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On the Centennial of the October Revolution, let's march toward another October!

(a speech by comrade Ashraf Dehghani in the commemoration of the centennial of the October Revolution)

Greetings to the militant people of Iran, especially to the militant youths who must bear the grave responsibility of leading the country in the aftermath of the revolution against the existing miserable situation.

As you know, this year marks the centennial of the Great October Revolution. Therefore, these days, in every media outlet we are able to find a story regarding this great and historic event. In some of these articles, the author has honestly tried to glorify the October Revolution, other authors have looked at the October Revolution academically and, while unable to reflect the revolutionary spirit of the workers who brought about the Great October in Russia in their writing, they intentionally or unintentionally, also included the usual distortions that exist in Western universities in relation to such historical events in their writings. There is also a huge number of misleading articles where they combined lies with the truth, in particular, the citation of reburial of the bourgeoisie in Russia; an attempt made to make the centennial anniversary of the October Revolution as a means to pummel that revolution and its profound, broad, and undeniable achievements that truly shook the world. The media that spreads such misinformation about the October Revolution are only pursuing the goal of concealing the greatness of that revolution from the people and to induce the people to think that perhaps there is only one way for humanity and that is the continuation of the present cruel conditions.

However, this is not the truth. History testifies to this. Today, the people and in particular our youth face the task of overthrowing the Islamic Republic, the germ of ruin and corruption. Therefore, especially the experiences and lessons of the struggles of the October Revolution, the greatest historical event of the twentieth century, must be learned so we can benefit from those experiences and lessons, so we may discover the correct path of the revolution and not repeat the bitter experiences of the 1979 Revolution, and as a result, lead the way to put an end to oppression and exploitation in Iran.

Accordingly, my attempt here with the commemoration of the centennial of the Great October Revolution, is that while emphasizing the significance and achievements of this revolution, I will illustrate an image of the events that took place in the time between the two Revolutions of February and October 1917 in revolutionary Russia, so that some of the embedded lessons in the Bolshevik struggle that was successful in leading the victorious revolution in favour of the exploited and oppressed in Russia, become more and more evident. In this talk, I will try to accomplish this, especially by referring to some of Lenin's articles written in the same period.

The image of what happened in the period between the two Revolutions of February and October 1917 in Russia is actually an image of the extreme class struggle which continued during this period in Russian society, i.e., the struggle between mainly workers and peasants on the one hand, and on the other, the bourgeoisie of Russia who had just come to power, and the petty-bourgeoisie that, due to its nature, swayed between revolution and counterrevolution.

The experiences of this period of the Russian Revolution, for us who witnessed the compromising and appeasing behaviour and stance of the vast majority of political organizations claiming to advocate for the working class after the Bahman uprising in Iran (Bahman is the eleventh and penultimate month of Iranian calendar which begins in January and ends in February when the Shah's regime was overthrown and the 2500 years of Monarchical despotism was abolished for good), it is important in that regard that we focus on the study of the communist positions of the Bolsheviks during the October Revolution, the similarities of those organizations with their similar organizations in that period in Russia, meaning Mensheviks (a part of the Social Democrats that were called the "minority") and "SR"s, that called themselves "Socialist Revolutionary" and to see what the difference is in practice between a communist organization—the Bolshevik Party, which reflected the ideals and aspirations of the working class and the realization of their interests—and organizations or parties that claimed to be socialist and revolutionary, but in

fact, represented the desires and interests of the shaky petty-bourgeoisie, and, as the saying goes, Flip – Floppers!

As we know, Lenin was the theoretician and leader of the Bolsheviks, and it was Lenin who, with his timely guidance and by providing tactics precisely suitable for the conditions, the position, and the morale of the masses- in a situation where the bourgeoisie had formed an official government after the February Revolution and the petty-bourgeois organizations had placed themselves at the head of Labor councils- brought the Bolsheviks into a position where they could lead the socialist revolution in Russia and give power to the councils. Now, it must be emphasized that although there is no doubt that, from the point of view of the role a single personality in history, Lenin's ingenuity and noble character at the head of the Bolsheviks, had its impact on the progress of revolution in Russia. But, what is essential here is to see how we can learn from Lenin's dealings and performance between February and October 1917! If we pay close attention, then we see that most importantly, he, with complete earnestness and sincerity, carried out in practice a strategy whose validity he had already reasoned in theory. While Lenin was flexible in the utilization of tactics, he was firmly committed to the principles and as to the day-to-day demands of politics, he never violated the principles he believed in; and he was not afraid of being attacked by non-proletarian forces and being in the minority because of this. This is the most important lesson that anyone can and must learn from Lenin and his method of dealing with problems.

When in February 1917 the workers and other masses started the revolution, the Bolsheviks were entirely in the streets alongside the people and as far as they could, directed their revolutionary movements and led the revolution. However, after the revolution, the Bolsheviks' organized force within the worker councils was very weak compared to the Mensheviks and SR petty bourgeois organizations and in their own words, they did not have "Political corps". But the Bolsheviks had enjoyed an important and essential advantage and privilege; they had a solid organization based on democratic centralism, coherent ideological views, revolutionary members, and the clear goal, and of great importance, they had a personality such as Lenin as their leader who as it was emphasized earlier, never deviated from his deeply – believed principles.

During the interval between the February and the October Revolution, the most important and fundamental issue for Lenin as the head of the Bolsheviks was to bring out the revolutionary masses who were under the influence of petty-bourgeois political organizations, the Mensheviks and SRs who became collaborators of bourgeoisie in

power. He believed in the strength of the masses and had a deep conviction that the revolution is the work of masses and the revolutionary vanguard is obliged to guide the masses towards victory by adopting appropriate tactics at any moment. He was able to bring workers, peasants, and other masses under the leadership of Bolsheviks, the true communists, and succeeded in leading the uprising of these masses against the exploiters and their reactionary order until the victorious Revolution of October came into the realm of existence.

Now, before the start of the main discussion, let me very briefly mention the significance of the October Revolution, some of its achievements, and its vast impact throughout the world.

