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that there was nothing to fear, that the past had been forgotten, and that permission to live freely in Moscow had been granted by the "highest authority," meaning Stalin himself. Miasnikov, despite his misgivings, finally agreed to go. When he landed in Moscow he was arrested at the airport and taken to the Butyrki prison.

Tragedy had meanwhile befallen Miasnikov's wife and children. During the war against Hitler, all three of his sons had joined the Red Army and perished at the front. As a result, Daia Grigor'evna had suffered a nervous breakdown and been placed in a psychiatric hospital. Released after a year, she never completely recovered. In 1946 came the final shock. Visited by the police, she was informed that her husband, whom she had not seen in twenty years, was in the Butyrki prison, and that she would be allowed to visit him. Bewildered by the news, she sought advice from friends. Finally, after a week's delay, she went to the Butyrki. She had come too late. Miasnikov, she was told, had been shot. On hearing this, Daia Grigor'evna suffered another mental collapse and was taken back to the hospital, where she died not long after.

Such was the fate of Miasnikov and his family. For his ideals he paid the ultimate price. Yet he has not been erased from historical memory. Whatever his faults, and they were many, his heroic career, his refusal to compromise his principles under both tsarism and Bolshevism, are sufficient proof of his revolutionary integrity. Such men are seldom forgotten. The historian of Russia, exploring the years after 1917, is driven again and again to oppositionists of Miasnikov's stamp, to their criticisms of official policy and their alternative proposal of the construction of a socialist society, Miasnikov's central vision-the vision of workers' participation in management, of proletarian and party democracy, of freedom of discussion and debate-has survived in recent Soviet dissent, and the day may yet come when his ideas, voiced with such persistence and self-sacrifice, will influence the shaping of Communist policy to the benefit of the Russian people.

nor the bitterness of emigre life could shatter his high hopes and fervent faith in the ultimate triumph of the workers. Following Trotsky's rebuff, however, he became an isolated figure. From Constantinople he received permission to go to Paris, where he settled in October 1930, finding work at his old trade in a metals factory. In 1931, he published his manuscript on the Soviet bureaucracy under the title of Ocherednoi obman (The Current Deception). Two years later, when the French Marxist Lucien Laurat issued a similar treatise, Trotsky was quick to note the parallel. Laurat, he wrote, was "obviously unaware that his entire theory had been formulated, only with much more fire and splendor, over thirty years ago by the Russo-Polish revolutionist Machajski," and that, only recently, the same idea had been put forward by Miasnikov, who maintained that "the dictatorship of the proletariat in Soviet Russia has been supplanted by the hegemony of a new class, the social bureaucracy."

In Paris Miasnikov found it hard to adjust. Gradually, however, matters improved. He learned to speak French and took a French wife (though Daia Grigor'evna was still alive). He met two left-oppositionist acquaintances, Ruth Fischer and Victor Serge, who mention him in their memoirs.99 By 1939, when Fischer last saw him, he seemed reasonably content. At the outbreak of World War 2, Fischer tells us, he took a refresher course and graduated as an engineer He was then fifty years old.

Miasnikov remained in France throughout the war. Then in1946, he disappeared. His friends in Paris, seeking to find out what had become of him, learned that he had been taken to Russia in a Soviet plane. Whether he returned of his own will or was kidnapped by the MVD had not been conclusively established. The most reliable account, provided by Roy Medvedev, goes as follows. At the end of the war a representative of the Soviet government came to see Miasnikov and tried to persuade him to return. Miasnikov at first refused, perhaps recalling his experience in 1923, when he was lured back from Germany by false promises. He was assured, however,

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USSR"-parties he emphasized, in the plural, as opposed to the existing single-party rule. Yet a number of questions remained unanswered. By what process had the goals of Bolshevism become perverted? How did it happen that a revolution that was to lead towards the liberation of humanity, towards a classless and stateless society in which oppression would have ceased to exist, should have sunk into the mire of bureaucratism and repression? To what extent was the degeneration due to conditions beyond anyone's control-to the isolation of the revolution in a backward and impoverished country, the devastation caused by the Civil War, the difficulties of administering a diverse and far-flung population in the midst of revolutionary turmoil and civil strife? Surely these factors were important. Degeneration could not be attributed to "bureaucracy" alone, still less to the machinations of the Bolshevik leadership. Besides, why should revolutionaries who hated autocratic tyranny have built an oppressive bureaucracy of their own? Had not a similar fate overtaken previous revolutions? Do all revolutions degenerate when ideals clash with political, economic, and cultural realities?

On such questions Miasnikov shed little light. Nor, it must be added, was he himself immune from criticism. Idealizing the proletariat, from whose ranks he had emerged, he displayed a fierce intolerance of the middle classes, an intolerance that would have doomed his own version of socialism had it ever been put into practice. For all Lenin's authoritarianism and ethical blindness, was it not to his credit that he had sought to reach an accommodation with technical specialists and other nonproletarians and to enlist them in the task of economic reconstruction? What, in any case, is a "workers' state," and whom would it benefit? Surely it is a free society where individuals of different backgrounds and interests can live together as diverse human beings instead of as units of a party or class.

