle of the Black Sea. The common people believed that, dazed by the staggering beauty on the bridge of the Soviet flagship, the British Commander misfired his guns; Mother Volga had personally taken the field to drive back the invaders.

Raskolnikov was Commander of the Baltic Fleet when he was called upon to take up a diplomatic post. He came to Moscow for his instructions from the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, and to discuss with me the political aspect of his mission. I called on them with some awe for the almost legendary war goddess. She was indeed the picture of the typical Greek goddess; but there was nothing Walkyrian about her. It was an austere Bolshevik household; there was no servant; the hostess prepared and-served tea. Hers was undoubtedly a striking personality, which almost eclipsed the presence of Raskolnikov. With a Glaxo Baby face and rather ingratiating manners, he looked rather effeminate by the side of the most perfect feminine personality I have ever had the pleasure and privilege of meeting. But there could be no doubt that Larissa was a loving wife, who had no intention of pushing her husband to the background. But she could net efface herself, and Raskolnikov was proud of the fact. They
were palpably a happy couple, who had together experienced a life of adventure, and were terribly excited by the prospect of a new kind of adventure in a strange and exotic land. Larissa wanted me to tell her something about the conditions under which she must live in the near future. Must she put on the *burkha*? She would, of course, do anything so that the mission of her husband was successful. It was her revolutionary duty. The goddess was a Bolshevik, but not by marriage. She joined the party as a student, before the Revolution, when it was very risky to do so.

Having myself not ever had any first-hand experience of an oriental Court, I could not enlighten my new friends. But Larissa was richly endowed with poetic imagination. She was reading the Arabian Nights all over again, hoping to get a feel of the atmosphere of the Court of King Amanullah. Was he something like Harun-al-Rashid, she wondered. No, he was reported to be a modern man. In that case, he would not mind her appearing in the Court as the Ambassador's wife. Larissa confessed, blushing to the roots of her ravishing chestnut hair, that she had some idea of oriental dancing. She would entertain King Amanullah, if she had the chance, not of course with any ulterior motive. Neither the queen nor "my husband" should be jealous. With unconcealed pride and adoration showing in his eyes, Raskolnikov thought that Larissa was sure to befuddle the Afghan Kirig just as she had the Captain of the British Fleet. Slur scolded him for his frivolity and said that the British invaders were driven down the Volga and routed in the battle of the Black Sea by the Soviet Fleet commanded by Comrade Ra<l-\ukov. With some difficulty, the latter controlled the temptation of demonstrating his happiness. Larissa helped him with the tantalising rebuke: “Don't be silly”.

To have met and made friends of those two splendid specimens of human beings was indeed good luck. I saw them frequently, almost every day, until they left for Kabul, before I did for Tashkent. They did not stay there long. Because Enver Pasha's intrigue did influence King Amanullah, although before long he himself fell a victim to the fanaticism of the all-powerful Mullahs. But during their short stay at
Kabul, the young couple of devoted Bolsheviks played their role very well. Raskolnikov won the confidence of King Amanuliah to such an extent that once, in a very expansive mood, the latter confessed that he had killed his father, and on that record claimed to be himself a Bolshevik. Larissa made friends with Queen Suraya and obtained her consent to entertain the King by doing the Salome dance.

As a typical Russian Bolshevik, Raskolnikov had great expectations about the situation in India. Indeed, it was therefore that he was chosen for the post of Kabul. Before he left, he urged me to press for the plan of supplying the frontier tribes with plenty of arms and money, so that they could wage a war against the British. The consequent weakening of British power would enable the Khilafat movement to overthrow it. That was my old idea, which still fascinated me. Why not pursue it? The possible breakdown of the British rule in India would open the floodgates of revolution. The upper classes might capture power; but there would be an even chance for the democratic forces to triumph. Anyhow, subversion of the status quo was a precondition for the building of a new order.

I submitted the plan for Lenin's consideration and approval, without which nothing was done. He was interested. The overthrow of the British power in India would be a revolutionary event, no matter what happened immediately in that country. It would have a tremendous repercussion throughout the East, and be the signal for a revolution in Britain. But how to supply the frontier tribes so plentifully as would enable them to engage British forces fully and thus create the opportunity for an uprising inside the country? We must win the cooperation of the Afghan Government. Again, how? King Amanuliah was not a revolutionary. He was shrewd enough to see that he could profit by pretending to be anti-British. But the opportunist policy would ultimately lead him to a deal with the highest bidder, and the British could pay more. Then, there was the decisive consideration that, in the last analysis, King Amanuliah had more in common with the British rulers of India than the Russian Bolshevik regime. Lenin having stated his cynical view with remarkable aloofness, I enquired:
were not the same arguments valid also in the case of other Asiatic
countries? Would not the Indian nationalist bourgeoisie, for example,
rather prefer a compromise with British Imperialism than welcome the
Bear's embrace of Bolshevism? Lenin laughed his agreement with me.
We should have no illusions; but the strategy of revolution was to
exploit all available opportunities. Therefore, the plan of pursuing the
possibilities of using Afghanistan as the base of operations to promote
revolution in India should be pursued. I must work it out in all details
for the sanction of the Politbureau of the Party and the Revolutionary
Military Council.
Plan to Raise An Army of Liberation

My plan was not simply to supply the frontier tribes with the sinews of war so that they could make trouble for the British-Indian Government. It would be easy enough to do so; but I was doubtful about the consequences. The war in Europe was over. Before long, the British-Indian army would again be available for the defence of the North-Western Frontier. The relation of refugees would change and one could not be sure about the result of another frontier war.

Supposing that with Russian help the tribesmen gained the upper hand, the repercussion in India might reinforce the position of the British. Victorious tribesmen would almost certainly raid the neighbouring Indian towns and villages, as they had done on previous occasions. Magnified reports would spread like wild fire throughout the country, creating panic. Frightened by the spectre of a new Muslim invasion, the Hindu majority of the Indian population would look upon the British power as the only protection. Consequently, the anti-British movement would receive a setback. The alternative result of the panic might be countrywide communal riots. If the weakened political regime failed to cope with the situation, chaos would be let loose. Because there was no purposefully organised force to seize power, it would be difficult to restore order and build up a democratic regime.

A new factor had appeared on the scene, which was included in my plan. Reports had reached Moscow that, responding to a call of the Khilafat Committee, thousands of Muslims, including many educated young men, were leaving India for Turkey to join the army of Kemal Pasha. It was a religious Pan-Islamist movement. But it gave me an opportunity to
contact a large number of possible recruits for an army to fight for the 
liberation of India instead of a lost cause.

Kemal Pasha was waging a war neither for the restoration of the 
Ottoman Empire, nor for the defence of the Khilafat. The abolition of 
the Turkish Sultanate had put an end to the revered institution of the 
Islamic Khilafat. The Indian Muslims, therefore, were fighting for a 
lost cause. The ignorant masses were moved by religious fanaticism. 
But the educated youth, who constituted the driving force of the 
movement, were politically motivated. For them the Khilafat was a 
traditional symbol of Islamic unity. The disappearance of the symbol 
was sure to disrupt the Pan-Islamist movement, at least blunt the edge 
of its fanaticism.

On the rebound, the educated amongst the Indian Mujakeers might 
realise the pointlessness of a pilgrimage to Turkey to fight for the 
cause of secular nationalism. Then it should be possible to enlist them 
in an army of Indian liberation.

My plan was to raise, equip and train such an army in Afghanistan. 
Using the frontier territories as the base of operation and with the 
mercenary support of the tribesmen, the liberation army would march 
into India and occupy some territory where a civil government should 
be established as soon as possible. The first proclamation of the 
revolutionary government would outline a programme of social 
reform to follow national independence. It would call upon the people 
to rise in the rear of the enemy, so that the Liberation Army could 
advance further and further into the country. The appeal should be 
addressed particularly to the industrial and transport workers. The 
entire adult population of the liberated territory would be armed, some 
for defence and others for enlarging the Liberation Army. The 
programme of social reform outlined in the proclamation issued on the 
establishment of the revolutionary government would be enforced in 
the liberated territories; consequently, the masses would 
enthusiastically support the new regime. The concrete picture of 
freedom would have a strong appeal to the vast majority of the people, 
giving them the incentive to strive for it. The vested interests 
throughout the land might be opposed to the revolutionary 
implications of national liberation; but the imperialist power,
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weakened by the consequences of the World War, and shaken by a popular uprising, would not be able to offer any protection to the upper-class minority, who would wish to stem the tide of the democratic national revolution.

The requirements for implementing the plan were obvious: a sufficiently large quantity of arms, field equipment, training personnel and plenty of money. The last item was sanctioned by the Council of People's Commissars on the recommendation of the Communist Party. Several years of Civil War having almost exhausted military stores, it took me some time to collect the rest of the requirements. In Trotsky's absence, the Deputy Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council, Klansky, took the matter in hand and my party was ready to leave Moscow soon after the Third Anniversary of the October Revolution.

The immediate destination was Tashkent, about two thousand miles away. A major part of the intervening country was occupied by counter-revolutionary armies until the previous winter. Roving detachments of White Guards, who had taken to banditry, still infested the steppes beyond the Ural River. They frequently tore up the railway line and held up trains to plunder. Our party travelled in two trains; one composed of twenty-seven 30-ton wagons carrying arms (pistols, rifles, machine-guns, hand grenades, light artillery, etc.), adequate supplies of ammunition and military stores, and field equipment which included several wireless receivers and transmitters. The train was escorted by two companies of crack Red Army soldiers commanded by a giant. While living in the United States as an immigrant labourer, he had joined the anarcho-syndicalist organisation called the Industrial Workers of the World—the most militant wing of the American labour movement. After the Revolution, John returned to Russia and plunged headlong into the Civil War. But he refused to join the Communist Party, because he would not compromise the purity of his anarchist faith. His loyalty to the Revolution and the Soviet regime having been proved by heroic deeds during the Civil War, John rose to position of trust and responsibility. He was admitted into the air force as a highly skilled mechanic. He was nearly seven feet tall,
and proportionately broad. With a booming voice, he was a veritable giant.

The other train was composed as follows: two wagons loaded with money (gold coins, bullion and pound and rupee notes); ten wagons carried dismantled aeroplanes and the complete outfit of an air force battalion; the personnel of the latter and the staff of a military training school travelled in seven coaches: a salon was attached for my use. A young air force officer was the Commandant of our train. He took orders only from me. Our train was more heavily guarded. Camouflaged machine-guns, were posted on the roof of the salon car. The wagons carrying the treasury and the aeroplanes were also similarly guarded.

The first stage of the journey to Samara (now called Kuibyshev) on the east bank of the Volga took two days. During the critical period of the Second World War, the Soviet Government and foreign embassies shifted to that city. In another day and a half, we reached Orenburg, on the border between European Russia and Turkestan. After crossing the wide Volga, the railway line passed over the last lap of the Great Russian Plain. The southern spurs of the Ural Mountains and the river of the same name flowing southwards to the land-locked Caspian Sea can be called the natural boundary between Europe and Asia. The inhabitants of the extensive borderland between the Lower Volga and the Ural were very largely A-tic —Tartars, Bashkirs and Khirgiz. The city of Orenburg was the only European oasis, so to say. The capital of a province of the Tzarist Empire, it had a large Russian population. From the Governor and the Commander of the local garrison down to the lowest administrative official and army officer, all belonged to the ruling race. The Revolution changed that state of affairs. All the officials and officers of the old regime were gone. In 1920, Orenburg, despite its name, was an Asiatic city. Since then, the name has also been changed. Ethnically as well as administratively, the marches of the Orient have reached the lower course of the Volga.

On the Asiatic side of the Ural River, there sprawled the Khirgiz steppes rolling to hundreds of miles in all directions. In 1920, it was a no-man's land. Between Orenburg and Tashkent
— a distance of over one thousand miles—there was not a single town worth the name. The native population was nomadic and the Russian colonisers, all supporters of the Tzarist regime, had followed the routed White Guards. Market places near the larger stations on the railway were deserted, and the distance between two such stations was often more than a hundred miles. Over those long stretches, absolutely nothing was available.

The toughest problem was to find water for our four locomotives. Each train was pulled by two. The other problem was to keep the aged engines, given to us at Orenburg, running for more than a thousand miles. Nowhere before Tashkent could they be changed. In the not unexpected eventuality of more than two breaking down, we should be stranded in the midst of a vast desert, not indeed of the terrifying shifting sandhills of the Gobi, but sparsely covered with thorny shrubs, ideal lurking places for wild animals and wilder men, taken to banditry.

Fortunately, fuel was no problem-. Our locomotives actually did not carry any. Whenever needed, they stopped and a party of soldiers hacked together a heap of the tough roots of the desert vegetation. The empty coal platforms of the locomotives were used for carrying surplus water in iron drums. Over long stretches of our way, not a drop of the precious fluid was available.

The larder of the party was replenished at Samara and finally at Orenburg. There we had to provide for a week. If nothing untoward happened, the rest of the journey could be completed in three to four days. The rickety locomotives must not be overworked. They might break down. But in that no-man's land, something wrong or exciting did happen always. So, a week was the scheduled time for the journey. If a party failed to reach the terminus in either direction within a week, rescue operation was to be undertaken. In our case, that was not necessary; we reached Tashkent just in the nick of time—in the late afternoon of the seventh day—to be, received personally by the Commandant of the Turk front, who had come to the railway station to order the departure of a strong and well equipped rescue party under the cover of falling darkness.
On the journey over the vast expanse of parched earth, remorselessly tortured by the ferocity of the blazing sun, the days were scorchingly hot. Even the luxurious appointments of my salon car (I was told that it was one of those made specially for the Imperial Train) offered little protection against the fury of a capricious climate. The climate was capricious, because the nights were cold. Unless we were lucky to be passing by a spring, for days we had to go without cool drinking water. Big stations on the line were as a rule built near those springs, so that the locomotives could take in water. But in most places the springs had been choked with debris by the fleeing Russian colonisers. So we had to look out for other springs. For that purpose, watches were posted to scan the landscape through field glasses from the running train. Wherever there was a spring, the desert vegetation was less scorched and stunted. We stopped whenever such an oasis was spotted, sometimes at quite a distance from the railway line. Under the cover of light artillery mounted on the roof of the train, a well armed advance party was sent to reconnoitre. If a good spring was located, we spent there the major part of the hot day. The trains could not be left unguarded. Batches were sent to enjoy the luxury of a bath in cold water, and carry back loads of it for drinking during the next days. Sometimes, the spring was a mere trickle. In that case, only the store of drinking water could be replenished.

One day, our watch spied in the eastern horizon what looked like a large encampment. There was difference of opinion about what it might be. Some thought a band of fugitive White Guards might be camping there. Others imagined that it could well be a large settlement of Khirgiz nomads. The young air force officer, in charge of my train, was cautious. Under the advice of his Political Commissar, he would take no risk. I was curious; and I was in supreme command of the party and also of my Political Commissar. But I was reluctant to overrule a cautious subordinate, just for the sake of satisfying my curiosity. Of course, if I could place the whole party in the field, there should be no risk in facing a band of fugitive enemies. But that could not be done. Should we decide to send out a reconnoitring party,
anticipating the danger of a trap, the trains must be very well guarded against a possible attack from the other side. Because, if a reconnoitring party was sent out, it might not return before dusk. In that case, we must stop overnight in the midst of the desert.

Seeing that I was very eager to avail of the opportunity of visiting a Khirgiz nomads' settlement, John came to my aid. As an anarchist, he did not believe in discipline. If he was not ordered to lead a reconnoitring party, he would go alone to have a look at the settlement. He was directly under the command of the air-force officer. I asked the latter to let him go with a party. Happy liVe a child, John unloaded a small truck and a motor-cycle. We were carrying a tank of petrol for emergency. Ordering half a dozen soldiers on the truck, John swung his huge frame on the motor-cycle to lead the party. We watched them anxiously until they disappeared in distant shrubs. The biggish red flag fluttering from a pole on the truck could be seen from time to time. It took them more than an hour to reach the destination. It was a crosscountry drive over virgin earth. Even motor transport could not make much more than ten miles an hour on such a highroad of nature.

The watch reported friendly reception of the party. After a while, the Red Flag was hoisted on one of the tents. Presently John signalled a reassuring message. They were returning with good report. Meanwhile, we should prepare for receiving next morning a delegation from a large Khirgiz tribe. We woke up next morning to find the entire encampment shifted overnight to our near neighbourhood. There were fifty-three round low tents of thick felt, big and small. The Red Flag fluttered on the biggest in the centre, which belonged to the Chief. The group was composed of three-hundred odd men, women and children. Their possession included a herd of camels, a flock of sheep, a few ponies and a fleet of wheelless carts. In addition, there were some ferocious dogs. Accompanied by the air force officer and escorted by John, I went to call on the Chief in his tent. The political Commissar of our party, a hardened Cheka man, still suspected foul play. He would not budge an inch from his post, and personally stood guard.
OD the other side of the trains. A few lives might be risked but the property of the proletariat was sacred. It was of considerable value, in any case.

The chieftain was a benevolent old man; his attendant, a bright-looking youth who, to our great surprise, spoke Russian. He had been to school in one of the nearby settlements of Russian colonisers, and later on was employed by one of them (a fur trader) as his clerk. He had heard of the Revolution, which had overthrown the Tzar and driven away the Generals who conquered the homeland of the Khirgz. So, the Revolution meant that the Khirgz were masters of their home again. "Long Live the Revolution"—shouted the Khirgz youth who seemed to be a born Bolshevik. The whole tribe joined. There followed a day of fraternising and merry-making, followed by a banquet for which the flock of sheep was depleted by several heads. In the midst of the excitement, my attention was attracted by the fact that the long arm of modern machine civilisation had reached this oasis of primitive culture of the Nomads of Central Asia. A shining Singer Sewing Machine was the most precious possession of the first lady of the tribe.

Because of the pleasant interlude on the way, we reached Tashkent just late enough to cause Comrade Sokolnikov some anxiety. That is the first thing he told me when we shook hands on the platform of the railway station. The party meant to go for our rescue was sent the day after the contact with the settlement of the friendly Nomads.
PART 4
Revolution Comes to Asia
ON the platform of the railway station, Sokolnikov, as the Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Forces in Central Asia, took over the custody of the military equipment and personnel of my party. The young air force officer, who had been the Commandant of our train, was to see his new chief in the morning for orders about the disposition of the equipment and personnel. The money was to be deposited in the local treasury.

Tashkent was the destination of the first stage of the journey. The base of the projected army of liberation was to be created there. The nucleus of the army itself was still to crystallise. Its recruitment and training would take time. The next stage of preparation for the establishment of the advance base at Kabul and operational bases on the Indian frontier presupposed consent and active co-operation of the Afghan Government. That meant diplomatic negotiations, which were bound to be devious because of Enver Pasha's intrigues. Meanwhile, I must discharge the responsibility as a member of the Turkestan Bureau of the Communist International set up to carry through the revolution in the Central Asiatic provinces of the fallen Tzarist Empire, and consolidate the new regime. For all these considerations, I was to reside at Tashkent for an indefinite period.

Apart from the headquarters of the Turk Bureau of the Communist International, a house had been allotted for my residence. Having given his orders for the watch and ward of the trains until they were dismantled in the morning, Sokolnikov conducted me to my residence. On the way he apologised for the disorderly conditions in which I must live. There had not been much actual fighting for the capture of
Tashkent. The regular army having been withdrawn for active service on the western front, on the outbreak of the revolution there was no armed force to defend the old regime in Central Asia. Power was easily seized initially by a small group of workers, mostly Russian, employed in the local railway shop and other minor industrial plants. Thereupon, the Tzarist officials and the upper strata of the Russian population ran away, having very largely destroyed the movable property they had to leave behind. Practically every residential building in the modern part of the city was found in uninhabitable condition. The buildings themselves could not be destroyed easily. The ravage was internal—furniture broken up, water pipes smashed, electric wiring torn down.

On arriving at the house allotted for my residence, we were confronted with a scene of wanton destruction, as described by Sokolnikov on the way. He said that the house was selected because it was more habitable than others. He was living in a tent pitched in the compound of the house allotted for his residence. None of the other members of the Turk Commission (the Provisional Revolutionary Government) lived under any better conditions. In the capital of the colonial empire of the Tzars, the revolution did not have to wage a civil war in the military sense. It had to wage a war, on the one hand, against wanton ravage, disorder and chaos left behind by the old regime and on the other, against the apathy of the masses of the native population, disturbed by the enthusiasm of a few inspired by the new vision of freedom, against the sullenness of others who doubted the intention of the new regime and the ill-concealed hostility of the Mullahs who sought to incite religious fanaticism against the Bolshevik infidels.

It was late in the evening when we reached the house. The city of Tashkent is situated in an oasis. Though very hot in summer, it is intensely cold in winter, the temperature dropping well below the freezing point. Soon after our arrival there, it started snowing and for two months the city as well as the surrounding desert were covered with a vast white sheet. The house was cold and dark. The repairs of the electric connection could not be completed before we arrived. It might take another couple of days. The material required was not easily
available and skilled workmen were also scarce. A few kerosene lamps, feebly aided by flickering candles, tried in vain to dispel the sepulchral darkness of a deserted house. And the darkness seemed to add teeth to the biting chill of a mid-November evening. Huge porcelain tile-stoves built in the walls stared at us like white ghosts shrouded in the cold twilight. They had not been lit once since the winter began several weeks ago. The practically complete absence of useful furniture like chairs and tables was compensated by piles and piles of carpets covered with a thick layer of dust. They were of the most exquisite variety, I was told. The representative of the Emir of Bokhara had lived in the house and furnished it, in the typical Middle-Eastern style, with the most expensive carpets and tapestries, big and small, of varying thickness, spread on the floors and hung on the walls. They were piled up to make couches.

It was a double-storeyed, well constructed house with spacious rooms, situated on the main thoroughfare of the city, facing the Central Park. Everything possible was done to make it fairly comfortable. A team of workmen laboured for several days to clear out the debris. The electric connection was restored; but the burst water-pipes could not be replaced by new ones. So washing, not to mention bathing, remained a problem. "Water drawn out of the well could not be heated. Fuel was the scarcest commodity. Owing to the dislocation of railway transport, coal could not be brought from the distant Don Basin. The limited quantity of petroleum available was reserved for the military and official motor vehicles. There was no forest in the neighbouring desert. The kitchen fire of the big city was fed with small rations of the tough gnarled roots of shrubs which grew on the surrounding steppes. We were privileged to receive a special ration which was big enough to keep the kitchen fire burning for longer hours than needed to cook two meals a day. The Vitchen stove, made of massive blocks of stone, retained some warmth even when the fire was out. Except when in bed, warmed with piles of thick woollen carpets, all the members of my personal staff congregated in the basement to sit around the kitchen stove. Perhaps for the sake of dignity, I refused to shift my office to the kitchen;
but the brave resolution gave way as the winter advanced and
temperature inside the house fell below the freezing point.

Food was also in short supply. We received our radon of black bread,
rice, mutton, apple tea and raisins. The meat was usually stale. The
process of freezing being very primitive, its edibility was often
doubtful. Sizzling rancid mutton fat filled the house with an acrid
smell, which clung permanently to the dark corners and penetrated the
piles of dusty carpets. For years afterwards, the sight or the very name
of mutton reminded me of the repulsive smell. The piece de resistance
of each meal was rice or kaska (dark brown coarse grain) cooked in
rancid mutton fat with some lumps of meat. Brightened up with tiny
bits of carrots, the evil smelling and ugly looking thing was called "
pilaf." The alternative was bread with salt washed down with " apple
tea." The dark complexion and soggy consistency of the bread defied
inquisitiveness about its composition. Whatever else might have gone
into it, there was a good amount of grit, sand and perhaps even good
earth. It often tasted sour and sometimes smelled musty. But with all
that blemish, it was any day preferable to the malodorous mutton
pilaf.

The steaming pink water drunk as tea was made of dried apple
crumbs. Poured on a teaspoonful of these, a quart of boiling water
would turn blood-red. Diluted with more hot water, the brew was
called apple tea, which served no other purpose than to heat the body
internally. It had a faint sweetish smell, but no bad taste. In the
absence of sugar, it could not be sweetened. Milk was out of the
question; and it would most probably curdle if added to the brew. It
was drunk with a handful of raisins. Grapes grew plentifully in the
neighbourhood.

On the whole, it was a life full of hardships, but also of great promise,
to be pursued with unbounded faith and enthusiasm. I settled down to
it with no regret for having chosen it. Experience had taught me that
the path of revolution was never strewn with roses. Moreover, honour,
distinction, the joy of participating in the liberation of peoples
downtrodden for centuries, and the perspective of more risky
adventures and greater successes swelled my store of experience and
added to the richness of life.
The office of the Turk-Bureau of the Communist International was located in the house built for the Russian Imperial Bank. It was a solid as well as an elegant structure of red stone brought from the far-off Ural Mountains. As the Treasury of the local government, the Bank was amongst the public buildings seized by the insurgents at the outbreak of the Revolution. No damage, therefore, could be done to it. The valuable deposits in its vaults as well as the rich apartments of the chambers remained intact. The vaults contained the Viceregal Crown Jewels and precious personal possessions of the Court nobility and the colonial rich. In addition, there was a large quantity of bullion and high denomination bank notes. Locked and sealed and heavily guarded, the Treasury remained untouched, until orders for its disposition came from Moscow.

To have chosen that house for the headquarters of the Bureau of the Communist International had a symbolic significance: as if the valuable booty of the Revolution was placed under the custody of the world proletariat, and the honour of holding the trust fell on me. The other two members of the Bureau having additional responsibilities of more exacting nature, the charge of directing its activities virtually devolved upon me, although I had declined to assume it formally as the chairman. The weekly meetings of the Bureau were held in the spacious room which previously had been the office of the Director of the Bank. Having the status of an Imperial satrap, he was either a General or a Prince. Sokolnikov and Safarov attended the weekly meetings. As the member in charge of the Bureau, I inherited the privilege of daily occupying the throne of the deposed imperial dignitary. It was indeed a throne—the high-backed chair of richly carved rare wood, upholstered in crimson velvet. The Romanov Coat-of-Arms was embroidered in gold on the red background and a gilt crown perched on the top. A life-size portrait of Tzar Nicholas II, heavily framed in gold, hung on the wall behind the throne-like chair. But it had been taken down and deposited in the vault with other valuables and works of art.

In the beginning the function of the Bureau was to establish contact with revolutionary elements in the neighbouring
countries. Emigrant groups had to be crystallised to serve the purpose of developing revolutionary movements in their respective countries. But there was no direct access to any of them. The revolution had granted national independence to the Emirate of Bokhara and the Khanate of Khiva. The two together constituted a broad belt of territory sprawling from the sea of Aral to the north-western tip of India. Behind the barrier the vast expanse of the Trans-Caspian plain was the scene of many incursions by the British-Indian army which occupied Khorasan (the eastern province of Persia), and had its advance base of operation at Meshed. It not only shielded the rest of Persia against the menace of Bolshevism, threatening the Trails-Caspian railway, which ran along the Persian frontier for several hundred miles, but it also cut off the supply of petroleum and coal to the new-born Republic of Turkestan. Military operations to push intruders back so as to secure the line of vital supply were not possible without the consent of independent Bokhara, which was not readily forthcoming. The Emir and his Court did not think that they owed any gratitude for the gift of independence. Even reinforcements could not be sent to the small garrison at the frontier town of Ashkabad. Disintegration of the British-Indian army by propaganda thus became the prerequisite for the spread of the Revolution; indeed, for its defence and consolidation in Central Asia. Ashkabad was the obvious advance base of the planned revolutionary operation. It was necessary to visit the place for exploring the possibilities.

There were quite a few Indians in Central Asia, mostly engaged in trade, which had been unavoidably disturbed to some extent by the Revolution. Private trade was not prohibited; but the exchange of commodities across the Persian and Afghan frontiers had practically stopped because of the occupation of Khorasan by the British-Indian army and officious interference in independent Bokhara. Consequently, the trade between India and Central Asia suffered. Soon after my arrival at Tashkent, a delegation of Indian traders saw me for the redress of their grievances. As nothing could be done unless the Bokhara Government changed its obstructive policy and the Meshed-Quetta road was cleared of the British
Indian military transport, I sought the co-operation of the Indian traders in the plan of making anti-imperialist propaganda amongst the Indian troops in Khorasan. While professing patriotism, they were not very enthusiastic to render any practical help. They suggested that I should see the Indian merchants in Bokhara, who were richer and more influential. Meanwhile they should be given permission to return to India through Fergana—the easternmost part of Bokhara separated from Gilgit and Chitral by a narrow strip of Afghan territory. As the Turkestan Government could not give them any protection in a country still held by Turkoman rebels led by fanatical mullahs, I advised the Indian traders to have patience. But curiously enough, they preferred the risky journey in a disturbed region to the security of the capital and other towns of the new-born Republic. The Russians being most reluctant to displease "the Indian comrades," they were advised to proceed as far as the authority of the new government reached, and wait there until the way ahead was open for them to travel with some measure of security. Once away from the protective and friendly vigilance of Tashkent, "the Indian comrades" somehow managed to make themselves scarce. The explanation of their strange behaviour was found later on: Enver Pasha's secret agents had promised compensation for their loss if they left Turkestan to settle in the new Islamic State. The Indian traders in Central Asia were mostly Hindus from Sindh—the so-called Shikarpuris.

The attitude of the richer and more influential ones in Bokhara was no more patriotic. They did not believe in the possibility of liberating India. Therefore, they would not be in the bad books of the British and their agents in Bokhara. They hoped that, as soon as the Russian influence was completely eliminated in Bokhara, trade with India would be resumed under the protection of the British Indian army in Khorasan. After my experience with "the Indian comrades" in Bokhara, it was quite on the cards that the British might be previously informed of my secret visit to Ashkabad. In that eventuality, an attempt at kidnapping should be expected. All necessary precautions were taken. At several places along the frontier, I met small groups of Indian soldiers who had deserted
from the British array. They were mostly Pathans and were burning with zeal to proceed to Anatolia to fight for the Khilafat. Some of the deserters went to the Baku Congress, but could not proceed further. Their experience, however, did not dampen the zeal of the remaining Islamic crusaders. After some talks, I did find a few inclined to be reasonable. They undertook the task of persuading their comrades to attach greater importance to the liberation of their homeland.

Returning to Tashkent, I suggested the idea of recruiting the deserters from the British Indian army into detachments of an irregular force which, as auxiliary to the Red Army, would patrol the Trans-Caspian railway from Krasnovodsk to Merve preparatory to a major offensive to drive the British invaders back. A step was taken towards the creation of a nucleus of the army to liberate India.

Just at that moment, reports came that a large batch of Indian Muhajirs had walked across Afghanistan, but on entering Bokhara had been taken prisoner by the Turkoman rebels. The report about their number varied—from two hundred to five thousand. According to press reports and despatches from Kabul, no less than 30,000 altogether had left India, most of them enticed by the proclamation of the Afghan Government that they would be given free land and otherwise helped to settle themselves in an independent Islamic country. A subsequent report was that the promise was not kept. Thereupon, the Indian Muslim emigrants wanted to proceed to Turkey, and some northwards to Russia. Given these reports, it was quite possible that the group which had reached Bokhara was large. It could be reasonably estimated to be near about a couple of thousand. Even that would be a substantial reinforcement for the projected army of liberation.

Meanwhile, we went ahead with the plan of organising an irregular detachment with Indian soldiers who had deserted from the British army, Persian revolutionaries and Russian Communists. It was the first International Brigade of the Red Army, and the experiment was a success, with considerable experience of campaigning in desert country and their natural hardihood, the Pathans reacted very well to the training in the use of bigger and superior arms, which were not entrusted
to them in the British army. Formidable with rifles, they quickly learned to handle machine-guns and operate artillery. Armed with machine-guns, small groups of them ambushed British Indian troops so very frequently on the Meshed-Ashkabad road that before long the enemy abandoned their outposts along the Persian frontier. Persian groups of the International Brigade could penetrate deep into their country in various disguises and harass the flank of the British army on the road to the south of Meshed.

In the beginning, Indian detachments were commanded by Russians with long experience of guerilla operations during the Civil War. Very soon, Indians were raised to officer rank. The moral effect of that experience was incalculable. It made new men of the hardened Indian soldiers, who became able and proud officers. The news of their experience could not be kept away from their comrades still in the British army, and it had a disintegrating effect. The number of deserters increased daily, and the International Brigade soon became an effective auxiliary of the Red Army. Not only the Krasnovodsk-Merve railway was secured, so that petrol from Caucasus could be freely transported to Central Asia; in course of time, the British base at Meshed was in danger. It was continuously threatened by guerilla bands from all sides. And Persian revolutionary propaganda made the civil population of the neighbourhood hostile to the foreign invaders. The latter could procure no provisions locally even at a high price. And transport on the long Quetta-Meshed road was harassed all the way by guerilla bands backed everywhere by the local civil population. In less than a year, the Indo-British army evacuated Meshed, and the entire Persian province of Khorasan was cleared of British influence.

Bokhara, set free from Tzarist domination by the Revolution, however, still remained a thorn in the side of the Soviet Republic of Turkestan. It became the hot-bed of British intrigue against the new regime in Central Asia. As a progressive force, in the early Middle Ages, the Islamic culture had been patronised by the Court of Bokhara. That venerable tradition was now to be exploited for a reactionary purpose. Over the signature of a number of high-placed Imams, an
appeal was issued to the entire priesthood of Central Asia. They were to assemble in a conference under the patronage of the Court of Bokhara to plan a *jehad* against the Bolshevik infidels who were enticing the faithful with the offer of distributing land to the peasants. But it was obvious that the new regime could not be easily overthrown. It had secured the support of the masses. Only a very small minority composed of tie big landlords and high-placed priests were hostile. As in the case of the French Revolution, even the lower clergy, who lived with the people, had joined the popular uprising when the old order appeared to be doomed. However, the defenders of the faith realised that the *jehad* could not succeed except as an armed insurrection. Having been driven out of Khorasan, the British had shifted their base of operations against Central Asia to Chitral and Gilgit. From there, initial supplies of arms, enough to encourage the would-be insurgents, reached Bokhara through mountainous Fergana.

In the beginning of the twentieth century, as the Viceroy of India, Lord Curzon had endeavoured to counter Russian influence in Persia, Afghanistan and Central Asia. Twenty years later, as British Foreign Minister he was still haunted by the spectre, although in the meantime Russian Imperialism had been replaced by the Workers' and Peasants' Republic, which did not want to conquer, but to liberate the neighbouring countries of Asia. Die-hard imperialists like Curzon, as Pitt in his time, were incapable of grasping the significance of the change. The call of the Bolshevik Revolution was irresistible. The British-inspired conspiracy to organise an armed insurrection against the new regime in Central Asia failed. The masses could not be fooled. As between bread, land and peace, on the one hand and, on the other, priestly blessing and the promise of reward in heaven, they chose the former.

But the dangerous possibilities of religious fanaticism are incalculable. The masses might be swayed by the appeal to their faith, if counter-measures were not taken to nip the conspiracy in the bud. It was realised that the liberation of Bokhara was a condition for the safety of the new regime in Central Asia, and consolidation of the Revolution in those backwaters of the world.
THE ominous development in the last stronghold of reaction in Central Asia was not unexpected. The British as well as the Afghan Governments were fomenting the conspiracy. Enver Pasha's appearance on the scene gave an impetus to it. Although he did not go to Kabul, his agents succeeded in influencing King Amanullah. He was persuaded to believe that before long the military genius of the leader of the Islamic world would raise a powerful army in Eastern Turkestan. Having already forfeited British protection, he must have a new ally. The choice was between the Bolsheviks and the Defender of the Faith. The Afghan King after all was a Muslim, and he made no mistake in his choice particularly when Enver Pasha's emissaries promised him a reconciliation with the British, provided that he would join the conspiracy to save Central Asia for Islam.

Though not ignorant of the conspiracy, the Russians did not want to precipitate the situation. It would be easy enough to depose the Emir of Bokhara. Enver Pasha was still only conspiring, building castles in the air. The British were not at all in a position to intervene actively. A political consideration stayed the hand of the Bolsheviks. They believed that Pan-Islamism could be a powerful anti-British movement, provided that its reactionary leaders were isolated by clever diplomacy and devious political manoeuvres. In any case, the risk of inflaming the Islamic world must not be underestimated. Bokhara was different from the rest of Central Asia. It was the traditional home of Islamic culture. There would be little resistance to replacing the Emir by a republican Government,
which might enlist the support of the masses. But what could be the repercussions in the adjacent Muslim countries?