The October Revolution was a Socialist Revolution during which the workers organized in councils, were able to bring down from the throne of power the leech-like capitalists, all of their criminal reactionary supporters and seize political power themselves. The enormous significance of this revolution compared to earlier revolutions that took place in history is that in previous revolutions, a class that seized political power from another class, placing an order in society that was still exploitative in favour of the minority in society, in another shape and form. In those revolutions, the governing machine was transferred intact from one hand to another. But the October Revolution completely crushed the bureaucratic and military machines of capitalism and created a specific army and administrative organization of a socialist society, and with the transformation of the previous socio-economic conditions, organized a new order in favour of the majority in society.

According to the new order after the October Revolution, the leech-like capitalists, the tyrannical and sponging landowners, and, in general, exploiters and oppressors were deprived of their so-called “rights”; meaning they completely lost the possibility of exploiting workers, the possibility of fleecing workers' wages, the bounty of the peasants' toil, plunder the wealth of society for their own sake; and naturally, deprived them of the use of despotism and dictatorship against the majority of the people in society!! To enforce this new reality, the dictatorship of the proletariat was imposed upon the capitalists and landowners.

The October Socialist Revolution in Russia, on the other hand, took some actions fulfilling the workers' and peasants' aspirations that they had wished for centuries and the masses who were considered “Nobody” and always faced discrimination, inequality, and oppression, had achieved equality and the broadest of freedoms. It the October Revolution which was against any kind of exploitation and oppression; in the face of poverty,

injustice, oppression and tyranny raging in Europe where capitalism has reached the stage of Imperialism and the most reactionary and barbaric acts committed against the masses, had shaken the world.

As a result of the October Revolution, and then the construction of socialism in Russia by the Communist Party led by Stalin, unemployment disappeared from society, no one went to bed hungry, housing was provided for all, free education, various social amenities for all, gaining national rights and, in short, everything that is considered today's advanced social standard, was guaranteed. Another great achievement of this revolution was the emancipation of women. The emerged government from the October Revolution, meaning the Soviet Union's Socialist State, from the very beginning, recognized equal rights for women in all economic, social, and political arenas, and developed laws for the benefit of women. As a result, women's demands including equal pay, the right to divorce, abortion rights, maternity leave and the creation of daycare were realized. Lenin was right to say that the work accomplished by the Soviet workers' government in the first year of the revolution in relation to the demands of women in Russia, had not yet been done by the bourgeois republics after decades.

By ending the exploitation of the workforce and by creating a social safety net with extensive freedoms for the masses, the October Revolution kindled such passion and hope of emancipation in the hearts of the deprived and exploited classes all over the world that led to their awakening and struggles against the exploiters and tyrannical rulers, especially in the colonial countries. The success in establishing the socialist structure after the October Revolution and years later, the Soviet Union's victory over Hitlerite fascism resulting in liberating the people of Europe, and indeed the people of the world, from this monster originating from the brutal capitalist system, intensified the appeal of the prospect of a Soviet society and of a world free from oppression and exploitation. It created a vast revolutionary atmosphere and struggle throughout the world and it was at this point that waves of liberation movements swept throughout the world. This wave, along with the revolutions that took place, changed the political landscape of the world. On the other hand, these struggles and revolutions were one of the weakening factors of British imperialism which at that time was the most powerful imperialist in the world. In this situation, bourgeois governments in Europe observing the widespread effects of the October Revolution on the working class and oppressed people in their societies and in fearing revolution, were forced to take some measures, decades after the October Revolution by reducing the severity of poverty in their societies. They created "welfare

governments” and they found it necessary to make reforms in their bourgeois laws. Thus, the October Revolution, with the profound and extensive impacts that it left, had shaken the twentieth century’s class societies.

The October Revolution, in spite of the infiltration of the revisionists in the party and the Soviet Government, and then the re-emergence and re-capturing of power by the bourgeoisie in Russia, and in spite of all the ideological struggles and the toxic propaganda of the bourgeoisie and their petty-bourgeois followers worldwide against this revolution and its founders, is still inspiring the workers and oppressed people and is still their beacon in the struggle against capitalists and the reactionary governments of capitalists advocate around the world.

With this introduction, we now go to the main discussion that is related to the experiences in respect to the interval between the revolutions of February and October 1917 in Russia.

In the February 1917 revolution, which took place from the workers' initiative, the most important issues for the workers and the other oppressed masses in Russia raised and demanded were the issue of bread, meaning having relative welfare in life, land for the peasants, to earn freedom and establish democracy in society, and of great importance, ending the war: the imperialist World War I in which Tsarist Russia participated too.

The first spark of revolution was struck by workers' strikes in Petrograd, Moscow, Baku and a couple of other cities and within one month, the strikes spread to most of Russia’s large factories. But the revolution actually began with the rally of female workers and toilers on International Women’s Day from the worker-dominated neighbourhood of “Viborg” in Petrograd, where the Bolsheviks had a great influence. With the vast support of the workers in this city, the rally turned into a political demonstration against the Tsarist regime. The demonstration spread including clashes with the police, attacks on centres of repression, and the people arming themselves in Petrograd as well as other cities, and finally, the joining of the army to revolutionaries were the major events that took place over the course of eight days, leading to the overthrow of the Tsarist Empire.

The fact is that both in the revolution of 1905 and in the February revolution of 1917, it was these workers with their great revolutionary passion and driven initiatives, under the yoke of peasants and the urban toilers to struggle and revolt against the status quo. By observing the revolutionary actions of the workers during the revolution of 1905, Lenin had said “in a revolutionary epoch—I say this without the slightest exaggeration, on the basis of the most accurate data of Russian history—the proletariat *can* generate fighting energy a *hundred times greater* than in ordinary, peaceful times. It shows that up to 1905

mankind did not yet know what a great, what a tremendous exertion of effort the proletariat is, and will be, capable of in a fight for really great aims, and one waged in a really revolutionary manner!” (Lectures and Lessons From The Revolution of 1905) Believing in the power of the workers and relying on the experiences that the masses had gained both from their participation in the 1905 Revolution and from the dark era of counter-revolutionary rule, Lenin states that without the Revolution of 1905 the February Revolution of 1917 could not succeed.