For the rest of his life the cult of the proletariat dominated Miasnikov's thinking. Neither his disillusioning experience in Russia

icy, in foreign and in domestic affairs. With regard to China, for example, their positions were virtually identical.

On some matters, however, agreement proved impossible, above all on Miasnikov's contention that Russia was no longer a "workers' state." This idea Miasnikov advanced in a manuscript that he sent to Trotsky in August 1929, asking him to contribute a preface. Trotsky refused, clinging to the belief that, for all its bureaucratic deformities, Russia remained a proletarian dictatorship. Miasnikov's manuscript, the last known work to issue from his pen, developed the main ideas of his earlier writings. The bureaucracy, he declared, echoing Machajski, was "completing its triumphal procession." It had become a new exploiting class, with its own interests and aspirations that diverged sharply from those of the workers. Soviet Russia, as a result, had ceased to be a workers' state. It was a system of state capitalism, ruled by a bureaucratic elite.

Insofar as state capitalism organized the economy more efficiently than private capitalism had done, Miasnikov considered it historically progressive. All the same, the workers had been cheated of the fruits of the revolution and reduced to a "subject class." For Miasnikov, the sole remedy remained a revival of workers' democracy. This would entail, as he put it, "a multiparty form of government, securing all rights and freedoms, de facto as well as de jure, to proletarians, peasants, and intellectuals." Miasnikov's hostility towards intellectuals had softened since the time of the Workers' Group manifesto. He now distinguished between bureaucrats and bosses, on the one hand, and "honest, proletarian-minded intellectuals," on the other. The latter, joining forces with the workers and peasants, must endeavor to overthrow the parasitic bureaucracy. Partial measures were useless, Miasnikov insisted. Only the destruction of state capitalism and one party rule could eliminate the "bureaucratic evil."

Thus Miasnikov, having begun in 1920 by trying to reform the Communist Party, ended by rejecting it as beyond redemption. Its place was to be taken by the "Workers' Communist Parties of the

Part One

During Lenin's years in power, from October 1917 until his death in January 1924, a number of groups took shape within the Russian Communist Party-the Democratic Centralists and the Workers' Opposition are the best known-which criticized the Bolshevik leadership for abandoning the principles of the revolution. The revolution, as sketched by Lenin in *The State and Revolution* and other works had promised the destruction of the centralized bureaucratic state and its replacement with a new social order, modeled on the Paris Commune of 1871, in which the direct democracy of the workers would be realized. The cardinal feature of this "commune state," as Lenin called it, was to be its repudiation of bureaucratic authority. The workers themselves would administer the government through grass-roots organizations, of which the soviets were the foremost example. Workers' control, through factory committees and trade unions, would function similarly in economic life, replacing private ownership and management with a system of industrial democracy and self-administration in which the rank and file would shape their own destiny. Mistakes would be made, Lenin conceded, but the workers would learn by experience. "The most important thing," he declared, "is to instill in the oppressed and laboring masses confidence in their own power."' Such was Lenin's vision before October. Once in power, however, he saw things from a different perspective. Overnight, as it were, the Bolsheviks were transformed from a revolutionary into a governing party, from an organization that encouraged spontaneous action against existing institutions into one that sought to contain it. As time went by, moreover, they faced a growing array of difficulties-civil war, economic dislocation, rising popular discontent, sheer physical exhaustion-that threatened their very survival. Lenin and the Central Committee sought to come to terms with the problems that crowded in around them. In the process, theories were modified or abandoned, principles compromised or shelved. The reten-

tion of power dwarfed all other objectives. The party of opposition and revolt had become the party of discipline and order.

Under mounting pressures, the Bolshevik leadership assumed an increasingly dictatorial position. One by one, the goals of 1917 proletarian democracy, social equality, workers' self-management-were thrust aside. The institutions of the new society were recast in an authoritarian mold, and a new bureaucratic edifice was constructed, with its attendant corruption and red tape. In government and party, in industry and army, hierarchy and privilege were restored. For collective management of the factories Lenin substituted one-man management and strict labor discipline. He reinstated higher pay for specialists and managers, along with piece rates and other discarded features of capitalism. Soviets, trade unions, and factory committees were transformed into tools of the state apparatus. Authority was increasingly concentrated in the hands of a party elite.