The question was considered at a meeting of the Turk-Bureau of the Communist International. I urged the contingency of an action which could not be deferred indefinitely. If the enemy was allowed longer to utilise the sprawling territory of Bokhara as the base for his propagandist operations, none could be sure that the credulous masses throughout Central Asia would not be disaffected against the new regime. As regards the revolutionary role of the Pan-Islamic movement, I had all along been very sceptical about it. My Russian colleagues on the Bureau were disciplined party members. To regard Pan-Islamism as a possible ally of the revolution was the official policy. It was true that Lenin had been somewhat shaken by my views. But so long as no new instruction came from Moscow, the old policy stood. But I insisted on the necessity of ascertaining the opinion of other responsible party members on the spot, and make a fresh report to Moscow. No policy could stand for ever. It must be adjusted from time to time to meet the requirements of the situation. The risk of alienating the sympathy of the masses in the adjoining Muslim countries could not make us disregard a danger which was imminent.

In a larger meeting, the opinion was more evenly divided. All the local communist (non-Russian) leaders agreed with me. They were members of the Government of the new Republic. Some of the Russians also sided with us. It was resolved that I should test the attitude of the Bokharan as well as the Afghan Governments. The former should be asked to permit the despatch of a contingent of the Red Army to rescue the Indian mujahirs held prisoner by the Turkomans. The rescue party must go across Bokhara to reach the Afghan frontier. I should also enquire from the Afghan Ambassador, preferably in the presence of Enver Pasha, if he had received any instruction about my passing through Afghan territory with military supplies and personnel meant for establishing near the Indian frontier a base of operations for the army of liberation.

I invited the Afghan Ambassador and the more important members of his entourage to a diplomatic dinner. Since my
arrival at Tashkent, the house where I lived had been made more habitable. Still it was far from being suitable for a gala or formal dinner party. On the slightest hint, the Afghans would have thrown the party. They had nothing ostensible to do, and would seize any available opportunity to impress the local population with their opulence as against the want and austerity under the new revolutionary regime. Presumably they hoped that occasional demonstration of the disparity might spread disaffection against the new regime.

The premises of the most luxurious hotel in Tashkent had been allotted for the residence of the Afghan Embassy, which was granted all kinds of special privileges except in food stuffs, which were very scarce. The hotel was situated in the most fashionable and aristocratic part of the city. It was almost exclusively inhabited by Russian officials and the colonial bourgeoisie. Since the Revolution, they were all gone, and the exclusive part of the colonial capital was deserted. Houses built for ostentatiously luxurious living were not suitable for other purposes; and Turkestanese belonging to the uppermost class did not feel at home there. Their standard of comfort and luxury was different. The Afghans naturally preferred the oriental style, but they thought that it was their diplomatic prerogative to take liberties with the outlandish appointments of the hotel. Their ostentatious display, however, was in vain. The common people were discreetly discouraged from coming too close to the diplomatic guests. Enver Pasha lived in the Afghan Embassy as a State guest, and graciously accepted the invitation.

My Russian colleagues suggested that the guests should be entertained lavishly on the oriental style. I dismissed the idea and insisted that there should be no departure from our usual revolutionary austerity. There was some compromise about the quality of food and its preparation; and for the first time since I occupied the house, the dining-room was to be used. But the high spacious chamber was like a cold-storage. It had not been heated once during the winter. Unless fire was made in the huge porcelain stove built into the thick wall at least for a couple of days, the room would not be habitable, and that meant cartloads of precious fuel. It came,
and the house was comfortably heated up for the diplomatic dinner. Once those old-fashioned stoves were lit, the porcelain tiles and the thick walls stored up heat for several days. The entire household was thankful for the crumbs from the diplomatic tables, so to say.

In oriental diplomacy, one could not go straight to the point. I conducted the after-dinner talks in the desired direction by enquiring how Enver Pasha was proceeding with his plan. It was going very well; he might go to Kabul soon. That was a surprise, but he would say no more. That was the appropriate occasion to broach the delicate question about my projected trip to the Afghan capital. Another surprise: the Ambassador had received instructions from Kabul. His Government would be delighted to welcome the illustrious visitor and render all possible help to the cause of the liberation of India. But in order to relieve me of the difficulties of travelling with all the requisites for my mission, the Afghan Government proposed that they should be deposited with the Afghan Embassy at Tashkent, to be delivered to me in the proper place and at the proper time. The meaning of the proposal was obvious. Once in Afghanistan, I would be entirely at the mercy of the Government of that country. The astounding proposal was backed up with the argument that the diplomatic relations between Kabul and the British Indian Government would be strained if Indian revolutionaries were allowed to transport arms and sinews of war through Afghan territory. That might be a plausible argument; but, on the other hand, what was the guarantee that the arms given by Russia would be delivered to me on the Indian frontier. If they were not, I could do absolutely nothing. At the same time, I could not reject outright the obviously tricky proposal. That would be to doubt the *bona fides* of the Afghan Government. Diplomatic relations must be maintained. So we parted with a profuse declaration of goodwill and exchange of pleasantries. It was evident that there was no sense in my going to Afghanistan in the near future, and that to create there a base for an Indian army of liberation was a forlorn hope.

Events moved swiftly. In a few days, the news came that the Emir of Bokhara with a small retinue had secretly left his
capital and fled towards Fergana. About the same time, Enver Pasha also disappeared from the scene. The Soviet Embassy at Kabul reported that the Afghan Government had politely requested several Indian revolutionaries to leave the country. They had come to the Indo-Afghan frontier at the time of the Third Afghan War in order to incite the tribesmen against the British. Afterwards, they could not return home and had since then been living at Kabul. Some of them joined the Indian Provisional Government set up in 1916. The order for the expulsion of those friends and political refugees was motivated by diplomatic considerations. Kabul was anxious to resume good relations with New Delhi.

All these ominous events occurring almost simultaneously proved that, for some reason or another, the enemy had decided to precipitate the situation. It was a premature decision, because their position was still very weak. However, our hands were forced. The Red Army marched on Bokhara and a revolutionary government was set up there without any resistance. The Emir having run away, the country was without any legitimate government. The vacuum must be filled. It was obviously a right and responsibility of the Turkestan Republic to see that a large part of Central Asia should not be in anarchy, which was sure to encourage the Turkoman rebels to march in. The precipitate flight of the Emir and the mysterious disappearance of Enver Pasha clearly indicated that the plan was to use the not easily accessible mountainous region of Fergana as the base of military operations and the seat of a counter-revolutionary government backed by the British. It was equally obvious that Kabul was also an active party to the plan.

It was easy to occupy the city and the Western plains of Bokhara. But a large-scale military operation had to be undertaken to break the resistance in Fergana, which bordered OD Afghanistan for nearly two-hundred miles, and was easily accessible from the British outposts of Chitral and Gilgit. The Turkomans were fierce fighters and were very well provided with arms and supplies. The attack was delivered by two columns of the Red Army, one advancing eastwards from the plains of Bokhara and the other southwards from Andijan.
on the border of Eastern Turkestan. The latter was a flanking movement over high mountain passes. While the frontal attack pushed the rebels back over a much longer distance, the other column struck at their main base only a few miles away from the Indian frontier. The victory of a very difficult campaign was celebrated by planting the Red Flag on the Pamirs. Standing on the "Roof of the World," I looked at India, through a field-glass, across a narrow neck of Afghan territory which turned out to be an insurmountable barrier.

After the storming of the last rebel bastion, the dead body of Enver Pasha was found on the battle-field. It was dressed in a British army officer's uniform.
Bloodless Revolution

THE counter-revolutionary conspiracy in the Court of the Emir of Bokhara was not a sudden discovery. Reports reached us regularly. But no preventive action was promptly taken because of the reluctance of the Russian Communists to do anything that might inflame the opinion of the Muslim world against Soviet Russia.

Bokhara had been a part of the Tzarist Empire. It was granted independence soon after the Russian Revolution. That step naturally made a deep impression on the Islamic world, and the Russians did not want to squander the moral asset by any hasty action. Since the early Middle Ages, Bokhara was one of the main centres of Islamic culture. The Emirs of Bokhara pretended to be the inheritors of the tradition of the descendants of the Prophet, who ruled at Baghdad. It was reported that the British played with the idea of endorsing that pretension. But the ambitious King Amanullah of Afghanistan would have been against the recognition of the Emir of Bokhara as the head of the Islamic world. Therefore, British diplomacy had to go slow. Russian military intervention would be necessary to break up the nest of counter-revolution in Bokhara. There was no revolutionary party which could be helped to overthrow the old regime and establish a revolutionary government,

As a matter of fact, there was no social base for a revolution as desired by the Communists. The country was industrially backward to the very extreme. Consequently, there was no working class to be organised and incited to revolt. The peasantry was most backward, completely under the influence
of the priesthood. The bourgeoisie, in the modern sense, was also completely absent. In Bokhara and a few other minor market towns, a small trading class existed. Obviously, the latter would have to be mobilised as the spearhead of a revolution against the old feudal-sacerdotal order, if it was to have the appearance of a spontaneous movement grown out of the native soil.

While ruling out any preventive action in the form of a Russian military intervention, we could not sit with folded arms in the face of the danger of the British and Afghans utilising Bokhara as the centre for inciting the reactionary classes throughout Central Asia to revolt against the new order. As against the plausible Russian sensitiveness for Islamic feelings, I pointed out that should counter-revolution triumph in Central Asia, the Muslim masses there would be the victims. The landlords would return to exploit the peasantry as before, and the fanatical priests regain their hold on the cultural life of the masses. I argued that these considerations could be made clear to the Islamic world in order to justify the eventual intervention in Bokhara. The purpose of the revolution would be not to dethrone the Emir, but to protect the Islamic masses throughout Central Asia against the possibility of the feudal ruling class returning to power.

As a matter of fact, we did not look upon the Emir as a dangerous person. Nor could we apprehend any serious action from his effete Court. Therefore, when the news reached us that the Emir was on the point of leaving his capital, we did not think it necessary to stop him. It would be very easy to take him prisoner together with his small entourage. But that would serve no purpose. On the contrary, it might incense the sentiments of the Islamic world, because the Emir was regarded as a religious head. There would be no sense in holding him and his courtiers as prisoners, and it would be completely unwarranted cruelty to take the life of the helpless old man. So we preferred to let him go wherever he wanted to.

Fully realising that sooner or later some action had to be taken in Bokhara, a Bokharan Revolutionary Committee
was set up in Tashkent under the auspices of the Turk-Bureau of the Communist International. In addition to carrying on propaganda amongst the Bokharans, the Committee was to contact the trading community in the city of Bokhara and other towns. The trading class could be made to see that the liberation of the peasantry from feudal domination would do no harm to them. The feudal order had actually placed all sorts of restrictions on trade. Nothing but a sentimental loyalty to the semi-religious personality of the Emir would make the trading class antagonistic to the revolutionary movement. And that sentimental bond snapped when the Emir fled the country instead of staying at his post to defend his realm and subjects.

The Revolutionary Committee was also to carry on propaganda among the peasant masses, telling them that if the new regime in Central Asia was overthrown with the help of the British and the Afghans, the landlords would come back and take away from them the land which the Revolution had given them. They had to choose between the old order, which had never done them any good, and the gift of the Revolution; in other words, between the Emir and the land which the revolution had given them. And with our Marxist faith, we assumed that the peasants would make no mistake in their choice. They were indeed ignorant and, as such, liable to be incited to fanatical outbursts by the priests. This dangerous possibility was taken duly into consideration, and the Bokharan Revolutionary Committee was advised not to do anything which might offend the religious sentiments of the masses. Recollecting the experience of the French Revolution, we endeavoured to split the ranks of the priesthood and win over the poorer priests for the revolution. With this purpose, I made a careful study of the Koran and other classics of Islamic theology. In public meetings I could justify the Revolution on scriptural authority.

But the composition of the Bokharan Revolutionary Committee, which was meant to take over power as the Provisional Government, pending the establishment of a government with popular consent, presented some difficulty. There were very few men of any education among the Bokharan
traders in Tashkent. The members of the Revolutionary Committee had to be put through the ordeal of an elementary education before they could understand the implications of their mission. Fortunately, we discovered a young man, named Faizullah Khazaev, the son of a well-to-do merchant who had travelled as far as Petrograd to learn journalism. Evidently, he was a man of ambition, not willing to spend his life in the paternal shop, but intent on striking out a new way for his life. The good thing was that his ambition was based on a certain degree of intelligence and education. Only his age was in the way. In the Islamic Orient, none without a long beard could command respect. Faizullah had not only no gray beard, but he did not care to grow any at all. However, we manoeuvred his election as President of the Bokharan Revolutionary Committee. He played his part well and the Committee began functioning months before Bokhara was left without a government because of the flight of the Emir and his Court.

The Committee established contact with younger elements of the trading community in the urban centres of Bokhara. Some of them came to Tashkent to be trained as propagandists and agitators. Through them, a message was broadcast throughout the country that, when the opportune moment arrived, a conference for setting up a popular government would be held, and the trading community was expected to send its delegates to the conference. The prospect of a share in the spoils of the revolution won over the trading community, and their natural timidity was dispelled by the knowledge that they could rely on the patronage of the Russians.

On receipt of the news of the flight of the Emir, a joint meeting of the Turk-Bureau of the Communist International and the Government of the Turkestan Republic was held to consider the situation and plan immediate action. It was decided that it was not possible to hold back any longer. The political vacuum in Bokhara must be filled up by a new government. Concretely, it was resolved that the Bokharan Revolutionary Committee should immediately proceed to Bokhara to convene the projected conference of people's
delegates to declare the end of the old regime and the establishment of a popular government. I was to accompany the Committee as its adviser and to act as adviser also of the Provisional Government when it would be established. As nothing could be left to chance, and as a precaution against surprise attacks, a small detachment of the Red Army commanded personally by Frunze, who had replaced Sokolnikov as the Commandant of the Turkfront, was to follow the Bokharan Revolutionary Committee.

We arrived in an atmosphere of excitement and chaos; but there was no sign of any serious opposition. Immediately on arrival, the Revolutionary Committee issued the invitation for popular delegates to attend a conference within a few days. Pending the meeting of the conference, the Revolutionary Committee proclaimed itself to be the Provisional Government and took up the reins of power. The aims and objects and the programme of the new government were printed in huge posters, stuck on the walls of the city. The Emir had deserted the country and had forfeited his claim to the loyalty of the people; the land belonging to the feudal landlords would be confiscated and distributed to the peasants; the extensive personal estate of the Emir was declared to be national property, which was to be administered by the Chief Imam as a trust.

Having thus promised to protect and promote the interests of the downtrodden masses, and reassuring the rest of the population that none would be molested arbitrarily, the proclamation of the Provisional Government proceeded to explain the presence of Russian troops: They had come there on the invitation of the Bokharan Revolutionary Committee to protect the newly established government against all possible danger, and they would withdraw as soon as the new government would assume power with the sanction of the people. As a matter of fact, Frunze, with most of his soldiers, returned to Tashkent after a few days, taking all the gold out of the Emir's treasury along. This news, however, was jealously kept secret.

The previously prepared Delegates' Conference met on the appointed day. There were a few priests amongst them, but
no voice of opposition was raised. There was some whisper about the
godlessness of the Bolsheviks. The apprehension that under the new
regime religion would be persecuted was generally shared. Something
had to be done to meet the situation and secure unanimous election of
the Provisional Government. Addressing the conference, Faizullah
Kjiazaev swore by the name of God and his Prophet that he was not a
Communist and remained as devout a Mussalman as anybody else. He
also reassured the audience that die Russians did not want to establish
a Communist regime in Bokhara. Finally, he called for the
organisation of the People's Revolutionary Party of Bokhara, whose
purpose would be to defend the sovereignty and independence granted
to the Bokharan people by the Russian Revolution. He drove the point
home by hinting at the danger of foreign intervention and referring to
the counter-revolutionary conspiracy at the Emir's Court. His speech
was lustily applauded. At the end of the meeting, hundreds rushed to
enrol themselves as members of the new party.

Just at that moment, from the turret of the main Mosque, the Imam
called the faithful to prayer. It was a tense situation, because a vast
majority of the audience were anxious to join the prayer. But they
were not certain whether that would be consistent with the programme
of the new party. Feeling that we were in the midst of a crisis which
might prejudice the revolutionary cause, I asked Faizullah, who was
the chairman, if I could say a few words. He gladly agreed and
announced that a friend from India, who had helped him to prepare for
this great day, was present and would like to address the meeting.
There was a great ovation when I got up—not to make a speech, but
to make a simple proposal, which turned the tide and guaranteed the
future of the Bokharan Revolution. My proposal was that, the object
of the revolution was to liberate the poor, it had no quarrel with any
religion. In order to demonstrate that contention, let the meeting be
suspended, so that all present could go and join the prayer. I could not
resist the temptation of making the remark that I should be excused,
because not being a Mussalman, I could not join the prayer.
The meeting concluded by electing a Soviet (Council) of People's Delegates, to which, the new Government would be responsible. Faizullah was elected the President of the new-born Republic by acclamation and entrusted to form a government. He was the hero of the day.
Revolution Enters the Harem

But for the ambitious adventure of Enver Pasha and the ill-advised flight of the Emir, the Bokharan Revolution would have been completely bloodless. The Turkoman insurrection in mountainous Fergana, though ostensibly for the defence of the Emir, had no repercussions in the extensive plains of Bokhara. The peasants placidly cultivated their land as ever before and the traders peacefully conducted their lucrative profession. These two classes constituted the overwhelming majority of the Bokharan people, and the new government had little difficulty in collecting in its hand the reins of affairs. For the moment, there was not much for me to do there. But before I left, there was a tragi-comedy, which was perhaps the most spectacular aspect of the revolution in that mediaeval kingdom.

According to tradition, a devout Muslim is allowed to have as many as four wives. But the Emir was not an ordinary man. He was a religious potentate. Therefore, he stretched a point or two of the scriptural injunction and allowed himself many times more wives than permitted by tradition. His harem contained about four-hundred inmates. They were orphaned, so to say, when the Emir left. In any case, there was no longer any reason for existence for them. But they had no other place to go. Nor were they very anxious to leave the comfortable asylum voluntarily. They presented a problem for the new government. To keep up those four hundred parasites in a luxurious fashion to which they were accustomed would cost a lot of money. The new government was not prepared to waste the money collected from the people in that manner.

But what to do with the inmates of the harem? Faizullah sought my advice. I also found the problem rather difficult
to solve. I suggested that they should be told that the revolution had freed them from the bondage of the harem, and they could go wherever they liked and do anything they pleased. But they would not leave the protection of comfortable slavery for the dubious blessing of freedom in an unknown world which did not have any place for them.

Evidently, some bold measure was called for. I advised the Revolutionary Government to issue a proclamation that the Emir's harem was disbanded and its inmates set at liberty. They were entitled to go out and marry again, if they wanted. I felt that the proclamation would be a temptation for the soldiers, because the inmates of the harem were all good-looking and mostly young women. It was further declared that any soldier who would take a former inmate of the Emir's harem for his wife and settle down in peaceful domestic life, would receive a grant of land and some cash to cultivate it. But the deserted Begums would not leave their cells of comfort and luxury.

To end the deadlock, it was decided to take a drastic measure. The soldiers who had responded to the proclamation were allowed to enter the harem and each choose his wife, provided that there would be no violence nor any rowdyism. The storming of the harem took place under strict vigilance and nothing unpleasant happened. The Begums, of course, behaved like scared rabbits, but the sight of the husky young men scrambling for them must have made some impression on them. Able-bodied young men seeking their favour was a new experience to women whose erotic life naturally could not be satisfied by a senile old man. At the end, it was a pleasing sight—the secluded females happily allowing themselves to be carried away by proud men. Russian soldiers also took part in the scramble and carried the lion's share of the booty.

After the harem was emptied, I wanted to have a look at the inside of the Emir's palace. It was a striking contrast. From outside, it looked like an earthen fortress. Inside, the rooms were like caves in the mountainside. They had only one entrance and no windows. But each of them was richly furnished. The principal article of furniture being carpets. The emancipated Begums, of course, did not leave any of
their personal property, clothes and jewellery behind. But the Emir could not take all his personal belongings with him. There were heaps and heaps of silken robes hanging on the walls. One of them struck my fancy. It was a long piece of garment, which would fall to the ankles of a six-footer, made of heavy handwoven silk and striped with all the colours of the rainbow. While I admired it, Faizullah, who was conducting me through the palace, took it down and hung it over my shoulders. On my objecting, he said: “After all, let this piece of precious garment, produced by the labour of the poor, at last have a worthy owner.” And then banteringly he added: “This will be your reward, a present from the Republic of Bokhara.” I could not deny the offer and kept the garment on while we walked out of the palace.

Outside there was a large crowd waiting, which had gathered to watch the tragi-comedy of the disbandment of the Emir’s harem. Most probably, the more cynical among them expected to see the members of the government and its Adviser walking out with the most beautiful of the Begums. But the only gratifying sight they saw was myself in the ex-Emir’s gorgeous garment. It seems that Faizullah felt I should have the reward with the consent of the people. So he made a little speech, saying that in recognition of the valuable services rendered to the cause of the liberation of the Bokharan people, the Government of the Republic had presented this garment to the Indian comrade. I added that I would value this precious robe not because it once adorned the royal shoulders, but as a token of affection of the people of this land of ancient learning and culture.

Soon after arriving at Bokhara, I received a report that a group of Indian revolutionaries had been captured by the Turkoman rebels, and were held as prisoners in a place on the upper reaches of the Oxus River. On enquiry, the authenticity of the report was verified, and it was further learned that the Indian prisoners were very badly treated by their captors, and were actually in danger of death or starvation if they were not relieved before long. The country was infested by Turkoman rebels. Therefore, the rescue of the Indian prisoners required a small military expedition. Fortunately, Frunze
was then still in Bokhara. I discussed the matter with him, and it was decided that a detachment of the Red Army should be forthwith despatched with a gunboat up the River Oxus.

The rescue party started immediately and did not have any difficulty in reaching the place where the Indians were held by the Turkomans. They were indeed in a deplorable plight, being actually tied with thick ropes, and were practically starving, because the miserable morsels thrown at them by their captors were uneatable. The expedition returned to Bokhara while I was still there. The liberated Indians were in rags and tatters and hardly able to move because of the long period of starvation. The first thing was to accommodate them in a comfortable house and give them sufficient clothes and food. After they had recovered from the miserable condition in which they were found, I enquired how they came to that remote part of the country where they were taken prisoner and why. It was a long story they told.

In 1919, the Indian Khilafat Committee, which made common cause with the National Congress to fight British Imperialism, issued a call to the Indian Muslim youth to leave the country and go to Turkey to join the army of Mustafa Kemal Pasha, which was fighting against British Imperialism in defence of the Khilafat. As the Indian emigres could not go to Turkey except through Afghanistan, the Government of that country was approached for permission. Not only was permission readily granted, but the exodus from India was encouraged by the tempting proclamation of the Afghan Government that Indians going to fight for the defence of the Khilafat would receive free land, if they wanted to settle down in Afghanistan. The number of Mujahirs (religious emigrants) was never actually known, but it was said to have been between fifty and hundred thousand. Their path of pilgrimage was not only across Afghanistan, but Persia had also to be traversed. But news had reached India that Russian Bolsheviks were very friendly to the Asian people fighting for independence and would offer them help. Therefore, the plan of the Indian Mujahirs was to reach Russia across Afghanistan, and from there proceed farther with the help of the Bolsheviks. To
ascertain whether the expected help would be really available, some emigrant leaders approached the Russian Embassy at Kabul. That seems to have annoyed the Afghan Government and aroused its suspicion. The Mujahirs were thereafter not allowed freedom of movement and placed practically in a concentration camp. Their request that if they could not proceed to Turkey, they should be allowed to settle down in Afghanistan on the terms of the proclamation of the latter's government, did not obtain any favourable response. Their position was helpless as well as hopeless. The more intrepid amongst them revolted and resolved to proceed, defying the order of the Afghan Government, towards the Russian border. It was a bold and hazardous venture.

A distance of more than 150 miles had to be covered on foot over the high ranges of the Hindukush. At the end of the journey, they lost their way to a frequented frontier station. But as they knew that the Russian frontier was at a short distance to the north, they pushed ahead through the wilderness, until they reached the River Oxus, which was the boundary between Afghanistan and Bokhara. The Afghan Government had betrayed them. But Bokhara was an Islamic country, and the Turkomans whom they encountered directly were also Mussalmans. Yet another disillusionment was in store for them. When they asked the Turkomans which was the road to Russia, they were conducted to a clearing in the forest higher up the river and made prisoner. It was a terrible experience, but fanaticism survived it. They did not seem to be very thankful for the rescue.

They were told that a new government had been established in Bokhara which was very friendly to them and they could stay there as long as they wanted. But they insisted upon being sent to Turkey without any delay. It was a refractory lot, moved only by religious fanaticism, which ought to have been shaken by their own experience. There were a few partially educated young men among them. I took them aside and pointed out the futility of their mission to Turkey. Mustafa Kemal had an army of his own and a few more Indians with no military training would be of little help. I advised them to abandon the wild goose chase and settle down in Central Asia.
to be trained politically as well as militarily for future revolutionary activity in India.

The idea of political education did not appeal to most of them. They were all anti-imperialists; what more was there for them to learn? But military training was an inducement. At last I found a point of contact, and promised to arrange for their military training if they went with me to Tashkent. The entire rescued party was of some seventy odd men; about fifty of them agreed to go to Tashkent. They were mostly half-educated young men. The rest were illiterate peasants or urban riff-raff, who were attracted by the fraudulent offer of the Afghan Government and some by the possibility of going to Heaven by laying down their lives in *jehad*. Nevertheless, their religious fanaticism was unbounded, and they could not be persuaded by any argument. They insisted on being sent to Turkey. As nothing else could be done, I sent them to Baku, from where they could proceed to Anatolia. With the more reasonable ones, I left for Tashkent.

There was a solitary Hindu among the Mujahirs. I was naturally intrigued by his presence, and his fellow-travellers were suspicious. It was surprising that he did not fall victim to religious fanaticism. It seems he was saved by his innocuous appearance and quiet manners. I discovered that he was a well educated man, being an M.A. of Benares Hindu University. In any case, he was generally called "Doctor X" (I have forgotten his name). I tried to elicit the reason of his joining the Muslim Mujahirs. He was very uncommunicative and gave evasive answers to my searching questions. But he was eager to accompany me, although he did not evince any interest in military training. Eventually he confided to me that he had come with an important mission from some well-known Hindu leaders. He would not say a word about his mission. He must go to Moscow to deliver it personally to Lenin. On my telling him that unless I knew the nature of his mission, I could not send him to Moscow, he seemed to be reconciled to his fate and said that he would wait for his chance in Tashkent.

AJ time went on, he became more troublesome and threatened to start for Moscow on foot. He did not know the way, but he could go along the railway line. Evidently,
he was not quite in his senses. So I decided to send him to Moscow whatever might happen to him there. He did reach Moscow, and was put up in one of the various guest houses there, and forgotten. After some time, he disappeared. It was reported that his dead body was found on the railway line towards Turkestan. Most probably, the poor fellow committed suicide out of despair. It was a sad story, but I did not know what to do about him. He was still in Moscow when I returned, and bitterly complained that he had not yet been received by Lenin. He doubted the sincerity of the Russians. On my insisting again that unless I knew the nature of his mission, I could not ask Lenin to see him, probably in sheer despair, he, at last, revealed his secret. As I was quite certain that he was not in his senses, I decided to keep his secret to myself. His story compromised some of the prominent Indian leaders, who, he claimed, had sent him to Moscow with the object of securing military help for the Indian Revolution. For the journey he availed himself of the opportunity of the Khilafat emigration. His story was incredible, because the leader particularly concerned was a moderate man who did not believe in an armed revolution.
THE destitute Indian religious emigres were brought to Tashkent. It was not easy to house, feed and clothe them there. Everything was scarce in the capital of the new-founded Turkestan Republic. The first difficulty was to find a house which could accommodate more than fifty people. Having received the news of the coming of the Indian "comrades," the Turk-Bureau of the Communist International had found a suitable house with the help of the Turkestan Government. In the modern part of the city, there was no large enough house. The house for the Indian emigres was between the modern part and the old part of the city. It was a one-storey building with a large number of rooms of all shapes and sizes. It was still winter. Already at Bokhara the Indian emigres had been provided with warm clothing. Each was given a uniform of the Red Army soldier. The long brown coat was quite warm. Yet, some arrangement had to be made for heating the house, at least for another month or so. Fuel was the scarcest commodity of all, and to heat a big house required a considerable quantity. To obtain that, a special permit of the Government had to be secured, and no lesser official than the Commissar of Supplies could issue the permit. The now famous Lazar Kaganovitch was the official to be approached. I thought of seeing him personally so as to make sure that the permit for the precious commodity would be obtained soon. But my secretary-interpreter—a Russian Jew who had lived long in America—felt that it would not be quite proper. In the official hierarchy I held a position higher up than the Commissar of Supplies. The Secretary said that a letter from me would be enough, and he would go with it. I asked him
to draft the letter in Russian, and he produced a tearful document describing all the suffering of the Indian comrades, and how they would freeze if the house was not heated properly. I asked if it was necessary to write all that. He replied, "Yes, some agitation is necessary to move the Commissar.”

My Secretary went off with the letter as drafted by him, and within a couple of hours returned triumphantly with the permit, not only for fuel, but also for a pair of "valniki" (thick high felt boots worn in Russia during the winter) for each Indian comrade. He also brought a message from the Commissar, that the Indian comrades would be provided with everything necessary to make them comfortable, and that I would only have to ring him up, and the required commodities would be delivered promptly.

Before long, two truckloads of wood arrived, and several tall white porcelain tile stoves in the house were lit. There followed a scramble for the warmest room. Anticipating that many similar difficulties would follow, I suggested that three from amongst the 6migr4s should be chosen to constitute a House Committee to supervise the allotment of rooms, and also the provision of food for them all. There were several fairly educated young men in the crowd. I selected three of them and recommended them for the Committee. They readily agreed with my suggestion that, in the allotment of rooms, preference should be given to those not in good health and also to the aged. There were actually several gray beards who had joined the crusade for the defence of the Khilafat. It was a miracle that they had survived the hardships of their journey over the snow-peaked Hindukush. It was also agreed that cots should be provided only to the aged and those in indifferent health. It was impossible to secure cots for all, anyhow. But large woollen carpets were secured to cover the floors, and on the whole the guests were fairly comfortable.

Feeding arrangements were also quite satisfactory—one meal consisted of what was called pilaf, no worse than eaten in my residence or in that of any other high party or State official. The evening meal was composed of lepishka (thick but well-baked unleavened bread known in Northern India as nan) and some meat preparation, usually shtuhtik (Shik Kabab).
In between, in the morning and in the afternoon, apple tea with raisins (in lieu of sugar) was also supplied. It was not a very luxurious board, as expected from oriental hospitality. But none in those days got anything better, and most of the guests were not accustomed to anything better at home. Nevertheless, before long, there was grumbling and articulate complaints. Except for the minority of the educated, the rest of the lot felt that they were obliging us by accepting our hospitality. The House Committee spared me the trouble of listening to unreasonable complaints and trying to do the impossible. As a matter of fact, about a dozen young men of the company proved to be very helpful.

Presently, the time came when we had to broach the question of the purpose of bringing the Indian emigrants to Tashkent. At Bokhara, most of them were attracted by the hope of receiving military training. They believed that after a short sojourn in Tashkent, they would be all sent back home with plenty of arms and money to fight the British. But we had to decide the nature of training according to the competence of the recruits. It would be easy enough to teach all of them how to shoot a gun or even to handle some more complicated weapons. It would also not be difficult to satisfy their expectation of going back to India with arms. But the question was: what would most of them do with their guns, and whom would they fight, and for what ideal?

They had left India with the purpose of fighting for the Khilafat. Most of them were not even nationalists. They were anti-British, but had no idea of what would happen when the British were driven out of India. So it was felt that a measure of elementary political training was necessary before the majority of the emigrants could be armed. The plan was not to convert them to Communism, but to awaken in them the minimum measure of political consciousness. They might be easily persuaded to abandon the slogan "Khilafat Zindabad" for the slogan "Inquilab Zindabad," But they should have some idea of revolution, and how it would be brought about. And for that purpose, first of all they should become loyal soldiers of the revolution. Then we were thinking in terms of a national democratic revolution. But if most of the
emigrants were not nationalists, none of them had any idea of democracy.

I discussed those difficulties with the educated minority of the group. After some persuasion, they agreed with my proposal that the emigrants should receive a course of political training before a military school for training the soldiers of the Indian Revolution could be founded. Arms were easily available. As a matter of fact, I had come to Tashkent with a large quantity of them. But there was no possibility of sending them farther on nearer to India. We did not want the Indian emigrants to be Communists. But if they were to be armed, we wanted to be sure that the arms would not be turned against us.

It was quite clear that, before we could proceed to do anything fruitful with the emigrants, the educated minority should be differentiated from the fanatical mass. So, to begin with, I set myself to the task of politically educating the educated few. Most of them responded quite satisfactorily, although a few turned out to be very refractory. I was very much surprised to find that a few of the educated young men were more fanatical than the emigrant mass. Curiously enough, one of them eventually became an equally fanatical Communist. He is still living somewhere in Pakistan, although it is reported that he has left, or has been expelled from, the Communist Party. He was a pathological case—distrustful of everything and fanatically religious. Another, a somewhat more elderly person who claimed to have been closely associated with Mohammad Ali, was a more deliberate trouble-maker. On the strength of his supposed association with the leader of the Indian Khilafat Movement, he commanded the confidence of the group and could sway them as he liked. He is also alive, and it is reported that he holds a high position in Pakistan.

My closer relation with the educated few aroused suspicion and resentment among the rest. The latter of the two mentioned before took advantage of that situation, and carried on a whispering campaign that I was trying to convert them to Communism. An educated few among them had actually been so converted. There was a terrible uproar, but the
trouble-mater was a very skilful intriguer, and could not be detected easily. The tense situation came to a head when one day the majority of the group demanded that the meat given to them should be from sheep slaughtered in their presence. They suspected that they might be given meat which Mussal-mans were not allowed to eat. It was a groundless suspicion, because in those days no pigs were easily available in Turkestan. But the excited fanatics would not listen. When the House Committee, assisted by the other educated few, tried to explain the position, they were denounced as Kafirs who would be driven out of the house if they continued their objectionable activity. It was an embarrassing position. I would not have minded throwing the majority of the lot out into the streets because no good was ever likely to come out of them anyway. But the Russians were very sensitive about the "Indian comrades" and advised me to be patient and persistent. On my replying that my patience was exhausted by the unruly fanatics and that I did not believe that further perseverance would produce any result, the Russian comrades suggested that the President of the Turkestan Republic, who was a Muslim, should visit the boarding house and talk to the Indian comrades. The President himself was a young man, who wore European clothes and kept no beard. However, his visit did make an impression; after all, he was the head of the government!

After the visit, he sympathised with my difficulties and offered to help. He was also of the opinion that nothing could be done with most of the Indian emigrants, and suggested that we should select only the hopeful few and tell the rest to go out and earn a living, on the ground that in a Communist State none could have bread unless he worked. He offered to provide employment for those who would be willing to work. Of course, his advice could not be accepted, and it had to be kept a strictly guarded secret.

Meanwhile, I went ahead with the political training of the educated few, barring the couple of mischievous ones. To pacify them, the ignorant majority was allowed to go out and roam in the bazar. That was a risky procedure, because even Tashkent was full of enemy spies in those days. They could
take advantage of the disaffection of the Indian emigrants, and with a little money purchase their services. Before long, it was discovered that the apprehension was not unfounded, and I was placed in the delicate situation of dealing with suspected enemy agents as they were dealt with in those days in Russia. My position was delicate because the Russians would not do anything against the "Indian comrades."