In addition to various major points, the workers' experience in the formation of workers' councils must be highlighted. In 1905, a strong workers' presence on the scene of the struggle led to the workers electing representatives among themselves in all the factories and manufacturing institutions in Russia and the workers were given the option to form a labor council for the first time in history. The 1905 Revolution filled the days with passion and enthusiasm where in all the Petrograd factories and manufacturing centres, the election of Council of Workers Representatives was under way, with the number of delegates ranging from 400 to 500. Gradually, in other cities, workers moved to form their own councils as well. The Councils of Workers' Representatives were the mass organizations of the working class. They acted as a parliament making decisions in favour of workers that were contrary to the laws and regulations of the Tsarist government, and they themselves enforced them. For example, in the same year of 1905, the Councils released their own special newspaper and they instituted an eight hour work day in the factories. They even took some actions like confiscating government money to advance their revolutionary tasks.

The formation of the council was the initiative of the workers themselves but because in the Social Democrats had had the opportunity to participate in the workers' struggles years before and were known to them, they were able to win the leadership of the councils. In 1905, the leadership of the council in Petrograd was in the hands of the Mensheviks and Trotsky was one of their prominent members. But at the head of the Council of Representatives of Moscow, were the Bolsheviks. Hence, due to the difference in opinion and political thought and, in general, the nature of the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, the former promoting the thoughts of the working class and advocating their interests, and the latter representing the ideas and interests of the petty- bourgeoisie, it was not at all surprising and not accidental that the workers' armed uprising against the Tsarist regime occurred in Moscow in 1905 and not in Petrograd, Russia's largest industrial centre and the capital of the empire!

Therefore, during the course of the revolution of February 1917, the workers, just having the experience of the Council in 1905 at hand, immediately proceeded to form their own Councils. It needs to be remembered that prior to the February Revolution, a situation had been created in Russia where Left leaning parties, along with the party of the “Cadet”, as a bourgeoisie representative, had been able to participate in parliament named the “Duma”. With the outbreak of the First World War in which Russia fought, the Bolsheviks, in accordance with the teachings of Lenin whose foundation is described in the book “Imperialism as the Highest Stage of Capitalism” were spreading and propagating against the war. The representatives of the Bolsheviks in the Duma expressed their disagreement wherever possible when giving their views on the war. This action by the representatives of Bolsheviks led the Tsarist government to detain all members of the Bolshevik faction in the Duma on charges of treason to and exiled them to Siberia. Thus, during the February Revolution, in the situation where most Bolshevik leaders and cadres were either in jail or in Siberia, Lenin abroad, the reactionary forces enjoyed greater infiltration opportunities in the workers' councils.

With the overthrow of the Tsar, there were two forces present in the State Duma which formed two committees; the Cadets, as representatives of the bourgeoisie, and the Mensheviks and SRs who despite their claims, represented the ideas and interests of the petty-bourgeoisie of the both the city and the countryside (SRs had influence among peasants). The Cadet party formed the Temporary Committee. Menshevik and SRs pushed forward and formed the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Council and were able to bring the council under their influence. At this juncture, the Bolsheviks were in the majority in councils in only a few cities, as for the rest, they were in the minority.

The very first days of the February Revolution, the workers' council turned into a workers' and soldiers' council by having the soldiers join as delegates and as an armed council, gained more power. On the other hand, in the Duma, the Mensheviks, due to their incorrect views about the responsibility of the Russian bourgeoisie in the revolution, views that had already been fully criticized in the writings of Lenin, including in his famous book called “The Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution”, with the announcement of support for the Cadets, handed over the government to them most willingly. This action, in fact, meant they had waved their power and were supporting the bourgeoisie in practice. Lenin always exposed the nature of petty-bourgeois and complicit views of the Mensheviks. He had argued that in the Russian situation, the bourgeois-democratic revolution, not the bourgeoisie, but only the workers and peasants can propel it

forward, while the Mensheviks said that since it is a bourgeois revolution then its leadership should be in the hands of the bourgeoisie too. Obviously, from these two views, two different practices would arise. Therefore, with the support of Mensheviks and SRs, the Russian bourgeoisie in the Cadet party succeeded in forming a Provisional Government that consisted of representatives of capitalists and the bourgeoisie landowners. This government was recognized as a legal government in Russia. Mensheviks and SRs, at the head of the executive committee of the Petrograd council, announced they would conditionally support the Provisional Government.

At this point, the position of Lenin and the Bolsheviks versus the Provisional Government draws notable attention. Lenin was only able to arrive in Russia on April 3, meaning more than a month after the February Revolution. In his first speech, he boldly declared that the Provisional Government must by no means be supported. Of course, before that, Lenin also stated in the “Letters From Afar” “...He who says that the workers must *support* the new government in the interests of the struggle against tsarist reaction... is a traitor to the workers, a traitor to the cause of the proletariat, to the cause of peace and freedom.” Now, it is not inappropriate to compare this revolutionary stance with the position of the existing political organizations in Iran at the juncture when Khomeini and his Islamic Republic had come to power. All these organizations, including The Iranian People’s Fadaee Guerrillas Organization which worked under this name without the least believing in the theory and practice of The People’s Fadaee Guerrillas, the People’s Mujahedin Organization of Iran, the Paykar Organization, etc. all on the pretext that the great enemy is America, supported the regime of the Islamic Republic of Iran in various forms and by their actions, showed that they had the same petty-bourgeoisie nature as the Mensheviks and SRs in Russia.

The facts show that the Provisional Government refused to respond to any of the demands of the people. The people wanted an end to the war but the Provisional Government refused to bring peace due to the links that existed mainly with the British and French imperialists. This government promised a lot but in practice did not act, even a little, to realize the demands of the people. The Provisional Government itself not only did not do anything toward the change of the ownership of land but stood up against the peasants who themselves seized the lands of the masters. This government would call for patience, would promise that the demands of the people would be dealt with in the assembly of constituents and of course, would avoid setting the date for its assembly. In fact, the

Provisional Government practiced the policy of deceiving the people and dawdling in order to strengthen its footing.