Such policies could not fail to arouse opposition. What had they to do with the original goals of the party? Was it for this that the revolution had been made? Questions of this sort troubled a growing number of Bolshevik stalwarts. Unable to remain silent, dissidents on the left wing of the party raised their voices in protest. Among them was Gavriii ll'ich Miasnikov, a metalworker from the Urals and a Bolshevik since 1906. One of the most vocal of the early oppositionists, he is also one of the most obscure. Yet during the early 1920s he blazed into prominence as a critic of Lenin's policies, posing questions of the utmost importance: Who is to decide what is in the interests of the workers? What methods are permissible in resolving disputes among revolutionaries? At what point does honest criticism of party officials become "deviation" or insubordination? Miasnikov, seeing his deepest revolutionary aspirations thwarted, evolved an elaborate and penetrating critique of the dictatorship in the making, pointing to dangers whose full consequences were not yet apparent.

and has been a Communist for twenty years." Returned to his cell, Miasnikov was kept in isolation. No one was permitted to speak to him, neither the guards nor his fellow inmates. His wife, Daia Grigor'evna, and their three small sons were meanwhile sent into exile.

In 1927, Miasnikov himself was banished to the Armenian capital of Erevan'.89 He was kept under police surveillance. Nevertheless on November 7, 1928, the eleventh anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, he took part in an anti-government demonstration. Fearing arrest, he decided to flee abroad. He cut'his hair, shaved off his beard, and, stuffing his briefcase with manuscripts and notes, boarded a train for Dzhul'fa, a town on the Persian border. Nearing Dzhul'fa, he leaped from the train and crossed the Araks River into Persia, only to be immediately arrested. After six months in prison, he was expelled, without passport or visa, to Turkey, where he was continually harassed by the police, In a letter to the Russian section of the Industrial Workers of the World in Chicago, written from Constantinople on November 27, 1929, he described his unending persecution: "From 1922 up to the present time I have never been free from kind attentions, sometimes of the GPU, at other times of the Intelligence Departments of various governments." So hard was his lot that he approached the Soviet consul at Trebizond about conditions for returning to Russia, but no agreement could be reached. During the spring of 1929, Miasnikov entered into correspondence with Trotsky, who himself had been exiled to Turkey that year. That Miasnikov should have done this may seem surprizing, as it was Trotsky, a few years before, who had led the offensive against the oppositionists. By now, however, Trotsky, like Miasnikov, had been expelled from the party and driven from the country. He, too, however belatedly, had raised the banner of party democracy against the dictatorship of the Bolshevik machine. And though he denied that this meant a "justification of Miasnikov and his partisans," the two men had enough in common to engage in friendly discussion. Both cleaved to a left-wing anti-Stalinist pol-

as "anti-Communist and anti-Soviet" and ordered the GPU to suppress it. By the end of September its meeting places had been raided, literature seized, and leaders arrested. Twelve members were expelled from the party, among them Moiseev, Tiunov, Berzina, Demidov, Kotov, and Shokhanov, and fourteen others received reprimands.

What of Miasnikov himself? In Germany since June, he had not been involved in the strike agitation. Nonetheless he was considered dangerous. In the fall of 1923, therefore, he was lured back to Russia on assurances from Zinoviev and Krestinsky, the Soviet ambassador in Berlin, that he would not be molested. Once on native soil, he was immediately placed behind bars. The arrest was carried out by Dzerzhinsky himself, a token of the gravity with which the government viewed the case. In January 1924, Lenin died. By then the Workers' Group had been silenced. It was the last dissident movement within the party to be liquidated while Lenin was still alive. It was also the last rank-and-file group to be smashed with the blessing of all the top Soviet leaders, who now began their struggle for Lenin's mantle.

Miasnikov spent the next three and a half years in prison, first in Moscow, then in Tomsk and Viatka. He continued his protests, writing to Stalin and Zinoviev, to Bukharin and Rykov. In Tomsk he declared a hunger strike, his second while in Bolshevik custody. Its aim, he explained in a letter smuggled to the West, was "to force a formal indictment and open court proceedings against me, or to secure my liberation." It succeeded in accomplishing neither. On the tenth day of the strike he was subjected to forcible feeding. Miasnikov resisted. On the thirteenth day his warders, reinforced by the, local GPU, dragged him out of his cell and put him in an insane asylum, an act, Miasnikov complained, which "sets a fine example for the Fascisti of the whole world." Indeed, he added, not even the fascists employed such methods. "They have not gone that far yet, but here the motto is: Whoever protests is crazy and belongs (among) the insane! Particularly when he is of the working class

Miasnikov's criticisms became the focus of acrimonious debate. It figured largely at both the Eleventh and Twelfth Party Congresses, drawing fire from virtually every prominent party leader, above all from Lenin himself. The debate, moreover, had international repercussions, involving the Communist International as well as foreign parties and organizations.

Miasnikov, then, merits closer attention than he has hitherto received from Western historians. The object of the present article is not only to tell his story in proper detail, but also to relate it to the broader issues surrounding the emergence of the Bolshevik dictatorship. Miasnikov, it is true, was a secondary figure in the portrait gallery of the revolution. Nevertheless, he was a brave and colorful individual and deserves to be better known. He added a strong proletarian voice to the debate over the meaning of socialism. But what lends his story particular poignancy is that he was a dedicated revolutionary, a Bolshevik of long standing, who cherished the ideals of October only to see them compromised and crushed. His defeat, in a sense, symbolized the defeat of the revolution itself.