My preliminary efforts with the educated minority produced greater results than I expected and wanted. Most of them transferred their fanatical allegiance from Islam to Communism. I had not spoken to them at all about Communism. I only told them that driving the British out of India would be no revolution, if it was succeeded by replacing foreign exploiters by native ones. I had to explain the social significance of a revolution: that, to be worthwhile, a revolution should liberate the toiling masses of India from their present economic position. Instinctively idealists, they readily agreed with my opinion and jumped to the conclusion that, if the revolution was to liberate the toiling masses, it would have to be a Communist revolution. I was surprised when some of them approached me with the proposal that they wanted to join the Communist Party. Others enquired why we should not found the Communist Party in India there and then. Their enthusiasm was very well meant. Although some of them had a utilitarian motive, I could not discourage them.

Presently, they were reinforced by the arrival of a small group which called itself Communists already at Kabul. It was led by an old gray-bearded Maulana, Abdur Rub, and a South Indian Hindu named Acharya. On their arrival, they were accommodated in the emigrants' house and expected to have special attention and privileges owing to their professed political faith. I would have welcomed the advent of even a few clever and convinced Communists to help me deal with a rather difficult situation. But after some conversation I discovered that Abdur Rub was an impostor, and Acharya was an anarchist, if he was anything. But the educated minority of the earlier emigrants were easily influenced by Abdur Rub and Acharya, who fanned their Communist fanaticism.
The result of a new crisis in the emigrants’ house was that some of the inmates began talking about communism openly and went to the extent of making disparaging remarks about their fanatical past, which was still a present with most of the others. Occasionally, it came to fierce altercations and even exchange of blows. To maintain order and to protect the minority, we had to post some armed guards near the house. ' On the other hand, the minority, which proposed the formation of an Indian Communist Party, was reinforced by the Abdur-Rub-Acharya group and, on the latter's instigation, sent a delegation to the Turk-Bureau of the Communist International to plead their case. I tried to argue with them that there was no hurry. They should wait until they returned to India. There was no sense in a few emigrant individuals calling themselves the Communist Party. They were evidently disappointed, and I apprehended that the experience might dishearten them. I needed their help to manage the refractory majority of the emigrants. The idea of turning them out with the offer of employment was not practical. So I agreed with the proposal of the formation of a Communist Party, knowing fully well that it would be a nominal thing, although it could function as the nucleus of a real Communist Party to be organised eventually. An intelligent and fairly educated young man named Mohammad Safiq, who had come from Kabul with the Acharya group, was elected secretary of the party.

The party was formed. But what should be its activity? A Communist party must work among the masses. India was far away. The Indian masses could not be reached from where we were. But I pointed out that in the emigrant group we had a cross-section of the Indian masses. On return to India, the pioneering Communists would have to face the political backwardness, general ignorance and religious fanaticism of the masses. So they had better serve their apprenticeship by endeavouring to influence the cross-section of the Indian masses within our reach. They agreed and it was decided that they should try to persuade the rest of the emigrants to attend a series of general political talks preparatory to their admission to the proposed military school. The
members of the Communist group were to deliver those talks. Apart from Mohammad Safiq, two others proved to be quite efficient. One was Shaukat Usmani. He was a graduate of some Indian University and quite intelligent. But he was the most fanatical of all and stuck to his guns till the bitter end. As he was known among the emigrants to be a devout Mussalman, his talks were readily attended and began to have influence. The other was Abdullah Safdar. In India he used to teach Urdu to British army officers on the Frontier, but he himself hardly knew any English. But being a professional teacher, he was also quite successful in his talks. Usmani returned to India several years later and became an important member of the Communist Party. He was an accused in the Meerut Conspiracy Case. Safdar went to Moscow and graduated from the Communist University for the Toilers of the East. Then he received higher education in Marxist Theory at the Institute of Red Professors. He also came back to India eventually and lived underground. In the earlier part of the Second World War he left India with the object of returning to Russia. I have had no news of what happened to him thereafter.

The central theme of the talks delivered in the emigrants' house was that they must soon return to India to fight for her liberation. But a few of them, even if supplied with arms, would not be able to make a revolution. For that purpose, they must win over thousands and thousands of others like themselves. Therefore, before returning to India they must learn what they would tell them to win them over for the revolution. Once that preliminary training was imparted, they would be admitted to the Military School to receive training in the use of all sorts of arms and when, on return to India, they would have enlisted the support of many others for the revolution, plenty of arms would be sent to them.

The talks, delivered by several of their own fellow-religionists, did not mention the word "Communism" nor made any disrespectful reference to religion, which pacified the recalcitrant lot, and the atmosphere in the India House (that was how the emigrants' house was called) became quiet. The idea of being trained in the use of arms seemed to have been attractive.
Shortly thereafter, a Military School was founded. The group of Russian officers who had accompanied me from Moscow was still in Tashkent. To them was entrusted the organisation of the school. John, the American Wobbly, was appointed the Commandant of the School. He was to look after the discipline. Having looked over his wards, he sarcastically remarked: “We are going to train not an army of revolution, but an army of God.”
THE formal foundation of the Indian Military School at Tashkent was a ceremonious affair, attended by the high officials of the Turkestan Republic and the leaders of the Turkestan Communist Party. According to previous agreement among ourselves, the Russians kept away. This precaution was taken in view of the fact that, just at that time, diplomatic negotiations were going on between the Soviet Government and Britain for resumption of trade relations, which would end the long economic blockade of the Soviet Republic. Lord Curzon was the British Foreign Secretary in those days, and he was very sensitive about the Empire. "The Russians in Central Asia " had been the spectre which haunted him for many years, ever since he was the Viceroy of India. The fact that the Russian Government of the Tzars had been replaced by a new regime, which from the very beginning proclaimed the principle of serf-determination of peoples and condemned colonialism of any kind, was of no significance to the arrogant noble Lord. Therefore, anxious to put an end to the economic blockade, the Soviet Government was reluctant to do anything which might queer the pitch of the diplomatic negotiations for the resumption of trade with Britain. A pathological suspicion, however, could not be easily allayed. Before the year was out, the Soviet Government received a blistering note from the British Foreign Secretary which referred to the Indian Military School at Tashkent as evidence of Soviet aggressive designs against the British Empire. As a rupture of the newly established economic relations with Britain would prejudice the painful process of Russian reconstruction, the Indian Military School at Tashkent had to be disbanded.
That was, however, not a great loss, nor should revolutionaries with fullest confidence in their strength and ideal bother about loss of prestige. Perhaps but for the youthful exuberance of some of the Turkestan leaders, the situation might not have been precipitated so soon. At the opening of the Military School, some of them had made fervently Messianic speeches. That was the temper in the early days of the revolution. The revolutionary leaders had not yet learned to be discreet and diplomatic. "The Indian comrades" were warmly welcomed as the representatives of a great people groaning under colonial slavery and at last rising up in a mighty revolt against barbarous British Imperialism. The Russian BolshevUcs not only stood for the liberation of the colonial peoples, but as soon as they seized power, they had actually set free millions of Muslims subjugated for centuries by Tzarist absolutism. Now it was the turn of the liberated Muslims to extend a helping hand to their brethren across the frontiers. Trained in the Tashkent Military School, Indian revolutionaries would carry the message of the Russian Revolution to their countries, which would surely inspire the Indian masses to undertake heroic action for overthrowing the British rule.

Several speeches were made in this strain and they must have been reported with exaggeration and embellishment to disturb Lord Curzon's sleep; and sleepless nights ruffled his temper, which not only disregarded diplomatic decorum, but ignored Britain's self-interest. For, the resumption of trade relations with Russia was mutually beneficial. Russian timber was essential for Britain's mining industry. There were other Russian commodities which were badly required for rehabilitating Britain's war-shattered industry. On the other hand, the economic reconstruction of a vast country like Russia offered a profitable market for British manufactured goods, and the Russians were good pay-masters. If they could not pay in kind, they paid in gold, which must have helped to stabilise the pound.

In any case, the Tashkent Military School could not last very long. The initial group of cadets was indifferent material, except a few who would make good organisers and commanders.
of a revolutionary army and had realised the importance of political training and were not very keen to put on military uniforms, to shoulder guns and to drill. Those who liked these war-like activities remained politically undependable. What should we do with them after they had been trained in the use of arms? They could not be sent back home to constitute a reliable nucleus of a revolutionary army. On the other hand, there was no hope of getting out from India suitable material to be trained as the organisers and founders of a revolutionary army.

While the majority enthusiastic for soldiering could not be trained to handle more complicated weapons than the ordinary rifle, the educated few proved to be capable of higher training. Some of them picked up gunnery very quickly, to the surprise of their Russian instructors. To learn aviation, however, was the general craze. In those days, military aviation was still not highly developed, not only in Russia but throughout the world. I had taken a few aeroplanes with me from Moscow. They were put together into flying condition, and a few of the Indians were selected to receive training in aviation. There was a general scramble; everyone wanted to learn flying, and there was resentment against "unfair discrimination". The complaint was that only those who had turned against the faith of their forefathers and accepted the atheistic cult of communism were given preference. The foundation of the complaint was that those selected for training in aviation were the most educated and also politically conscious. But not one of them was yet Communist. Later on they embraced communism, not under any compulsion, but out of intelligent conviction. Three or four of them made the best of the elementary training which could be imparted at Tashkent. Later on they were sent on to better equipped training centres in Russia proper. At least two of them did very well. One actually became recognized as an ace-flyer. He was attached to the Red Army aviation unit at Leningrad. While doing some acrobatics in a solo flight, his plane crashed and he died. His death was mourned by the Red Army. The other's career, though not so spectacular, was equally creditable. He acquired the qualification to be placed in charge of a Squadron stationed
somewhere in South Russia to train cadets from Afghanistan and Persia. I do not know what happened to him and where he is now.

The closing down of the Military School was not a misfortune because before long the danger of dealing with ignorant and non-political emigrants became palpable. In consequence I was myself placed in a very difficult position. Of course, once they were admitted to the Military School, the Indian emigrants were not allowed to go out and loiter in the bazar, which was their favourite pastime. Nevertheless, clandestine connection between the "India House" and the bazar could not be altogether broken. The man who gave himself out as a trusted lieutenant of Mohammad Ali refused to submit himself either to political or military training. He claimed to be a full-fledged revolutionary and there was nothing for him to learn. He had come to Russia to seek help for the Indian Revolution, and to test the sincerity of the proclamation of the Soviet Government that it stood for the liberation of the colonial peoples. As he was not altogether a youngster, I had taken him into confidence, and told him that my original intention of coming to Turkestan was to go farther to the Norther-Western Frontier of India with a large quantity of arms, with the object of raising an army of Indian liberation there. I also told him that the plan could not be carried out because the Afghan Government would not allow me to pass through its territory. He was surprised when I told him that I did not want to hand over the arms and money I had brought from Moscow to the Afghan Government, as the latter demanded. He thought that was not only a mistake, but a sign of my Hindu distrust for an Islamic government. He, of course, conveniently forgot how the Islamic government had treated the Khilafat emigrants from India. However, he proved to be an even greater trouble-maker.

One day he told me that a very important messenger from the Indian Frontier had come to Tashkent and wanted to see me. On my enquiring where he was, I was told that he was living in the "India House." I was rather surprised that a complete stranger should have been admitted there. However, I decided to see the newcomer, but refused to receive him
either in my residence or in the office of the Turk-Bureau of the Communist International; I would come to the India House to see him. The intermediary was rather crestfallen because he wanted to prove his importance by introducing the newcomer to high quarters. The very sight of the latter aroused suspicion. Perhaps I was prejudiced, although there was no reason why I should be. I had welcomed equally unknown people. He was tall, a typical handsome Pathan, with a flowing black beard and an ornamental turban. He was introduced as Maulana X (I have forgotten the name). I was further told that he wielded great influence with the Frontier tribes and could raise a numerous anti-British army if the necessary arms and money were provided. He had come in search of those. As I was not particularly interested in arming the Frontier tribes to raid India, I enquired if the Maulana had any connection with the nationalist movement inside the country. His reply was very vague. But I could not have anything to do with him before he had given some credentials of his bona fides. So I enquired if he had any relation with the Indian Provisional Government at Kabul. For years it had been carrying on anti-British propaganda among the Frontier tribes and it was headed by a Muslim priest, Maulana Obeidullah. Although the propagandist activity of the Provisional Government had produced little result, Obeidullah was a respected Muslim divine in Western India, and was supposed to have contact with the Indian Khilafat Committee. The newcomer confessed that he had no connection with the Indian Provisional Government at Kabul and obviously to justify his position, made some rather disparaging remarks about it. My initial suspicion was reinforced. I had to proceed with great circumspection.

I told him that the Russian Government would render any help to a revolutionary movement. But personally I wanted to be sure that the movement was genuinely revolutionary; secondly, I enquired how he would transport the arms and the money to the Frontier. He was more easily trapped than I expected. He had already seen the Afghan Ambassador who, on instructions from Kabul, was willing to take delivery of the arms and transport them to the Indian Frontier. As
regards the money, it could be transmitted through some of the Indian traders in Turkestan.

Evidently, there was a well laid plot, not only to swindle, but for more sinister purposes. Some careful investigation was necessary before any step could be taken, one way or the other. I ended the interview with the reassurance that all help for the Indian revolution was easily available, but reliable ways and means must be found to make it reach the proper quarters. The newcomer was evidently not pleased, but he could not give expression to his displeasure except with sulky behaviour.

The next day I reported the matter to the representative of the Tcheka on the Turkestan Commission. Because of the fact that Turkestan was then the hot-bed of enemy espionage, "bloody Peter" of the Tcheka had been sent to Tashkent in that capacity. On hearing the story, he immediately came to the conclusion that the fellow was a spy, but pleaded inability to act swiftly because of the silly sentimentality of the other Russian comrades. I suggested that there was no reason to be hasty; the man did not seem to be very dangerous. So we could take our time for an investigation, which might unearth a really dangerous conspiracy. Peter agreed. His agents reported that the spurious Maulana spent all his days until late in the bazar and mixed with Indian traders who were suspected of British espionage. He also frequently visited the office of the Afghan Mission, but very secretly.

In the meantime, I referred his case to Maulana Obeidullah at Kabul. Whatever might be his political views, he was known to be an honest and honourable man. He would not make any false or malicious report against anybody. His reply was communicated through two members of his government who had to leave Kabul on suspicion of Communist sympathy. Maulana Obeidullah's report was that he knew nothing of the man I enquired about, nor had he ever heard of him. On the arrival of the two members of the Indian Provisional Government from Kabul, the emissary from the Frontier suddenly left the India House and explained his conduct by saying that he was going to stay with some friends, where he would be more comfortable. However, I had the opportunity of confronting him with the two friends from Kabul. He behaved in a very
embarrassing manner; although the latter greeted him as an old acquaintance, he refused to recognise them. From them I learned that the man was quite well known in Kabul as a British agent and also trusted by the Afghan Government.

On the evidence of the two members of the Indian Provisional Government at Kabul, Peter ordered the arrest of the suspected Maulana, but on my request it was done so as to attract no notice. He was arrested one evening late when he was returning from the bazar. A large amount of money in Indian currency was found on his person. It had also been detected that he frequently invited the ignorant cadets in the Indian Military School to the bazar, not only for good feeds, but also to have some private conversation with them. He was actually found to pass on money to some of them. On the receipt of this report, one day we had the Tcheka agents identify the cadets who had received money from the man the previous evening. They were called out of the School on some plausible pretext and searched. Some money was found on each of them. The case was conclusive enough for the revolutionary justice of those days. Peter would listen to no more counsel of caution. His duty was to stamp out counter-revolution. The arrested man was sentenced to death. But on my earnest request, Peter agreed not to lay his merciless hand on others who had been detected to be connected with him.

As a matter of fact, I felt that nothing else could be done. It would not do to send the man away. He was evidently part of a large gang. If sent back, he would carry on vicious anti-Russian propaganda on the Frontier, and also in India. But the other Russian comrades were highly embarrassed by Peter's despatch in dispensing revolutionary justice. But he was autonomous in his position, and his decision could not be revoked even by a verdict of the entire Turkestan Commission. The embarrassing move was made, and it could not be retraced. But the execution of the sentence presented a problem. The condemned man was to be shot. Presumably to guard himself against future censure, Peter handed the condemned man over to the civil authorities, which were to execute the sentence. Molotov, who had come to Turkestan together with Safarov in the Propaganda Train which brought the message
of the revolution to Central Asia, remained there as the Secretary of the Turkestan Commission and the liaison man between the latter and the Turk-Bureau of the Communist International. He was instructed to carry out the execution so that no news of the event would leak out. Peter was impatient. Every day he telephoned to me enquiring what happened to that British spy. I had no news. I even did not know where he was detained. Nor was I interested any more in the case. I would have liked to let the fellow go and all the other Russian comrades would have agreed. But I realised that it was too late. Somehow, all those who knew of the affair seemed to think that to put an end to it was my responsibility. As day after day passed, everybody got a little uneasy, because if the news leaked out there might be a delicate political situation. I appealed to Safarov who, as the representative of the Russian Communist Party, was formally Peter's superior, to come to my aid. With his characteristic cynicism, he said: “What does it matter if one more man dies? But Molotov seems to be afraid of Allah's wrath.” He would send him to me the next day and I should give him a very strict order to finish the job without further delay. Molotov came and stammered and stuttered nervously in reply to my question why the man sentenced to death was not executed. Until he rose high up in the party, Molotov used to stammer very badly. Eventually he managed to get over the defect. Some say that he imitated the example of Demosthenes, although he never became quite an orator. The explanation stammered by Molotov was: Was it advisable to kill an Indian comrade? I told him rather sternly that, in the first place, he was not a comrade, and secondly, there was evidence of his being an enemy agent. I ended the painful interview by a peremptory order: the revolutionary justice must be carried out; the man condemned as enemy agent should be executed forthwith. The daring Maulana was accordingly dealt with the next morning. Fortunately, the whole affair remained a strict secret. Not a single soul except those directly concerned with the affair knew anything about it. Nevertheless, his sudden disappearance caused some commotion among the Indian emigrants. It was discovered
by secret agents that the backward students of the Military School were being frightened by the Indian traders, who had been connected with the late Maulana. They were told that they should demand to be sent back to India, and that if their demand was not complied with, they should run away secretly and they would be helped. Clearly, there was absolutely no sense in keeping the Military School with such inmates going. Meanwhile, the time came for the Third World Congress of the Communist International in Moscow. I was to leave Turkestan to attend it. But in whose care should I leave the troublesome lot? About a dozen of the more educated and intelligent had indeed become sincere revolutionaries and honest friends. But they were alarmed to hear that I was to leave very soon. With the ready consent of the other leading Russian comrades, I got Peter's assurance that during my absence he would make no arrests from among the Indian students of the Military School.
Indian Revolutionaries in Moscow

ON the eve of my departure from Tashkent, Abani Mukherjee arrived from Moscow. I had no news of his coming. He had no business there. I had sent him to the Baku Congress on the understanding that, on return to Moscow, he would leave for Western Europe to take up his headquarters in Holland with the object of establishing contact with India through the intermediacy of sailors. So his sudden arrival was not only a surprise, but it also turned out to be an embarrassment. He readily volunteered to take over charge of the Military School during my absence. He was also an ardent advocate of developing the Communist Party of India and increasing its membership. Because of his previous record with the Tcheka, Peter came to know of his arrival instantly. He had never got over the disappointment of having had to let him go out of his bloody clutches owing to my intervention, backed up by Lenin's benevolence. Given his ambitious and stormy character, Abani Mukherjee was sure to get into some trouble before long. Who would protect him this time against Peter's vengeance? Safarov disliked him heartily. Before leaving, I saw Peter to plead with him to be more lenient. He growled at me: Why did I bring Mukherjee here? He was sure to create trouble, and in that case Peter would take him without fail. The meaning of Peter taking anybody was quite unequivocal. I was frightened and told him that Mukherjee had promised to behave properly and there were a dozen intelligent Indian revolutionaries who would keep a check on him,

I was surprised that Mukherjee had left Moscow just before the Third World Congress, and that he willingly agreed to
stay away. I came to know the reason as soon as I returned to Moscow.

When I reached there, several Indian revolutionaries had arrived from Berlin as representatives of the defunct Indian Revolutionary Committee. On my way to Moscow,' I had pleaded with the leading Indian revolutionaries in Berlin to proceed to Russia, which at that time offered them the only safe asylum and promised to be a reliable base for work to promote revolution in India. At that time, they did not seem to believe that the Russian Revolution would last; and Communism did not find favour with them. So, when at last they changed their mind and turned towards the base of world revolution, I was naturally very glad. But to my great surprise, the few representatives of the Berlin Revolutionary Committee who had already reached Moscow were rather cool in their response to my friendly attitude. However, I learned from them that they had come only as a vanguard of the Revolutionary Committee, which would before long reach Moscow in full force. I hoped that on the arrival of veteran revolutionaries like Virendranath Chattopadhyaya, Bhupendranath Dutta and others, the relation would change. I eagerly looked out for the arrival of men who with their revolutionary devotion and long experience could be expected to be good comrades and willing collaborators.

Within a short time, they all arrived to announce that the Indian Revolutionary Committee of Berlin, which alone had the authority to speak in behalf of India, had decided to shift its headquarters to Moscow, if favourable conditions were offered. Although the declaration insinuated that I had no right to speak in behalf of India, I made no secret that the plan of the Indian revolutionaries shifting their headquarters to Moscow would have my fullest support; and there could be no doubt that nowhere in the world could better conditions be obtained than in Moscow. But curiously enough, the newcomers not only tried to avoid me, but some of them actually took up an openly hostile attitude.

The Indian Revolutionary Committee of Berlin was then a thing of the past. Irrespective of whatever might have been its achievements in the earlier days, during the closing years
of the war it was a divided house and had practically disintegrated. Instead of working on the authority of that legend, it would have been wiser to have made a new beginning under different circumstances. But it seems that the news of the formation of the emigrant Indian Communist Party at Tashkent had frightened the old nationalist revolutionaries, who regarded the new body as a challenge to their authority. If I had had the opportunity to meet the leaders of the delegation from Berlin, I could have explained the situation to their satisfaction. I did not approve of the formation of the emigrant Communist Party, and I did not believe that it had any right to speak on behalf of the workers of India, not to mention the Indian people as a whole.

The delegation of Indian revolutionaries from Berlin was composed of fourteen people, including Virendranath Chatto-padhyaya, Bhupendranath Dutta, Virendranath Das Gupta, the Maharashtrian Knankhoje, Gulam Ambia Khan Luhani, Nalini Gupta. The driving force of the delegation however was Agnes Smedley, an American by birth. I had met her in America. Then she was an anarchist-pacifist. Working as private Secretary of Lajpatrai for some time, she seemed to have developed a great sympathy for India. Having learned that famous Indian revolutionaries were living in Berlin, at the conclusion of the War she came over there and became a very active member of the Indian group.

But the delegation which came to Moscow was evidently not the original Indian Revolutionary Committee of Berlin. Hardayal and Chattopadhyaya had been the two dominant figures of the Berlin Committee and as such they had clashed before long. No less ardently anti-British, Hardayal however was taken prisoner in Germany and detained on the suspicion of enemy espionage. When Germany surrendered, he escaped to Stockholm and wrote a book describing his experiences in Germany. Evidently, the experience had embittered him. He appeared to be an apologist of the British rule in India and advocated Dominion Status as against complete independence. He actually wrote something which, though true, ought not to be said by a revolutionary Indian nationalist. Pointing out the fact that the fighters for Indian freedom
had learned their political lesson from Britain, Hardayal made the declaration that, if India was the mother, Britain was the grandmother. That naturally scandalised all Indian nationalists. It was alleged that he had written the book with the object of getting the permission to return to Britain and subsequently to India. But evidently he did not get the permission. He stayed on in Sweden and during the last years of his life taught Indian philosophy in the old University of Upsala. That was a recognition of his learning and intellectual calibre. The chairman of the Berlin Committee, Mohammad Hasan Mansoor, had gone to Turkey in the earlier years of the War. He returned from there to Berlin disillusioned and disgruntled and declared himself to be a Communist. The professed conversion to communism isolated him from the old colleagues. He did not join them when they came to Moscow, but later on came there alone and lived quietly for a couple of years. I have already referred to my experience with him. When in 1919 I reached Berlin, Bhupendranalh Dutta was the only original member of the war-time Indian Revolutionary Committee living there. All the others had dispersed. Virendranath Chattopadhyaya himself had gone to Stockholm to plead the case of India's independence in the International Socialist Conference there.

Feeling that the Indian revolutionaries from Berlin were not very kindly disposed towards me, I left them alone so as to obviate the impression that I was trying to influence them or to stand in the way of whatever plan they might have had. But I could not help being puzzled and pained when most of them would not even speak to me. It seemed they had the entirely groundless misgiving that I might stand in their way to seeing various Russian leaders and plead their case. Curiously enough, they were very eager to see Chicherin in the first place. He was still Commissar of Foreign Affairs, but wielded no great political influence. Moreover, he had just received the British note about the activities of Indian revolutionaries in Central Asia and naturally did not think that it would be very wise to receive well-known Indian revolutionaries in Moscow. Nevertheless, as a polite man, not willing to offend anybody's feelings, he did have a short meeting with a
few of the Indian revolutionaries. It seems the latter were disappointed with the meeting. Then they demanded an interview with Lenin himself. They made a great secret of the move, most probably believing that I might stand in their way. But I got the news from Lenin himself. He telephoned to me and asked me to come and see him. He enquired about the Indian revolutionaries who had come to Moscow, and if it was necessary for him to see them. If they had come to discuss any plan of revolutionary work in India, they should address themselves to the Communist International. Lenin was surprised to hear that the Indian revolutionaries were not at all well disposed towards me. Nevertheless, I suggested that he should see them and hear what they had to say. Lenin remarked that I was in a minority of one against fourteen. I replied that he knew that I did not claim to represent anybody but myself. So, as far as I was concerned, there was no conflict between the Indian revolutionaries and myself. Lenin enquired if I had discussed matters with them, and was surprised to hear that they would not even speak to me. Evidently in exasperation he sat back in his chair and said: “Well, select three of them to come and see me.” I told him that I could not do that, he would have to contact them directly.

In the next days there was a great flutter in the Indian delegation. Lenin had agreed to grant an interview. The Indian revolutionaries had been informed that Lenin would receive three of their representatives chosen by themselves. There were differences as regards the choice. Everybody considered himself to be more entitled to the honour and privilege than the others. I could get all this information through Nalini Gupta, the only one who did not share the general hostile attitude towards me. He was also the only one among the Indian revolutionaries in Europe who maintained some connection with the revolutionary organisations in India by frequently travelling back and forth secretly. He had met some of my friends in India and learned from them about the mission with which I had gone abroad in the beginning of the War. During his last visit to India shortly before he came to Moscow, he was instructed to contact me. So from the very beginning ray relation with him was of mutual trust and confidence.
He gave me the information that, although among the Indian revolutionaries there was a dispute about the selection of the three to see Lenin, there was a general agreement about the case which was to be presented on that occasion. A long thesis was being prepared under the guidance of Chatto-padhyaya and Agnes Smedley to contradict my thesis adopted by the Second World Congress of the Communist International the year before. Luhani, a North-Bengal Muslim, who had come to Britain to study law, was a clever man and an accomplished speaker. But not being one of the senior members of the Berlin group, he was not chosen as one of the representatives to see Lenin. The thesis to be presented by the representatives, however, was drafted by him. The others could not prepare a well argued document.

Agnes Smedley, backed by Chattopadhyaya, wanted to be one of the representatives to see Lenin. Her claim was opposed by all the rest of the Indians. Finally, Chatto and Dutta, as the seniormost members, were chosen by general consent. I have forgotten who was the third one; most probably it was Knankhoje, who was chosen to obviate the allegation that the delegation was purely Bengali.

Having given them a polite and patient hearing, Lenin advised the representatives of the Indian revolutionaries to see the Secretary of the Communist International, and remarked that the Soviet Government could not actively take part in any plan for promoting revolution in other countries. The Indian revolutionary representatives returned from the coveted interview thoroughly disappointed and even angry. Dutta blurted out that Indian revolutionaries could expect no help from the Bolsheviks because they were eager to make peace with British Imperialism.

However, they saw Radek, who was then General Secretary of the Communist International. When they came to his office, I was in another room in the same building. In their presence Radek spoke to me on telephone. I begged to be excused with the remark that he would presently learn why I could not come. Lenin had passed on the thesis submitted by the Indian revolutionaries to Radek. He informed his visitors that in its activities to help the national movements in
colonies, the Communist International was bound by the thesis of the Second World Congress. But, he added, if the new Indian comrades disagreed with that thesis and wanted the Communist International to alter its attitude and policy, they would have an opportunity in the near future, when the Third World Congress would meet; the Indian revolutionaries could stay on and attend the World Congress, not of course as delegates with votes, but as visitors. But if they submitted their thesis, the Secretariat of the Communist International would recommend its consideration by the World Congress.

The Indian revolutionaries were impatient. They would not waste time in Moscow. They were eager to return to active work which had been interrupted after the War. They had come to Moscow expecting to receive help so that they could go back to West Europe and resume revolutionary activities. Radek informed the Indian revolutionaries that the Second Congress of the Communist International had set up its Central Asiatic Bureau as the instrument to promote revolutionary activities in the countries of the East. Pending any new decision all plans of revolutionary activities in India should be prepared in consultation with the Central Asiatic Bureau of the Communist International. Radek informed the Indian revolutionaries that I was a member of that Bureau and had just come to Moscow. He advised them to get in touch with me and discuss their plans.

The meeting with Radek was even more disappointing than that with Lenin. In order to assuage the feelings of the Indian comrades Radek promised to ask the Executive Committee of the Communist International to set up a small commission to hear the case of the Indian delegation and to investigate the whole situation. But that did not satisfy all, and soon thereafter, most of the members of the delegation left Moscow, one by one. Chattopadhyaya, Agnes Smedley, Bhupendranath Dutta, Luhani, Nalini Gupta and a few others stayed behind.

The Commission to hear the Indian revolutionaries and to examine the Indian situation was composed of August Thalheimer, the leader of the German Communist Party, Tom Queich of the British Communist Party and Borodin. Chatto
was the obvious leader of the Indian delegation. But he was a poor speaker, and Agnes Smedley was anxious to deputise for him. But a non-Indian would not be the right person to open the Indian case, which was done by Luhani. He gave a very good performance. After he had finished, Thalheimer enquired whether the new Indian comrades had any objection to work in co-operation with me. On enquiry, I frankly said that I would be only too glad to have the co-operation of the newcomers. I further added that I did not claim to represent India. If the new Indian comrades would agree on a programme of work, and decide to stay in Moscow to take over the responsibility of guiding activities, I should place myself at their disposal. That brought Chatto to his feet. With great indignation he interjected: "We have nothing against you, but we cannot have anything to do with you so long as you are associated with a known spy who has been responsible for the death of many revolutionaries in India," The Commission was taken aback. Borodin suggested that Comrade Chatto-padhyaya should be a little more explicit about his allegation, if he wanted it to be taken seriously. In any case, who was the British spy he had just mentioned? Chatto signalled Luhani to answer the question. The accused was Abani Mukherjee, and the allegation was that, on his way back to India from Japan in 1916, he was arrested at Singapore and imprisoned. He did not escape from prison, as he had pretended, but was released by the British police because he had given out information about the underground revolutionary movement in India. On his information, a number of people were arrested in India and sentenced to death and long terms of imprisonment.

In reply, I informed the Commission under what circumstances I came to know Abani Mukherjee and said that his behaviour had also made me suspicious; but as long as there was no evidence to bear out the serious allegation against him, it would not be fair to penalise him, and the penalty would be the maximum, if I withdrew my protection. I would not take such a responsibility merely on vague suspicions.

In order to put an end to the unpleasant subject, which could not be settled there and then, Thalheimer suggested
that we should revert to the discussion of any political differences the new Indian comrades might have had with me. In behalf of the delegation, Luhani replied that they disapproved of the formation of the Indian Communist Party in Tashkent and demanded its dissolution as the condition for any cooperation with me. I again explained the situation which was forced on me, and pleaded that the Communist Party of India was formed on the initiative of a number of others who would certainly not agree to the dissolution of the party, even if I recommended it. But the Indian delegation was equally adamant also on this question.

Chattopadhyaya, on behalf of the delegation, gave an ultimatum to the Commission. If their demands were not accepted, they would forthwith leave Moscow, fully convinced that Indian revolutionaries could not count on any help there.
Indian Provisional Government Expelled From Kabul

THE Moscow visit of the Indian revolutionaries from Berlin was a painful experience for me. I could never understand why they were so unfriendly and even hostile. Already in India, I had heard so much about them and the work they were doing for Indian freedom. When I came to Berlin, none of those who had been known to me by name was there except Bhupendra-nath Dutta. He did not make much of an impression on me. As a matter of fact, although he was living abroad for quite a long time, he never participated in any revolutionary activity. He won some reputation in India when in 1907 he was arrested and sentenced to two years' imprisonment for sedition. He was then the editor of the famous Bengali Weekly *Tugantar*, the organ of the underground revolutionary party. After his release, he left for the United States, presumably to avoid getting arrested again in the Alipore Bomb Case. In America, he was known rather as the brother of Swami Vivekananda than as a revolutionary. On the outbreak of the War, he went to Berlin, as many other Indian emigres did. For his reputation as a former editor of the *Tugantar*, who had gone to prison, and also as the brother of Swami Vivekananda, he was given a place of honour among the Indians congregated in Berlin. When I saw him there first, at the end of 1919, I was struck by his political immaturity. He had lived in the centre of Europe when that continent was devastated by a world war, but had learned nothing either from the War or from the German revolution which followed it. He had made no attempt to contact the German Social-Democratic Party, which had replaced the Monarchists in the government of the
country. As a matter of fact, he was impatient with the Socialist idea of class struggle and did not believe that the Socialists would be at all interested in India's struggle against British Imperialism. Of course, he knew even less about the Russian Revolution, except that from his Monarchist friends and acquaintances he had acquired a dislike for the Bolsheviks. Therefore, he declined to shift to Moscow, as I suggested. I was not very disappointed, because I did not believe that he would be of any use anywhere.

Chattopadhyaya was away when I came to Berlin. He was the leader of the Indian Revolutionary Committee in Berlin. I was particularly eager to meet him. I was very glad when he came to Moscow. He was known to be a very intelligent and energetic man, having lived a rather stormy life for years in Europe. I expected to find in him a valuable colleague in the revolutionary work. Therefore his attitude of unconcealed hostility puzzled me very much. As I came to know him subsequently, he was not malicious nor did he have any reason to have any grudge against me. His attitude in Moscow was largely the result of the influence of Agnes Smedley.

Ever since we met in the United States, she seemed to have a grudge against me. She was a fanatical hero-worshipper. When she espoused the Indian cause, she seemed to believe that to fall in love with famous Indian Revolutionaries would be the expression of her loyalty to India. As a lonesome old man, Lajpatrai was reported to have played the first Indian hero worshipped by Agnes Smedley. The next hero was a young Indian who had been sent by my friends in India to contact me. Ultimately, he reached New York and met me there. I introduced him to the Socialist and Anarchist circle which alone sympathised with the cause of Indian freedom in those days. There, Agnes Smedley met him and bestowed her affection on a man much younger than herself. Subsequently, I left for Mexico and the young Indian joined me there. As a passionate Indian nationalist, he naturally did not approve of my activities in Mexico. He wanted to set up an Indian propaganda organisation in America and wanted money for it. I tried to persuade him to remain in Mexico and do something which would give him some revolutionary experience.
and political lessons. He refused and was eager to return to New York. While staying with me, he received daily letters from Agnes Smedley urging him to come back as soon as possible. I felt that the infatuation of a young man for a woman much older than himself would do no good. But I could not persuade him to remain in Mexico. Eventually, he left, with a considerable amount of money under a false pretence. On his return to the United States, together with Agnes Smedley, he set up an organisation called "The Friends of Freedom for India," with headquarters in Washington. Soon both of them were arrested for the pretension of being diplomatic representatives of a foreign country without due accreditation. I received frantic cables to send money for their defence. But I was not prepared to waste any to support a frivolous adventure. Eventually, the young Indian married another American girl, and Agnes Smedley had to look out for a new hero. The famous revolutionary Chattopadhyaya naturally commended himself for her affection. She came over to Berlin and was known to have lived with Chattopadhyaya for several years. It seems that she managed to poison Chatto's mind against me. In any case, she was the evil genius of the Indian revolutionary group which came to Moscow. But for her influence, Chatto, who was an intelligent and practical man, would have behaved differently. I learned in the course of time that she was heartily disliked by all the other members of the group because of her pretension to be a more passionate Indian patriot than the Indians themselves.