However, this government did not have much power to advance its objectives since part of the power was in the hands of the workers' and soldiers' councils and the Provisional Government could not do anything without their agreement. Workers were present everywhere and were able to expose or nullify any wrongdoing of the Provisional Government or, in other words, its conspiracies. In fact, the February Revolution had created two powers in Russia, which Lenin called "Dual Power". The class feature of this second power, was the proletariat and the peasants who were wearing the uniforms of soldiers. Lenin emphasized the power of the Councils of Workers' and Soldiers' Representatives, had the quality of the Paris Commune. Lenin, while explaining that the February Revolution had created a dual power in Russia, described that the situation was temporary and that there could be only one sovereignty in one country, and therefore one of these two powers must be eliminated forcibly. He saw the danger that the councils, under the influence of Mensheviks and SRs, could submit their entire power to the bourgeoisie.

Now, in picturing these conditions after the February Revolution, one can see how the Bolsheviks, despite not having enough power, with Lenin's leadership, adopting whatever methods of struggle and tactics that succeeded in attracting the workers and peasants, were able to gain the majority in the Councils of Representatives of Workers, take over the leadership of the councils, and ultimately by leading the uprising of workers and their supporting masses, were able to, with the slightest bloodshed overthrow the Provisional Government and hand over total power to the councils.

According to what Lenin had explained in "Letters From Afar", from the very beginning, the main goal for the Bolsheviks was to put all of their efforts and campaign activities in order to overthrow the Provisional Government of the bourgeoisie and help the proletariat seize power. In this regard, for some Bolsheviks, the question was raised: should we immediately overthrow the Provisional Government? Lenin's answer to this question reveals the entire policy of the Bolsheviks at that period. He replied that the Provisional Government must be overthrown because it is a bourgeois oligarchical government that cannot give peace, nor bread nor complete freedom; and then, with the deep conviction that "revolution is the work of the masses", immediately argues that this government cannot be overthrown now, because in regards to the compromise, especially the Petrograd

council, this government is backed by the second government meaning the Representatives of Workers' and Soldiers' Councils.

Lenin in his writing "The Dual Power" explains: "...We are not Blancists, we do not stand for the seizure of power by a minority. We are Marxists, we stand for proletarian class struggle against petty-bourgeois intoxication, against chauvinism-defencism, phrasemongering and dependence on the bourgeoisie." Therefore, in the situation where the masses – in addition to the armed masses of workers and soldiers who had sent their delegates to the council – were under the influence of petty-bourgeois ideas and teachings, all of the Bolsheviks' policies and practices were to help the masses so that through their own experience they could discover the falsehood of policies that the leadership of councils, meaning the Mensheviks and the SRs, had adopted in the executive committee; and in this way, were trying to attract the majority of the masses.

Lenin considered class balance as the standard for determining the duties of the Bolsheviks. In this regard, an interesting and remarkable point in Lenin's dealing in this period which is an important lesson, is that he described the reality as it was and shared it with workers without any concealment. In this context, in the article "The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution" he writes: "Recognition of the fact that in most of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies our Party is in a minority, so far a small minority, as against a *bloc of all* the petty-bourgeois opportunist elements". He described reality as it was, so that the task that lies with the Bolsheviks is well understood. The main task and the depth of the necessity that Lenin is pursuing at this period is that the Bolsheviks must enlighten, criticize, and expose the conservative tilt of influential political forces by explaining the mistakes of the councils and by strengthening the proletarian line of thought in the councils. In the same article about the second government, meaning the Councils, he writes, "as long as *this* government yields to the influence of the bourgeoisie, to present a patient, systematic, and persistent explanation of the errors of their tactics, an *explanation* especially adapted to the practical needs of the masses." In regards to raising political awareness among the masses, Lenin always pointed out that "the real education of the masses can never be separated from their independent political, and especially revolutionary, struggle." (Lecture on the 1905 Revolution) **accordingly he insisted that one should help the masses free themselves from the bondage of mistakes by relying on their experience in struggles. At this juncture, the workers and peasants, ecstatic from the Tsar's overthrow, believed that the Provisional Government would fulfill their demands.**

During this period, the main slogan of the Bolsheviks, despite being weak in the councils, was “all power to the soviets” because, from their point of view, the Soviet of Workers' Deputies was the only possible form of revolutionary government and this fact was to be explained to the workers. The Bolsheviks hoped that the councils gradually and in their course of practice would realize the absurdity of the promises of the Provisional Government and therefore, with the rejection of the bourgeoisie rule, take all the power into their own hands.

In this situation of the rule of dual power in society, the contradiction between the two powers quickly gave rise to important events. One of those events occurred on March 14 when one of the Provisional Government ministers ordered soldiers to return to the barracks. The meaning of this order was to establish old military regulations to serve the continuation of the war. When the workers in Petrograd became aware of this situation, they confronted the government and issued a decree that is known in history as the “Soviet Order Number 1. This decree, which addressed the soldiers, prevented them from returning to their barracks. In this way, the Petrograd council decisively disregarded the order from the Provisional Government and prevented the soldiers from returning to the barracks. This represented the power of the councils and it was one of the practices that showed the Provisional Government could be in power only as long as the councils would allow it.

But the first major divide between the two governments developed on April 20 and 21. This was when the workers at the telegraph office noticed the text of the telegram from “Milyukov” (the foreign minister of the provisional government) to the Allies, meaning the Imperialist forces involved on one side of the First World War. In the telegram, the Provisional Government promised the continuation of the war on the part of Russia. This telegram totally revealed that in contrast to what the Provisional Government promised in words, in practice it violated one of the demands of the masses, meaning peace and ending the war.