Of Miasnikov's early years little is known. He began life in 1889, a native of the Urals, which had a tradition of working-class militancy reaching back to the eighteenth century. Himself possessed of a militant temper, he took an active part in the Revolution of 1905. Only sixteen at the time, he helped organize a workers' Soviet in the large metals factory in which he worked, at Motovilikha, a village on the Kama River a few miles above Perm'. The following year he joined the Bolshevik party. Arrested soon after, he was imprisoned and then banished to Siberia, serving a total of seven and a half years at hard labor' Miasnikov proved a refractory inmate. He was beaten for insubordination, spent seventy-five days on hunger strikes, and escaped no less than three times, rejoining the Bolshevik underground after each flight. Small wonder that he acquired a reputation for fortitude and dedication! Bold, determined, unyielding, a man of passion and of tempestuous energy, he already exhibited those traits of character that were to set him against the

party hierarchy. He was high-minded, independent, implacable, a stormy petrel of revolutionary militancy who, with his long hair and beard and piercing eyes, combined the qualities of a tough labor activist with those of a visionary and romantic. Stamped with the mentality of an Old Believer-one wonders whether, like Shliapnikov of the Workers' Opposition, he came from a schismatic background-he tended to view social and political issues in terms of moral absolutes. For the rest of his life he retained an attitude of sectarian fundamentalism, rejecting any adulteration of revolutionary ideals.

On returning from exile, Miasnikov resumed his underground activity. With the collapse of the autocracy in February 1917, he threw himself into the revolution in his native district, forming a workers' committee in the Motovilikha factory and serving in both the Perm' Soviet and the local Bolshevik organization. In October 1917 he took part in the Bolshevik seizure of power in the Urals. Three months later, in January 1918, he was sent as a delegate from Perm' Province to the Third Congress of Soviets, at which the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly was approved. Soon afterwards occurred his first known break with Lenin; he allied himself with the Left Communist faction and opposed the ratification of the Brest-Litovsk treaty. In May 1918, at an all-city party conference in Perm', Miasnikov spoke out against the treaty. Convinced that a European revolution was imminent, and that without it the Bolshevik regime could not survive, he favored a "revolutionary war" that would ignite the proletariat of the West and bring about the final destruction of capitalism.

Miasnikov, however, did rally behind Lenin during the summer of 1918, when the intensification of civil war saw the fading of the Left Communists and a restoration of unity within the party. Now a member of the Urals Regional Soviet, he gained a measure of notoriety for his role in the liquidation of the imperial family. He was personally responsible for the murder of Grand Duke Michael, the tsar's younger brother, who had been deported to Perm'. On the

Moscow and the Central Bureaus, relates that the group planned to publish a journal when circumstances should permit.

On a small scale, therefore, the group was assuming the appearance of a separate party. While it professed loyalty to the Communist Party program and pledged to resist "all attempts to overthrow the Soviet power," it established ties with discontented workers in several cities, began negotiations with leaders of the now defunct Workers' Opposition (including Kollontai, Shliapnikov, and Medvedev), and tried to form a Foreign Bureau into which it hoped to draw both Kollontai, with her international contacts and knowledge of languages, and Maslow of the KPD. Nothing came of these efforts. According to one report, however, the group won support within the Red Army garrison quartered in the Kremlin, a company of which had to be transferred to Smolensk.

An unexpected opportunity for the group to extend its influence came in August and September 1923, when a wave of strikes, recalling that of February 1921, swept Russia's industrial centers. An economic crisis-the so-called scissors' crisis-had been deepening since the beginning of the year, bringing cuts in wages and the dismissal of large numbers of workers. The resulting strikes, which broke out in Moscow and other cities, were a Spontaneous and unorganized phenomenon, sparked by worsening conditions. There is no evidence to connect them with any oppositionist faction. The Workers' Group, however, sought to take advantage of the unrest to oppose the party leadership. Stepping up its agitation, it considered calling a one-day general strike and organizing a mass demonstration of workers, on the lines of Bloody Sunday 1905, with a portrait of Lenin at the lead.

The authorities became alarmed. As Bukharin later acknowledged, the strikes, combined with the activities of dissident groups, drew attention to "the necessity of lowering prices, the necessity of paying more heed to wages, the necessity of raising the level of political activity by members of our party organization." At the same time, the Central Committee branded the Workers' Group

he was arrested by the GPU. Subjected to interrogation, he repeated his criticisms of the bureaucracy as cynical, ruthless, and self-serving.

Surprisingly, Miasnikov was released from custody and permitted to leave the country. He boarded a train for Germany, possibly as a member of a Soviet trade mission, a device not infrequently used by the authorities to rid themselves of dissenters. But Miasnikov did not abandon his protests. In Berlin he formed ties with the ulim-radical German Communist Workers' Party (KAPD) and with the left wing of the German Communist Party (KPD), headed by Arkady Maslow and Ruth Fischer; to them he gave, as Fischer recalls, "a very discouraging picture of the state of the Russian working class.