With persistent effort I did manage to cultivate the acquaintance of some of the minor members of the group. Most of them were entirely non-political and had a very vague idea of revolution, although they called themselves revolutionaries. In Germany, they were engaged either in some kind of trade or studies to learn a profession. After the mission in Moscow failed, they went back to their respective pursuits. From them I learned to some satisfaction that Chatto wanted to meet me and cultivate my acquaintance, but Smedley stood in the way. She was hysterical—a pathological case, a fit subject for psycho-analysis. I am afraid that the intimate association with her for several years did some harm to Chatto,
who was a normal human being with likes and dislikes, prejudices and sympathies.

The Indian revolutionaries came to Moscow on the eve of the Third World Congress. Not many international delegates had as yet arrived. Nevertheless, the Hotel Lux (residence of foreign Communists) was nearly full. The Indians were also staying there. But they made no attempt to take interest in the problems which were agitating the minds of the international Communist movement. The Communist Party of Russia itself was in the midst of a very lively discussion about the problems of internal reconstruction. The New Economic Policy of Lenin was the main subject of discussion. There was also a discussion on the role of trade unions under proletarian dictatorship. The Indian revolutionaries took no interest in these discussions. Their only activity was to march up and down the long corridors of the Hotel Lux, button-holing other residents to tell them all about the inequities of the British rule in India. It was like carrying coal to Newcastle. All members of the Communist International, whether Russian or non-Russian, were against Imperialism and sympathised with the struggle of the colonial peoples for freedom. The question they were interested in was how the liberation of the colonial peoples was to be brought about, and what sort of a regime would replace the colonial rule. The Indian revolutionaries had never thought of these questions and could not answer them. That did not make a very good impression on people who were declared friends of Indian freedom. Their lack of interest in listening to the Indian tale of woe and complaint against British Imperialism was interpreted by the Indian revolutionaries as indifference to their cause. In his usual sarcastic vein, Borodin used to describe the situation as the Communist delegates rushing back into their respective rooms as soon as a "dark cloud" appeared at the other end of the corridor.

The ultimatum of the Indian revolutionaries from Berlin was not accepted, and they all left Moscow soon afterwards. Only two remained—Luhani and Nalini Gupta. The others were never explicit about the real object of their visit. But it was evident from their behaviour that they wanted to challenge
my right to represent the Indian revolutionary movement. The implied positive demand was that the Russian Government should recognise the Berlin Committee of Indian revolutionaries as the representatives of India. They were trying, as it were, to break through an open door, because I never claimed to represent any organisation in India. I came to Moscow as an individual, and whatever position I attained there was a recognition of my revolutionary record as an individual and personal merit. Moreover, I invited the Berlin Committee to shift its headquarters to Moscow and take over the responsibility of the work I had been trying to do. I also offered to place my individual services at the disposal of the Committee if it agreed to my proposal. As I did not oppose the demand of the Indian revolutionaries from Berlin, they were rather helpless in their desire to dislodge me. Therefore they concentrated their attack on Abani Mukherjee. As a matter of fact, some of them actually went to the office of the Tcheka and formally denounced Mukherjee as a British agent who was protected by me. The only result of the formal denunciation was a suggestion that Mukherjee should be called back to Moscow and stay there, so that he could be kept under watch. I readily agreed.

Nalini Gupta stayed behind because he wanted to discuss with me his plan of returning to India in the near future. In him I found a very useful collaborator. It was through him that I resumed contact with some of my old friends in India and came in touch with others who took up the task of organising the communist movement in India. Gupta advised me to establish in Western Europe the base of revolutionary propaganda in India.

Luhani had appeared to be a close associate of Chatto-padhyaya. He was his spokesman in the Indian Commission. But he was chosen for the task because he was an accomplished speaker. It was evident that he was briefed by Chattopadhyaya and Agnes Smedley He was very sarcastic about the group in Tashkent, which called itself the Communist Party of India, and ridiculed the central idea of my thesis adopted by the Second World Congress of the Communist International. The idea was that a party of workers and peasants must be organised
to function as the spearhead of the struggle for national freedom.

I was surprised when Gupta told me that Luhani also had decided to stay behind. A few days later, Borodin told me that Luhani had called on him to say that he was disgusted with the behaviour of his colleagues from Berlin and had decided to part company with them. He did not know what he should do and asked for Borodin's advice. The latter advised him to see me. Luhani was disappointed and feared that because of his association with the Berlin group, I would not trust him and might even be vindictive. Borodin told him to take the chance and assured him that he would be very pleasantly surprised. He was, because I welcomed him as one who regretted his mistake and was willing to make good. He said that he was prepared to go back to India, but having come to Moscow he had prejudiced the chance. What should he now do? I suggested that, for the time being, he should remain in Moscow and do some work in the Information Department of the Communist International. He readily agreed.

Just when the Indian revolutionaries from Berlin were leaving Moscow, a message came from the Soviet Ambassador in Kabul that the Afghan Government had requested Maulana Obeidullah to leave Afghanistan together with his colleagues of the so-called Indian Provisional Government, The Maulana wanted to pass through Russia on his way to Constantinople and thereafter to Mecca. His plan was to set up his headquarters there and make revolutionary propaganda among the Indian Muslim pilgrims, and through them establish contact with India. The Soviet Ambassador in Kabul was advised to tell the Maulana that he and his colleagues would be" very welcome in the Soviet Union, where he could stay as long as he wanted, or proceed elsewhere, if he so desired.

Before long, another group of Indian revolutionaries came to Moscow, two members of the Provisional Government—Zakharia and Mohammad Ali—who had left Kabul earlier, and accompanied Obeidullah from Tashkent to Moscow. Several others came with the latter from Kabul. They were all Muslims, but there was one Hindu amongst them. He was
Sibnath Bannerjee, who had come to Kabul to work as a school teacher.

At the same time, Abdur Rab and Acharya also moved from Tashkent to Moscow. There was no love lost between the two old gentlemen. They were at loggerheads already in Kabul. So the two had to be lodged separately in two houses.

Obeidullah reported that, after long negotiations, King Amanullah of Afghanistan had come to an understanding with the British. On the demand of the latter, and to please them, he requested the Indian revolutionaries to leave Afghanistan. Obeidullah's story was corroborated by a report from the Soviet Ambassador in Kabul that he also had been requested by the Afghan Government to leave the country. It was a very unexpected-development, because King Amanullah had all along pretended to be very friendly with the Soviet Government, and the latter had helped him in every possible manner. Raskolnikov, ably assisted by his talented wife, Larissa Reissner, was very successful as a diplomat at the Court of King Amanullah, so much so that the latter once took him into extremest confidence. They became personally friendly and the Soviet Ambassador with his wife were often invited for intimate social functions in the palace of the Afghan King. On these occasions, Queen Surayah discarded her purdah, and the Soviet Ambassador's wife entertained the Afghan King with dance performances. A very beautiful woman, she was not only famous as a talented writer, but was also an accomplished dancer. On one of these occasions, Raskolnikov asked King Amanullah what he thought of Bolshevism; was he not afraid of coming in contact with Bolsheviks, who frankly stood for the abolition of the feudal and capitalist social orders? The King smiled and replied: “No; because I am also a Bolshevik,” Raskolnikov was taken aback and thought it was a mere joke. But the King was serious and whispered in his ear that he also had killed his father to ascend the throne!

King Amanullah's volte face and the restoration of British influence in his kingdom surprised everybody in Russia except Lenin. He had anticipated the development. In one of our many talks before I left for Central Asia with the supplies
and personnel necessary for organising an army of liberation on the frontier of India, the problem of the attitude of the Afghan Government was discussed. The success of my plan presupposed sympathy and co-operation of the Afghan Government. Lenin asked how I could be sure of that. I replied that King Amanullah had quarrelled with the British and must count upon Soviet support for his position. Lenin wondered if the British would abandon their strategic position without making determined efforts to regain it. I enquired what would be the nature of those efforts. Lenin said that they would bombard Amanullah's citadel with silver and gold bullets. On my suggestion why we should be the first in the field with that weapon, Lenin's reply was simple but fully convincing: “The British are much richer than the new Government of Russia. With all the Tzar's treasures, the latter could not compete with the possessors of super-profits from, a vast colonial empire in the game of bribing this or that Asiatic court.” At that time I felt that Lenin's wisdom was rather cynical. But history bore him out.
Revolution Nearly Wrecked by War Communism

THE Moscow visit of the Indian revolutionaries from Berlin was an unpleasant interlude. Not only did it destroy my illusions about the famous revolutionaries to a large extent; it also interfered with my active participation in the preparations for the Third World Congress and also in the discussions about the crisis which had overtaken the new regime in consequence of the ravages of War Communism, aggravated by the Trotzkyist attempt to bring order out of "petit-bourgeois anarchy" by establishing a military dictatorship.

The Civil War had ended in the victory of the new regime practically in the beginning of 1920. With the end of the Civil War, there arose inside the Bolshevik Party differences of opinion about the means and methods of reconstructing the shattered economy of the country. The Revolution had called upon the peasants to seize land and divide it amongst themselves. One of the first decrees of the Soviet Government was to nationalise land. But similar measures were not taken as regards industry. Soon after the establishment of the new regime, a decree was issued introducing workers' control of individual factories. Before long, there developed a conflict between the proprietors and managers and the workers. The conflict led to the seizure of some factories by the workers employed therein. But the preconditions for a general nationalisation of industries were absent. Russian economy was very largely agrarian, and large-scale industries existed only as so many islands in a sea of agrarian economy. They were further destroyed and disintegrated during the two years of civil war.
The Bolshevik Party disapproved of the spontaneous seizure of individual factories by isolated groups of workers, and condemned it as an anarcho-syndicalist practice.

One year after the establishment of the new Government, the All-Russian Congress of Economic Councils opposed the practice of spontaneous expropriation. But War Communism spread in the countryside, particularly in the Ukraine and South Russia, occupied by the German invaders. Owing to the dislocation of the transport system and also the general breakdown of trade, cities were isolated from the countryside and experienced a great shortage of food. Small bands of armed workers sallied forth from the economically beleaguered cities to the surrounding countryside and confiscated grains stored by the more well-to-do peasantry. The poor peasants were incited to revolt against the richer farmers, and joined the armed workers from the cities. This practice was a logical consequence of the nationalisation of land: Land was the property of the entire nation; its fruits must belong to all. The new State was not yet in a position to enforce this principle. But it was a proletarian State, and the proletariat was the leader of the Revolution. So the workers took the law into their own hands and introduced a practice which virtually amounted to a war against the peasantry. Therefore the practice came to be known as War Communism.

The practice spread to other parts of the country and, under its influence, the Soviet Government passed a decree ordering nationalisation of industries. But War Communism aggravated the economic difficulties of the urban areas. Rich peasants burned their stores of grains and slaughtered livestock en masse instead of delivering it to the State. Large tracts of land remained uncultivated. The result was a general famine throughout the country. Nevertheless, the most impractical measure of general nationalisation of industries was taken under the pressure of a mass influx of industrial workers into the party. In the two years 1918-1920, the membership of the Bolshevik Party increased from 2,00,000 to 16,00,000. At the same time, Trotzky's successful attempt to build up a disciplined army out of the scattered guerilla bands of the Civil War period encouraged a tendency in the opposite direction.
As the organiser of the Red Army, Trotzky obtained increasing control over all available man-power. Workers in industries in any way connected with the army were subjected to the most rigid discipline. Gradually, the trade unions were also to be brought under military discipline. The workers naturally resented this encroachment on their new-gained freedom. As long as the new regime was struggling for its very existence, they subordinated themselves to the emergency measures. But as soon as the Civil War was over, powerful groups of old Bolshevik leaders, backed by the new proletarian membership of the party, opposed the growing tendency of over-centralisation, which necessarily meant a threat to democracy. Trotzky was suspected of Bonapartist ambitions. He had laid himself open to the suspicion by admitting tens of thousands of old Tzarist officers in the Red Army. The so-called "Left Communists," led by Bukharin, opposed the employment of Tzarist Generals with the argument that the revolutionary Republic of the Workers and Peasants did not require a centralised army. It had been defended by guerilla bands in the most crucial periods of its history. Now, on the plea of discipline, the freedom of those heroic defenders of the Revolution was being suppressed.

Fully appreciating the great services rendered by Trotzky during the Civil War, Lenin tried to placate the opponents to his alleged Bonapartism. In many moments of sharp dispute, he overruled Trotzky and placed veteran party members in the key positions of the new army. Once it actually came to a conflict between Lenin and Trotzky. When the latter was away on the Eastern front, Lenin sent him a note enquiring what would happen if all the Tzarist Generals and specialists were thrown out of the Red Army and party members with military experience were placed in commanding positions. Trotzky characterised Lenin's suggestion as a "child's play." Later on, he backed up his arrogant reply with the statement that there were no less than 30,000 Tzarist officers in the Red Army; how could he replace them all?

Lenin had expected that Russian economy would be improved with the technical help of a revolutionary Germany. But the defeat of the German Revolution destroyed that hope.
Nevertheless, the Eighth Congress of the Soviets in December 1920 endorsed Lenin's plan of electrification as the basis for industrial reconstruction. New industries should be built to absorb demobilised soldiers, and peasant youths who had fought for the Revolution during the Civil War should not be sent home, where starvation and misery awaited them; they were to be formed into Labour Battalions and employed wherever man-power was needed. Trotzky availed of this plan of Lenin's to carry through the militarisation of labour, Lenin's idea was that in the course of time the Red Army was to be transformed into a labour army. But Trotzky wanted to draft the entire man-power of the country as an auxiliary to a central army. He supported this plan with the argument that out of a million and hundred-thousand industrial workers, only 8,00,000 were employed. Where have the remaining 3,00,000 gone? Wherever they might have gone, in the military sense they were deserters. Trotzky declared that, like soldiers, workers also must be forced to do their duty. He wanted the trade unions to mobilise the workers to do their duty.

Trotzky's position had a far-reaching economic implication. It was rejection of the New Economic Policy which Lenin had been outlining inside the party, and which was adopted by the party in summer 1921. Trotzky held that the production of the means of production must have priority. That is to say, the economic rehabilitation of the country must begin with the development of heavy industries, and he argued: “Only when we have the means of production can we go over to the production of consumers' goods directly for the masses.” But Trotzky's idea of the reconstruction of Russian industry by militarisation of labour never worked. Released from the army, the soldiers went back home.

Preparatory to the 10th Congress of the Bolshevik Party which was to settle the disputed political and economic issues, and also to the Third World Congress of the Communist International, which was to endorse the resolution of the Bolshevik Party, there was a lively public discussion. The non-Russian members of the Executive Committee of the Communist International resident in Moscow participated in the discussion. Practically all of them reassured the Russian
workers that revolution was round the corner in their respective countries; the hard pressed Russian workers were to hold out for a little while longer to be relieved by the coming world revolution. Whatever the non-Russian Communists might say to cheer up the Russian workers, the failure of the German Revolution of 1918 and the subsequent defeat of the Red Army at Warsaw had dimmed the perspective of an early world revolution. Indeed, the crisis in the Bolshevik Party and of the Russian Revolution was very largely due to those regrettable facts.

Disappointment in the West induced the Russian workers to turn their eyes to the East for a new hope. I was therefore a very popular speaker in all public meetings. Although I refused to foster a new illusion, I was called upon to address numerous meetings. But I preferred to speak on issues which then agitated the minds of all intelligent and active members of the Bolshevik Party. My sympathy was with the so-called Left Communists, who opposed Trotzky's suspected Bona-partism, and by implication advocated continuation of War Communism. The influence of Left Communism on the proletarian masses was evidenced by my election to the Moscow Soviet from two key constituencies—the Press Workers' Union and the District of Krasnapresnia, which was the scene of the first insurrection in 1917.

I also participated in the discussions in many party membership meetings. My sympathy with the Left Communist Opposition brought me in close contact with its leader, Bukharin. He was the most lovable of all the Bolshevik leaders, and though the youngest of all, he was recognised as the theoretical authority second only to Lenin. The latter looked upon him as his spiritual son. Although he disapproved of Left Communism, he treated Bukharin very, very gently. His attitude towards me was also very affectionate. On many occasions he asked Bukharin and me for private discussions on all the disputed issues.- He made no secret that on one point he fully approved of the Left Communist Opposition; it was its objection to Trotzky's plan of militarising the entire manpower of the country and making a centralised army a power above the party.
In the course of such private discussions, I learned that already then Lenin was backing Stalin, at that time still very little known outside the inner circle of the party, as against Trotzky. The struggle for succession did not begin until after another two years. But already the issue was lurking in the minds of all the party leaders. Because of his close association with Lenin during the long years of European exile, Zinoviev believed himself to be the natural successor. The belief was generally shared. It was reinforced by Zinoviev's election, with Lenin's backing, to the Chairmanship of the Communist International. But he had two formidable rivals from the very beginning, and the latter were rivals themselves. They were Trotzky and Stalin. The one held that a military dictatorship was necessary to bring order out of the chaos created by Civil War and War Communism, while the other advocated a strict party dictatorship.

Having learned that Lenin had almost unlimited confidence in Stalin's judgment and ability, I was naturally eager to cultivate the latter's acquaintance. The opportunity came before long. I was to make a report to the coming Third World Congress about the activities of the Turkestan Bureau of the Communist International and also about the situation in the colonial countries. I submitted the outlines of the report to Lenin. Our differences about the revolutionary potentialities of colonial Nationalism had considerably narrowed down since the Second World Congress. But even now we could not agree about the role of Gandhi, whose name was just coming to be known in Russia. Lenin regarded the new leader of Indian Nationalism as objectively revolutionary like the great heretics of mediaeval Europe. I held that such an estimation of the role of Gandhi was precluded by his religious and social ideas, which were positively reactionary. Admitting that, as the leader of an anti-imperialist movement, Gandhi could play an objectively revolutionary role, I argued that he might also travel the way of the Russian Social Revolutionaries, who were characterised by Plekhanov as politically revolutionary and socially reactionary. As a disciple seeking light from the Master, I enquired whether an anti-imperialist movement inspired by reactionary social ideas and burdened
with obscurantist religious beliefs, could be politically revolutionary. Lenin saw the force of my doubt and agreed to differ for the moment, expecting that experience would enable us to make a correct judgment.

Lenin made a few notes to be incorporated into my report to the Third World Congress. But he suggested that I should have a detailed discussion with Stalin, who was then the Commissar of Nationalities and considered to be the authority on the question. I saw him after a few days, but he was very ill. I saw him again nearly a whole year later. By that time, he had become the Secretary of the Party as Lenin's choice.

Trotzky's attempt to militarise the entire man-power of the country, and particularly his theory that under Socialism trade unions have no independent function to perform and should be merged into the machinery of the State, provoked widespread discontent among the workers. The discontent manifested itself in a wave of strikes in Petrograd. On 1 March 1921, the sailors of several battleships anchored at Kronstadt and the local garrison rose in revolt. They called a public meeting of citizens which adopted a programme incorporating the demands of the various opposition groups inside the party. The programme reflected the sentiment not only of the middle class intellectuals and the mass of the dissatisfied peasantry, but also of the workers who were opposed to regimentation. The programme of the Kronstadt insurrection included the demands (i) freedom of the trade unions and peasant organisations; (2) full freedom for peasants with regard to their land, on condition that they manage it with their own means and without employing hired labour; and (3) the right of craft production by one's own effort.

The Bolshevik Party and the Soviet Government reacted to the situation by condemning the insurrection as a counterrevolutionary uprising engendered by White Guard Generals from their asylum in Finland. No compromise was possible with such a dangerous movement. The party and the government ordered the employment of full military power for the suppression of the Kronstadt revolt. But few could miss the ominous significance of the event. It was a danger signal. Only three years before, the Kronstadt sailors had been the first
to raise the banner of insurrection, which was a signal for the October Revolution. Now those very sailors were rising in revolt against the revolutionary government with the support of many workers! Nor could the revolt be dismissed as an isolated event. Its programme clearly reflected the dissatisfaction which was sweeping the country. It was easy enough to suppress the Kronstadt revolt. But it was only the symptom of a widespread disease, which had to be cured by drastic measures.
IN that grave crisis, Lenin demanded that the Bolshevik Party must forthwith endorse the New Economic Policy proposed by him as the only remedy for the ravages of War Communism. Having anticipated the maturing crisis, he had outlined the New Economic Policy for discussion inside the party. The new policy advocated by Lenin was a call for a retreat on the economic front, which would have far-reaching political consequences. It was so drastic a measure that even the rank and file of the party were not at once taken into confidence. The discussion remained confined to the higher circles of the party. But a faint echo of the lively discussion reached the general public as well as the party membership, to raise new hope for the enemies of the Soviet regime and cause grave misgivings to the rank and file Communists. Only unshakable confidence in the leader of the World Proletarian Revolution kept up the morale of the proletarian masses. Lenin could never betray the Revolution; indeed, he could never make a mistake. That was the general belief.

The essence of Lenin's New Economic Policy was to face the cardinal fact that the peasantry was the dominating factor of the economic situation. Their satisfaction and loyalty were essential for the very existence of the new order. The Revolution had given land to the peasantry. But War Communism, appropriation of the major part of the produce of the land and the peasants' labour had deprived the gift of the Revolution of all economic value. The legal ownership of the land did not mean anything to the peasantry, if they were not also owners of the produce of the land and their labour.
With infinite patience, Lenin explained all these obvious points to the party leaders. But the latter were obsessed with the idea of proletarian dictatorship. Would not economic freedom enable the peasantry to acquire political power—to capture the Soviets in the rural areas, and contest the supremacy of the proletariat? The orthodox Marxist Lenin was confronted with the dogmatism, of faith. Once again he was in the minority of one, practically all his followers disputing the correctness of his position. Trotzky with his theory of Permanent Revolution was the leader of the opposition to the New Economic Policy. He argued that the freedom of the peasantry to sell their produce in the open market would lead to a resurrection of the bourgeoisie, which would mean the end of the proletarian revolution.

Together with other non-Russian Communist leaders, I had the privilege of participating in the discussions in the higher circles of the Bolshevik Party, and I supported the opposition to the New Economic Policy. To my youthful revolutionary romanticism, it appeared to be a negation of the fundamental dogmas of Marxism. At that time, together with many others, I did not realise that Marx had not written a single word about post-revolutionary economic reconstruction. Impressed by what appeared to be his defence of the true faith and the proletarian cause, I ignored Trotzky's attempt to establish a military dictatorship, and came to be known as one of his ardent admirers and staunch supporters. He also looked upon me as such, and for years since then counted on my support in his struggle for the leadership of the party. However, I did not like him personally, although I shared his misgivings about the consequences of Lenin's New Economic Policy.

The Kronstadt uprising made it clear that the party must make a decision. The discussion about the New Economic Policy could not continue indefinitely. It also opened the eyes of the Bolshevik leaders who had until then opposed Lenin. It had the same effect on me also.

Lenin told the party that the Soviet State was in danger of a breakdown. The catastrophe could not be prevented unless the toiling masses were reassured that the Soviet Government
was sensitive to their feelings and responsive to their demands. The proletariat could not capture power without the support of the peasantry. That support must be regained at all costs if the new government was to survive the crisis. A peasant economy could not be industrialised by military and terrorist methods. In recognition of his great services to the Revolution during the Civil War, Lenin had backed Trotsky against strong opposition inside the party. The compromise could continue no longer. War Communism must end, and a new way found for the rehabilitation of the Russian economy. A week after the Kromstadt revolt, the 10th Congress of the Bolshevik Party met in Moscow, and Lenin submitted his New Economic Policy for its endorsement. His speech on that occasion was a masterpiece of boldness. He staggered the Party Congress with the declaration that the peasant masses had revolted against the Soviet Government with the slogan: GIVE us BACK FREE TRADE, The urban middle classes sympathised with the peasantry. Industrial workers were also dissatisfied with the policy of militarising labour, of subordinating trade unions to the State machinery. So the entire social foundation of the new regime was shaken.

Lenin's dramatic declaration served as a shock cure for the party. Opposition groups laid aside their respective doctrinaire theories and the Party Congress listened very attentively to Lenin's speech, which practically called for a retreat over the whole front and advocated an economy which appeared to be a compromise with capitalism, and therefore a betrayal of the socialist ideal. Addressing Shlyapnikov, the leader of the "Workers' Opposition," Lenin said that under the given conditions of the country no less than ten years would be required to build up industries and transform the agrarian character of the Russian economy and make the working class the dominating economic factor. What is going to happen during these ten years if the peasant masses are alienated from the established regime? Pleading for patience, Lenin continued: A year or two of the relief from famine, a year or two of regular supplies of fuel so that the factories will function—and—we shall receive hundred times more support from the working class, and far more talents will rise from its ranks than now.
Lenin maintained that the background of the crisis was the demobilisation of the peasant army which was releasing hundreds of thousands of men who could find no work, their only trade having become war. The result of this situation was banditry. He said that demobilisation, had created a large insurgent element throughout the country which could be exploited for a counter-revolutionary purpose. The proletariat was a small minority while the peasants remained the overwhelming majority. The disorganisation of agriculture and the hostility of the peasantry had blasted the foundation of national economy.

Lenin concluded his speech by proposing that on that very day the party should issue a decree abolishing forcible collection of food-grains and allowing the peasantry the freedom to sell their produce in the open market. The corollary to that freedom would be freedom of petty trade in the towns and cities and a general return to the system of a free exchange of commodities which War Communism had tried to suppress in a year.

Summarising his view of the international situation and conditions inside the country, which had persuaded him to give a sharp turn to the revolution, Lenin said: “During the past three years, we have learned to understand that banking on international revolution does not mean calculating on a definite date. We must be able to co-ordinate our activities with the class relationships in our country and other countries, in order that we may be able to maintain the dictatorship of the proletariat and remedy, if only gradually, all the misfortunes and crises which have befallen us.”

Even after the 10th Party Congress, which endorsed the New Economic Policy, the opposition to it was kept up inside the party by the so-called Workers' Opposition, led by the Commissar for Labour, Shlyapnikov, and Madame Kollontai. With its pronounced anarcho-syndicalist tendency, the Workers' Opposition implicitly demanded continuation of War Communism. It also opposed the supremacy of the party. Having been defeated in the Party Congress, the Workers' Opposition wanted to appeal to the Third World Congress of the Communist International. But before the
dispute could be brought before the World Congress, it was referred to a closed session of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. That was a memorable session, because it revealed that the political differences had a background of personal relations also.

Shlyapnikov opened the debate. He was a sober speaker without the flair of an opposition leader. He expounded his thesis, set forth previously, that all power should be vested in a Congress of Producers. At the 10th Party Congress, Lenin had advised him to be clear about the concept of the "producer." If the term was not used in the narrow sense of regarding the proletariat as the chosen elite, Shlyapnikov could not reasonably oppose the New Economic Policy, which recognised the right of the vast majority of producers.

As there was a lot of similarity between Trotsky's theories and the programme of the Workers' Opposition, and desiring to absolve himself of the possible charge of secretly supporting the latter, Trotsky intervened in the debate at an earlier stage. But instead of replying to the arguments of Shlyapnikov, his whole speech was an attack, very largely personal, on Madame Kollontai. He called her an aristocratic lady playing with the revolution. Counting upon the sympathy of the audience, which Trotsky's unfair attack had won for her, Kollontai made a very spirited reply. Trotsky was a great orator. But Kollontai was also a very attractive and forceful speaker. Provoked by Trotsky's attack, she openly accused him of Bonapartist ambitions. Originally, the programme of the Workers' Opposition was intended to counter Trotsky's plan of bringing labour under military discipline.

Kollontai's speech placed Trotsky in such an embarrassing position that Lenin rushed to his defence. He used persuasive arguments to reply to Shlyapnikov, but was brutal in his attack upon Kollontai, whom he castigated as a petit bourgeois anarchist. The latter had stood up against Trotsky's attack, but broke under Lenin's verbal lashing, and left the hall weeping.

The scene was rather dramatic. But few of the audience understood why the two leaders of the revolution had to turn all their heavy artillery on a woman. Tongues began to wag
and all sorts of gossip was whispered. The most juicy one was that both Lenin and Trotsky had in the past solicited Madame Kollontai’s favours, but were disappointed. They took their revenge. It might have been so in the case of Trotsky, who was a man of riotous passions; but it was hardly believable that Lenin should allow personal feelings to get the better of his judgment.

Subsequently, I had occasion to ask Madame Kollontai herself to what extent the gossip was true. I dared do so because she was very kind to me and had spoken about her personal life quite frankly. Most probably the experienced lady wanted to put a young man on his guard. She benevolently smiled at my enquiry and said: “Don't rake up the old memories. For us revolutionaries, personal relations do not count for much when it comes to political matters.” She could hardly conceal her bitterness against Trotsky. But she would not say a word which might have hinted any reflection on the gentlemanliness of Lenin. I could imagine that as between her and Lenin the shoe was on the other foot than the gossip placed it. As a passionate romanticist, she could quite conceivably have been in love with the great leader of the party. But the latter, with all his humaneness, was a machine. He might have strong personal sentiments, but would never allow them to stand in the way of political or theoretical judgment.

However, I felt that Madame Kollontai was unfairly treated in that historic meeting of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. But I did not dare to express my sympathy for her in subsequent conversations with Lenin; and I would not think of speaking about her to Trotsky, because in his case the gossip could be true.

The Third World Congress of the Communist International endorsed the New Economic Policy. But the opposition inside the Bolshevik Party continued. The result was the first purge. In one year after the 10th Party Congress, about twenty-five per cent of the membership was expelled. But neither Shiyapnikov nor Kollontai was victimised. The one was removed from his position in the government and sent on some mission abroad; Kollontai, too, was given a diplomatic
assignment. She was the first woman to have the rank of an Ambassador.

It took me some time to get over my doubts about the wisdom of the New Economic Policy. It was a retreat, which might become a rout, leading to surrender. But experience proved that the retreat saved the Revolution. I was also convinced equally that, had the New Economic Policy been pursued to its logical conclusion, the history of the Soviet Union would have been very much different. The result would not have been Socialism of the Marxist dream, but it would have been the building up of a genuinely democratic order, without much of the ruthlessness which later on transformed the Soviet Government into an instrument of violence and terror rather than of expanding freedom.

The Bolshevik Party had no right to make the laws of the land. Its role was political, not legislative. The resolution of the Party Congress was an advice to the Soviet Government. If the latter accepted the advice, it must convene the All-Russian Congress of Soviets to legislate accordingly.

The memorable session of the Soviet Congress met in the summer. It was a public session, held in the Great Opera House of Moscow. Party and Government leaders took their seats on the stage. A major part of the extensive ground-floor was occupied by the delegates. The public packed the spacious balconies and the six semi-circular tiers which rose up to the high ceiling. Yet thousands could not be accommodated. They crowded the park in front of the theatre and listened to speeches broadcast through loudspeakers.

As President of the Executive Committee of the Congress of Soviets, Kalinin opened the session. In his characteristic slow manner of pronouncing each word separately, laying emphasis on the more significant ones, he explained the purpose of the session, and called upon Lenin to explain the New Economic Policy which the Congress was to endorse.

Lenin briskly went to the rostrum, flashlights were on him, and on the high stage, he looked shorter than he really was. The thunderous applause which greeted him signified that he had won the battle.
His speech on that occasion was not full of theoretical arguments, nor was his tone so solemn and serious as at the World Congress. Then he was speaking to comrades, now he was addressing the people. Having given a simplified version of all his arguments in the Party Congress, he concluded: As Marxists, we want proletarian dictatorship. But that presupposes a proletariat. Where is the Russian proletariat? Ordinarily a minority, nearly half of it had died in the revolutionary insurrection and in the two years of civil war. A new generation of proletariat must arise before proletarian dictatorship was possible. That again presupposed the growth of modern industries. But ruined industries could not be rehabilitated, and new ones built, unless the national economy was normalised. The Russian economy being agrarian, it could not be normalised unless the peasantry was freed from the fear of expropriation. The purpose of the New Economic Policy was to give them that freedom, and to legalise free trade in consumers' goods, which would be necessary to enable the peasants to sell their produce in the open market at a competitive price. Finally, Lenin swayed the audience with one of his commonplace remarks, which contained great wisdom: “We have made a revolution; now we must learn revolutionary housekeeping.”

Without wasting any time in oratorical peroration, Lenin left the rostrum and quietly returned to his seat. The whole audience sprang to their feet in order to give their applause. The crowd outside shouted in joy and relief. Evidently, Lenin's boldness had lifted a burden of fear and anxiety from the breast of the people. The formality of voting was hardly necessary, Lenin's proposal was endorsed unanimously. To my surprise, I found myself raising the fed card of my Moscow Soviet membership to vote for a measure which I had opposed previously. Lenin was sitting at the other end of the stage. But he looked at me with a benevolent smile. Trotzky, who was sitting also nearby, scowled and bent his head to hide his feeling. He did not vote. A few more opposition leaders followed him.
TROTSKY'S report on the world economic situation was the highlight of the Congress. Next to the Chairman's address, which dealt mostly with the quarrels in the German Communist Party, Trotzky's report was the first item on the agenda. Although Lenin spoke separately to explain the New Economic Policy and to ask the Congress to endorse it, the purpose of Trotzky's report was to show that not only the critical situation in Russia, but also the international situation called for the retreat proposed by Lenin. It was rather curious that Trotzky should make the report. But he spoke in behalf of the Russian Communist Party, and the outlines of his report had been drawn up by the Political Bureau of the latter. If he refused to make the report according to those outlines, as he should have done and given his opposition to the New Economic Policy, Trotzky would have laid himself open to the charge of a breach of party discipline. Relying still on the support of Lenin, he would not do so.

However, Trotzky's report was a landmark in the history of the Communist International. His unrivalled oratorical skill handled the mass of material collected by the Information Department of the Communist International to depict a vivid picture of the world economic situation. He spoke for three hours, first in German, then translated his own speech into French, and finally the Russian visitors to the Congress demanded that he should give also a Russian version and he did it. Altogether he spoke for nine hours, with very short intervals. In whichever language it was delivered, the speech was listened to by practically all the delegates of the Congress.
and the Russian visitors.” It was not necessary to understand what he was saying. One was simply carried away by the torrent of words and phrases and deeply impressed by the personality of the speaker, dressed in trim military uniform, standing on the platform, motionless like a statue. Trotzky was a man of rather below middle height. But on the platform he looked taller. It was said that on special occasions he put on shoes with higher heels, which made him look taller. With all his admirable qualities, Trotzky was an arrogant and vain man.

There was something piquant in the situation—Ordinarily, Trotzky's report should have been a part of the Chairman's inaugural address, which surveyed the world situation with the object of formulating the strategy and tactics of the Communist Parties for the immediate future. The departure from the practice was due to Lenin's desire to give Trotzky an opportunity to withdraw from the position he had taken up as an opponent to the New Economic Policy without losing face. Zinoviev, who felt that it was favouritism, which was likely to lower his prestige, was naturally not very happy to sit there as the Chairman while his rival was fascinating the Congress by his matchless oratorical performance.