In a situation where the Provisional Government did not do anything to improve the living conditions of the masses or create any kind of change in the social–economic situation and instead referred to the constituent assembly which, of course, did not even determine the date of its assembly – and accordingly, the anger of the masses toward the Provisional Government was increasing every day, the disclosure of the text of the Milyukov’s telegram caused the anger of the masses to boil over. Workers and soldiers took to the streets. A massive demonstration took place and death to Milyukov chants were heard

everywhere. As Lenin says, “the movement flared up spontaneously; nobody had cleared the ground for it.”^(From the article “Lessons of the Revolution”) Lenin writes in the same place: “The movement was so markedly directed against the government that one regiment even appeared fully armed at the Mariinsky Palace to arrest the ministers. It became perfectly obvious to everybody that the government could not retain power.” Both this demonstration and the practices within it, and the discovery that the Provisional Government was not even able to send a telegram without the help of the workers, were other examples that showed that the Provisional Government, without the councils, could not be sustained; and showed that the slogan “all power to the soviets” was truly achievable. At this point, the Bolsheviks, while demanding that all secret contracts be disclosed, still insisted on the necessity of transferring all power to the councils.

Lenin emphasized that if the councils were determined to take over the whole government, no one among the people would resist and the transfer of all power to the councils could take place in a most peaceful manner. It was certain that if the councils were moving in the direction Lenin was seeing in the interest of the workers, this case would have caused not only the counterrevolutionary resistance of the Provisional Government but also the opposition of the Mensheviks and the SRs. However, in this case in the course of events, the workers and soldiers got to know more accurately both the Provisional Government and the leadership of the councils. In any case, the nature of the Provisional Government would have been revealed to the largest group of masses. Hence, when the first Bolshevik public conference was held in the same month of April, one of the most important stated duties of the party was to help the masses understand that the Provisional Government was essentially the government of landowners and capitalists.

In the article “The Dual Power”, Lenin had explained that the fundamental question of every revolution is the issue of the ruling power in the country; and a political force must primarily respond to this issue from its point of view, toward the nature of the ruling power and in relation to that, what policies should be adopted. In Lenin’s view, this was the only way to speak of conscious participation in the revolution. Another point is that the struggle to overthrow a non– proletarian government and an effort to bring the proletariat to power is an inviolable duty of the communist. As a result, they must demonstrate this in theory and practice at every juncture by adopting the policies and tactics that carry out this task.

Considering this valuable guide, if we look at the state of the political organizations in Iran when the Islamic Republic had just come to power, we see that, while trying to justify

their complicity by repeatedly quoting Lenin in a fragmentary fashion, just contrary to those of Lenin's words, they avoided the task of defining the nature of the Islamic Republic, i.e., the successor of the Shah's regime. And when they did finally identify the regime, they incorrectly identify it as popular and anti – Imperialist in nature, thus no longer was it a necessity to try to overthrow the Islamic Republic in order to bring the proletariat to power. The Mensheviks and SRs were much the same. They never considered the thought of overthrowing the Provisional Government in an effort to bring about a proletarian government.

Now, after the protests in April, the Provisional Government had been disgraced and needed to rebuild credibility for itself. For this reason, they grasped anything that they thought would save them. In its first act, this government fired Milyukov and another minister. However, its most important move was to reach out to the petty-bourgeois parties of the Mensheviks and SRs in order to strengthen itself. As a result, less than two weeks after the mass uprising, it was announced on May 6th through an agreement between these parties and the Provisional Government that a coalition government would be formed in Russia.

In the same article “Lessons of the Revolution”, Lenin referred to what capitalists in Britain and France had done repeatedly, explaining that when the bourgeoisie realized its state of government was weak, in order to fool and weaken the workers and create division among the workers, they proceeded with the formation of a coalition government with the so called socialist forces and showed that these “socialists” had a token role in the coalition government and were an instrument in the hands of the bourgeoisie used to deceive the workers and the oppressed masses. Incidentally, we witnessed in Iranian society during the 1940's that when the people were revolting and fighting everywhere, and even Azerbaijan and Kurdistan had declared autonomy, the government of “Qavam”, appointed by the Shah, allowed three Tudeh party members into his cabinet and then used them as a tool. For example, they put an end to the huge strike of oil workers in Khuzestan, which later led to their bloody suppression. While the Tudeh party – happy to have three ministers in the government – were busy appeasing the regime of the Monarch, the Imperial army then provided the grounds for an attack on Azerbaijan and Kurdistan, and only about two months after the Monarch expelled the ambitious Tudeh ministers from the cabinet, the army brutally stormed the masses of people in these regions, and in particular, drove Azerbaijan into the bloody ground.

In Russia, with a tactic used by the bourgeoisie, on May 6, 1917, six ministers from the Mensheviks and SRs entered the cabinet. Because of being alongside ten ministers of the bourgeois, they imagined themselves of high status and position, when in fact, in Lenin's words they were the "stump speakers" there in order to mislead the masses. By participating in the coalition government, they made a new compromise with the bourgeoisie and gave part of the power of the councils to the Provisional Government. From the month of May to June 9, when another historic incident took place, the talkativeness and giving of promises to people for example that perhaps 100% of the profits of capitalists would be taken from them, was underway by the respective ministers. In practice, however, the coalition government not only did not make the slightest change in order to meet the demands of masses, but rather, wherever struggle and revolt were taking place, would send so-called socialist ministers there to whitewash the situation and put an end to the revolt. One of the examples was the deployment of one of the SR ministers putting an end to the revolt of the "Kronstadt revolutionaries who, with complete audacity, dismissed the commissioner appointed by the government. The Provisional Government commissioners were mostly children of feudal lords and land-owners, and that is why they were hated by the masses. It is interesting that just when the socialist minister was negotiating in the area, the bourgeoisie newspapers were producing false and provocative propaganda against the Kronstadt revolutionaries.

During this time, people still faced bad economic conditions. In the case of the peasants, not only had land not been provided to them but even one of the promises that was made to peasants based on a law issued by the Petrograd council prohibiting the purchase and sale of land, was not enforced. Also the war, while being referred to by the petty-bourgeois parties 'as the war for defence of the homeland' had not end, and there was no talk of peace.

Under these circumstances, the Bolsheviks engaged in circulation and propaganda not only in the councils but also in the factories and even in the military, relying on the experiences that the masses had gained and tried to attract them towards the Bolsheviks. They were somewhat successful in this task and the outcome of their activism was that the Bolsheviks gained power in the councils of many cities. However, when the first congress of councils of all Russia was convened on June 3rd, it became clear that the Bolsheviks were still in the minority. This meant that the workers and soldiers had not yet thoroughly gotten rid of the influence of petty-bourgeois ideas.