With the aid of these groups, Miasnikov was able to publish, in booklet form, the manifesto of the Workers' Group, prefaced by an appeal, drafted by his associates in Moscow, "to Communist comrades of all lands." The appeal, in brief compass, recapitulated the main points of the manifesto. Quoting Marx's inaugural address to the First International ("the liberation of the workers must be the task of the, workers themselves") and the second stanza of the "Internationale," it concluded with a set of slogans proclaiming the aims of the Workers' Group: "The strength of the working class lies in its solidarity. Long live freedom of speech and press for the proletarians! Long live Soviet Power! Long live Proletarian Democracy! Long live Communism!"

During Miasnikov's absence in Germany, the Workers' Group, under Kuznetsov and Moiseev, went on propagating his views. Moiseev soon withdrew from the Provisional Central Organizational Bureau, but his place was taken by Makh. On June 5, 1923, the group held a conference in Moscow and elected a Moscow Bureau, consisting of either four or eight members (the sources conflict on this point). According to Kuznetsov, a six-man Provisional Komsomol Bureau was also established, and Makh, a member of both the

night of July 12–13, 1918, a group of workmen, led by Miasnikov, arrived at Michael's apartment with forged papers of the provincial Cheka. They awakened the Grand Duke, took him and his English secretary, Nicholas Johnson, to the Motovilikha factory, and there shot them to death.

Whether Miasnikov undertook the assassination on his own initiative or was acting on orders from higher authority is unclear. Vera Kornoukhova, secretary of the Perm' Bolshevik Party Committee, afterwards testified that Miasnikov was "a bloodthirsty and embittered man, and not altogether sane," implying that he alone was responsible for the act. Yet the fact that, as soon as the assassination was carried out, Miasnikov left for Moscow and reported directly to Lenin, suggests that he had acted under instructions. Four days later, it might be added, the tsar and his family were shot, on Bolshevik orders, in the Urals city of Ekaterinburg.

For the remainder of the Civil War Miasnikov remained a loyal Bolshevik. By 1920 he was chairman of the Perm' Provincial Party Committee, having headed its agitprop section. In September of that year he was a delegate to the Ninth Party Conference, held in Moscow, where he spoke on propaganda work within the party. He did not, like several other delegates at the conference, criticize the party leadership. Yet he was seething with disaffection. He was deeply troubled by the oligarchical tendencies within the party, the drift towards authoritarianism and elite rule, a process greatly accelerated by the Civil War. He was dismayed by the growing concentration of power in the hands of the Central Committee, the divorce of the leadership from the rank and file, and the suppression of local initiative and debate. Equally disturbing, though he did not yet raise his voice in public protest, was the introduction of labor discipline in the factories, along with the elevation of technical specialists to positions of authority and the replacement of workers' control by one-man management and bureaucratic administration.

To Miasnikov all this represented a flagrant breach of Bolshevik promises, a surrender of the conquests of October. With hierarchy

and discipline resurrected, what, he wondered, had the workers won? With the class enemy once again running the factories, what had become of the workers' power? Miasnikov was a bitter man. He could not reconcile himself to the abandonment of the principles of proletarian democracy enunciated in 1917. He believed heart and soul in the revolution. The central purpose of the revolution, as Miasnikov saw it, had been to abolish capitalist forms of exploitation, and thereby release the creative energies of the workers and establish conditions for their dignity and equality. For Miasnikov, the course on which Lenin was now embarked was neither necessary nor expedient. Soon after the Ninth Party Conference, Miasnikov began to speak out. Returning to the Urals, he protested openly and vociferously against the whole tendency or Bolshevik policy and its divergence from the line of 1917. He lashed out at the rise of bureaucratism in the party, the arbitrariness and high-handedness of party officials, and the growing number of nonworkers in the party ranks and in positions of power. He railed against any accommodation with the old order, any retention of capitalist forms and methods.

Miasnikov strove to restore the party to its original path. Nothing less than a clean sweep of the bourgeois order, with its inequality and injustice, its subjugation and degradation of the workers, would satisfy his thirst for the millennium. He called for the realization of the program of 1917-anti-bureaucratic, egalitarian, and internationalist-as Lenin himself had outlined it in The State and Revolution. The advance towards socialism depended on internal democracy within the party, greater local autonomy and popular initiative, and the restoration of power to the soviets. It depended on the participation of the working class, non-Communist as well as Communist, at all levels of political and economic life.