In the opening session, the Congress elected a Presidium (panel of chairmen) to guide its deliberations. I was a member and was sitting by Zinoviev's side on the platform. In the midst of Trotzky's speech, Zinoviev asked me to take the chair in his absence, got up and left the hall. That was not a very proper thing to do. I am sure not many people in the Congress missed the significance of the gesture. But Zinoviev was a jealous man and could not reconcile himself to the position gracefully. The Chairman of the session had nothing to do, no more than an ordinary delegate. The speaker, drunk with the resounding notes of his own voice and conscious of Lenin's favouritism, was entirely oblivious of his surroundings. The audience was also spell-bound. There was no interruption and the session proceeded smoothly. The only interruption came from the speaker himself. A large battery of powerful flashlights was turned on him from very close quarters. It was July and Moscow can be quite warm in summer. The hall
was packed. Trotsky must have felt very uncomfortable and he ran his finger around his collar and flared up at the photographers: “What is this? Do you want to suffocate me? Stop that nonsense, or I will kick down all your paraphernalia.” At last the Chairman had something to do: to ask the photographers to leave the hall. But before they complied with the request, they could not resist the temptation of taking another shot, which they presumably thought would be very attractive: The flashlights were turned on again and Trotsky looked helpless in the face of the tyranny of the photographers; he turned towards the Chairman for protection. I was standing in my place waving to the photographers to clear out. That was the picture which seemed to have fascinated the photographers. After this rather frivolous interruption, Trotsky resumed his speech and got in his stride without any difficulty.

The central thesis of the report was that world capitalism had survived the post-war crisis and dug itself in to resist any revolutionary onslaught. This point was made with copious statistical material. The political conclusion was that the possibility of an early world revolution was no longer there. The proletariat, therefore, must also fall back on prepared positions, strengthen its organisation and wait for the next opportunity to be afforded by another crisis of world capitalism, which would come inevitably according to the Marxist horoscope of history. While Trotsky was thus speaking against himself, he tried to hint that he did not fully agree with Lenin in the latter's motivation of the New Economic Policy. He suggested that, if world capitalism had recovered its position, it could not have more than a temporary stabilisation, and therefore the proletariat must be ready to pass on to the offensive any moment and open up a new chapter in the history of world revelation.

It is doubtful if many delegates detected the subtle nuances of Trotsky's argumentation. But they certainly did not escape Lenin, who sat in the front row watching Trotsky speak and carefully weighing every word he said. Occasionally he expressed his disagreement by almost imperceptibly shaking his head. Trotsky also must have been watching him. On every gesture of Lenin's disapproval, he pulled himself up
and skilfully proved that what might appear to be contrary to the central thesis of his report was really said by way of emphasising it.

Before it was made in the open session of the Congress, Trotzky's report was discussed in a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. There was a lively debate on that occasion. I maintained that Trotzky's analysis of the position of the British Imperialism was wrong. As a matter of fact, as far as Britain was concerned, the post-war economic crisis had reached its climax in 1921. The so-called invisible export was the foundation of British Imperialism. It represented the profit from investments abroad, income from British shipping and bank and insurance commission. The international balance of British trade had been maintained, ever since the beginning of the century, by invisible export. That stabilising factor of British Imperialism had been steadily declining in the post-war years, and in 1921 it had touched almost the vanishing point. A careful analysis of the trend led to the conclusion that in the next year there would be a deficit in the balance of Britain's international payments. That actually happened, giving me the incentive to undertake the ambitious project of writing a book to be called the "Decline and Fall of the British Empire". The title, indeed, would be a plagiarism. But it was very appropriate. With the collaboration of Hugh Rathbone, a member of the British Communist Party, I worked on the project until I left Europe in 1930. A mass of valuable material had been collected, which could not be taken along on a journey under abnormal conditions. Packed in a big box the materials were left with my publishers in Berlin, who, being a communist firm, were raided on Hitler's advent to power and the result of many years' work went into the bonfire, together with heaps of other books and papers blacklisted by the Nazis.

The Hungarian Josef Poganyi, who had just reached Moscow, was another active participant in the discussion of Trotzky's report. He was a clever man and detected that the report was a repudiation of Trotzky's opposition to the New Economic Policy. Practically everybody knew that Trotzky was aspiring to succeed Lenin as the leader of the party,
and his ambition was opposed by the closest associates of the latter, such as Zinoviev, Kamenev and Stalin. The shrewd politician in Poganyi felt that by crossing swords with Trotsky on his first appearance on the forum of the Communist International, he would gain a big reputation and incidentally win the confidence of Trotsky's rivals for the succession of Lenin. But he overreached his mark and invited on his head the full blast of Trotsky's oratory. With blistering sarcasm, Trotsky advised Poganyi to be modest and acquaint himself with the situation before he dared find fault with the opinion of the Political Bureau of the Russian Communist Party.

The political conclusion of my amendment to the report, in so far as Britain was concerned, would be to expect an early revolution there. But I added that the absence of a powerful Communist Party in Britain ruled out such an expectation. The political conclusion I wanted to draw was that the economic decline of British Imperialism ruled out the possibility of an Anglo-American war, which was hinted in Trotsky's report and was an article of faith for many years in the Communist International. The Anglo-American war would be the signal for the next upsurge of world revolution. As the latter was inevitable, the signal must be given.

For rejecting this view, I argued that, instead of risking a war with America, which was replacing Britain as the dominating economic power of the world, Britain would rather seek an alliance with the Trans-Atlantic cousin and, blood being thicker than water, an Anglo-American alliance, in which Britain would be the junior partner, was more likely because it would be the stoutest bulwark for the defence of world capitalism.

Trotsky seemed to be impressed by my arguments—a rare thing for him to do. An unmitigated egoist, he was never impressed by anybody except Lenin, and that also not always out of conviction, but for political opportunism. However, he asked me to see him for a private discussion. That was the first time I met him face to face, from close quarters. The discussion was a pleasant experience. Trotsky was undoubtedly a man of great intelligence; I had never any doubt about it, but suspected that he might not be above the common failing
of orators, who attached greater importance to their skill in manipulating words than to the ideas conveyed by them. Trotzky was surprised that the people who had collected the material for his report should have missed the evidence as regards the position of British Imperialism which I adduced in the discussion. He admitted that the report must be amended in so far as Britain was concerned. A fanatical believer in the imminence of world revolution, Trotzky was very reluctant to admit that the grave crisis of British Imperialism would not precipitate a revolution. Could it not begin in the periphery of the empire? I could not hold out any hope. However, Trotzky was not much interested in the situation in the colonial countries. He was a European \textit{par excellence}. It was an article of faith with him that Germany would be the next scene of revolution, which would then spread to the rest of Europe. As the German question was the next important on the agenda of the Congress, we also discussed it briefly.

Trotzky, however, did not amend his report to the Congress perceptibly. The result of his discussion with me was his sensational book called "Whither Britain?" which was published the next year. The thesis of the book was that Britain had to choose between two alternatives—Socialism or subordination to America.

Although our first private discussion enabled us to understand each other better and my respect for Trotzky increased, I could never be personally friendly with him. I was not the only one to have that puzzling experience. Trotzky did not cultivate personal intimacy. He was a lone horse. He defended his voluntary personal isolation with the armour of vanity and arrogance. But he never rode the high horse except when confronted with people who wanted to pierce his armour. On the other hand, he did not like to be in a crowd, except to harangue it and to be adored by it. It is a well-known fact that in his very eventful life Trotzky had only two personal friends—the French Communist Alfred Rosmer and the Rumanian Rakovsky, who rose very high in the hierarchy of the Russian Communist Party. Trotzky never mixed freely even with his equals. During World Congresses, frequent parties were held where leading Russian Communists socially
mixed with the foreign comrades. Trotzky never attended any of those social functions. It was said that he stayed away from such social functions, where hard-worked Communists relaxed and amused themselves, because he would not drink with others. Trotzky was neither a puritan nor a teetotaller. His preference to shun the relaxation of comradely social gatherings most probably was out of fear of the dictum: *In vino veritas*. This judgment would imply an adverse reflection on his character. He seemed to be eager to hide something. His failure to cultivate personal friendship may also warrant the same judgment.

However, our first meeting face to face and a private discussion brought us closer politically. Although disagreeing with his views as regards many grave issues, I was more attracted by his personality and I sympathised with him as the man who was fighting a single-handed battle against a powerful combination of the Old Bolshevik leaders. That attitude of mine deceived Trotzky into counting me as one of his supporters. On my part, I felt that his attitude towards me was less aloof than with many others, indeed, affectionate to a degree. Perhaps that was an illusion on my part.

In any case, I believed that the rift between Trotzky and Stalin was a great misfortune for the revolution. Next to Lenin, the two were the biggest men of the revolution—each great in his own way. The two together could have filled up the place left vacant by Lenin. I tried my best in the years to come for a reconciliation, but failed. And ultimately I had to disappoint Trotzky by refusing to support him in the most crucial moment of his life. It was not a personal choice for me. The issue was political, and I had to make the choice on principle.
Bolshevik Gold and Demoralisation of the Communist Movement

IN the years of great expectation following the Bolshevik capture of power in Russia, the Soviet Government recklessly spent huge sums of money in all the European countries, with the object of hastening the advent of revolution there. That practice was according to Lenin's dictum that having captured power in one country, the proletariat must be prepared to sacrifice everything in order to help their comrades in other countries to bring about the inevitable revolution.

To send large sums of money from one country to another is a difficult operation. Because of the repudiation of foreign debts contracted during the Tzarist period and also nationalisation of foreign industrial holdings in Russia, the new government had no credit abroad. The suspension of trade owing to the blockade by the Entente Powers made it impossible for Russia to export commodities, the exchange of which abroad could have built up financial assets. The Tzarist currency was still in circulation. But for obvious reasons, it had depreciated almost to nothing, and it could not be exchanged in foreign countries. The currency issued by the Soviet Government was fiat money. The output of the printing presses turning out the new currency attained such fantastic figures that the real value of it was diminishing to nothing. The Soviet Government having abolished money as the medium of exchange, the currency issued by it naturally had no monetary value. It circulated rather as an instrument of propaganda than as a medium of exchange. Large-denomination currency notes printed in bright colours the slogan of the
world revolution—Workers of the World, Unite—in practically all the languages of the world.

Simultaneously with the suspension of foreign trade, Russian national assets abroad were frozen by hostile capitalist Powers. Even in that difficult situation, the Soviet Government was in a position to export large amounts of gold, bullion and coins. But shiploads of gold arriving in foreign ports would naturally arouse suspicion and were liable to confiscation. In the earlier years of the revolution, a very novel method was adopted to finance the Communist movement in foreign countries. Large quantities of imperial jewels were sent out abroad and converted into cash secretly. The operation had to be secret, because hostile governments would, as they did on several occasions, confiscate the jewels as stolen property. Consequently, the practice, which could tide over the situation in the earlier years, could not be continued. Legal transfer of Bolshevik gold to foreign countries had to wait until the resumption of trade relations, first with Germany and then with Britain.

The vast amount of money sent out of the country, notwithstanding so much difficulty and at considerable prejudice to the national economy, did greatly promote the cause of revolution in other countries. The influx of Bolshevik gold consequently became a nightmare to the Governments of the capitalist world. The result of that practice for a healthy growth of the international communist movement, however, was doubtful. In the course of time, it led to the corruption and demoralisation of the movement. But in the beginning, it certainly was a powerful lever to develop revolutionary organisations throughout the world.

When the Russian Revolution took place, and for several years afterwards, the Communist Parties in other countries were numerically small organisations with little influence on the political life of the respective countries. Russian financial help enabled the small Communist Parties, which had a large fund of enthusiasm and idealism, but little material resources, to grow into large, efficiently functioning organisations. For the first time they could build up organisational machineries manned by paid officials. They could also build up a press of their own and turn out large quantities of propaganda.
literature. The spectacular development of the Communist Parties, which until recently were insignificant small groups, impressed the advocates of social justice in the middle class, and all sorts of left-wing elements in the labour movement nocked under the banner of the new party.

From that experience it can be reasonably concluded that but for the influx of Bolshevik gold the international communist movement could not become a power in such a short time. But there was a dark side to the picture, which was not noticed in the beginning. For one thing, the Communist Parties grew as Russian satellites. As there was a whole host of important problems at home, the Russian Bolshevik Party could not spare many of its first-rate members for the administration of the Communist International. The task was left to second or third rate men who utilized their control of purse-strings to demand abject subordination of the Communist Parties in other countries to their whims and very mediocre political leadership. The army of paid functionaries in each Communist Party tended to lose their original revolutionary idealism and transformed the parties into bureaucratic machineries. Moreover, the earlier practice of smuggling in Tzarist jewels to be sold illegally brought the communist leaders in contact with very shady elements, and the association was contagious. As a matter of fact, leaders of non-Russian Communist Parties who were entrusted with the financial operations were inevitably corrupted.

While in Berlin, I met the director of a small private bank to have a fairly large amount of money, which was in my possession in British and American currency, exchanged into German money. In a social gathering at his place, the old social-democratic leader Kautsky taunted him as the man who speculated in behalf of all the three proletarian parties of Germany. That incident illustrates the situation created by the necessity of illegal financial transactions.

It came to be soon realised that the earlier method of financing the development of the international communist movement not only led to corruption and demoralisation, but also amounted to considerable loss. The practice could not be discontinued without injuring the growth of the infant
Communist Parties. It was felt that a certain amount of control was necessary. The central machinery of the Communist International was accordingly reorganised. A new department, called Department of International Relations, which was to function secretly, was created. As the channel through which money flowed to the Communist Parties abroad, the new department, which was meant to be an instrument of technical administration, soon assumed disproportionate importance and all but eclipsed the Political Secretariat of the Communist International.

The situation in Germany and the activities of the Communist Party in that country were given a prominent place on the agenda of the Third World Congress. The German Communist Party was rent by a controversy about an insurrection in the central part of Germany. The party leadership still under Paul Levy condemned the "March Action," as the local insurrection was called, as premature and adventurist. The fraction which justified the insurrection, on the other hand, could point out that it had the approval of the Russian leaders of the Communist International. However, the controversy inside the Communist Party had to be composed, if the party was not to disintegrate. Paul Levy was already revolting against the Russian leadership and characterised Bolshevism as Asiatic barbarism, which had no appeal for the civilised German workers. It was felt that the situation called for the presence of an authoritative representation of the Communist International on the spot. As the German expert of the Communist International, Radek was chosen to go to Germany to function, as the virtual leader of the party by superseding the dissident leaders like Paul Levy and his associates.

On Radek's departure, the post of the General Secretary of the Communist International fell vacant. An old Bolshevik named Osif Piatnitzky joined the Communist International as the head of the newly created Department of International Relations. Although he virtually acted as the General Secretary of the Communist International, he did not possess the political reputation and stature necessary for the position. Since the Second World Congress a year before, a number of Hungarian Communists had come to Moscow as political refugees. i)ue
to the fact that they were the only people who had made a revolution and actually established a proletarian regime outside Russia, the Hungarian refugees enjoyed prestige and popularity. They were also internationally known, particularly Bela Kun, who had been the head of the Hungarian Soviet Republic. As such he was the most plausible candidate for the General-Secretaryship of the Communist International. But he was included in the Comintern delegation which went to Germany. Eventually, the choice fell on the now famous Matias Rakosi, who had been a member of the Hungarian Soviet Government. Although formally the nomination was made by the Political Bureau of the Russian Communist Party, Rakosi rose to the high position as Piatnitzky's choice. He was not a man of any great calibre, and concealed his intellectual mediocrity in demonstrative pomposity. With the advent of Rakosi and Piatnitzky, the headquarters of the Communist International was packed with minor members of the Russian Communist Party and sycophants from abroad. The result was the beginning of the degeneration of the organisation which had been created to bring about the proletarian world revolution.

Rakosi demonstrated his importance by surrounding himself with an army of secretaries, mostly young women members of the German Communist Party. The curious demonstration of importance did not raise the authority and prestige of Rakosi in critical eyes. On the contrary, it made him ridiculous. There was a malicious talk that Rakosi had improved upon Marxist theory of social evolution, which knew three stages the matriarchate, the patriarchate and the proletariat. The talk was that the new Secretary of the Communist International maintained, if not in theory at least in practice, that the "proletariat" was to be followed by the "Secretariat" as the final stage of social evolution. Once I personally watched an incident which showed up Rakosi's smallness, carefully concealed with highly cultivated pomposity.

It was a session of the so-called Small Bureau (Supreme Executive) of the Communist International to discuss some very important questions. Several important Russian leaders, not formally connected with the Comintern, were to attend.
The session was in the lobby of the Hotel Lux, where all the foreign Communists resided. To guard the secrecy of the session, armed sentries were posted at the door. Presently Rakosi blew in, accompanied by several of his secretaries. When he reached the door, the sentries crossed their guns before him and demanded his identification card. Rakosi was furious: How could ordinary soldiers insult his dignity? And he shouted: “Don't you know me? I am the General Secretary of the Communist International.” He tried to push the guards aside and enter the room. The latter shook their heads and again demanded his identification card. The attention of the people inside the room was attracted by the incident. Bukharin went up to the door, pacified the sentries, who thought they were doing their duty, in his gentle manner and requested Rakosi to show his card. The request was reinforced by the remark that all in the room including himself had to produce their identification cards before the sentries let them pass.

Notwithstanding all his pomposity, Rakosi was a creature of Piatnitzky, who in a short time became the virtual boss of the machinery of the Communist International. In the pre-revolutionary days, he had been engaged in smuggling literature published abroad into Russia. For that experience, he was considered to be the most suitable person to be in charge of the underground machinery of the Comintern. The main function allotted to him, however, was to control the expenditure, not only of the centre, but in the different countries where money was sent. Year after year, all the Communist Parties of the various countries sent their representatives to Moscow with budgets of their expenditure for the ensuing year. Although the budgets were formally submitted to the Secretariat of the Comintern and had to be approved by it, the final word virtually rested with Piatnitzky. He was believed to be the man of confidence of the Political Bureau of the Russian Communist Party. Thanks to the fact that he held the purse-strings, Piatnitzky acquired a dictatorial control on the machinery of the international communist movement. He organised an extensive espionage system to watch the activities of the international Communist organisations. His agents, with the innocuous title of liaison officers, were placed at the -
headquarters of all the Communist Parties in other countries. They were small men with no political talents. Previously they were mostly minor officers of the Tcheka, the secret terror organisation in Russia. Yet their reports, usually determined by personal sympathies or antipathies, ruined the political career of many a leader of the international communist movement, and it was on their recommendation that veteran leaders were removed, to be replaced by sycophants.

As a matter of fact, Piatnitzky was the evil genius of the Communist International. I persistently opposed his method of operation, and consequently must have incurred his displeasure from the very beginning. But he pretended as if I was one of his favourites. The anxiety to obtain more money than could be legitimately required brought foreign Communist leaders under Piatnitzky's domination. As there was no Communist Party in India at that time (and for the work I could do from abroad not much money was required), I not only asked for modest amounts but surprised Piatnitzky by returning parts of it at the end of the year. The fact that someone could avoid coming under his domination annoyed Piatnitzky. However, for the simple reason that I had access to the top Russian leaders who would always listen to me, Piatnitzky was compelled to simulate a friendly attitude towards me. It was, however, quite clear that he did not like me, and repeatedly tried to take away from me the guidance of revolutionary work in India and to authorise the Communist Party of Great Britain for the task. As I never claimed to represent India, I did not oppose the plan that the Communist International should have its connection with India through London. Anyhow, the plan did not work. The only result was that many times more money was allotted to the British Communist Party for work in India than I ever demanded, and not a pound of that money was ever refunded, although very little of it could be used for the purpose for which it was allotted.

Eventually, I could not avoid a clash with Piatnitzky. He accused Borodin of having stolen the Tzarist jewels which he smuggled out to deliver to the Soviet Trade Representatives in the United States of America. I have already described the circumstances which brought Borodin in contact with me in
Mexico. He had told me the story of the loss of the jewels. With the connivance of the Mexican Government, I made elaborate efforts to recover the jewels and ascertained that Borodin's story was truthful. One day I was called to appear before a Conti-ti (aumLijion before which Piatnitzky accused Borodin of defalcation and misappropriation. On my evidence he was exonerated of the charge. Piatnitzky never pardoned me for having snatched one of his preys from his claws. But it was not my evidence, but subsequent events that proved that Borodin was innocent. He received a letter from his wife in Chicago that a man who described himself as a former officer of the Austrian Army had called on her to deliver three brand new suitcases, which were left by Borodin in his custody in some West Indian island. Borodin immediately cabled to his wife to come to Moscow with those suitcases. They were ripped open and all the jewels were found intact.
After the Third World Congress, it was decided to abolish the Turkestan Bureau of the Communist International, and to open an Eastern Section of the headquarters in Moscow to take over the charge of promoting and guiding the revolutionary movement in the colonial world. The attempt to establish contact with the revolutionary movement in the Asiatic countries from the base in Central Asia having proved not very fruitful, it was decided that in future the Communist Parties in the imperialist countries should be directed to make similar attempts in the colonies of the respective Powers. In this respect, their activities would be guided by the Eastern Section of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, and the latter, in its turn, would be assisted by representatives of the Communist Parties in the imperialist countries. Under the new arrangement, the African and South American countries, in addition to Asia, would come within the radius of the activities of the Communist International. South America was regarded as a semi-colonial region, because of the American domination of the New World. The decision was that I should return to Moscow and take charge of the Eastern Section of the Communist International, so as to maintain the continuity of the initial work done from Central Asia. But I had already planned to go to Western Europe after the Central Asiatic base for developing a revolutionary movement in India was wound up. For that reason, I declined to take over charge of the Eastern Section at the headquarters of the Communist International, and recommended Safarov for the post. But before any final decision...
could be made, Safarov must be consulted, and it must be ascertained whether the Russian Communist Party was willing to release him from his responsibilities in Central Asia. In any case, I was to go there to wind up the Turkestan Bureau of the Communist International, to disband the Indian Military School and to settle the future of the Indian revolutionary emigrants there. I was not much concerned about the majority of the latter. But my effort of one year had resulted in the conversion of a minority of the fanatical Mujahirs into a small cadre of conscious revolutionaries. Most of them were powerfully attracted by Communism and were keenly desirous of receiving further training in the theory and practice of revolution. Thinking about the problem of their future, I conceived the idea of establishing in Moscow a centre for the political training of revolutionaries from various Asiatic countries.

Lenin enthusiastically approved of the idea and advised me to consult Stalin about its execution. The latter was the recognised authority in the Russian Communist Party on questions of the communist approach to the problem of national minorities and subject nationalities. But Stalin was dangerously ill, the hardships of the Civil War having brought him nearly to death's door. It would be at least months before he could be disturbed for any serious discussion of political and organisational problems.

In the earlier years of the Revolution, the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs served as an instrument of revolutionary propaganda in foreign countries. It had an agency in Tashkent, which co-operated with the Turkestan Bureau of the Communist International. As it was virtually a part of the Central Asiatic base of revolutionary propaganda in the surrounding countries, the Tashkent Office of the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs also had to be closed down. Therefore, Lenin advised me to discuss with Chicherin the future plan of activity. After the receipt of the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon's Note about the Indian Military School at Tashkent, Chicherin recommended that the base of revolutionary propaganda in the East should be shifted to a more convenient place. He enthusiastically approved of the idea of opening in Moscow
a centre for training young men from the Asiatic countries for revolutionary work in their respective countries. He also thought that my plan of establishing contact with India from Western Europe was likely to be more effective. Because of the unfriendly attitude of the Afghan Government, nothing much could be done from Central Asia.

In the middle of 1921, the news of the non-co-operation movement in India had reached Moscow. The Russian Communists were enthused by the news, believing that India was in the throes of a revolution. The non-co-operation movement was interpreted as a revolutionary mass upheaval. Though of a sober and doubting disposition, Chicherin shared 'lie enthusiastic belief about the imminence of a revolution in India. Referring to my discussion with Lenin about the revolutionary possibilities of the non-co-operation movement, and particularly Gandhi's role, he remarked that I was very pessimistic. Having listened to the arguments in support of my view, he suggested that I should write a comprehensive report about the situation in India for the information and guidance of the Russian Communist Party. The report should include an analysis of the social background of the non-co-operation movement. I agreed to write the report, but pleaded that it could not be done before I returned from Turkestan. For the moment, I briefly outlined the structure of contemporary Indian society and the class composition of the non-co-operation movement, in order to back up my point of view that the non-co-operation movement was politically immature, with little revolutionary potentialities. Chicherin requested me to prepare a synopsis of the report, pending the preparation of that comprehensive document, which eventually took the form of my book, *India in Transition*.

At Tashkent, it was easy to wind up the Turkestan Bureau of the Communist International. But the disbandment of the India House was a difficult problem. What to do with the inmates? I took the politically trained and intelligently revolutionary minority into confidence and communicated to them the idea of a Communist University in Moscow. They welcomed the idea very enthusiastically and were eager to go to Moscow. But I was not minded to take any except a chosen
few all the way to Moscow. Going over the list of the students in the Tashkent Military School, I came to the conclusion that not more than twenty-five could be admitted to the proposed Communist University.

After a few days, in a general meeting of all the Indian emigrants, I announced the decision to close down the Military School, and enquired what they wanted to do. In the course of time, the fanatical enthusiasm to proceed to Turkey to fight for the defence of the Khilafat had cooled down. The perspective of the Indian centre in Tashkent being broken up in the near future seemed to cause a great deal of anxiety to those concerned. But few volunteered to return to India to participate in the anti-British movement there. What would they do when the India House was disbanded in the near future? Some of them would settle down in Turkestan and take to some small trade to earn their livelihood. Others would try their luck in Persia or Afghanistan, if they were given some monetary help. The more adventurous few would take the risk of reaching the North-Western frontier of India through the no-man's land of Eastern Bokhara.

Accordingly, a fair amount of money was given to each, and different groups of the non-political majority left on their way back, respectively chosen by themselves. It was a sad experience. But nothing better could be done. Nearly a hundred emigrants could not be indefinitely kept with no purpose. According to reports received subsequently, the emigrants returning home did not fare very badly on the way. But I never knew whether they actually reached home, and what they did there. But from my nearly one year's experience with them, I was fully convinced that nothing else could be done with them. Therefore, to let them return as they desired and wherever they wanted, was the only thing to do under the circumstances.

Of those who remained behind, twenty-two were chosen to go to Moscow and join the Communist University there. Three wanted to join the Red Army. They were allowed to do so. The minority who were chosen for further political training were happy to be relieved of the company of the rest. They were thrilled by the idea of going to Moscow, and resolved to make the best of the unexpected chance.
A year ago, I had left Moscow with great expectations. The experience in Central Asia was very valuable. But from there I could do nothing about India. Yet I was not disappointed, because I got the opportunity of serving the cause of revolution directly. The contact with a cross-section of the Indian masses at the same time dispelled some of my earlier illusions and gave me a realistic view of the latter. I was convinced that the Indian revolution was still a long way off, and an uphill path lay ahead. Arms and money would not make the revolution. The army of revolution should be first trained politically. Having travelled around the world since I left India in 1915, I had reached very near her frontiers with plenty of arms and money. It was in quest of those that I had left India. But when I was in a position to get plenty of them, I discovered that it was useless to search for arms before there were people ready to bear them. I was sure that if the resources I had at my disposal in Central Asia could be taken to the Indian frontiers they would most probably be seized by the enemy or misused by mercenary adventurers or otherwise lost. So I closed an exciting chapter of my life with the experience of a failure, but without regret. Now I must discover other ways to my goal and to help the Indian Revolution.

Before leaving Turkestan on my way back to Moscow, I made the acquaintance of a young man who was closely associated with me during the whole of my stay in Russia. One day he approached me in front of the Tashkent Office of the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, with the enquiry if I needed an interpreter. I was pleasantly surprised, because I did need one. The American who had originally come to Tashkent as my Secretary-Interpreter accompanied me to Moscow when I went there for the Third World Congress and had refused to return. As my second visit to Tashkent was to be short, I did not look for a substitute. The young man who approached me was remarkable in more than one way. I felt that he would be a valuable help in many things. I asked him to accompany me so that we could talk the matter over.

He was a young man, indeed much younger than he looked, of short stature, with black longish hair and a pointed beard. With a prominent nose and dark complexion, he was evidently
a Jew. Introducing himself, he said that his family lived in Baku. There he was born. From the very beginning he actively participated in the Revolution, but would not join the Communist Party, because by conviction he was a mystic anarchist. Nor could he join the Party even if he wanted, because of his bourgeois parentage; he was born in a rich Jewish family. Nevertheless, he took part in the Civil War, which was very fierce in Baku and the neighbourhood. Restlessness and a spirit of adventure drove him from place to place, until he reached Tashkent as a journalist. On my enquiry why he came towards Central Asia instead of proceeding towards Moscow, he said that his dream was to go to India and help the revolution there. Having heard that an army to liberate India was being raised in Tashkent, he had come there to join it. Since he could not go to India immediately, he would be very happy to work with me if I found him to be suitable.

He spoke English fluently and in the course of time I discovered that he spoke also German and French equally well. He had never been abroad and had learned the foreign languages while he was in school. His family name was Levit. To hide his identity and his Jewish parentage, he called himself Tivel. In a few days I was impressed by his intelligence, earnestness and efficiency and appointed him as my Secretary-Interpreter. But would he accompany me to Moscow? He would gladly, as there was no chance for him to proceed to India and he did not want to stay on in Turkestan.

Tivel's willingness to act as my Secretary-Interpreter and to go to Moscow in that capacity solved a problem for me. How to take the twenty-two Indians selected for admission into the Communist University to Moscow? I did not like the idea of personally leading the caravan; nor could they be left to travel the long distance all by themselves. Railway travel was still very hazardous. It was quite possible that travellers would be stranded somewhere on the way. Tivel readily agreed to take over the responsibility of herding the flock to Moscow. He would be delighted to be associated intimately with the Indian comrades.

In consultation with Safarov and other Russian leaders in Tashkent, it was decided that, having disbanded the
Military School and sent off the majority of the Indian emigrants on their way back home or wherever they liked, I should go to Moscow to look after the preparations for the opening of the Communist University. On hearing from me, Tivel would follow with the Indian students. The plan of sending so many Indians back with some financial help for the journey was kept a secret. It was quite conceivable that they would be arrested either in Afghanistan or in Persia by the British Military Police as Bolshevik agents going to make trouble in India. The plan was to send them off secretly in small batches and instruct the Russian Frontier Guards to put them across with the maximum degree of secrecy. Once they were on the other side of the Russian border, they had to depend on their own wits. In any case, we did not feel in any way responsible for whatever might happen to them. They refused persistently to be trained as intelligent revolutionary propagandists according to our advice, and chose to go their own way. As a matter of fact, they were quite satisfied with the monetary help given to them. It seemed they did not expect even that much.

The winding up of the Turkestan Bureau of the Communist International and the disbandment of the Indian Military School, however, were announced at a public function held under the auspices of the Turkestan Government. As both the events were likely to have adverse repercussions in the neighbouring countries, they had to be explained. In the public function, Safarov spoke to explain the closing of the Turkestan Bureau of the Communist International: It did not mean that the Comintern had ceased to be interested in the struggle of the Asiatic peoples for liberation; the Turkestan Bureau was closed because experience had proved that its function could not be performed effectively from there. The Sections of the Communist International in the imperialist countries must play an active role in colonial peoples' struggle for liberation. The Communist International would more effectively implement its programme of helping the liberation of the oppressed peoples by urging its national sections in the imperialist countries to do their duty. For this consideration, the function allotted to the Turkestan Bureau of the Communist International would be taken over henceforth directly
by the Executive Committee of the Comintern. The result of this change would only increase the activities of the Communist International in helping the development of the revolutionary movement in the colonial countries.

I had to speak to explain the disbandment of the Indian Military School. It was an emergency measure. By accident, a fairly large number of Indians had reached the territory of the Soviet Republic. The latter had naturally to offer them hospitality. As they all claimed to be revolutionaries, it was felt that the hospitality should help the promotion of their purpose. The Communists believed that, to be beneficial, a revolution must have a social purpose. Accordingly, we wanted to make the Indian emigrants conscious of their revolutionary purpose. But they insisted on learning the use of arms. They had to be satisfied, so that they might not lose faith in the sincerity of the professions of the Soviet Republic. The emergency arrangement, however, served the purpose of helping a fairly large number of students in the Military School to understand the purpose of a revolution and the responsibility of a revolutionary. The work initiated in Tashkent would henceforth be done more elaborately, on a larger scale, in the Communist University for the Toilers of the East, to be founded in Moscow in the near future. The Indian comrades who had taken the fullest advantage of the hospitality of the Turkestan Republic would now proceed to Moscow to learn the lessons of the Russian Revolution, so that they could return home as soon as possible to resume political activities there, which would bear greater fruit.
First Meeting With Stalin

WHEN I reached Moscow in the spring of 1920, Stalin was away from the capital. The Civil War was still raging in the South of Russia. Stalin had played a very prominent role in the Civil War. The defence of Tzaritzina on the lower reaches of the Volga under his command was a classic episode in the Civil War. Therefore the city was subsequently named after him, and called Stalingrad. The greatest steel plant of the Soviet Union was built there, and the failure of the Germans to capture that powerful industrial base turned the tide of the Second World War. The memory of the earlier personal heroism of Stalin must have to a great extent emotionally inspired the epic defenders of the city built to commemorate it. If the battle of Stalingrad stemmed the tide of German invasion in the Second World War, the defence of the same city twenty years ago had marked the turning point in the Civil War.

After the defence of Tzaritzina, which had seriously affected his health, Stalin went to the Western front as the Political Commissar of the left wing of the army which, under Trotzky's command, was to march through Poland to Central Europe. In those days, Stalin was little known outside the inner circle of the party. But amongst the leading party politicians, who had spent years in European exile, he was not popular. Assembled in the drawing-room of Angelica Balabanova, the matriarch of early Bolshevism, they used to mention the hero of Tzaritzina as "the military man", whose type might cast the party on its model. But that was a wrong judgment. Because already then Stalin had undertaken the struggle to assert the supremacy of the party, while Trotzky was demanding a military dictatorship. While explaining the defeat at the
gates of Warsaw in his report to the Third World Congress, Trotsky threw the blame on the left wing of his army which was politically commanded by Stalin. Trotsky said that without his order the left wing rushed forward. Whatever might have been the accurate fact of the situation, Trotsky's explanation was the first manifestation of the antagonism between the two men.

Even when Stalin was still a dark horse in the party, it was nevertheless a current saying that he was in the confidence of Lenin. From Lenin himself I learned that the saying was very largely true. He said that my difference with him about the revolutionary role of colonial nationalism had to be referred to Stalin. But I could not meet him immediately. After the Second World Congress of the Communist International, I went to Central Asia and remained there until the summer of 1921. On my return to Moscow, I learned that Stalin was back in the capital, but was very ill. The great hardships of the siege of Tzaritzina—nine months of desperate fighting with no food except a meagre ration of dead horses' flesh—and further campaigning on the western front even thereafter, had brought him almost to death's door. A man in that condition should not be disturbed. Nevertheless, I was eager to see him, not to discuss the problems of colonial revolution, but to pay my mute tribute to the hero of the Revolution. I experienced an emotional conflict: fascinated by what I had heard of the man, against whom I was also prejudiced by the talks in Balabanova's drawing-room, I was sure to dislike him. But at the same time, I could not resist admiring him.

In that strange mental state, I called at his modest apartment in the Kremlin. Borodin accompanied me because I could not speak Russian sufficiently well as yet. Reclining on a sofa, Stalin was talking on the telephone in a very low voice, as he always did. Presently, a secretary took the receiver from his hand and he lay back, evidently a very sick and exhausted man. Yet, the eyes shone penetratingly out of their sockets in the slightly pock-marked face. Borodin having introduced me, Stalin extended his hand and shook mine. The secretary placed for me a chair by the sick man's bed.
"So, you do not see the revolutionary significance of Pan-Islamism?"
I was staggered by the directness of the question. On my protesting
that I had not come to discuss politics with a dangerously sick man
who was to undergo a major surgical operation the next day, he
laughed and reverted to the point. I enquired how he knew of my
opinion about Pan-Islamism. "From Ilyitch" (amongst his close
associates, Lenin was so referred to). I had discussed the Khilafat
movement with Lenin on my return from Central Asia; he referred me
to Stalin, and evidently had informed the latter of my opinion. But in
the first meeting with Stalin, I avoided joining issues. My object was
to get a first hand measure of the man. After fifteen or twenty
minutes, the general exchange of views was interrupted by a secretary
who entered the room to deliver a message from the Chief Surgeon of
the Kremlin Hospital. The message was that, preparatory to the
operation the next morning, the patient should take no food in the
evening. Why? The telephone receiver was handed over to the patient
and he whispered in it a couple of sentences in a tone that commanded
obedience. Borodin made a sign: we must go, Comrade Stalin
required rest. The latter sat up to shake hands and with the peculiar
Stalin grin said: "We must meet again as soon as this operation
business is over."