Lenin called the period between May 6 and June 9 the Second Phase of the of the Russian Revolution, and stated that during this period the bourgeoisie consolidated its power under the auspices of the support and actions that the socialist ministers did in their favour and provided the means for an offensive against the revolutionary workers.

On June 9, the Bolsheviks, who had witnessed the intense dissatisfaction and frustration of the masses, decided to hold a rally. However, the Mensheviks and SRs who realized that they were losing their influence among the masses day by day, observed that they were becoming weak and that the rally of Bolsheviks would notably expose their weakness to everyone, so they opposed the rally by spreading propaganda against Bolsheviks. The Mensheviks and SRs were also accompanied by Cadets. At this time, the petty– bourgeois alliance with the counterrevolutionary bourgeoisie became fully apparent and the gap between the workers and the leaders of the Menshevik and SR became wider.

There was no doubt that a military conflict would take place in the event of a rally. The Bolsheviks, since they still lacked sufficient political strength, did not want the workers to enter a battle that did not have the ability to win so they withdrew the decision to hold the rally. In contrast, the Mensheviks and SRs who had openly violated democracy, announced a rally for June 18th in order to restore the lost trust of the masses. The rally was held and 500 thousand people took part in it. However, at this rally, it was shown that the content of the petty–bourgeois slogans advocating for trust in the coalition government and the continuation of the war, perhaps in order to defend the homeland, was on the sidelines. However, the majority of the crowd participating in the rally, repeated the slogans of revolutionary proletariat. The slogans of the Bolsheviks filled the scene of the rally with such brilliance and prominence that it astonished the Bolsheviks themselves. The slogans of bread, peace, freedom, land, death for ten ministers of capitalists, and all power in the hand of councils, resonated in every part of the rally.

The petty–bourgeois parties staging that rally had tried to show themselves useful to democracy in front of the masses. On that same day of June 18th, despite the peace demands of the masses, the bourgeoisie began an open offensive on the front line. The news of this offensive was announced on June 19th by “Kerensky”, the head of state who belonged to SRs. The offensive on the front meant a renewal of the imperialist war, and in a situation where the masses were strongly opposed to war, this action meant a stand against the masses. In fact, the real meaning of the renewal of war on the front line was the elimination of freedom in society, the shooting of opponents and the consolidation of power in the hands of military gangs.

Incidentally, the offensive declared by Kerensky failed. At this point, the news of the failed offensive spread and greatly provoked the anger of the masses because it was now completely clear to the masses that the Menshevik and SR leaders, even if they wanted to in practice, could not prevent the Cadet Party's criminal acts in the coalition government.

On July 3rd, the rage of the masses reached a boiling point and the streets of Petrograd filled with revolutionary masses. The rally took the form of an armed struggle. However, the Bolsheviks did not see armed confrontation to be in the interest of revolutionary workers yet. Because, according to the strategy that Bolsheviks were pursuing, within the specific conditions in Russia they still had to pull out the deceived masses under the influence of the bourgeoisie and the petty bourgeoisie. They saw that they did not have enough support from the people in different parts of the country and the fighting forces in the army had not yet been attracted towards the revolutionary workers. They also still saw the possibility of extending the scope of the revolution through peaceful means. Therefore, all the efforts of the Bolsheviks went towards making the rally peaceful and organizing the revolutionary forces. Because of this, instead of taking military action, hundreds of thousands of people under the leadership of the Bolsheviks went to the executive committee and asked the councils to take all the power into their own hands. This rally, however, did not end without bloodshed because a bunch of Cadets attacked the workers and blood was shed. The counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, which now included the Mensheviks and SRs, engaged in full cooperation and for the full and complete repression of the workers, they ordered the most reactionary section of the army to Petrograd.

At this point, the Mensheviks and SRs, in the words of Lenin, acted like the servants of bourgeoisie, whose legs were in chains too. They agreed with the counter-revolutionary measures that the bourgeoisie needed to suppress the people, including the renewal of war on the front lines, the execution of soldiers who escaped from the war, and eliminating the freedoms gained from the revolution and in this way, they placed themselves on the counterrevolutionary front. Hereon, Lenin, after showing their retrogression from the moment they promised in the Petrograd Council that they would conditionally support the Provisional Government, to salvaging the government from failure and from forming a coalition government with them on May 6th, to other stages of downfall that they moved through in the compromise with bourgeoisie, points to: "This disgraceful end of the SRs and Mensheviks parties was not accidental but the result of the economic situation of the small employers, meaning the petty bourgeoisie, which Europe's experience has repeatedly proved."

Under the leadership of the Mensheviks, and SRs, thereafter, the councils became an appendage of the Provisional Coalition Government, and as a result, the life of the dual government ended in favour of the rule of the bourgeoisie. This was in a situation where the bourgeoisie party was unable to rule alone, and the councils under the leadership of the petty-bourgeoisie did not want to take power into their own hands, therefore, reactionary groups from the army who were supported by the Black Hundreds gangs of landowners and capitalists, called “Bonapartists” by Lenin, became the main sources of power.

After the July 3rd incidents, there were completely new conditions in Russia. The repression of the Bolsheviks, on the pretext that they staged an armed demonstration on July 3rd, was placed on the order of the day of the coalition government. The military forces, or according to Lenin, the Bonapartists stormed and destroyed the building where the Bolshevik publication “Pravda” was printed. Other local Bolshevik newspapers were also seized. The attackers killed a worker merely for carrying a package containing Bolshevik newspapers. They arrested many of the Bolsheviks. They began to disarm the Red Guard and deployed the revolutionary parts of the Petrograd Barracks to the war front and committed other counter-revolutionary acts such as summoning Lenin to court on July 7th, which of course Lenin refused to comply with and disguised, went underground.