Much of what Miasnikov was saying echoed ideas already voiced by the Democratic Centralists and the Workers' Opposition. He shared with these dissenters a common outlook of left-wing idealism, a common dissatisfaction with the policies of

ignorant people, and use such words as "proletariat" and "worker" merely as rhetoric, as "window-dressing "

The emergence of the Workers' Group did not pass unnoticed. It figured prominently at the Twelfth Party Congressi held in April 1923, which convened in the absence of Lenin, who had suffered a series of strokes that left him paralyzed and deprived of speech, On the eve of the congress, an "anonymous platform" was circulated which called on "all honest proletarian elements," both inside and outside the party, to unite on the basis of the manifesto of the Workers' Group. The authorship of this document, which denounced the triumvirate of Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Stalin and demanded their removal from the Central Committee, apparently rested with the Workers' Group, and perhaps with Miasnikov himself.

In Lenin's absence, the task of anathematizing the Workers' Group fell to Trotsky, Radek, and Zinoviev. Trotsky, denouncing Miasnikov's manifesto, recalled "the old theory of the now forgotten Machajski" that "under socialism the state will be the apparatus for the exploitation for the working class." Radek poured contempt on Miasnikov's "high-flown formula" of freedom of the press. Zinoviev declared that "every criticism of the party line, even a so-called left criticism, is now objectively a Menshevik criticism." Miasnikov, he added, maintains that "the worker is against us and we are against him." Such a notion is "rubbish ." "I was personally bothered by him for almost a year. Vladimir ll'ich occupied himself with Miasnikov, wrote to him, reasoned with him." A special commission, of which Bukharin was a member, sought to bring him around. To no avail. Miasnikov "has betrayed our party." Whatever its mistakes, insisted Zinoviev, the party had driven the old ruling elite from its entrenched power. The "hegemony of the proletariat has survived under the most difficult circumstances, and will continue to survive, I hope, to the end (applause)." .

Miasnikov had become an intolerable thorn in the leadership's flesh. On May 25, 1923, a month after the Twelfth Party Congress,

Such were the contents of the Workers' Group manifesto. By the spring of 1923 it was circulating illegally in hectographed form. Copies filtered across the border into Poland, where, as with Miasnikov's 1921 memorandum, excerpts were broadcast by the government. In Berlin it attracted the attention of the Menshevik colony, whose journal, Sotsialisticheskii vestnik, hailed the Workers' Group as "honest Bolshevik elements who have found the courage to raise the banner of criticism."

Inside Russia, too, the manifesto was having its effect, drawing fresh recruits into the Workers' Group. By summer the group had some 300 members in Moscow, where it was centered, as well as a sprinkling of adherents in other cities. Many were Old Bolsheviks, and all, or nearly all, were workers. Apart from the three founders (Miasnikov, Kuznetsov, and Moiseev), its most active members were I.Makh, S. Ia. Tiunov, V. P. Demidov, M, K. Berzina, I. M. Kotov, G.V.Shokhanov, and A. I. Medvedev (not to be confused with the Workers' Oppositionist S. P. Medvedev). Makh, a veteran Bolshevik from Kharkov, had been a delegate to the Tenth Party Congress. Tiunov, who joined the party in 1917 and was better educated than his associates, was strong-minded, determined, and "not devoid of Nechaevist traits," according to Ante Ciliga, the Yugoslavian Communist dissident, who afterwards encountered him in prison. Several were former Workers' Oppositionists, including Makh, Kuznetsov, Demidov, and Barzitia, a Bolshevik since 1907 and one of the few female members of the group.70 All shared Miasnikov's views on the degeneration of the party and the revolution, and three, in addition to Miasnikov, had signed the Appeal of the Twenty-Two: Kuznetsov, Shokhanov, and Medvedev. Kuznetsov, indeed, regarded the workers and the Bolshevik leadership as "antithetical forces." To his GPU interrogators he later declared,

"We see how the upper levels of the party bureaucracy, our comrades of yesterday, increasingly distrust us, increasingly fear us. They regard us as a declared proletariat, as politically illiterate and

the Bolshevik leadership, a common revulsion against the whole authoritarian program that the regime, under Lenin's direction, had adopted. Yet Miasnikov went his own way. Notwithstanding subsequent charges that he had been an "active member" of the Workers' Opposition, he did not, apart from the most ephemeral contacts, associate himself with this group. Miasnikov, for the time being, remained a one-man opposition. Always independent in his views, he differed with both the Democratic Centralists and the Workers' Opposition on important points and went beyond them in the sweeping nature of his attack on the party hierarchy. He was one of the few Bolsheviks at this time to espouse the cause of the peasantry, especially its poorer elements, advocating the formation of peasant unions; for this he was accused of harboring Socialist Revolutionary sympathies. During the trade-union controversy, moreover, he did not adhere to any of the contending platforms, least of all to that of Lenin and his supporters, as Shliapnikov mistakenly maintained. For Miasnikov, on the contrary, the trade unions had outlived their usefulness, owing to the existence of the Soviets. The Soviets, he argued in a syndicalist vein, were revolutionary rather than reformist bodies. Unlike the unions, they embraced not merely one or another segment of the proletariat, this or that trade or occupation, but "all the workers," and along the "lines of production" rather than of craft. The unions should therefore be dismantled, Miasnikov urged, together with the Councils of National Economy, which were riddled with "bureaucratism and red tape"; the management of industry, he said, should be vested in the workers' soviets.