Once we were outside, Borodin asked if I had understood what Stalin
had said on the telephone. I had not. The Chief Surgeon of the
Kremlin at the other end had explained that the stomach of the patient
must be empty when anaesthetics would be given for the operation the
next morning. The patient ruled: "No anaesthetics for me; I must be
conscious when my abdomen will be opened to see how it looks
inside." A major intestinal operation was thus performed with local
anaesthesia. It was such a serious case as to occasion doubts about the
patient surviving it.

Soon after the first meeting with Stalin, I went again to Central Asia. I
saw him for the second time on my return to Moscow at the end of
1921 in connection with the foundation of the Communist University
for the Toilers of the East. His had already become the deciding voice
in the higher circles of the party. Not yet the General Secretary of the
party (the
post of the General Secretary was created only the following year), Stalin held two high posts in the Government. He was Commissar of Nationalities and also Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. The latter was a very powerful position. In the earlier years of the Revolution, its holder was entitled to supervise the function of all the other departments of the Government. Most probably, that controlling position afforded Stalin the opportunity of rising to the top of the party hierarchy also.

When I saw him for the second time, he had completely recovered his robust health. I faced the memorable figure in the uniform of the Red Army soldiers, a cheerful grin on the pock-marked face, smoking a pipe which he filled with several cigarettes crushed, tobacco as well as the paper. In the long Red Army soldier's coat and with the star-marked peaked cap on, he looked taller than his five feet six inches. Walking forward to the middle of the huge room, the office of the Secretary of the Communist Party, he received me heartily. The prejudice against the man who was alleged to have the ambition of militarising the party still lingered in me. But his frankness and palpably sincere friendly behaviour made a dent in my reserve. Ilyitch had spoken to him about me, he confided; he had also received reports of my activities as a member of the Turk-Bureau of the Communist International. It was a good idea to remove to Moscow the centre for training revolutionaries from Asia, and students from the Soviet East (Asiatic parts of the Tzarist Empire liberated by the Revolution) should also be included, so that revolutionaries from the subject countries could learn from the experience of the peoples of the Muslim Soviet Republics. Safarov was returning from Central Asia to be in charge of the Eastern Section of the Communist International, which would guide the work of the new institution, and I should be its Political Director.

As the Commissar of Nationalities, and recognised authority on the problems of revolution in the Eastern countries, Stalin was to be something like the Chancellor of the projected University, which was actually named after him. From his-opening remarks, it seemed that the whole plan had been worked out in detail, according to my ideas. I was pleasantly
surprised. But Stalin proceeded to add something which was still more surprising and also pleasantly. He frankly conceded that I was right when I had differed with the Russian members of the Turk-Bureau of the Comintern on the role of Pan-Islamism. With a grin, he added that Ilyitch was also of that opinion; had he not accepted my supplement to his Thesis on the National and Colonial Questions? The nationalist movement in the colonial countries, even in India, was politically immature. It had no revolutionary ideology. No use trying to help it with arms and money. It must be strengthened by a well-trained revolutionary cadre. The Communist University for the Toilers of the East was to be founded to serve that purpose.

I could immediately see the significance of the name chosen for the proposed training centre. It indicated that my point of view about the social basis of the revolutionary movement in the colonial countries had been tacitly accepted. The revolutionary cadre of the anti-imperialist movement for national liberation would come from the toiling masses. My contention, when I disagreed with Lenin at the Second World Congress was that, if the nationalist movement succeeded under the leadership of the bourgeoisie, it would only mean transfer of power to the native ruling class; there would be no social revolution.

This view was not formally endorsed by the Communist International until the Fourth World Congress in 1923. But the interview with Stalin gave me the confidence that I was right, and opinion in the higher circles of the Bolshevik Party was moving towards my position.

From the amused expression on Stalin's face I could gather that he knew what was going on in my mind. That was my first experience of the Stalin method of winning the confidence of his closer associates, of such men as did not aspire to outgrow his leadership. The method was the readiness to take over the sounder parts of the point of view of others, amend it without saying so in order not to provoke resistance, and state the result as the generally agreed opinion. I was a novice; so the master took some pains to help me understand his method. His frankness was Machiavellian, Jesuitic, as I realised many years later. But I would never regret those years of rich
experience, without which I might have still remained a naive revolutionary, burning buses and throwing acid bulbs at tram-cars, instead of treasuring a few pistols to kill a policeman, perchance a Britisher.

Stalin reverted to the issue of Pan-Islamism and our difference about the relation of the Communists with the colonial nationalist movement generally. Marxists did not believe that any people or any religious community as a whole could be revolutionary or otherwise. The law of the class struggle determined that ultimately the nationalist bourgeoisie must turn against the revolution, as soon as it would threaten their class interests. But as long as they led an anti-imperialist movement, they played an objectively revolutionary role, and therefore must be helped. Not only the nationalist bourgeoisie in less backward colonial countries like India and China, but even the feudal landlords, Ulehmans and Mullahs in the Islamic countries must also be helped. That was an elementary principle of the strategy of world revolution. Having heard Stalin meekly, I dared put in a few words of doubt: How would Communism and the cause of the liberation of the proletariat be helped if the capitalist and feudal upper classes came to power? The modern Machia-velli laid his cards on the table: That should not be allowed; the proletariat in alliance with the peasantry should become the driving force of the national liberation movement, so that, at the proper moment, the revolutionary cadre, organised in the Communist Party, might lead them to transform the national liberation movement into a civil war for the social emancipation of the toiling masses.

One could learn all that from any textbook of Leninism; but to have the revolutionary gospel expounded personally by the Man of Destiny was a privilege. Before long, I was initiated in the inner circle, and thereafter had many occasions to observe the master-mind make far-reaching decisions quietly, but with firm and indomitable courage. Eventually, until my break with the Communist International in 1929, I came to be counted among "Stalin's young men," although, more than once I crossed swords with the Master, not unsuccessfully- His readiness to respect an independent judgment,
provided that it did not amount to heresy against the common faith, raised my esteem for him. Even today I believe that but for the intellectual cowardice, the sordid desire to be on the band-wagon and moral sycophancy on the part of his foremost followers in Russia as well as abroad, Stalin's leadership might not have degenerated into a disgusting cult of hero-worship.
AFTER his exoneration from the charge of having failed in his mission to the New World, Borodin was sent as the Soviet delegate to the conference of the International Postal Union, held at Madrid. That was the first time when the Soviet Republic became a member of the Union. Until then it had no postal connection with the rest of the world, and no postage stamps. The postal service inside the country was free—of course, for the privileged few. One had to produce a permit to use the postal service before his letter was accepted in a post office, and even thereafter it was not certain that the letter would ever reach its destination. Important communications were transmitted through an extensive courier service maintained by the State as well as the party. Legally, the advantage was not available to private individuals. But high State officials and party functionaries did use it for private purposes. In Europe, Borodin found Indian newspapers on sale. He purchased a large number of them and brought them to Moscow as a precious present for me. I was indeed very happy to have them. That was the first time since the Revolution that Indian newspapers came to Moscow. Nor had I seen any for several years. The newspapers Borodin brought carried reports of the Nagpur Session of the Indian National Congress, which adopted the resolution to non-cooperate with the British Government until "the Bureaucracy" responded to the popular demand. According to that resolution and that of the Special Calcutta Session of the Congress, the visit of the Prince of Wales had been boycotted, and the non-cooperation movement spread throughout the country. Scrappy news of that movement had reached Moscow through the intermediary
of the British press, which played it down. Very little of that news appeared in the European continental press. On the basis of these scanty indirect reports, the Russian papers had manufactured stories about the powerful mass revolutionary movement against British Imperialism in India. I had myself written a number of those stories, which were read eagerly as authentic and authoritative reports of the situation. But none more than myself deplored the inadequacy of reliable information and my ignorance of what was actually happening in India. Therefore, I was very thankful for the present Borodin had brought for me and avidly read every single line of the large stack of newspapers, some of which were months old. Several pages of each paper were filled with the long presidential address at the Nagpur session of the Congress. It was exceptionally long and, being cast on the old liberal pattern, it was dull. Borodin was terribly amused by it and spent hours reading every line. Finally, he remarked that the verbal gun must be making British Imperialism shiver in its boots.

I was not interested in the opinion of a single individual, expressed in the presidential address. I scrutinized the huge stack of newspapers with the object of piecing together information which would present to my mind a coherent picture of the situation in India. There were reports of big demonstrations in towns and cities throughout the country. Responding to the Congress call for non-cooperation, thousands of students had left schools and colleges. Some lawyers had abandoned their practice. Many government employees had also resigned their jobs, depriving their families of the only source of livelihood. It was a magnificent demonstration of patriotism, which in those days was inspired by the slogan: SUFFER AND SACRIFICE. But what was the purpose of the movement? What would be attained by the sacrifice and suffering of the middle class people whose life was a tale of suffering and who could ill afford to make any sacrifice of their meagre material comforts? Students leaving schools and colleges en masse appeared to be a futile and indeed a harmful gesture.

The fact that surprised me was the total absence of any positive programme of the movement. Non-cooperation was obviously the means to an end. But what was the end?
The term "Swaraj" figured prominently in the political language of the country; but it was vague, and none took the trouble of defining it. The immaturity of the movement was betrayed by the fact that the enemy to be combatted was "the bureaucracy." It implied that the demand of the movement was not the end of the British rule, but of the bureaucratic system of administration, and it was assumed that non-cooperation on a large scale would paralyse the government. But none seemed to have any idea of what would take the place of the paralysed administrative system. I felt that such a movement could not continue for any length of time; it might go on for some time with its initial momentum. But unless it was reinforced by the consciousness of a definite purpose and a concrete programme of political and economic reconstruction, the movement was bound to break down.

The absence of an economic programme was the most striking feature of the movement. The absence resulted from a superficial conception of politics. The middle class might be moved by patriotic sentiments, and the masses by the religious appeal of the personality of a saint who occupied the centre of the political stage. But how long could popular enthusiasm be sustained? Hunger would before long compel the middle class patriots to repent the rashness of having given up the sources of a meagre subsistence. Employees who had resigned their jobs would then be eager to re-enter the lost paradise. In the meantime, the unemployed members of the middle class would have filled up the vacancies. So, the patriotic sacrifice would be in vain, and suffering dampen temporary enthusiasm. Mass unemployment of the educated middle class was a tragic phenomenon of contemporary Indian society. The belief that the Government machinery could be paralysed by calling out a large number of its employees ignored that most outstanding fact.

All of a sudden, the nationalist movement attained mass proportions. That was a remarkable fact, which was noted not only inside the country, but abroad also. Previously, until the beginning of the First World War, the National Congress was an upper middle class movement, demanding constitutional reforms. The revolutionary nationalists, who disdained
the constitutionalism of the pre-Gandhi Liberal Congress, and declared their intention to drive out the foreign rulers with violent means, also had no connection with the masses. During the War, the nationalist movement was suppressed. In the years 1918-19, there was not only a revival, but a mass movement developing under the banner of the Congress. That remarkable phenomenon was attributed to the advent of Gandhi with his doctrines of Satyagraha and non-violent non-cooperation. But my critical review of the situation was not favourable to that explanation. I searched for other causes of the new development. Gandhi's personality was indeed a new factor. But I did not believe that any individual could create a countrywide mass movement out of nothing.

An objective examination of all the facts reported in the press led me to the conclusion that there was a spontaneous mass discontent which was the social background of the non-cooperation movement. The method of non-violent mass struggle against the established regime advocated by Gandhi as against the constitutional agitation of the Liberal Congress harnessed the spontaneous mass discontent in support of the Congress. Gandhi practically overnight became the leader of the country because he gave expression to seething mass discontent. The religious ideology preached by him also appealed to the mediaeval mentality of the masses. But the same ideology discouraged any revolutionary mass action. The quintessence of the situation, as I analysed and understood it, was a potentially revolutionary movement restrained by a reactionary ideology.

British Imperialism had suppressed the political nationalist movement, but could not altogether keep out the repercussions of world events. The economic exploitation of the masses, particularly of the peasantry, was intensified to meet the financial requirements of the war. That naturally created widespread unrest in the countryside. The situation was aggravated by the return of the demobilised soldiers, who came back to their village homes with disruptive ideas, picked up from foreign comrades-in-arms on the battle-fronts. Thanks to that experience, they had lost the traditional submissiveness of the Indian peasantry, and had acquired self-confidence. On
their return home, the placidity of the countryside was disturbed. They incited the discontented peasantry to rise in revolt against the intolerable conditions of life. The result was local peasant uprisings throughout the country.

A faint echo of the Russian Revolution and other revolutionary upheavals in Europe had also reached India to influence the political ideas of the urban lower middle class, which had previously sympathised with revolutionary terrorism. The news of the workers of Russia having captured political power had encouraged the industrial workers of India to take up the struggle against the miserable conditions of their life. Already in 1918, there had been strikes in several industrial centres. The Congress leaders ignored the tremendous accession of strength to the nationalist movement if the latter championed the cause of the industrial workers. As a matter of fact, in 1919 Gandhi suspended the activities of the Satyagraha Committee and rushed from Delhi to Ahmedabad to prevent industrial workers being used for political purposes. There was a big strike of textile workers at Ahmedabad.

The Congress failed to develop the workers' and peasants' movement by supporting the demand for amelioration of their economic conditions on the ground that such a policy on its part would prejudice national unity. Big capitalists financially supported the Congress, and Gandhi's religious ideology and the doctrine of trusteeship appealed to the mediaeval mentality of the landlords. He taught the workers not to look upon their employers as exploiters, but trust them as their elder brothers. The peasants were told that the landlords were the natural trustees of their interests. According to this doctrine Gandhi condemned the movement of non-payment of taxes by the peasants, a step he had himself advocated previously, as an item of his programme of non-cooperation.

These facts learned from reports in the nationalist press convinced me that the non-cooperation movement, notwithstanding its imposing appearance, was essentially weak. The weakness could be removed only by making the movement conscious of its objectively revolutionary role. It needed a revolutionary ideology and a concrete economic programme, which would attract the workers' and peasants' masses to join
the movement for national freedom with greater and more abiding enthusiasm.

The next annual session of the Indian National Congress was to meet at Ahmedabad after a few months. C. R. Das had been elected President of the Session. I could gather from press reports that he did not fully share Gandhi's ideas and was sceptical about the possibilities of non-violent non-co-operation. He might favour the alternative method of mass revolutionary struggle, if a programme of developing it was submitted for his consideration. The bulk of the delegates to the Congress came from the middle classes who, themselves being victims of the established social order, did not share the conservatism of the nationalist leaders. If a more effective method of struggle for the attainment of their political objective was pointed out to them, they might be expected to accept it enthusiastically. With these considerations, I thought that it might be a useful step if I addressed an appeal to the Ahmedabad Congress, recommending the acceptance of the ideology of the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the appropriate economic and social programme. I had been out of direct touch with India for years. The contemplated appeal would mark the resumption of my modest role in the revolutionary drama of the Indian people's fight for freedom.

Both Lenin and Stalin enthusiastically welcomed the idea. I drafted the appeal and submitted it for their approval. Stalin suggested an amendment, which increased my understanding of the realities of the Indian situation. In the list of demands which I would recommend the Congress to advocate for the peasantry, I had included abolition of usury, which notoriously was, and still is, the greatest curse in the life of the peasant masses. Stalin remarked that, if all the moneylenders were driven out of the Indian temple, where would the peasantry get the money required for cultivating their land? They lived from hand to mouth and there was no cheap credit available to them. If usurers disappeared, the peasantry would be deprived of the only credit available to them and agriculture would be greatly damaged. I had thought that abolition of usury would be a resounding revolutionary measure, which would enthuse the peasantry. But Stalin's
remarks were an eye-opener. He suggested that the item on the programme should be amended as "control of usury; the rate of interest should be fixed at 6 per cent." He clinched his point with the age-old dictum: "Don't kill the goose that lays the golden egg."

Analysing the social background of the nationalist movement, the appeal pointed out that the welfare and progress of the great majority of the Indian population required radical changes in the relations of property such as were introduced by the French Revolution in Europe. In other words, the purpose of the nationalist movement was to bring about the bourgeois-democratic revolution. It would gain in strength in proportion to its consciousness of the purpose.

The appeal further argued that, to be effective, non-co-operation must be practised by the worker and peasant masses who sustained the economic life of the country. Concretely, it pointed out that a general strike of the railway workers could any day paralyse the life of the country to such an extent as would compel the Government to listen to the demands of the leaders of the movement. The great potentialities of an organised peasant movement to resist exactions and oppression was also pointed out. Thereafter it was argued that, because of the overwhelming realities of their miserable life, the enthusiasm of the toiling masses could not be sustained unless the hope of some immediate relief was held out to them. As for the moment they happened to have confidence in the Congress and the nationalist leaders, if the latter formulated certain demands for the amelioration of their condition and proposed to lead them in a powerful struggle to enforce those demands, the nationalist movement would be tremendously reinforced by an enthusiastic and purposeful support of the masses. The minimum demands of the masses were finally-itemised, and the appeal concluded with the hope that the delegates assembled in the Ahmedabad Congress would wholeheartedly endorse these demands and on return to their respective places launch an uncompromising mass movement in support of the demands.

Indian students who had come to Moscow to join the Communist University were terribly enthused by the appeal,
which presented to them a concrete picture of the revolution to be brought about in India in the near future. Signed by Abani Mukherjee and myself, the appeal was printed in Moscow. It was a large-size, four-page leaflet. Then we were confronted with the problem of despatching it to India and distributing it broadcast. Posted singly as closed letters, a large number of copies could reach the addressees. But the Moscow postmark would betray the source. Therefore, arrangements were made to have a large number posted in various European cities. But that was only throwing stones in the dark. Nalini Gupta volunteered to go to India immediately carrying a large bundle of the leaflets with him. He claimed to have personal acquaintance with C. R. Das, whom he would contact on his arrival in India, and personally deliver the appeal. He was as good as his word. Having travelled previously several times back and forth between England and India, he knew his way about. Before long he discharged the responsibility voluntarily undertaken and reached India with the large bundle of the appeal, which was distributed and broadcast throughout the country before the Congress Session and to the delegates at Ahmedabad. The document naturally created a good deal of sensation. It was reproduced in part in a number of Indian newspapers.

Unfortunately, soon before the Congress Session, C. R. Das was arrested. So Nalini Gupta could not contact him and the appeal did not reach him. Because of my name and its illegal introduction into India, respectable nationalists shied at publicly possessing and discussing the document. But ultimately it did come before the Congress legally. Two delegates from Ajmer reprinted the document on their signatures and submitted a resolution that the Congress should discuss it. It was further said that the appeal gave Maulana Hazrat Mohani the idea to move for the first time in a Congress Session the resolution that complete independence was the goal of the Indian National Congress.

That was the first item in the programme of national revolution outlined in the appeal. The Congress Session rejected Hazrat Mohani’s resolution and the mover was arrested soon afterwards. But the ideal of complete independence
gained ground in the ranks of the Congress, although still for some time the latter officially waged war against the "bureaucracy."

The resumption of my relation with the movement in India after many years was indirect. But I could not help having the satisfaction that the appeal had some influence, which was bound to grow in the course of time. Nalini Gupta returned soon to report how the appeal had been received and what was the influence. The report encouraged me to hasten the implementation of the plan of shifting my headquarters somewhere to Western Europe and establish standing connection with India through correspondence and publication of propaganda literature.
DURING the earlier period of my stay in Mexico, I delivered a series of lectures on India in the Theosophical Society. They were subsequently printed in a book (in Spanish) with the title *India's Past, Present and Future*. That was my first attempt to apply Marxism to the study of Indian history. An attempt of the new, not yet fully convinced convert, it was tentative and halting. Theosophists, particularly those who had never set their foot on the sacred soil of India, held a very dogmatic view about ancient Indian culture. In private conversations with some leading theosophists of Mexico, I disagreed with that view and maintained that even in the remote past India was not populated by Rishis and Munis in constant communication with the mystic Mahatmas perching on the Tibetan plateau beyond the crests of the Himalayas. My sacrilegious view scandalised the adopted children of Mother India. Nevertheless, it seems that some of them realised that my arguments made some holes in their faith and felt that it must be reinforced to face the heretical attack. I was invited to expound my views so that they could be challenged by the learned members of the Theosophical Society with volleys of questions after each lecture. It was a curious experience, to be confronted with learned academicians whose palpable Ignorance of the history of their adopted motherland was concealed by the blind faith that it was the home of divine spirits.

While admitting that the religious mode of thought predominated the culture of ancient India, I laid stress on the incontestable truth that she was inhabited also by mortal
human beings, who were necessarily and primarily concerned with the requirements of their physical existence. From that unchallengeable premise, I argued that the social structure and cultural pattern of ancient India could not be essentially different from, those of any other country of an ancient civilisation. While my view was logically sound, I could not substantiate it with factual evidence, which was not available to me in those days. The fantastic notion about India's past, however, made me feel the necessity of writing a realistic history of India, and I was convinced that my new faith would enable me to do that in the course of time.

Meanwhile, I expressed a view about the ethnic origin of ancient Indian culture which before long was corroborated empirically. The culture of ancient India was generally believed to be of Aryan origin. But it is an indisputable fact that ethnically the Indian people as a whole do not belong to the Aryan stock. Moreover, if the mythical Aryans ever came to India, they must have brought with them a pastoral civilisation. That might be the appropriate social foundation of the early Vedic culture. But without a more highly developed civilisation, India could not develop the pattern of a richer and more complex culture. It could therefore be logically assumed that India was inhabited by a more civilised and cultured people before the advent of the Aryans, if the latter ever really came. If they did, they could occupy only a limited area in the north and implant their culture there. But the eagerness of the average Indian to claim Aryan ancestry was, and still is, very widespread. As a reaction to the American prejudice against the coloured races, the Indians in the United States laid emphasis on their descent from the white Aryan race.

That attitude of staking the equality of ethnic status on a legend appeared to me rather ridiculous. Therefore, the hypothesis of a pre-Aryan Indian culture appealed to me. In the lecture on the ethnic origin of the Indian people, I discounted the Aryan legends and maintained that there was greater evidence to trace the descent from the Dravidian stock. I expressed the view that ancient Indian culture was pre-Aryan several years before the discovery of the ruins of the Indus Valley civilisation. Whether the Indus Valley civilisation
was Dravidian or Sumerian is still a controversial question.

But in any case, it was pre-Aryan, and it is also legitimate to assume that before the Nomadic Aryans of Central Via came to the North-West of India, the rest of the country was not a wilderness. As the Epics, particularly the Ramayana, suggest it was quite well populated with a fairly high degree of civilisation and culture. If the hypothesis of the monogenesis of the human species is rejected, as most biologists and anthropologists do now, the Dravidian race can be regarded as one of the earliest human stocks. Why then should the culture of ancient India be traced to the nomadic invaders from Central Asia?

My first attempt at a Marxist interpretation of Indian history could not go any further because of the absence of the required material and also because of my other preoccupations. But the idea of rewriting the history of India was very fascinating and grew in my mind as I grasped more thoroughly the Marxist method of interpreting history. I resumed the attempt in 1921.

While outlining the programme of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in India in the appeal to the Ahmedabad Congress, I felt the need of having in my mind a concrete picture of contemporary Indian society. Some material for drawing the picture could be gathered from the newspapers which were available to me at that time. But more material about the economic life of the country was required. The only sources were government publications. A preliminary report of the latest census had also been published. Abstracts published in the newspapers indicated that the report contained valuable information about the structure of contemporary Indian society. Through the Soviet Trade Delegation in London, all the recent publications of the Government of India, including the census report, were ordered, and before long I was the proud possessor of a huge stack of Blue Books containing a mass of statistical material. I was in a position now to prepare a detailed report about the structure of the national economy and the class relations of contemporary India—a report which would back up my view of the nature and perspective of the Indian revolution. Contrary to the prevailing notion among
the Bolsheviks, the predominating social factor in contemporary India was not feudalism. Therefore, it was not correct to regard the national bourgeoisie as a revolutionary force. Although Chicherin had originally asked me to write the report, I wrote it to convince Lenin of the correctness of my view. The report had emphasised the fact, that although colonial economy tended to galvanise feudal relations, it could not altogether prevent the growth of native capitalism and the consequent rise of the bourgeoisie as an ambitious class. The established order, to some extent, thwarted their ambition. But at the same time, they had stakes in the status quo, and therefore could not lead a revolution for its subversion.

II

Other Russian leaders, who carefully read the report, expressed the view that it could be elaborated in a book which might have the significance of Lenin's book on the capitalist development of Russia. He wrote that book in the closing years of the nineteenth century with the object of combating the Populist theory that the special genius of the Slavic race would prevent Russia travelling the way of western capitalism. That book won for Lenin the reputation of a Marxist. Having read it, his master, Plekhanov, singled him out as the most probable leader of the coming Russian Revolution.

Having studied the report carefully and warning me against wishful interpretation of facts, Lenin advised me to elaborate it in the form of a book, which would give a realistic picture of the contemporary Indian, society and open up the perspective of the Indian Revolution. It would be a big job. I must have several months to write the book. Before beginning to write, I must wade through the ocean of statistical material, bearing in mind that statistics could be differently interpreted. But by then I had acquired a firm conviction about the infallibility of the Marxist method. So it was only a question of hard work and time. There was plenty of time at my disposal. In Moscow there was no active revolutionary work for me to do, as in Turkestan. The office work in the headquarters of the Communist International did not interest me much. The
teaching in the Communist University did not require more than a few hours a day. I was anxious to go to Western Europe as soon as possible. Meanwhile, it was an exciting occupation to write a book which might have the historical significance of Lenin's famous work.

Abani Mukherji was sitting idle mmfr the shadow of suspicion. I suggested that he could end His time fruitfully by going through some of the statistical material with the object of preparing abstracts. A man of indomitable energy and boundless ambition, he enthusiastically responded and selected for his study publications about the industrial development of India. The basic feature of the contemporary Indian society being gradual decay of feudal economy and the slow but steady rise of capitalism, I decided to call the projected book "India in Transition." The scope of the book was thus circumscribed. It would not be a Marxist interpretation of the whole history of India, but only a picture of the contemporary Indian society. The first chapter of the book, entitled "The Rise of the Bourgeoisie," was written entirely on the basis of statistical material collected by Abani Mukherji. Being in a hurry to finish the book, I did not check up the correctness of the abstracts prepared by him. In recognition of his help, I wanted his name to appear as co-author. But the Publication Department of the Communist International objected on the ground that the seriousness of the book might be questioned if the name of a doubtful character was associated with mine. But I insisted that there must be some public recognition of the help he had rendered. So the book was published as by M. N. Roy with the collaboration of Abani Mukherji.

The arrangement, reluctantly agreed to by the Publication Department of the Communist International, gave Abani Mukherji a status and some reputation, which he subsequently abused for doing me harm, but unsuccessfully. Some harm was actually done by his ignorant enthusiasm. He was so eager to prove that India was in the throes of a proletarian revolution and therefore must have the same status in the Communist International as Germany or Britain, that he juggled the statistical material to present a magnified picture
of the development of capitalism in India. Some of the figures quoted in the chapter on the rise of the bourgeoisie were actually wrong, and before long careful readers detected the weak spot of the book. As the author, I was naturally responsible for the mistakes, and in the beginning I declined to disown my responsibility. After all, I should have checked up the figures before using them. But later on, embittered by his name not appearing as the co-author of the book, Mukherji accused me of having misappropriated the entire manuscript which was his work. Then I had to make it known publicly how his collaboration in one single chapter of the book had led me up the garden path, so to say. He was so persistent and loud in the charge that I had stolen his work that the Communist International ordered a formal enquiry into the matter to set it at rest. First, it was discovered that the manuscript was written on my typewriter and not on his. He suggested that the original typescript could have been copied on my typewriter. He could not have written it only in one copy, which he claimed to have delivered to me. But he could not produce another copy. He failed even more miserably when he was put to a substantial test. If he was the author of the entire book, could he summarise the substance of each chapter? He enthusiastically agreed, but the result was devastating for himself. On the subject matter of each chapter, his view crassly contradicted the views expressed in the manuscript. However, nobody of any importance had taken his charge against me seriously. So, the formality of an enquiry closed the matter, and he was consoled with the offer to write another book, which of course he never did, nor could.

The Russian translation of *India in Transition* was published in Moscow. But the English text, meant for circulation primarily in India, had to be printed at a place from where the books could be sent to India without much difficulty. Soon afterwards I went to Germany, and the book was printed in Berlin, but issued in the name of a fictitious publisher at Geneva. As soon as it was printed a fairly large number of copies were posted singly to selected persons in India. Practically all of them reached their destination. But immediately the entry of the book into India was prohibited under the Sea
Customs Act. However, already quite a large number of copies had reached India and a good many found their way to important libraries, where some of them can still be found. But as a proscribed publication, the book could not be freely sold or otherwise distributed. Nevertheless, it attracted the attention of several prominent teachers of economics one of whom, himself a generally recognised authority on Indian agrarian economy, recommended his pupils to study the chapter on the peasantry as the best treatment of the Indian agrarian problem.

In spite of all difficulties, the book was widely read by many serious students of contemporary history. All were much impressed. The pioneers of the Communist Party of India all had then" first lessons in applied Marxism, and indeed in revolutionary politics, from this book. All frankly acknowledged the indebtedness. Subsequently, they denounced me as a renegade. But that is the ethics of Communism, which was one of the main reasons for me to part company with the immoral cult.

Internationally, the book was received very well. A German edition of 100,000 copies was sold out within a year. The book was published in several other European languages also. It was widely reviewed and highly appreciated in academic circles. A professor of history in Finland and another in Argentina expressed the identical opinion that the book was the first realistic picture of modern India available to critical and discerning readers. For the first time, India was described not only as the land of Gods and Saints, but also as populated by mortal human beings with identical sorrows, hopes and aspirations as their kind throughout the world had, and therefore governed by the general laws of social development.
Communists Amongst Themselves

THE New Economic Policy necessarily changed the mode of living of the foreign Communists in Moscow. Previously, they had lived in a commune; food, clothing and other necessities were supplied to them free of cost. Just as in any other house where many Russian families lived, the hotel where the foreign Communists resided had a common dining room, where everybody had his meals free. Coupons were issued to people who were entitled to have free meals in the communal dining rooms.

The New Economic Policy changed all that. Free trade being allowed on a small scale, cafes and restaurants were opened where people could go and buy meals according to their choice and taste. Money again became the medium of exchange. Practically the entire volume of consumers' goods released for the public was under the monopolist control of the Central Co-operative Society, which was a State organisation. It opened well-stocked shops in the cities, but the right to purchase in those shops belonged only to the members of local co-operative societies. The membership was obligatory for members of the Communist Party, the trade unions and any other professional organisations recognised by the State.

Nevertheless, money having again become legal tender and therefore gained somewhat in value, free trade on a small scale could not be prevented. Retail shops selling daily necessities sprang up throughout the cities, and they were patronised by a large number of people who were deprived of the rights of citizenship, according to the principle that he who does not work should not eat. The meaning of the principle was that in a workers' State everybody must do some productive work.

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in order to earn the right of citizenship. But even after the
Revolution, there remained in the country a large population
belonging not only to the middle class, but also to the upper classes,
who were neither qualified for any productive work nor would they
do any. As, therefore, they could not belong to any of the professional
organisations, not to mention the Communist Party, they were
debarred from the membership of the Co-operative Societies.

Until the introduction of the New Economic Policy, those people lived
a miserable life. The more enterprising of them engaged in all sorts of
clandestine activities for earning a precarious livelihood. Aristocratic
ladies, for example, kept boarding houses *sub rasa* and, for the
purpose, purchased provisions in the black market, although black-
marketing in those days was an offence punishable with death. Others
secretly sold their clothes and jewellery, also at the risk of being
punished heavily. The New Economic Policy changed all that and
gave the disenfranchised and disinherited a faint hope of life.
Therefore, the Left Communists apprehended that the New Economic
Policy would help the resurrection of the bourgeoisie.

The purpose of the New Economic Policy, however, was to grant the
right of free trade to the peasants, so as to encourage production of
food-stuffs and its supply to the cities. But the peasants were not eager
to sell their produce for money, the value of which was still dubious.
They wanted manufactured commodities of daily requirement in
exchange. That meant encouragement for small industries, because in
those days big State-owned industries were not yet in a position to
produce all the commodities to satisfy the demand of the peasant
masses. The danger of a revival of capitalism and consequently the
rise of a new bourgeoisie was prevented by the operation of the
Central Co-operative Society which controlled the exchange of
commodities between the city and the village. The so-called NEP
bourgeoisie were mostly engaged in clandestine trade, which
inevitably resulted as a by-product of the New Economic Policy.

On the eve of the Third World Congress, which was attended by a
much larger number of foreign delegates than on the
previous occasions, the residence of foreign delegates in Moscow was shifted to a much larger hotel which was previously called Hotel Lux. The old name was retained. It was a very spacious three-storeyed building situated on one of the main thoroughfares of Moscow. In the new residence, the foreign Communists had to change their mode of living. There was a restaurant on the ground-floor, which had its main entrance, on the main street. Therefore others than the residents of the hotel could come in, and one had to pay for the meals.

The officials at the headquarters of the Communist International had their morning tea before going to work. Boiling water was available from a boiler in the hotel. Tea leaves and sugar could be purchased and kept. As a rule, they do not take milk with tea in Russia. Lemon was used instead, and it was freely available now at a reasonable price. Lunch was supplied in the canteen at the Comintern headquarters. It was a cold meal composed of sandwiches and tea or curds. The time for the main meal was after the working hours. That was the prevalent Russian custom and foreign Communist residents in Moscow had to get used to it. The main meal, composed of soup, a meat dish and some sort of a sweet, was taken in the hotel restaurant.

Evening hours were again devoted to work. The Comintern officials holding high and responsible positions often worked until midnight. The time for relaxation came thereafter. To work late in the night was also a prevalent Russian habit. After a strenuous day of work, which continued until late in the evening, the residents of the Hotel Lux enjoyed a rather boisterous social life, with supper enlivened by drink.

The New Economic Policy had introduced the wage system. The officials and other employees of the Communist International all received salaries. The members of the Executive Committee in those days received 500 rubles per month, which was the maximum party salary. The inflation of the post-war years had been ended with the issue of a new currency, the unit of which was the "Chervonetz," worth ten rubles. The miracle of stabilising the Soviet Currency was done by Sokolnikov, who became the Commissar of Finance after he
had worked with me in Central Asia, as the Commandant of the Turkfront. It was a miracle because there was no gold reserve. It was said that the Chervonetz was backed by the three volumes of Capital. However, the new currency was not just propaganda leaflets, but a respectable looking thing. The Chervonetz resembled the lo-pound note and its value inside Russia was approximately equivalent. The new currency was printed in a press in Leningrad. It was a very up-to-date mechanised plant where the pulp was produced out of old rags and the entire process up to the printing of the notes took place there. During a visit to Leningrad I was invited to the plant and shown around it: After the visit I was elected by the workers of the plant as a member of the Leningrad Soviet.

Although money was legal tender and everybody, including the high officials of the Soviet Communist Party received salaries on which they had to live, some of the foreign Communists were rather ashamed of having a lot of money in their pockets. I, for example, never went to the cashier at the headquarters of the Communist International to receive my salary. My secretary used to go and collect it for me. Given the controlled prices for daily necessities, including the rent of the room one occupied in the hotel, the salary of a member of the Executive Committee of the Comintern was a very large sum. After paying the monthly rent and for the daily meals at the restaurant, plenty of money remained in one's pocket. There was the fullest freedom to use it. Most of us availed of the opportunity for having a convivial social life almost daily in the middle of the night after the day's work. People from different parts of the world, but pursuing the same ideal, met on these occasions as human beings and allowed their emotions to run riot, without any conventional or ideological inhibitions. Naturally, wine played a very important part on such occasions. Nothing else breaks down artificially built up inhibitions so completely and enables even the most affected and pompous individuals to be their natural selves.