Now, if we return to Iran, we see that similar counter-revolutionary incidents were waged in Iran, of course more intensely and extensively immediately after the arrival of the regime with Khomeini at its head: the bloody repression against Sanandaj (the capital of Kurdistan Province in northwestern Iran—Translator) people in Nowruz of 1358 (New Year in 1980 – Translator), the bombardment of defenseless villagers in “Qarna” and “Henderquash”, and other parts of Kurdistan, the attack on the Arab people in Khuzestan, attacks on and the burning of bookstores, which in one case led to the burning of a child among the flames that “Hezbollah” (Party of God – Translator) had ignited. The attack on the office of the Ayandegan Newspaper and others were the incidents that revealed the repressive nature of the Islamic Republic and the necessity of confronting it with a truly communist and revolutionary force. But, alas, the overwhelming majority of political organizations of that period, which due to certain reasons had the revolutionary forces under their “leadership” seeking appeasement thus committing the same complicit acts that their counterparts did in Russia, meaning, regardless of what they said in words, in practice they conformed to the regime’s tyranny. Incidentally, recently I came across a document from the publication of the usurped Organization of The People’s Fadaee Guerrillas of Iran, released during the very first period of the Khomeini regime under the

title “The Book of Dushanbe” (Dushanbe means Monday in the Iranian and Tajik calendars and it is also the capital city of Tajikistan a country in Central Asia—Translator) which is digitized and accessible on the internet. In part of that book, while confessing to the tyranny of “reaction” and the brutal killing of the people of Kurdistan, a quote by Lenin is provided, which in fact acts as a directive to the militant supporters of the organization, in the sense that perhaps because the bourgeoisie is engaged in killing, slaughtering and suppressing the people, one must maintain one's calmness and be patient. That quote begins with these sentences: “Life will assert itself. Let the bourgeoisie rave, work itself into a frenzy, go to extremes, commit follies, take vengeance on the Bolsheviks in advance, and endeavour to kill off (as in India, Hungary, Germany, etc.) more hundreds, thousands, and hundreds of thousands of yesterday's and tomorrow's Bolsheviks.” And the quote ends with this sentence: “Communists should know that, in any case, the future belongs to them; therefore, we can (and must) combine the most intense passion in the great revolutionary struggle, with the coolest and most sober appraisal of the frenzied ravings of the bourgeoisie.”

Yes, the Farrokh Negahdar's cronies at the head of the usurped Fadaee organization, while they made it appear like the killing in Kurdistan perhaps was not at the direct order of the “ruling body”, meaning the regime of Islamic Republic, but the responsibility of all those crimes lay with the “reactionary” which was, of course, unknown, relying on authority of Lenin quotations of which neither the date nor the source are known, nor under what circumstances, and why he spoke so, deliberately deceived the supporters of the organization; and they recommended them to be completely calm in practice versus those cruelties while maintaining their passion and enthusiasm for the struggle. But, has Lenin ever really had such an encounter? The fact is that Lenin wrote similar sentences three years after the October Revolution on April 27, 1920, in the book ““Left-Wing” Communism: an Infantile Disorder”, in the section of “Some Conclusion” and he essentially has an intention that is by no means consistent in any way with what the conciliators made it appear to be. In that period, either the usurped organization of The Iranian People's Fadaee Guerrillas, or the Organization of Paykar and its allies in the “Vahdat Conference” (Unity Conference – Translator) or other petty-bourgeois organizations who with the claim to believe in communism, were active, have always quoted sentences from Lenin's writings as religious verses to justify their compromises. But did Lenin and the Bolsheviks treat the anti-revolutionary actions of the enemies of the oppressed masses that were committed under any name and title like our native

organizations did? The answer is definitely negative. During the same period in Iran, there were also the stands and the actions taken by The Iranian People's Fadaee Guerrillas who had separated its line from an organization that was operating under the leadership of Farrokh Negahdar and his clique. Weren't those stands and actions regarding various events during those crucial situations Bolshevik like? – although our organization, had, by no means, the capability and the power to effectively confront the ruling regime, thus it could not have handled the task that requires an organization with large forces.

Now let's see what policy did the Bolsheviks pursue and what measures did they take as the political situation in Russia changed? In the new circumstances where the ruling parties within the councils, in coordination with the oppressors of the masses, had "tarnished" their existence, Lenin argued that from then on, the slogan of all power to the soviets was ridiculous and a deceptive to the people and pointed out that 'power can no longer be taken peacefully'. Therefore, with the change of political situation, the Bolsheviks also changed their policy. Incidentally, in Russia, the Mensheviks and SRs did not endorse the repressions carried out by the reactionary military force "Junkers and Cossacks" in Petrograd but did try to exonerate the coalition government from their counter-revolutionary actions. But Lenin, summarizing Engels's view, i.e., "this public power exists in every state; it consists not merely of armed men but also of material adjuncts, prisons...", explained that those repressive armed groups in Russia are now the real ruling power, hence we must rise up against this power with militarily might. Therefore, when the leadership of the soviets, whatever words of justification and interpretation it gave, in practice supported the oppressors and the executioners of the masses, thus indeed had joined the counter-revolution, the Bolsheviks abandoned the slogan of all power to the soviets, and instead put the preparation for an armed insurrection against the Provisional Government on their agenda.

At the 6th congress of the Bolshevik party which was held under these critical conditions, new decisions towards the preparation for insurrection were made. In the Party statement, workers, soldiers, and peasants were called upon to prepare their forces for definitive clashes with the bourgeoisie. Of course, there were other views within the Bolsheviks party and it was not easy to reach such an agreement. But Kerensky's ultimatum which threateningly stated that any action taken by the armed movement and any arbitrary action of the peasants to seize land will be answered with "Iron and blood" and General "Kornilov's" open demand that the committees and worker councils should be eliminated,

all stamped the affirmation of the correctness of the new policy adopted by the Bolshevik congress.

On August 12, the Bolsheviks called for a general strike in Moscow in protest against Moscow State Conference organized by the coalition government to mobilize capitalists and landowners where the majority of workers in Moscow and the workers of some branches in some cities took part.