Miasnikov's unorthodox pronouncements aroused the ire of the party authorities. On orders from the Central Committee, he was transferred ("banished for correction" was how he himself put it) from the Urals to Petrograd, where he could be kept under supervisions This occurred in the fall of 1920. The Civil War had been won, and the atmosphere in the old capital seemed festive. A closer look, however, revealed widespread discontent. "Red Petrograd," Mias-

nikov noted, was a "Potemkin village." Behind the facade of victory loomed a serious crisis. Bolshevik influence among the workers was swiftly declining. Within the party, favoritism and corruption were rife. The Astoria Hotel, where many high officials lived, was the scene of debauchery, while ordinary citizens went without the bare necessities. Assigned to a party unit detailed to forage for food, Miasnikov found that his colleagues were not "bread-gatherers" but "bread-eaters," and that a new type of Communist was emerging, the toadying careerist who "knows how to please his superiors."

At first Miasnikov hesitated to protest. But soon he began to speak out again. Zinoviev, the party chairman in Petrograd, responded with threats. At one point he warned Miasnikov to stop complaining "or we shall expel you from the party, You are either an SR or a sick man." But Miasnikov refused to be silenced. His prolonged struggle against the tsarist order had given him a taste for freedom of speech that he was loath to sacrifice, even for the sake of party discipline. He deplored the suppression of criticism by the Central Committee. Communists who ventured an independent opinion, he protested, were stigmatized as heretics and counterrevolutionaries. "You think you are smarter than ll'ich!" they were told. As Miasnikov, in spite of repeated warnings, continued to speak out, other disgruntled voices joined in. In early 1921, the working class of Petrograd was in ferment. In February, factory after factory went out on strike, and party spokesmen were often barred from workers' meetings. By the end of the month, the city was on the verge of a general strike. Then, in March, came the Kronstadt rebellion. Miasnikov was deeply affected. Unlike the Democratic Centralists and Workers' Opposition, he refused to denounce the insurgents. Nor would he have participated in their suppression had he been called upon to do so. For he attributed the rising to "the regime within the party." "if someone dares to have the couurage of his convictions," Miasnikov declared, he is either a self-seeker or, worse, a counterrevolutionary, a Menshevik or an SR. Such was

nomic gains. Partial reforms, he insisted, could only weaken the revolutionary elan of the proletariat and deflect it from its mission of overthrowing the capitalist system. "The time when the working class could improve its material and legal situation by strikes and parliamentary action has irretrievably passed," the manifesto declared. To put an end to exploitation and oppression, the proletariat "must struggle not for additional kopecks, not for a shorter working day. That was at one time necessary, but now it is a struggle for power." No compromise with the existing order should be tolerated. The workers of advanced industrial countries must press on with a social revolution, not in the distant future, but "now, today, tomorrow." "Sound the alarm! Gather for the battle! … With all our strength and energy we must summon the proletariat of all countries to a civil war, a ruthless and bloody war."

The battle, however, must begin at home. In his manifesto, Miasnikov wondered whether the Russian proletariat might not be compelled "to start anew the struggle-and perhaps a bloody one-for the overthrow of the oligarchy." Not that he contemplated an immediate insurrection. He sought, rather, to rally the workers, Communist and non-Communist, to press for the elimination of bureaucratism and the revival of proletarian democracy. Within the party he defended-the right to form factions and draw up platforms, the decisions of the Tenth Congress notwithstanding. "If criticism does not have a distinct point of view," he wrote to Zinoviev, "a platform on which to rally a majority of party members, on which to develop a new policy with regard to this or that question, then it is not really criticism but a mere collection of words, nothing but chatter." Miasnikov went even further, calling into question the very Bolshevik. monopoly of power. Under a single-party dictatorship, he argued, elections remained "an empty formality." To speak of "workers' democracy" wttile insist-ing on one-party government, he told Zinoviev, was to entwine oneself in a contradiction, a "contradiction in terms."

of "Makhaevism." There is no evidence that he had ever heard of Machajski, much less been influenced by his ideas, but the similarities between them are undeniable. For bureaucrats and intellectuals Miasnikov's contempt was unbridled. He branded the Bolshevik hierarchy an "oligarchical caste," a "high-handed bunch of intellectuals," a "managerial fraternity" that held the reins of industry and government in its hands. Should the present course continue, he warned in the manifesto, "we are faced with the danger of' the transformation of the proletarian power into the power of a firmly entrenched clique animated by a determination to Preserve both political and economic power in its hands-naturally under the guise of' the noblest purposes: 'in the interests' of the proletariat, of world revolution, and other lofty ideas!"