The Russian Revolution experimented with prohibition. Under the Tzarist regime, liquor trade was a State monopoly.
Revolutionary propaganda alleged that the purpose of the trade was to benumb the mentality of the working class with a copious supply of alcohol. Whatever might be the reason, Russian workers were addicted to alcohol. Vodka, a very strong spirit distilled from rye or potatoes, was the national drink. As a matter of fact, the habit of drinking heavily practically brutalised a large section of the industrial workers. The peasants were also addicted to the vice. Therefore, it was only natural that prohibition of alcoholic drinks was a part of the programme of the Revolution. More intelligent workers belonging to the Communist Party were so bitter against the practice which had brutalised their class that the execution of the law prohibiting the sale and drinking of spirits was marked by acts of violence. Every bourgeois or aristocratic resident had a rich cellar stocked with expensive drinks. In the earlier days of the Revolution, squads of enraged workers stormed those cellars and smashed hundreds and thousands of bottles containing expensive wines. I was told that on that occasion a torrent of champagne flowed from the porch of the Sugar Ring's palace, where I resided on my arrival at Moscow, into the river Moskva which flowed in front of it. Not only the sale of liquor was forbidden, but workers found in a state of drunkenness in the streets were actually put into prison or sometimes even shot.

Like all other manifestations of extravagance in the earlier days of the Revolution, the rigour of the law of prohibition also was mitigated in the course of time. It did not happen haphazardly, but in pursuance of a carefully calculated policy. The revolutionary law of prohibition had no pseudo-moral motive. The purpose was not to reform the depraved individual addicted to drink. In fact, there was no objection to drink as such. The object was to put an end to a habit which brutalised the human being. Therefore, when severely prohibiting the sale of Vodka, the Government in the course of time allowed that of light wines manufactured from grapes. It was also an economic necessity. Mountains of grapes were grown in the Crimea, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and the manufacture of wine is a lucrative industry there. The manufacture of wine was a light industry owned very largely privately. The New
Economic Policy allowed the manufacture of wines and their free sale in the market. The alcoholic content in the beginning was restricted to a very low percentage. But even that was good enough for those who had been accustomed to alcoholic drinks and had to go without it for several years. So there was a great demand for the freely sold light wines, which gave a great impetus to the industry. The demand was promoted by the policy of keeping the price of wine low. One litre of good wine was priced at 60 kopeks (equivalent to 8 annas), and the wine was sold exclusively through co-operative shops. The habit of drinking Vodka died out. After several years Vodka also appeared in the free market, but few cared for it any longer. Its alcohol content was also kept low, at 30 per cent in the beginning.

For the convenience of the foreign comrades, a co-operative shop was opened just in front of the Hotel Lux. It was a particularly well-stocked store where one could buy all articles of food, such as smoked fish, ham, bacon, cheese, butter, bread, eggs, etc. and wines of all sorts. Because of the custom of having the main meal after working hours between 4 and 5 o'clock, a late supper was a common practice in Russia. Therefore, food shops remained open until late in the evening. But, again, for the convenience of the foreign comrades, the shop in front of our hotel remained partially open, only for us, practically until midnight.

By 11 P.M. there was a telephonic inter-communication between the elite amongst the residents of the Hotel Lux. Every room in the hotel had a telephone. The telephonic conversations culminated in one or two of us rushing out of the hotel across the street to the food shop, often just \textit{\textbar}en the shutters were pulled down. But the sight of the foreign comrades had a magic influence. The store was thrown open for them, while no ordinary customer was allowed to enter. I happened to be a particular favourite with the shop assistants. Therefore, the responsibility of making the midnight purchases for our late suppers often fell on me. But there were always one or two to accompany me.

Some of the foreign Communists, particularly those who held high positions in the headquarters of the Communist
International and were therefore obliged to stay long in Moscow, lived with their wives. Most of the latter also did some work in the Comintern headquarters. They naturally joined in the midnight supper parties. There were a number of foreign girls who had come to Moscow to work as secretaries or stenographers at the Comintern headquarters. Those lonely souls were also invited to the midnight supper parties, which therefore usually turned out to be very lively, and sometimes lasted until the early morning hours. It was on those occasions that important Communists from different parts of the world got acquainted with each other as human beings. That was a very useful experience. As the leaders of the Russian Communist Party also worked until late in the evening, some of them often wanted to contact one or the other of the foreign members of the Executive Committee of the Communist International for some consultation. Sometimes the call came in the midst of our midnight supper parties. On those occasions, the Russian comrades were urged to come and join us and they often did. But not all of them were so sociable. As I have mentioned previously, Trotzky as a rule avoided such occasions where personal inhibitions necessarily broke down. Stalin was still not very well-known outside the inner circles of the Russian Party and had little to do with the Communist International. Zirtoviev was a conventional petit-bourgeois in his personal habits. But Bukharin, Radek and some other less known Russian leaders usually joined us in our midnight social gatherings, which were as a rule enlivened by singing and dancing. I participated neither in the one nor in the other; nevertheless, for some unknown reason I was always in demand in those midnight merrymakings. Occasionally, there used to be rather amusing incidents.

Some of the foreign Communists took themselves much too seriously, and objected to the social conviviality of the others on the ground that it disturbed them in their work. On such occasions, the more riotous members of the company would invade the room of the kill-joy and often treat him or her rather roughly. But it was all done light-heartedly and in the most friendly manner. So, none was offended and certainly no harm was done to anybody.
Whoever had the opportunity of living in the Hotel Lux in those early days of the Revolution must cherish the memory as one of the richest experiences of his life. The Communist International had already developed its hierarchy. The members of the Executive Committee, of the Presidium and the Secretariat were privileged persons. Cars came to take them to office, where they were not easily accessible to others. Some of them were not above the pettiness of putting on airs of superiority. But in the Hotel Lux they were all equals and in our midnight parties we met like equals, all human beings, with virtues which need not be magnified with artificial dignity, and frailties of which none need be ashamed.
Epilogue

IT IS SAD, sad beyond words, that Roy did not live long enough to
tell the full story of his life. It was a life full of adventures and
achievements and rich with experiences. The Memoirs cover only a
short period, a period of about six years, a period which serves more
or less as a curtain-raiser to the eventful life which followed. Those
who read them will ever regret that Roy did not write the story of
those crucial events of contemporary history. It would have been a
document of absorbing interest and an invaluable addition to the
literature of the modern world.

Roy was always loath to speak and write about himself. Dr. A. S.
Erulkar, the eminent physician and rationalist of Bombay, was struck
by this trait and wrote the following in his Introduction to Roy's
Letters from Jail: “One of the things on which it is difficult to elicit
information from Roy is himself and his own life. It would not be so
incorrect to say that even his close associates in public life know little
of him; and because of this peculiar silence, the curious and the
critical have labelled him the 'Mystery Man' of Indian politics. To me,
this silence does not at all appear deliberate. It is quite natural of a
personality merged in the current of history, constantly struggling to
influence its course. This exceptional identity of the man with his
work naturally precludes the possibility of any expression about
himself except in terms of his work.”¹

It was with great difficulty that Roy was persuaded in the last decade
of his life to write about himself. Earlier he had refused all requests
and even tempting offers to write his autobiography. He had received
one such offer from an American publisher while in jail. But he had a
distaste of

¹ M. N. Roy. Letters from Jail, Introduction, p. ii, Renaissance
Publishers, Calcutta.
writing about himself. In a letter written from jail, he wrote: “I consider autobiography very unreliable as a source of objective truth. It is practically certain that nobody can ever write the truth and nothing but the truth about his or her intimate experience. I really don’t understand why intelligent people rush to compose autobiographies. That itself is a matter of psychoanalytical study. Biography is a different proposition; but self-composed biography? Well, with due deference to the honesty of the authors, I remain sceptical about the historical authenticity and psychological value of their work, which may be otherwise meritorious as literature. It is not a question of honesty or integrity. It is the great 'Unconscious.' Who could ever be free from the dictations of the Freudian God? Indeed, I dare express the iconoclastic opinion that to write autobiography is worshipping in the temple of that deity. Even the most truthful man packs his autobiography unconsciously with lies. Otherwise, the venture could not be rationally explained. One able to think, able to express his thoughts, with something of value to add to the common stock of cultural attainments, can easily find so many other subjects to write about, without the handicap that one must feel while composing an autobiography. To talk about oneself? Well, it is a matter of taste, I suppose.”

The readers of the Memoirs will be happy that towards the end his friends succeeded in breaking down Roy's stubborn resistance and in persuading him to write a few fragments of his autobiography.

The Memoirs can no doubt be read by themselves. But they will, it is felt, give added pleasure and instruction if some information is given about the earlier and later parts of the life of the writer. A biography of Roy is yet to be written. It is a task which will require immense labour, ample resources and great competence. Until it is written, one has to rely on the information that is available in a fragmentary manner. The following is an attempt to piece together some of those fragments in order that the readers may get a glimpse into the rich and varied life that he lived.

Manabendranath Roy was born in a Brahmin family in a village near Calcutta in 1853. That was not his original name. He assumed it, as stated in the Memoirs, after he landed in the United States of America in the course of his search for arms. The original name was Narendranath Bhattacharya. His father was a priest as well as a school teacher. As stated by Roy, "he spent his life in teaching Sanskrit, to would-be clerks or prospective lawyers." Though he was a priest, he was of a reformist outlook. Early in his life, he left his native village in the Midnapur district and settled in a village in the district of Twenty-four Parganas where Narendranath was born. Narendranath received his early education in the village school. Later, he joined the National University founded by Aurobindo Ghose. But Narendranath did not have much of an attraction for academic studies. Even while in school he participated in a number of political activities associated with the national movement. The leader of the revolutionary youths, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar exerted a big influence on his mind. The politics that attracted Narendranath was not the politics of petitions and representations but the politics of armed struggle for the liberation of the motherland. Those were the days of the Bengal Partition and of the national struggle to right that grievous wrong. Swadeshi and boycott were the methods adopted by the general public, but the more earnest and resolute amongst young men resorted to the method of the armed struggle. The restless and intrepid Narendranath joined those youths and became a member of the Yugantar group, one of the two revolutionary organizations of the Bengal of those days.

A colleague of those days described, at a later period, Narendranath's first entry into the revolutionary movement. He wrote: "Narendra, almost a boy, hardly fourteen, and yet virile and energetic, full of revolutionary enthusiasm, rushed into a little room in which we were holding an informal talk on the problems then facing us in Bengal and elsewhere. He had a talk with us. After this, he offered himself as a


4 M. N. Roy, Letters from Jail, p. 204.
whole-timer for the cause of liberty of India from the foreign yoke. He declared on oath that he would be prepared to do the impossible; for, there was nothing impossible for a revolutionary. Soon after, he joined us; he proved to be of very great value to our movement and possessed rare qualities found only in a great leader of men.”

It was in 1907 that Narendranath had his first encounter with the police. He was arrested for his part in a raid on the railway station in his village. The raid was organized in order to get possession of the money collected at the station for revolutionary activities. Narendranath was prosecuted but the Magistrate acquitted him, holding that he was too young to participate in such serious and daring activity. Thereafter it became impossible for him to stay in the village and he shifted to Calcutta. In Calcutta he was arrested time and again for one revolutionary activity or another, but on each occasion the police could not bring the guilt home to him for lack of sufficient evidence. In 1910 he was placed for trial with forty other young men before a Special Tribunal of the Calcutta High Court in what has come to be known as the Howrah Conspiracy Case. The charge against the youths was one of conspiracy to wage war against the King under Sec. 121 A of the Indian Penal Code. One of the accused in the case was Jatindra Nath Mukerji, the leader of the Vugantar group. As an accused in the case, Narendranath had to spend twenty months in jail as an under-trial prisoner. Nine out of those twenty months had to be spent in solitary confinement which drove three other prisoners subjected to the same treatment to madness. Narendranath was later implicated in two other well-known armed dacoity cases, the Garden Reach Dacoity Case and the Beliaghat Dacoity Case. Both dacoities were committed by the revolutionaries with the object of securing money for the purchase of arms.

During the period in jail, Narendranath read a number of religious books. They left a deep impression on his mind and he decided to be a religious preacher. After his release from jail he became a Sanyasi. He also joined for some time the Ramakrishna Mission. As a Sanyasi he moved on foot in'

many parts of northern and eastern India and was able to see at close quarters the life of the people. However, he became soon tired of the religious superstitions and prejudices and, the desire to work for the political emancipation of the country proving stronger, he returned to his political activities.

By this time the First World War had begun and a new opportunity to work effectively for the overthrow of the British rule had presented itself to all revolutionaries. They hoped to get arms from the Germans and use them in their fight against the Government. Jatindra Nath Mukerji was at this time the leader of the Yugantar group and Narendranath was one of his closest associates. Revolutionary workers of all groups met together early in 1915 and drew up a coordinated plan of activities. They decided to establish contacts with German representatives in the far East and secure arms from them. Narendranath was sent on that errand to Batavia. He went there under the pseudonym of C, Martin. What happened is described as follows in a book about Roy: “On his arrival at Batavia ‘Martin’ was introduced by the German Consul to Theodor Helfferich who stated that a cargo of arms and ammunition was on its way to Karachi to assist the Indians in a revolution. ‘Martin’ then urged that the ships should be diverted to Bengal. This was eventually agreed to after reference to the German Consul-General in Shanghai. ‘Martin’ then returned to make arrangements to receive the cargo of S. S. Maverick, as the ship was called, at Rai Mangal in the Sunder-bans. The cargo was said to consist of 30,000 rifles with 400 rounds of ammunition each and 2 lakhs of rupees. Meanwhile ' Martin ' had telegraphed to Harry and Sons in Calcutta, a bogus firm kept by a well-known revolutionary, that' business was helpful.' In a series of remittances from Helfferich in Batavia to Harry and Sons in Calcutta between June and August monies were sent which aggregated to Rs. 43,000, of which the revolutionaries received Rs. 33,000 before the authorities discovered what was going on. ' Martin ' returned to India in the middle of June, and the conspirators Jatin Mukherji, Jadu Gopal Mukherji, Narendra Bhattacharji (Martin), Bholanath Chatterji and Atul Ghosh set about making plans to receive the Maverick's cargo and employ it
to the best advantage. They decided to divide the arms into three parts to be sent respectively to: (1) Hatia for the Eastern Bengal districts to be worked by the members of the Barisal Party, (2) Calcutta, (3) Balasore." A few days later the police discovered the conspiracy and arrested a number of conspirators. Later, the steamer S. S. Maoerick was not able to come and fresh efforts had to be made to get the arms. Narendranath was therefore sent again on the same mission. With that mission began his travel around the world which kept him away from India for over sixteen years.

The Memoirs begin at this stage. They tell in the first place of the futile search for arms in Dutch East Indies, in Japan, in China and the United States of America. They tell of the birth of M. N. Roy, of the dawn of the new vision and of revolutionary activities in Mexico. They also tell of Roy’s emergence as one of the leaders of the international communist movement and of how he re-established his contacts with the national movement in India and of his efforts to give it a revolutionary orientation. The Memoirs end with the attempts that Roy made to influence the deliberations and decisions of the Ahmedabad and Gaya sessions of the Indian National Congress held respectively in 1921 and 1922. But this was just the beginning of Roy’s work as a leader of the international communist movement. In subsequent years there was a remarkable growth of the breadth as well as the depth of that work. It also brought him in conflict with the Russian leaders of the Communist International. He had to strike a new path. After sixteen years of wandering about in the world in the pursuit of his ideals, he returned to India to work according to that new path. Unaided and persecuted both by the police and the blind followers of the Moscow gods, he built up a powerful political movement. But at the same time in the course of his ceaseless search for freedom and truth he travelled beyond Marxism and Communism and developed the philosophy of Radical Humanism. These are fascinating developments and one would have liked Roy to tell that story in his own inimitable manner. It will ever remain a matter of deep regret that he did not find the time to complete the Memoirs.

Roy's main work during the first few years of his association with the Communist International was the development of the revolutionary movement in India. The theoretical basis for this work was laid down by Lenin's theses on the national and the colonial question adopted by the Second Congress of the Communist International, improved and augmented as they were by Roy's supplementary theses. It was further guided by the cogent analysis of the situation in India as propounded by Roy in his book *India in Transition*. The book was published in 1922. It was the first attempt to study the conditions of India from a Marxist point of view. It disclosed close knowledge of the Indian situation and perfect mastery over the use of the Marxist method. The book is remarkable because when it was written nobody knew of Marx's writing on India. When it was discovered later, it was found that Roy had on many points reached the same conclusions as Marx without knowing about them. Many changes have taken place since the book was written—even Roy's thinking underwent a significant change—and yet it remains invaluable as a Marxist study of the Indian problem. It was translated in a number of European languages.

Roy attempted to develop the revolutionary movement in India both through the Indian National Congress and through independent organizations of workers and peasants and the intellectuals. He established contacts with the leaders of the national movement as well as with younger intellectuals who were getting dissatisfied and disillusioned with Mahatma Gandhi and his programme of work and methods of struggle. He concentrated his efforts on persuading them to accept a clear-cut programme of national revolution. With that end in view he began the publication of a journal called *Vanguard*. It was later changed into *Advance Guard* and still later into *Masses*. The journal had to change its name as well as its place of publication more than once as Roy had to change his place of residence, from time to time, owing to steps taken against him by the police. In the course of those four or five years, he was in turn expelled from Germany, Switzerland and France. In France he was on the point of falling in the hands of the British police, who had by then intensified their search for him.
owing to the growth of communist activities in India. During this period, Roy published three books on the Indian political situation. They were: *One Year of Non-Cooperation*, *Aftermath of Non-Cooperation* and *The Future of Indian Politics*. He wrote, besides, innumerable letters, statements and manifestos. Many of them were produced later as prosecution exhibits in the Kanpur and Meerut Communist Conspiracy cases. These writings of Roy were instrumental in giving Indian intellectuals, for the first time, an acquaintance with Communism and Marxism and in placing before them a concrete programme of a socio-economic revolution. They had an abiding effect on the thinking of a large number of young men.

The journals, books and other literature published by Roy did not have an easy entrance into India. Most of it was proscribed as soon as it was published and prohibited from entering into India under the Sea Customs Act. And yet large quantities came to India through devious ways. They came through post openly or disguised as harmless religious tracts and through couriers. Some copies of the journals also reached newspapers from time to time and they reproduced many articles. British censorship was not very efficient and it could not altogether stop the flow of literature that Roy was producing in big quantities at many places in Europe.

As a result of Roy's efforts communist groups developed in the early twenties in a number of places like Bombay, Calcutta, Kanpur, Lahore and Madras. Efforts were made to bring them together into a well-knit organization. A Communist Party had been already formed abroad. Roy made persistent attempts to establish a close link between local Communists and Communists working abroad. It was not an easy task. In the first place communication was difficult owing to police persecution. In the second place Communists in India were raw and uneducated in the theory and practice of Marxism. There were also jealousies and rivalries. Even amongst Indian exiles in Germany and other European countries there were many who felt jealous of Roy's meteoric rise in the communist movement. They made many attempts to displace him by challenging his representative character. Roy's position was simple. He said he did not claim to represent anybody and
was prepared to work with all who accepted the discipline of the Communist International. In the beginning this propaganda against him did not have any effect but later, when differences of opinion developed, it was utilized as a weapon against him. In India also there were jealousies and rivalries amongst the various communist groups and their members, and the development of the movement could take place only at a slow pace.

Even the small beginnings of the communist movement alarmed the British authorities. They attempted to nip it in the bud by arresting and prosecuting all those suspected of being connected with it. The earlier of the communist conspiracy cases were those of Lahore and Peshawar in which some of those who had come in contact with Roy in Tashkent and Bokhara were implicated. The more notorious were the Kanpur and Meerut communist conspiracy cases started in 1924 and 1929 respectively. In both the cases Roy was the principal accused; others were prosecuted on the charge that they entered into a conspiracy with him for waging war against the King. The letters and the literature that they received from him were the main evidence on which the prosecution relied for proving the conspiracy. Roy could not be produced before the court at the time of the two trials as he was then beyond the reach of the British Police. The charges and the warrants against him were, however, kept alive. They were brought into operation against him as soon as he was arrested years later. The Kanpur conspiracy case disorganized the work, but it did not put an end to the movement. S. A. Dange, Muzafar Ahmad, Shaukat Usmani and Nalini Gupta were the accused in the case. The first three resumed their work immediately after their release. They worked under the guidance of Roy and very soon there were active and influential communist groups in a number of places. The Communists were then closely associated with the Indian National Congress and many of them held important positions in the organization. They were also active in the trade union and the peasant movement. In 1928, they were influential in a number of important trade unions and were responsible for some big and successful strikes.

The growing activities and influence of the Communists was not to the liking of the Government as well as the vested interests
in the country. Both tried to put many obstacles in the way of the Communists; but under Roy's guidance they moved from strength to strength. Many have paid high tributes to Roy for the work that he did during this period. One from a very unexpected source, but a source with the best possible means of knowing the facts, may be quoted here: “M. N. Roy, the first of the Indian communist leaders, was well chosen by Moscow to introduce communism into the practical politics of India. He had, in addition to the equipment of leadership, the burning anti-British zeal of an Indian patriot and terrorist, and a deep understanding of class relations in colonies. From the first, he was held in respect in the Comintern. Having been inducted into leadership without having to struggle and climb, he had the confidence to propound his views and hold them even before the stalwarts of the Comintern. He used the skills of a conspirator to communicate the new doctrine to selected young men in India and to inspire them to try a new experiment in organizing calmly, deliberately, systematically but ruthlessly, a revolution. The record of the Meerut Conspiracy case provides testimony that Roy had raised a band of devoted communists in India who had begun to establish their influence over the working class and had given evidence of their capacity to arouse the militant spirit.” The quotation is from a history of the Indian Communist Party compiled by the Central Intelligence Bureau of the Government of India. It was this spectacular growth of the communist movement which made it necessary for the Government to strike its blow. The blow was the wholesale round-up of communist leaders all over the country and their prosecution in the Meerut Communist Conspiracy Case. Roy, the main factor responsible for the spectacular growth could not, however, be arrested as he was not in India and his activities could not be curbed. But, surprisingly enough, what the Government of India could not do was done by the Communist International by discarding about that time the line which Roy was following since 1921 and by adopting a new ultra-leftist and insurrectionary line" which put an end to his work in India as a representative of the Communist International.
Before going over to that period of his conflict with the Communist International and of single-handed efforts to put a new life into the revolutionary movement disrupted by its adventurist policies and the repression of the Government, it is necessary to say a few words about the position that Roy had come to occupy in the communist movement. He made his mark at the first international conference that he attended. It was the second Congress of the Communist International. At that Congress he crossed swords with Lenin, the accepted leader of the world communist movement. A reference has already been made to his supplementary thesis on the national and colonial question. The *Memoirs* has told the story in vivid details. Thereafter, Roy's rise in the communist movement was rapid and dazzling. He was elected a candidate member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International in 1922 and a full member in 1924. He took a prominent part in world Congresses as well as in ordinary and plenary meetings of the Executive Committee. The contributions that he made were always heard with attention and respect. These meetings brought Roy in close contact with Russian leaders as well as the leaders of most other Communist Parties. These personal contacts enabled him later to draw extraordinarily vivid pen-pictures of many of them. Some of those contacts matured into deep friendship. As a member of the Executive Committee, Roy was drawn into the factional struggle that began in the Russian Party immediately after the death of Lenin. Temperamentally and emotionally Roy should have been with Trotsky. The policies which he advocated were generally regarded as left policies. But he was a sober revolutionary—and as such he was convinced that Stalin's rather than Trotsky's policies would enable the world revolution to consolidate its base in Soviet Russia. Roy would have liked these issues of policy to be debated and decided in a wise and statesmanlike manner. But the factional quarrel soon assumed the form of an internecine war. Stalin won the war, but in the process he changed the character of the Russian Party and of the Communist International and converted the Russian State into a cruel and oppressive dictatorship. The revolution devoured
many of its valiant children. All this happened over a period of ten years. Roy has described and analysed this painful development in his book, *The Russian Revolution*. He wrote it after his return to India during the days of the Second World War. He was also a victim of the factional struggle which earlier had claimed Trotsky and his supporters and which later claimed many an old leader of the Bolshevik Party like Zinoviev, Bukharin, Radek and others.

Before he fell from grace, Roy was entrusted with a very important mission in China. China was then in the throes of a revolution. The revolution was led by the nationalist party, the Kuo Min Tang. The Communists were in alliance with it and as a result of that alliance they had built up a strong position for themselves; The alliance was established on the ground that the revolution that was taking place was an anti-imperialist, anti-feudal, national democratic revolution and therefore a four-class alliance of the capitalists, the petty bourgeoisie, the peasants and the workers should fight together for its accomplishment. The Communist Party of China had been instructed to join the Kuo Min Tang and work together with it. Michael Borodin was then in China as the representative of the Communist International and was giving it the necessary political guidance. There were also a number of Russian military advisers. They were headed by General Bluecher who was known there as General Gallen. Early in 1926, the alliance began to break down. In March, General Chiang Kai-Shek staged a coup and arrested a number of communist workers. The question then arose whether or not the Communists should continue their alliance with the Kuo Min Tang.

There were a rious differences of opinion on the issue in the Communist International which was guiding the course of the Chinese revolution. There were conflicting reports from China. In the end it was decided not to break with the Kuo Min Tang and to continue the cooperation, more particularly with its left wing. But things continued to go wrong. As a result, a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, styled in communist literature as the Seventh Plenum, was held in November 1926 to thrash out the whole issue. A new thesis was adopted and Roy was
sent to China at the head of a new delegation to organize action according to the new line. The meeting had earlier elected Roy to the Presidium of the Comintern and a member of the Chinese Commission.

In his book *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in China* written in 1929 Roy has stated the following about the thesis and his mission to China:

"The meeting of the Executive Committee of the Communist International in November 1926 adopted a new thesis on 'the Chinese question, the central point of which was that the Chinese Revolution must from that time be developed as an agrarian revolution. The leadership of the Chinese Communist Party as well as the representatives of the C.I. in China were of a different view. They still maintained that the nationalist bourgeoisie should be helped to lead the revolution and class struggle should not be accentuated for the sake of national unity. I was alone to advocate the different point of view that the Chinese Revolution had reached a critical moment in which it must strike out a new course and a fetish should not be made of the alliance with the Kuo Min Tang. The Executive of the C.I. adopted my point of view, which was opposed in the beginning by Stalin himself. But Stalin was brought around to my view and the Thesis adopted by the ECCI was drafted by me. Immediately afterwards, I left for China."\(^8\)

Soon after the meeting Roy set out for China by way of Vladivostok and Canton. Travelling along with him were Jacques Doriot and Tom Man who were to attend the fourth All-China Trade Unions Conference.\(^9\) The news of the new thesis reached China long before Roy's arrival. There were heated discussions about the thesis and "it became clear that there were important differences between Moscow on the one hand and the Chinese Communist Central Committee on the

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As the discussions continued, it became increasingly evident that some of the Chinese comrades were troubled by the thesis and extremely hesitant about unleashing a large-scale agrarian revolution over the countryside of China. In months to come, as Ts'ai Ho-san has recorded, the gap between Comintern’s theory and Chinese practice became wider and wider.\(^{11}\) It was this opposition of the Chinese Communists which rendered Roy's task in China extremely difficult. The difficulty was further accentuated by the opposition of Borodin who continued on the scene, held the purse strings and enjoyed the support of the Chinese Party.

"After a delay of more than three weeks in Canton, Roy set out for Hankow. An airplane was to have flown him to the Kuomintang capital, according to a member of the travel party, but there was engine trouble and the group journeyed overland five weeks in chairs carried by coolies. Roy, of course, had been in China a decade earlier, but this was his first intimate experience with the Chinese countryside. On the way to Hankow he saw Chinese villagers hung from trees—villagers who had fought for the revolution.

"On April 1, 1926, Roy and his party reached Changsha, where he was welcomed by the provincial government of Hunan province and by members of peasant, merchant, student and labor organizations. A Kuomintang newspaper described the event: 'Despite the rain, 100,000 people turned out to greet the (Comintern) delegate. Today the Government entertained Mr. Roy at a dinner. He will leave at midnight by special train and will arrive in Hankow tomorrow morning. Mr. Roy is accompanied by Mr. Tan P'ing-Shan, Minister of Agriculture.'\(^{12}\)

The difference of opinion between Roy and Borodin was over the issue of broadening or deepening the revolution. Borodin advocated the former while Roy was for the latter. Borodin was of the opinion that the Communists should support the second northern expedition proposed to be launched by the Left Kuo Min Tang and postpone the agrarian revolution until after the capture of Peking. Roy was opposed to the

12 *ibid.*, p. 59.
northern expedition which he thought was "fraught with grave danger." He warned: "Right now we have only to cope with Chiang Kai-Shek. But we are running from him into unknown territories where, in all probability, we will have to encounter many men like him." Agrarian revolution was in his view the great motive force of the conflict. "The Chinese revolution will either win as an agrarian revolution," Roy asserted, "or it will not win at all." In opposition to Borodin and the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party, Roy proposed "an organization, concentration and consolidation of revolutionary forces by (1) pressing the agrarian revolution, (2) establishing peasant power in the villages, (3) creating a revolutionary army that would not be merely a creature of land-owning generals."  

Efforts were made to settle these differences at the fifth congress of the Chinese Communist Party held in Hankow in May 1927. At the end of long discussions a resolution was adopted which in words accepted Roy's point of view. But words were not backed with action. There was the same reluctance to develop independent actions of workers and peasants on the ground that they would alarm and alienate the Left Kuo Min Tang. Meanwhile, there were many peasant revolts, but they received no support from Communists. They were mercilessly crushed by the militarists belonging to the Left Kuo Min Tang. If the Communists had acted vigorously at this time, they could have turned the tide. Roy was constantly prodding them, but all his advice and suggestions fell on deaf ears. As a last resort he turned to Stalin and requested him to send definite instructions to follow a revolutionary course of action. Stalin telegraphed instructions as desired by Roy. But even the telegram did not have any effect. Borodin considered the instructions "ludicrous" and the reply that was sent said: "Orders received. Shall obey as soon as we can do so."  

The end came soon thereafter. The Left Kuo Min Tang contended that the Communists had conspired against it, that they had fomented peasant revolts and that they were out to

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14 Ibid., p. 107.
capture power for themselves. The telegram from Stalin was relied upon for making these charges. Later, Roy was accused of having committed an indiscretion in giving its copy to Wang Chi-wei, the leader of the Left Kuo Min Tang. But as a matter of fact, the telegram was only an excuse. The relations had already become very strained. The Left Kuo Min Tang was no longer prepared to go along with the Communists. It preferred to patch up its quarrel with Ghiang Kai-Shek and join hands with him. An offensive was then opened against the Communists, they were hounded out of the Kuo Min Tang, a large number of them were arrested and executed and the rest had to flee and thus save their lives. This happened in July 1927. Borodin and all other Russian advisers were asked to return to Russia. " Roy left Hankow in late July or early August. The Comintern provided three large touring cars equipped with heavy-duty springs and gasoline cans lashed to the running boards. The drivers were agents of the G.P.U. From Hankow the caravan headed for the Northwest, crossed the Mongolian deserts and proceeded to the Soviet Union by way of Urga."\(^\text{15}\) After a brief stay in Moscow, Roy proceeded to his headquarters in Berlin. He was busy during the next few months, preparing his report to the Comintern. He also wrote during this period his work—*Revolution and Counter-Revolution in China*. The German edition of the book was published in 1931, but it fell prey to the vandalism of Hitler. The English edition was published in India in 1945. The report that Roy made to the Comintern was, it appears, published in Russian in Moscow in 1929, Roy did not have a copy of the book. A copy was discovered in a library in the United States in 1960. An English translation of the book was published in 1963 by Robert C. North and Xenia V. Eudin. It is entitled *M. N. Roy's Mission to China* and is published by the University of California Press. It contains a number of speeches made and statements and other documents published by Roy during those eventful days in China.

The defeat of the revolution in China was a blow to Roy's career in the Comintern. The blow did not come, however,

until over a year and a half later; and when it came it did not come on the issue of China. Stalin, it appears, could not proceed against Roy on that issue as he was personally involved in it at every stage and condemning Roy would have meant condemning himself. Moreover, it would have strengthened Trotsky's hands. He had, therefore, to bide his time. The Ninth Plenum of the Comintern was held in Moscow in February 1928. Roy was present at the meeting to make his report on China. " Roy expected his report to be accepted by the Comintern and his role in China to win Stalin's personal approval. But Stalin—for whom Roy had a sentimental attachment—refused to see him after the failure in China. As the Plenum proceeded, Roy came to realize that his Comintern career was virtually over, that his life as well as his career might well be in jeopardy. Indeed, when he left Moscow some weeks later, he found it necessary to travel by night—clandestinely—and until he crossed the Soviet frontier it was not certain whether he would make good his escape."16

The attack against Roy began at the sixth World Congress of the Communist International held in Moscow in September 1928. Roy was not present at the Congress owing to illness. " In his report on the colonial question, Kuusinen attacked me as the father of the so-called theory of 'de-colonisation.' According to him, I had put forward the view that British Imperialism would gradually lead the Indian people to freedom. On that allegation, I was characterized in the report as well as in the thesis (the tone was modified in the corrected stenogramme of the report and final version of the thesis) as 'lackey of imperialism' "— stated Roy later in his famous article " My Crime."17

The charge was absolutely unfounded as Roy made clear in a statement on de-colonisation that he submitted later to the Communist International.18 The charge was, however, merely an excuse. It had been already decided to effect a sharp turn in the policy of the Comintern and it was necessary to sacrifice Roy.

16 Ibid., pp. 128
17 M. N. Roy, Our Differences, Saraswaty Library, Calcutta, p. 27.
18 Ibid., pp. 44-114.
The sixth World Congress took a sharp turn to the left. The decision was taken in the light of the circumstances then obtaining in Russia where it was decided to embark upon a programme of rapid industrialization and forced collectivization of agriculture. The same rapid march was also imposed upon the world communist movement. The "International abandoned the tactics of united front, although the situation did not warrant such an abrupt change of policy."

Roy was in sharp disagreement with this new line of the Comintern on the Indian as well as on many other issues.

The new line to be pursued in India was supposed to have been adopted on the advice of an Indian delegation which put in its appearance at the Congress. The delegation made a report against Roy saying that he "was a person completely unknown in India, having had no connection whatsoever with the revolutionary movement." The interesting fact about the delegation however, was, "that only one member of the delegation was allowed to return to India. It is reported that the rest were presently suspected of being British spies and dealt with as such."

In spite of his sharp disagreement with the policy, Roy kept quiet for about a year. But in the meantime the communist movement in many countries was facing a serious crisis. The crisis was particularly grave in Germany where a number of veteran leaders of the movement were expelled and where the Communists were drifting further and further away from the large mass of workers. Unable to hold his patience any longer, Roy contributed a series of articles on the crisis of the International to a journal published by the dissident leaders of the German Communist Party. That gave the excuse to the leaders of the Comintern and they seized the opportunity officially to ostracize Roy. This happened at the meeting of the Tenth Plenum of the Comintern held in Moscow early in 1929. According to the resolution, by advocating "the opportunist policy of a bloc with the nationalist bourgeoisie" and "contributing to the press of the Brandlerist renegades" Roy had placed himself outside the pale of the International.