On August 25th, General Kornilov started rebelling and sent his military forces toward Petrograd and announced that he was trying to save the homeland. It was here that the Central Committee of the Bolshevik party took an action and invited workers and soldiers to armed resistance. The workers immediately took up arms and prepared for resistance. Parts of the army were also prepared for the battle in favour of the workers. The perimeter around Petrograd was fortified to prevent the advance of Kornilov's military forces. The Kronstadt sailors also came to aid. Other actions such as sending missionaries to parts of the Kornilov army, took place. All these actions were to convince Kornilov that the workers and their supporters were ready for armed resistance against his "Savage Division". In fact, these preparations and measures were effective and in the situation where Railroad workers had also blocked the entry way to Petrograd, Kornilov changed his mind and decided not to attack Petrograd.

Kornilov's revolt along with previous counter-revolutionary actions, whether the July 3rd rally and/or the action taken to eradicate the Bolsheviks, taught the masses many lessons. Not only the workers and soldiers learned these lessons but also in the villages where the SRs had more influence, the peasants observed that only the Bolsheviks were the true revolutionary force and were determined and serious in defending the masses. The notable point of the resistance to Kornilov was that the workers and soldiers carried out the Bolsheviks' guidance. This reality illustrated that within the councils, revolutionary resistance force was alive. After the defeat of the Kornilov revolt under the leadership of the Bolsheviks, the influence of the Bolsheviks rose both within the councils and in the countryside. On August 31st, the Petrograd Council and then the Council of the Representatives of Moscow Workers joined the Bolsheviks and the former Board of Governors of these councils resigned and opened the way for the Bolsheviks. With the support of the workers and soldiers from the Bolsheviks, the slogan of all power in the hands of the council was posed again. But this time, the practical meaning of this slogan was that the councils must rise up against the Provisional Government. Lenin was

constantly repeating that only the revolutionary proletariat could fulfill the demands of the masses throughout Russia.

In regards to both the necessity and the possibility for insurrection, Lenin in his article “Marxism and Insurrection” has raised many important subjects which at the same time expose the false accusation of the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie in the coalition government against the Bolsheviks, i.e., they were planning on armed struggle or coup d’état against the government on July 3rd. Lenin writes: “... an insurrection on July 3-4 would have been a mistake; we could not have retained power either physically or politically. We could not have retained it physically even though Petrograd was at times in our hands, because at that time our workers and soldiers would not have *fought and died* for Petrograd.” As we see, it is with this in mind that Lenin calls the “revolutionary upsurge of the people” one of the essential conditions for a successful Insurrection. On the days of September 13 and 14, 1917 he wrote the article “Marxism and Insurrection”, and declares that “Now the picture is entirely different. We have the following of the majority of a class, the vanguard of the revolution, the vanguard of the people, which is capable of carrying the masses with it.”

It was this very same vanguard of the revolution, i.e., the conscious and militant of workers of Russia who in the last days of October, made the Great Socialist Revolution in their country victorious. The very same revolution that its reminiscence still causes trembles in the limbs of capitalists everywhere around the world, and gives the workers and oppressed people hope and strength to fight the world of “poverty and servitude.”

The Bolshevik led uprising of October, gained government power almost without bloodshed. But this was just the beginning. After the October Revolution, the Russian bourgeoisie, with help of the imperialists, especially the British and French imperialists, imposed a bloody war on the Russian workers and the masses which continued for several years. During that time, the capitalists and oppressors of fourteen countries from different parts of the world, all attacked at the same time and turned their vengeful military strikes on the only socialist country in the world. However, they were only able to display their horror at the October Revolution and their hate for it because the workers and other mass supporters of the Bolsheviks, through their self-sacrifice and heroic battles, rubbed both the internal and external counterrevolutionary noses into the ground. In his book “The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky” Lenin rightly stated that, “the transition from capitalism to communism takes an entire historical epoch. Until this epoch

is over, the exploiters inevitably cherish the hope of restoration, and this hope turns into attempts at restoration. After their first serious defeat, the overthrown exploiters—who had not expected their overthrow, never believed it possible, never conceded the thought of it—throw themselves with energy grown tenfold, with furious passion and hatred grown a hundredfold, into the battle for the recovery of the “paradise”, of which they were deprived, on behalf of their families, who had been leading such a sweet and easy life and whom now the “common herd” is condemning to ruin and destitution (or to “common” labour . . .)”. These words of Lenin contain an important lesson especially for those who think that revolution in Iran can achieve victory with a spontaneous mass revolt like the 1979 uprising.

Usually, many people mention the lack of a communist party leadership as the reason for the failure of the Bahman uprising, but they do not bother to figure out as to how and through what process a communist party in Iran can be formed. Without understanding the main parameters of both conditions, these individuals in their fantasy imagine that the same path the Bolsheviks took under the circumstances of Russia in the late 19th and early 20th century can also be taken in Iran today. whereas, the reality is that revolution in each country has its own specific laws. Therefore, considering the specificities of Iranian society, a victorious revolution would take a different course from that of Russia. In fact, in January 1917, at a meeting of young workers in the “Zurich’s People’s House”, Lenin delivered a speech in German on the 1905 revolution, in which he confirmed the words that Kautsky had written in his “Social Revolution” before he became a renegade— words which in my view are of a great importance. These words were as follows: “The impending revolution ... will be less like a spontaneous uprising against the government and more like a protracted *civil war*.” Indeed, the imposition of a civil war on Russia after the revolution as well as the experience of other victorious revolutions led by Communists in the world after the October Revolution, showed that those words were quite accurate.

I finish my speech by mentioning the fact that the world of oppression and exploitation never has the tolerance for the workers and the oppressed masses to find out the truth about the accomplishments of Socialism in the Soviet Union, and to believe, therefore, that a world without oppression and exploitation is possible, and can be made if they destroy capitalism. For this reason, I believe we are obliged to disseminate among the workers and the oppressed masses in any way possible, the truth of a world free of class oppression, a world free of all the abominations and miseries of society under capitalist domination, as well as the possibility of reaching it with the powerful force of the masses

through the revolution. In hope this writing is a contribution, however small, towards such a grave task.

Glory to the Centennial of the October Revolution!

Note: What is presented here is the full text of the audio file of comrade Ashraf Dehghani's speech on the Great October Revolution which has recently been circulated within the movement and now is available to readers in this format. This full audio file is also available to enthusiasts at the following address:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KTRtV349frY>