19 Ibid., Preface, p. i.

20 Ibid., Preface, p. ii.
Roy has given a graphic account of how the decision was taken at the Tenth Plenum in his article "My Crime." A quotation will be of interest: “For some time I have been standing before the ‘sacred Guillotine’ the mad application of which is causing such a havoc to the International Communist movement. I have stood in that position for nearly a year, not shuddering with the fear for my head, but aghast at the incompetence of those who have usurped the leadership of the movement, and amazed at the temerity with which this incompetent and irresponsible leadership is driving the movement to rack and ruin. At last has come my turn, so inexplicably delayed. At the Tenth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the C.I. my humble head was demanded by the gentle Kuusinen in his characteristic manner of shirking responsibility. Referring to my latest ‘crime’—contribution to the press of the German Opposition—he wondered if after the commission of such a heinous crime one could still deserve to be a comrade of those whom he represented. The stage was set for the purpose. The masses responded. The prompted cry—‘a la guillotine’ was raised from the obscure corner, and one connected with the Communist International nearly from its very foundation, active in the revolutionary movement for years previously, hitherto suspected of and criticized for alleged 'left deviations' was placed automatically outside the pale of the Communist International. After some unfounded attacks by Losowskyi and Schubins, obviously with the authority of the Russian delegation, Manuilsky clinched the affair by damning me as a

‘renegade.’ It was a very simple procedure. No evidence whatsoever was produced to show how a traditional ‘leftist’ has become a right opportunist, how one suddenly becomes a

‘renegade’ after more than twenty years’ active service to the revolution. Kuusinen simply asserted that I propose the policy of making a bloc with the Indian National Bourgeoisie, and Manuilsky roundly called me a "renegade." The article ended with a powerful exposition of his position. He wrote: “The crimes attributed to me I have not committed. My offence is that I lay claim to the right of independent thinking,

21 Ibid., pp. 25-26.
and this is not permissible in the present critical period through which the C.I. is pacing. I was not declared a ‘renegade’ and placed outside the pale of the official International, 90 long as I did not speak out my disagreement. The gag of silence was imposed upon me, the all-mighty apparatus depriving me of all the means of expression. In other words, for the unpardonable crime of independent thinking, I would have been quietly buried into oblivion, had I not dared raise my voice. But the duty of a revolutionary sometimes transgresses the narrow limits of arbitrary discipline,... I was placed in a position where I found it was my revolutionary duty to join the Opposition against the present leadership which is ruining the International.

"I disagree with all the resolutions of the Sixth Congress, not only with that on the Indian Question. If the mistake were on one particular question, it might be advisable to wait hoping that it would be corrected in course of time. But the mistaken line pursued in India is but a small part of a huge blunder. Therefore, it is not permissible to keep quiet. The International is in a crisis which is manifested by the composition and exercise of its leadership."²²

Even after his expulsion from the Comintern, Roy continued as before his activities in furtherance of the Indian national movement. Most of the Communists in India whom he had trained and developed left him after the event and began to denounce him as a renegade and counter-revolutionary at the behest of the international organization. There were a few, however, who bad the courage of their conviction. They stood by Roy. He had moreover a number of other contacts in the Congress and the trade union movement. He carried on his work through them. In December 1929 the Indian National Congress held its momentous session at Lahore. The session accepted complete national independence as the immediate objective of the Congress. This was a historic declaration. Roy welcomed it by issuing a pamphlet entitled The Lessons of the Lahore Congress and took the opportunity to place before Congressmen a concrete programme of national revolution.-

²² Ibid., -pp. 42-43.
It included the following items: “(1) Establishment of a Federal Republic of India with an advanced Democratic Constitution, the Executive being fully responsible to a single-chamber Parliament elected by universal (men and women) adult suffrage; (2) Provincial autonomy in local matters, the provinces, reconstructed for assuring as far as possible linguistic and religious homogeneity, having government as democratic as the central government; (3) Abolition (without compensation) of the Native States and landlordism by the decree of the Democratic National State empowering the peasants to confiscate the land; (4) Nationalization of the land, the cultivators having the occupancy right in return for the payment to the Government of a unitary land-tax which shall not exceed 15 per cent of the net income; (5) Abolition of all other charges on the peasantry (for example irrigation-tax) and of indirect taxation (salt-tax, excise duties, protective customs duty, etc.) (6) Complete exemption of taxation for peasants living on (uneconomic holdings); (7) Liquidation of agricultural indebtedness in the case of the peasants in the state of insolvency; (8) Legislation for the control of usury (interest not to exceed 10 per cent per annum); (9) Organization of agricultural banks with State aid for providing cheap credit to the peasants; (10) Nationalization of the mineral resources and public utilities; (11) Legislation fixing the working day for the wage-labourer to 8 hours; (12) Minimum wages guaranteeing a constantly rising standard of living of the worker to be fixed by law; (13) Social Insurance (against unemployment, sickness, old age and maternity)—the employers and the State contributing 75 per cent of the fund; (14) Legislation of Trade Unions and of the workers’ right to strike and organize their class political party; (15) Freedom of the press, platform and association; (16) Freedom of religion and worship; (17) Protection for minorities; (18) Right to bear arms; (19) Free and compulsory primary education.”

The programme was to be achieved on the basis of the mobilization of the masses through struggles for the realization of their immediate demands. Roy was advocating this line right from the time that

he became a Communist and he continued advocating it even after his break with the Comintern. In May 1930, the Labour and the Socialist International held a meeting of its Executive Committee in Berlin. Prominent leaders of the British Labour Party attended it. Roy issued on the occasion "An Open Letter" to the members of the Committee drawing their attention to the steps taken by the Labour Party to crush the independence struggle in India. About this time, he also made an effort, along with many other Indians, to organize in Germany a branch of the Indian National Congress. Thus he continued to be in constant touch with the developments in India.

As a result of the ultra-leftist policies followed after the sixth Congress there were splits in the Communist Parties of many countries. Those who refusecj to toe the adventurist line were thrown out of the Parties. Many of them were leaders of long standing, with an enviable record of service to their credit. Prominent amongst them were Henrick Brandler and August Thalheimer of Germany. Roy had particularly close relations with them. They were his friends and also his guides and advisers. There are many references to both of them in his Letters from Jail. He worked in close collaboration with them until his return to India. They thought many a time of establishing a new international organization consisting in the beginning of those who had been expelled from the Comintern. Roy did not favour the idea. He advised them to wait in patience for the leaders of the Comintern to realize their mistakes and return to the path of sanity. The seventh Congress of the Communist International held in 1935 changed the policy and practically adopted the line that Roy and his friends had advocated. But it did not have either the honesty or the generosity to invite back to its fold all those who had parted company with it because of the wrong line that was adopted at the earlier Congress.

There was sharp deterioration in the conditions in India as well. All senior communist workers were arrested by the Government early in 1929. Their places had been taken by younger workers who had neither experience nor the capacity.

24 Ibid., pp. 220-331.
to think for themselves. They blindly followed the new line of the Comintern. As a result they placed themselves in opposition to the national movement, that was developing under the banner of the Indian National Congress. In the trade union movement, they followed the policy of organizing strikes and of splitting unions. They thought the revolution was around the corner and talked and planned only of establishing Soviets. As a consequence, the communist movement in the country was all but destroyed. Roy was getting all this information through newspapers and other reports. It was painful for him to observe the wanton destruction of all the good work that had been done during the previous half a dozen years under his guidance. He felt an intense desire to intervene and save the situation. It was evident moreover that a new upsurge of the national movement was taking place. He wanted to be on the scene to give it a revolutionary orientation. But it was not easy for Roy to return to India. Two warrants—one of the Kanpur conspiracy case and the other of the Meerut conspiracy case were pending against him and he would be arrested as soon as he set foot in the country. It was therefore necessary to take ample precautions to see that the Police did not get scent of his movements. Roy discussed the matter with his close friends, more particularly Brandler and Thalheimer. They did not approve of the idea. Brandler thought the situation was not as mature as it appeared on the surface and advised Roy against the adventure. Later, Roy accepted that Brandler's estimate of the situation was correct but he was not prepared to admit that his action was wrong. As he stated in one of his letters, "it is a stage in the process. It must be gone through, no matter whatever may come out of it." In the end, Roy decided to take the jump. The necessary preparations were made and he left for India on November 14, 1930. His last week in Europe, he spent with Ellen Gottschalk, who journeyed to India in 1937 to become his wife and collaborator, at a hill station in the Alps to which many a tender reference is to be found in the *Letters from Jail*

Roy had prepared some ground for his return to India. He had some contacts with Indian students studying in various

educational centres in Europe. Three of them, Tayab Shaikh, Sundar Kabadi and Brajesh Singh were very close to him. They accepted his point of view and agreed to help him in his work in India. They came to India a few months before him and made all necessary arrangements. Roy reached India in the middle of December. He landed in Karachi and then travelled to Bombay. He had arranged his disappearance from Europe and his travel to India in such a clever manner that the Police did not know of his arrival for about two months. Roy had to live, move about and work in a clandestine manner as he had to keep away from the Police. He knew that one day or the other he would be arrested; he was prepared for it, but he wanted to put off that day as long as he could so that he might get some time for laying the foundation of his work. At the same time, he did not desire to lay hidden in a safe place where he would not be able to do any work. Any number of such places were offered to him, some by prominent Congressmen; but he had no use for them.

Within a few days of his arrival in Bombay, Roy was able to gather around him a group of young and earnest political workers. They belonged to many organizations such as youth leagues, trade unions and Congress committees. They did not know in the beginning the illustrious identity of the person who dazzled them by the sweep and brilliance of his intelligence and who, moreover, opened before them a clear path of revolution. It was only later that they discovered that the centre of their group, Dr. Mahmud was the world famous revolutionary M. N. Roy. In the course of a few days he was able to win their political allegiance as well as their personal friendship and loyalty. Roy also met many Congress leaders and leaders of other organizations. He talked to them about the political and the social revolution and about what needed to be done in order to help its growth. He was not able to get their direct support, but in many cases he was able to influence their thinking at least to some extent.

Roy was present at the Karachi session of the Indian National Congress. He was able to meet there both Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose. He had long discussions with them and it was out of those discussions that there emerged the idea of a
declaration of the social and economic goals of the Congress. The declaration took the form of a resolution which has since come to be known as the Karachi Resolution. It was the first commitment of the Congress to a socio-economic programme. Roy was not responsible for the wording -of the resolution, but the idea and the inspiration were, no doubt, his. He did not, however, succeed in securing the emergence of a left wing in the Congress as a distinct force. Roy took an equally keen interest in the revival and the unity of the trade union movement which had been disrupted by the Communists. Some members of his group began to work in trade unions under his guidance. He also prepared the Platform of Unity which later became the basis of unity in the trade union movement. Roy did not restrict himself only to cities. He toured rural areas also and attended some peasant conferences. He did this especially in U.P. where he went under the name of Dr. Bannerji.

The Comintern's propaganda against Roy had reached India long before him. It was readily swallowed by the members of the Communist Party, to whom any statement of the Comintern was as good as God's word. They spread it energetically all over the country. Many a non-Communist also lent credence to it, as in those days Communism and the Communist International had a big glamour for all leftists and progressives. Roy's task was therefore extremely difficult. He had to struggle against the vicious propaganda of the Communists as well as the sentimental attachment of many to the centre of world revolution. The Communists did not content themselves only with propaganda. They actively obstructed all activities of the Royists. Some amongst them shouted from the housetops that Dr. Mahmud was Roy and that gave the missing clue to the Police. Thereafter it became impossible for Roy to move about in the streets.

Having come to know that Dr. Mahmud was Roy, the Police tightened their net. Eventually he was arrested in Bombay on 10th July 1931. Some of his associates were also arrested along with him on the charge of giving shelter to a fugitive offender. Roy's arrest was front page news in all papers. The Police regarded it as a great achievement, for after sixteen
long years they had succeeded in arresting a person for whom they were looking all over the world. Nationalist India was shocked by the news, for, without knowing much about the new philosophy that Roy had embraced, it had a sneaking admiration and love for him for his exploits in foreign lands. His friends and colleagues were naturally overwhelmed. It took them some time to recover from the shock.

Roy was immediately transferred to Kanpur. The old Kanpur Communist Conspiracy case was revived and he was prosecuted for his part in the conspiracy. The committal proceedings before the Magistrate were soon over. The trial in the Sessions Court dragged on for some months and eventually Roy was sentenced to twelve years' transportation. The punishment was brutally severe. Later it was reduced in appeal to six years' rigorous imprisonment. Roy defended himself before the Magistrate and in the Sessions Court. His defence was rather unorthodox. He contended that the British rule in India was not a legally established rule and that therefore an attempt to overthrow it was not illegal. He questioned the validity of the Indian Penal Code. This defence was later published in book form as *My Defence*. The defence, it appears, annoyed the Sessions Court—and it may provide some explanation of the savage sentence that was awarded. In appeal, Dr. K. N. Katju defended Roy. The sentence was reduced to half, but it was still far more severe than the maximum sentence awarded in the more recent Meenit Communist Conspiracy Case.

Immediately after the sentence was pronounced Roy was transferred to the jail in Bareilly. He spent the larger part of his imprisonment in that jail. Conditions in the jail were harsh and oppressive. He was treated as a B class prisoner. He was entitled to receive and send only one letter a month. He sent that letter regularly to Ellen Gottschalk who joined him in India at the end of the imprisonment and became famous as Mrs. Ellen Roy. Many of those letters were later published as *Letters from Jail*. The letters are a remarkable document. They manifest the wide and varied interests of Roy. He was as much interested in philosophy and science as in arts and literature. He kept himself abreast of all advances of modern
science. He was equally well informed about social and political events. They also express the pangs of a sensitive soul—a soul tormented by the cruelties and crimes of the world, and the eternal quest of a seeker after freedom and truth. They open a window into a mind that was phenomenally rich and yet always eager to extend the frontiers of its knowledge. Roy was also entitled to one interview per month, but he was denied that privilege on the ground that he had no relatives who alone, under the rules, could ask for it. There were many restrictions on his getting books and still more stringent restrictions on the use of writing materials. Many a time books as well as writing materials were denied to him and that was the worst type of torture that could be inflicted on him.

Bareilly gets very hot in summer. Roy could hardly stand the summer heat, having lived for over fifteen years in countries with a cold climate. But he had to undergo that torture. As a result, his health broke down. The damage done to his health was of a permanent nature, as was seen later after his release. The news of Roy's ill-health spread in the country and abroad. There were many anxious enquiries and a good deal of pressure was exerted upon the Government. As a result of the pressure, arrangements were made later to shift Roy to Almora during the summer to be brought back to Bareilly as soon as it ended. Roy was able to take advantage of this arrangement during the last two years. The last part of his imprisonment he spent in the Dehra Dun jail. He was released from there on 20th November 1936 after a period of five years and four months. At long last Roy was a free man, free to work openly and actively for the liberation of his country.

Roy's imprisonment did not put an end to the activities that he initiated during the short period that he was able to work underground after his return to India. The workers that he had gathered around him continued them and expanded the work after his arrest. They came to be known as the Roy Group and became prominent both in the political and in the trade union movement. The Roy Group came to be recognized as a force to be reckoned with. It built up this position for itself in spite of the constant and stiff opposition
that it met with from the official Communist Party. During that period, there was a sort of race between the Roy Group and the Communist Party for capturing influential positions in the national and the trade union movement. Owing to the correct guidance that it received from time to time from Roy, the Roy Group was far ahead in the race. An acknowledgement of that position is to be found in the history of the Communist Party prepared by the Government of India. It states: "The Comintern's apprehension that Roy would put to good use his political sagacity, organisational ability, capacity for leadership and, above all, his remarkable personality and would attract leftists to himself, thus weakening the 'official' communist movement, proved correct. Almost all the agents that he had raised in India from Europe had remained loyal to the Comintern, abandoning Roy. Yet, by the end of 1934, Roy's new followers had shown excellent results. They had consolidated their position in the A.I.T.U.C., secured the affiliation to it of over 40 labour organizations and had set up a permanent office in Calcutta. The A.I.T.U.C. was gradually re assuming the former position as the leader and organizer of the trade union movement in the country." At another place it records: "It was only the genius of Roy that could have accomplished so much single-handed in the short time that he had spent in India since his return. He inspired and guided his followers even from jail. The progress of the communist movement in India in subsequent years has shown how right were the tactics that Roy advocated. Had the Comintern directed the Communist Party of India to participate in the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930-32, the present-day communists would at least have been saved the accusation that they had remained aloof from the country's independence struggle and they might well have left a mark of their ideology and of their zeal and discipline on the political leadership of the day." Roy was constantly in touch with the Group. In spite of the rigours of the jail and the constant and watchful eye of the jail authorities on all his movements, he had found means of keeping himself in communication with the outside world. Roy had a wonderful knack of making friends and of evoking loyalty and faithful service. Political prisoners helped him.
He was also helped by common criminals as well as by warders and other jail officials. They helped him smuggle out his messages, his letters and other communications. He sent several letters to the members of the Roy Group. He also wrote several letters to leaders of the Indian National Congress. Prominent amongst such communications were his letters on the emergence of the Congress Socialist Party. He tried to advise the organizers on the programme that they should adopt and the type of organization that they should develop. The communication was later published as *Letter to the Congress Socialist Party*. A whole pamphlet on development in China was also smuggled out. It was published under the title *China in Revolt*.

Roy was all along a prolific writer. In jail, he did a lot of writing in spite of the hard conditions that were imposed upon him. His well-known books *Fascism* and *Historical Role of Islam* were written in jail as also his controversy with Sir Shah Suliman, the Chief Justice of the High Court of Allahabad, later published under the title, *Heresies of the Twentieth Century*. There is besides a large volume of still unpublished material. It bears particularly on the philosophical consequences of modern science, a topic to which Roy devoted keen attention during the period of his imprisonment. In every letter from jail, he was all along asking for more and more books on the topic. His great regret during the period was that he could not discuss his ideas on the subject with some of his friends in Europe who were competent to discuss them. It is to be regretted that the work is still unpublished,

Roy's release from jail was hailed with delight by all nationalists. There was only one exception, the Communists and their fellow-travellers. They were not happy at the prospect of having to face him in the open. To them, he was an enemy to be fought against by any and every means since he was not prepared, as they were, to follow blindly and unquestioningly the instructions and mandates of the Communist International. They continued as before their inveterate opposition to him. Roy jumped into the national movement as soon as he was released. He was already in touch with Jawaharlal Nehru. The latter invited him to the U.P. Provincial Congress.
Conference which was held immediately after his release. Roy had already decided, after deep thought during the days of his imprisonment, to join the Congress and to work through it for his ideal of the political and social liberation of the country. At the Conference he enrolled himself a member of the Congress and was immediately elected a delegate to the ensuing annual session of the Congress, a member of the All-India Congress Committee and a member of the Executive Committee of the U.P. Congress Committee. Members of the Roy Group were already by his side. Besides them, he had now a number of colleagues and co-workers in the Congress who were prepared to work according to his programme.

Roy visited a number of places after his release. At each place he was accorded a warm and enthusiastic reception and the people were eager to see and listen to a person who had played a prominent role in the revolutionary movements of many lands. He was already a legendary figure and political workers began to flock around him. He was the centre of attention at the Faizpur session of the Indian National Congress. He elaborated at the session his ideas about a constituent assembly and how, by developing people's struggles for their immediate demands, Congress Committees could become organs of struggle and in the course of time grow into organs of power. The elaboration of such a concrete programme of revolutionary action was a new event in the Congress. It caught the imagination of all serious and militant workers for the cause of national freedom. After the session Roy participated in the election campaign of the Congress in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra.

The activization and democratization of the Congress was the aim that Roy desired to pursue in order to make it into an effective instrument of national revolution. He worked for it consistently and persistently during the first three or four years after his release from jail. He had to work, however, against tremendous odds. The right wing of the Congress was ranged against him. That did not surprise him. What surprised him was the opposition of the left wing. The leftists in the Congress were running after Utopian dreams and impractical ideas. They were not prepared to come to terms with the
hard realities of the situation and devise a programme which was
practicable as well as effective. This attitude brought them in sharp
conflict with the policies and tactics that Roy desired to adopt for
developing a new leadership in the Congress. In an article written in
1937 the present writer described the position as follows:

“The so-called left-wingers had their own ideas as to what Comrade
Roy should do after his release from jail. They wanted him to stand
aloft on the Olympian heights of impracticable theories and romantic
dreams. They wanted him to keep aloof from the actual work of
mobilizing and organizing the radical forces, but to act merely as a
sympathiser, as an adviser, as a guiding star. They could have then
adored him as a hero and boosted him as a great revolutionary.
Comrade Roy, however, had his own ideas, and preferred not to play
the role allotted to him by those who were afraid of being outshone.
Always an active revolutionary, he went straight to the task of
organizing the people in their revolutionary struggle. He did not
appreciate the role of a highly applauded, but an ineffective hero. He
refused to isolate himself on the Olympian heights. He joined the
ranks of the people, and moving in their midst, thinking their
thoughts, and giving expression to their feelings and aspirations,
undertook the unostentatious, but essential work of organizing them.

" Many of the ideas and slogans put forward by him aroused in the
beginning a storm of opposition. The so-called leftists decried them as
reactionary and counter-revolutionary. They heaped abuse on him.
But the passage of time has proved the correctness of Comrade Roy's
analysis, and every one of his ideas and slogans has been generally
accepted even by those who were fiercely opposed to them.”

By this time Roy had established his own independent journal in
Bombay. It was a weekly called *Independent India*. It is published
now in Calcutta under the! new name of *Radical Humanist*. Through
the journal Roy placed before the people from week to week his views
on current problems and his suggestions for their solution. The
*Independent India* soon became

an influential views paper and attracted a wide readership. Roy also established a League of Radical Congressmen to carry forward the work of activizing and democratizing the Congress. He undertook extensive travel in many parts of the country and received in most places a large measure of public support. It is regrettable, however, to note that in all these efforts to develop the revolutionary potential he did not get the support that was due to him from either Jawaharlal Nehru or Subhas Chandra Bose, the recognised leaders of the left wing in the country or from the leftists in the Congress. None of them was prepared for a sharp break with the Gandhian mode of thought and methods of struggle, which was implicit in Roy's programme of action.

Roy was unique amongst nationalist leaders of the country in emphasizing the necessity of a philosophical revolution as a precondition for the accomplishment of a political and social revolution. He realized the necessity of a Renaissance. He had written about it when he was abroad. He undertook a vigorous campaign to propagate the idea immediately after his release. This campaign was an inseparable part of all the political campaigns that he waged. The article quoted earlier stated:

"Side by side with the struggles on the political front for the building up of an effective revolutionary movement and for curing the radicals of their theoretical extravagances and romantic dreams, Comrade Roy has been carrying on a systematic fight on the ideological front against the reactionary notions of orthodox Nationalism. In the midst of the din of political fight, he heralds a philosophical revolution. His philosophical writings and speeches, besides revealing him as a great thinker, have contributed a good deal to the clarification of the intellectual atmosphere clouded with the mist of glorification of old traditions, the talk of the spiritual genius of our people, and the special mission of India. His merciless analysis of the reactionary character of old ideas, and his bold insistence on the necessity of learning from the experience of the Western countries, have rendered him unpopular with the mass of orthodox nationalists. But he risked that with the conviction that a revolutionary movement cannot be built
up on the foundation of a reactionary ideology. The spectre of unpopularity or the frown of popular idols did not deter him from addressing himself to the fundamental task of the revolutionary movement of our country. With remarkable courage he has been preaching the message of revolt—revolt against authority, revolt against tradition, revolt against the intolerable conditions of life. The central point he always tries to drive home is that spiritual and intellectual revolt is the condition for the success of a political and social revolt.”

He wrote a number of books and articles on the problem. Prominent amongst them were *Materialism* and *Scientific Politics*. Later he also established a new organization called Indian Renaissance Institute to carry on systematic work to familiarize the country with the ideas of the Renaissance. The Radical Humanist Movement to which he devoted himself in the last part of his life is the culmination of the Renaissance Movement which he began developing as soon as he became free to work openly.

The Second World War which broke out on 1st September 1939 brought about a revolutionary change in the political situation in the country. There was a strong and widespread anti-British sentiment amongst the people and the general feeling was that advantage should be taken of the difficult situation in which the British Government had landed itself to advance the cause of Indian independence. The Congress Ministries resigned on the issue of the failure of the Viceroy to consult Indian opinion before involving the country in the War. There was a demand for initiating and developing an anti-war and war-resistance movement. Mahatma Gandhi started the individual Satyagraha movement. The Government suppressed it. But the war was becoming fiercer and was drawing nearer and nearer to India with the spectacular victories of Japan in South-East Asia. The British Government tried to conciliate Indian opinion, but the efforts did not succeed at it was not prepared to concede independence without which the nationalist movement was not prepared to extend its co-operation to the war efforts. In the end Gandhiji began "Ibid., pp. 157-158-
the Quit India movement in August 1942, which involved the whole country in a virtual rebellion against the Government. The rebellion, spontaneous, unorganized and predominantly non-violent that it was, was suppressed without much difficulty, but it left behind a vast trail of bitterness and conflict. There was a very large measure of public support behind these antiwar activities and movements of the Congress.

Roy had to swim against this powerful currents of public opinion. His reaction to the War was different. He regarded it as a people's, anti-Fascist war. This character of the War, which he had the vision of perceiving as soon as it spread to Europe in the early months of 1940, became clearer as it proceeded from one campaign to another. He was sure that it would soon engulf Soviet Russia, as it happened in June 1941. He was therefore of the opinion that it deserved the unconditional support of all freedom-kn-ing people. He was convinced that it was only through supporting the war efforts that the Indian people would be best able to work for their liberation. These were strange and heretical views and were most unpopular. Even amongst his close followers they did not win immediate approval. He had to reason and argue with them quietly and patiently. After a good deal of effort he succeeded in carrying conviction to them. Once convinced they began to work with him for the success of the war efforts and for persuading the people to take part in them enthusiastically and purposefully. Those activities were not popular and they earned for Roy and his followers a lot of abuse and denunciation as agents of British Imperialism. Roy wrote extensively on the issue of the War in *Independent India* as well as in other journals. Some of it is published in book form as *India and the War*,

This divergence of views on the issue of War led to Roy's expulsion from the Congress. The immediate cause of the expulsion was the pro-war, anti-Fascist demonstrations that the Royists organized on the first anniversary of the War. Faced with this ban on their pro-war activities, Roy and his colleagues had no other alternative but to leave the Congress and built up another political party. Accordingly the Radical Democratic Party was organized in December 1940 consisting of members of the League of Radical Congressmen and others
who were convinced of the correctness of Roy's line of action and were prepared to work according to it. In the course of the next couple of years the party grew into a powerful political force. On the same issue there was a split in the trade union movement. Under the influence of the nationalists the All India Trade Union Congress had decided to adopt a neutral attitude towards War. This was unacceptable to those who were of the opinion that it was in the interests of workers to support and win it. They broke away from the A.I.T.U.C. and formed a new organization called the Indian Federation of Labour. Roy was elected the General Secretary of the Federation and it soon became the premier central organization of workers.

The war years were a period of hectic activity for Roy. He had to develop a pro-war sentiment in the country and help in every possible way the prosecution of war efforts. A large number of meetings and conferences were organized for the purpose. He had to attend many of them and deliver the key speech. He had to build up the Radical Democratic Party and the Indian Federation of Labour. In the interests of more purposeful participation of the people in the war efforts he also tried to build up a much wider front. It took the form of a National Democratic Union.

All these activities put a severe strain on his health, which was none too good after years of neglect and privation in jail. The privations continued even after release. He never had any fixed income. Writing brought him some money, but it had to be always supplemented with financial assistance from friends. As a result Roy could never freely avail himself of the medical care and treatment that was needed. During this period and thereafter Dehra Dun was his headquarters. The house which he occupied when he first went to live there, No. 13 Mohini Road, was later purchased for the Indian Renaissance Institute. It became the centre of all Royist activities, political and social as well as philosophical and ideological. Many a discussion and conference of crucial importance was held there. Many turned to it for light on many an issue of contemporary politics as well as on many a problem of philosophy and science.

Roy wrote during this period many books and pamphlets. Some of them were about current political problems such as
Nationalism, an Antiquated Cult and National Government or People's Government? Some like the book on the Russian revolution and the revolution and counter-revolution in China were of a more abiding character. The People's Plan also belongs to this period. Roy did not write it himself, but the inspiration behind it and the ideas incorporated in it were entirely his. Another important publication is the Draft Constitution. It was drafted by him and incorporates his ideas on the type of political structure that the country should organize for itself after independence. He also conducted a high-level quarterly journal for the discussion and elaboration of philosophical and ideological problems. It was first called The Marxian Way. Later, the name was changed to The Humanist Way. These literary activities were carried on simultaneously with his manifold political and other activities.

It was during the closing years of the War that Roy's restless and ever-inquisitive mind began to realize the inadequacies of Marxism and Communism. The victory of the democratic forces was by then assured. The danger of Fascism was averted. The fear that Hitler and his fascist hoards might overrun Europe and enslave the world was set at rest. The time had come to think of what might happen after the end of the War. Roy had already prophesied that the world would revolve around two poles, the United States of America and Soviet Russia. It was necessary to avoid conflict between the two poles if peace was to be preserved and if people were to be enabled to advance in the direction of progress and prosperity. Neither Capitalism, nor Communism was the answer to the situation. Capitalism had already proved its bankruptcy. Communism had also falsed all hopes. On the other hand, Communism held out the threat of a civil war on the national as well as on the international plane. It was necessary therefore to go beyond Communism and evolve an ideology, a political structure and social institutions which would ensure freedom as well as equality, security as well as free scope for development. Thinking along these lines Roy arrived at the philosophy of New Humanism.

It took Roy a couple of years to evolve and elaborate these-ideas. Moreover he had to place them before his colleagues.
and co-workers and secure their approval. The discussions took place at the famous summer camps which were held regularly every year at Dehra Dun or Mussoorie. In the end they found general acceptance. They were then put in the form of Twenty-two Theses. They were discussed by a conference of the Radical Democratic Party held in Bombay in December 1946. It was the first time that a political party was called upon to discuss such a highly intellectual, philosophical statement on the origin and growth of man and society, on the development of ideas and on the social and political institutions that could serve the purpose of man in the twentieth century. But the party that Roy had developed was a party of a different order. It discussed it calmly and intelligently and adopted it with a few modifications. Roy was asked to draft a statement based upon the social and political ideas contained in the Twenty-two Theses. It was to be the Humanist Manifesto. It was published later under the title *New Humanism*.

The statement that was adopted at the Bombay Conference had its logical implications. It was realized that in New Humanism there was no place for a political party, that it prevented the people from exercising their sovereignty, that it was an obstacle in the way of democracy. Having reached these conclusions, it was necessary to disband the Radical Democratic Party. It was not an easy decision to take. The Party had grown during the intervening years, it had its branches in most parts of the country and had a large cadre of intelligent, devoted and selfless workers. They had sacrificed everything for their political and social work under the banner of the Party. They had stood by it through thick and thin. The thought of what would happen to them and how they would react to the idea of dissolution worried Roy for a number of months. He had no desire to impose any decision upon them. But the ideas had their own dynamics. In the course of a year or so most of the members of the Party came to hold the same view. They realized that if they were to be Radical Humanists they must disband the political party that they had built up. A conference of the Party was held in Calcutta in December 1948. It was decided to dissolve the Party. This again was a unique decision. One hardly ever comes across an organization,
more particularly, a political party deciding to disband itself. There is a tendency to stick on and insist on continuing even when no useful purpose could be served. The Radical Democratic Party had by no means reached the end of its utility. It had before it, by conventional standards, a long period of useful work. It was dissolved because it could not fit in with the political outlook and social purpose of Radical Humanism, The credit for securing the dissolution with the near-unanimous consent of members must go to Roy. It was his persuasive logic and the strength of his ideas which carried the day. Roy wrote extensively during the period on the problem of politics without parties. A collection of some of those articles was published after his death in book form.

The dissolution of the Party did not mean withdrawal from political or public life. Roy continued to take the same keen interest in social and political developments in the country and abroad. He published his forthright views on them in his journal which was renamed The Radical Humanist, as well as in many other newspapers. They received now a better hearing than before as he was not identified with any political party. He had also to pay some attention to the development of the Radical Humanist Movement. His main work, however, was the elaboration and the refinement of the ideas of Radical Humanism. He wrote during this period his last big book, *Reason, Romanticism and Revolution*. It is published in two volumes. One was published in 1952 and the other in 1955, a year after his death.

This book is one of the few books that Roy wrote as a book. Many of his other books are collections of articles written from time to time or of speeches delivered on various occasions. It sets out his views on "the cultural and moral crisis of modern civilization;" and his suggestions, based on a critical study of all philosophies, for its solution. He stated in the preface to the book: “On the basis of a humanist interpretation of cultural history, this work endeavours to outline a comprehensive philosophy which links up social and political practice with a scientific metaphysics of rationality and ethics.”

developed a new philosophy; but it was not a philosophy of mere contemplation; it was a philosophy of social and political action. Describing the essence of the philosophy of New Humanism, he stated:

"New Humanism lays emphasis on the basic fact of history that man is the maker of his world—man as a thinking being, and he can be so only as an individual. The brain is the instrument of thought; and it is individually owned. It cannot be possessed collectively. Revolutions are heralded by iconoclastic ideas conceived by gifted individuals. A brotherhood of men attracted by the adventure of ideas, keenly conscious of the urge for freedom, fired with the vision of a free society of free men, and motivated by the will to remake the world, so as to restore the individual in his position of primacy and dignity, will show the way out of the contemporary crisis of modern civilization.

"In the last analysis, education of the citizen is the condition for such a reorganization of society as will be conducive to common progress and prosperity without encroaching on the freedom of the individual. New Humanism advocates a social reconstruction of the world as a commonwealth and fraternity of free men, by the cooperative endeavour of spiritually emancipated moral men.

"New Humanism is cosmopolitan. A cosmopolitan commonwealth of spiritually free men will not be limited by the boundaries of national States—capitalist, fascist, socialist, communist, or of any other kind—which will gradually disappear under the impact of the twentieth-century Renaissance of Man."^{29}

For the major part of the last two years of his life Roy was seriously ill suffering from an attack of cerebral thrombosis. It was a grim and heroic struggle against the illness. As soon as there was some recovery, Roy would resume his writing as well as his work of guiding the development of the Radical Humanist Movement. He wrote a number of articles for the *Radical Humanist* from his sick bed. Some chapters of the *Memoirs* were also written during this period. Early in 1953

it appeared as if he had fully recovered. He resumed many of his usual activities and was even planning to undertake a tour. But it was not to be. There was a relapse later during the year and the end came a couple of months later. Roy, the great revolutionary fighter for freedom and a thinker and writer of unusual brilliance, passed away at his place in Dehra Dun in the late hours of January 25, 1954.

No account of Roy will be complete without mention of Ellen Roy, his wife, friend and collaborator. It was only with her help that he was able to do all the work that he did after his release from jail. She survived him and continued his work. It was a brave attempt. It was, however, cut short by violent death inflicted upon her on the dark night of December 13, 1960. It was a clear case of murder. But neither the death of Roy nor the murder of Ellen Roy has stopped the work which he began. The Radical Humanist Movement is growing in the country and Roy's contribution to the growth of a free and democratic society, more particularly in the field of thought, is receiving greater and greater recognition.

V. B. KARNIK
A Checklist Of
The Writings Of
M. N. Roy
## Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BN</td>
<td>Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBI</td>
<td>Cumulative Book Index (New York, H. W. Wilson Co.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CU</td>
<td>University of California Library, Berkeley</td>
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<tr>
<td>HL</td>
<td>Hoover Library on War, Revolution and Peace, Stanford University, Stanford, California</td>
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<tr>
<td>IOL</td>
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<td>IRI</td>
<td>Indian Renaissance Institute, Dehra Dun, India</td>
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<td>LC</td>
<td>Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>LSE</td>
<td>London School of Economics and Political Science, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>NYPL</td>
<td>New York Public Library</td>
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<td>PC</td>
<td>Private copy</td>
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<td>RH</td>
<td>&quot;List of writings by M. N, Roy,&quot; <em>Radical Humanist</em>, XIX (23 January 1955), nos. 4, 5, p. 50</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>University of Michigan General Library—as of 15th March 1961</td>
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Abbreviations

BN
Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

CBI
Cumulative Book Index (New York, H. W. Wilson Co.)

CU
University of California Library, Berkeley

HL
Hoover Library on War, Revolution and Peace, Stanford University, Stanford, California

IOL
India Office Library, London

IRI
Indian Renaissance Institute, Dehra Dun, India

LC
Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

LSE
London School of Economics and Political Science, London

NYPL
New York Public Library

PC
Private copy

RH
"List of writings by M. N. Roy," Radical Humanist, XIX (23 January 1955), no. 4, 5, p. 50

M
University of Michigan General Library — as of 15th March 1961

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CU (11)

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CU (31)

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CU (32)

LC (33)

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