What then was to be done? For Miasnikov the degeneration of the revolution could be halted only by the restoration of proletarian democracy. He remained unshakable in his belief in the initiative and capacity of the workers, the class from which he himself had sprung. The defects of the regime could no longer be corrected by the Bolshevik leadership. Remedies, rather, must come from the working-class rank and file, both party and nonparty. Without worker participation in every area, he insisted, the attainment of socialism would be impossible. Lenin, by contrast, lacking Miasnikov's faith in mass initiative, clung to administrative solutions, rejecting any proposal that would have allowed a democratic breeze to blow through the party apparatus. This he considered more dangerous than bureaucratism itself. He relied, to the very end, on bureaucrats to reform the bureaucracy, setting one section of the apparatus against another.

For Miasnikov such remedies were worthless, as they failed to attack the problem at its root. Real reform, he was convinced. was possible only from below. Calling for an all-out assault against capitalism, abroad as well as at home, he condemned the "united front" policy advanced by the Communist International, rejecting cooperation with moderate socialists and the struggle for limited eco-

the case with Kronstadt. Everything was nice and quiet. Then suddenly, without a word, it hits you in the face: "What is Kronstadt? A few hundred Communists are fighting against us." What does this mean? Who is to blame if the ruling circles have no common language not only with the nonparty masses but with rankand-f'ile Communists? So much do they misunderstand one another that they reach for their weapons. What then is this? It is the brink, the abyss.

Clearly it had been a mistake to bring Miasnikov to Petrograd. The Central Committee, recognizing its error, ordered him to return to the Urals. Miasnikov complied. Back on native grounds, however, he resumed his agitation, stirring up a hornet's nest in the local party organization. In May 1921, moreover, he exploded a bombshell in the form of a memorandum to the,Central Committee, calling for sweeping reform. A crushing indictment of the Communist leaders, their theories and methods, the memorandum demanded the abolition of the death penalty, the liquidation of bureaucratic forms of organization, and the transfer of industrial administration to producers' Soviets-, it counterpoised revolutionary principle to the expedients promoted by the Central Committee.

The most striking demand of the memorandum was for unrestricted freedom of the press. Criticizing the Tenth Party Congress for stifling debate, Miasnikov called for freedom of the press for everyone, "from monarchists to anarchists inclusive," as he put it, a phrase that would reverberate through the polemics that followed. Miasnikov was the only Bolshevik to make such a demand. He saw freedom of the press as the only means of curbing the abusive tendencies of power and of maintaining honesty and efficiency within the party. No government, he realized, could avoid error and corruption when critical voices were silenced.

In the Urals, meanwhile, Miasnikov waged a vigorous campaign to bring his ideas before the workers. Again and again he spoke out against the dictatorial behavior of party officials and the growing concentration of authority at the center. To prevent the situa-

tion from getting worse, he appealed for the immediate revival of democracy within the party and a greater measure of autonomy for the Soviets. He warned that the displacement of the Soviets by the party apparatus, combined with the tendency towards centralization within the party, presented a danger to the realization of socialism.

Miasnikov's criticisms kindled a revolt within the Urals party organization. A man of magnetic character and obvious sincerity, he won a following in both Perm' and Motovilikha, cauldrons of proletarian discontent. The local Bolshevik officials became alarmed. In May 1921, shortly after Miasnikov dispatched his memorandum to the Central Committee, the Perm' Provincial Committee forbade him to propagate his views at party meetings. But Miasnikov refused to desist. On June 21 he spoke at a provincial party conference in Perm', chastizing both the Central Committee and the Provincial Committee.29 A month later, on July 27, he went even further, publishing a pamphlet called Bol'nye voprosy (Vexed Questions), in which he reiterated the demands of his memorandum, above all for freedom of criticism. "The Soviet government," he boldly declared, "should maintain detractors at its own expense, as did the Roman emperors." Meanwhile the Perm' Committee had not been idle, Following Miasnikov's speech of June 21, it appealed to the Central Committee to investigate his conduct. On July 29, two days after the appearance of Bot'nye voprosy, the Orgburo formed a special commission, consisting of Bukharin, P. A. Ziluisky, and A. A. Sol'ts, to took into the matter. Bukharin found Miasnikov's memorandum of sufficient interest to pass on to Lenin. Thus it was that Lenin became involved in the affair.

Lenin glanced over the memorandum. On August 1, he wrote Miasnikov a brief note, inviting him to the Kremlin for a talk. What kind of freedom do you want? Lenin asked. For SRs and Mensheviks? All at once? In your memorandum it is not clear. On August 5, Lenin followed this up with a long letter. By then he had read

decay of the socialist ideal. In spite of the abolition of private ownership, the worst features of capitalism had been preserved: wage slavery, differences of income and status, hierarchical authority, bureaucratism. The initials "NEP," asserted the manifesto, stood for "New Exploitation of the Proletariat."

Part Two

For Miasnikov the NEP had come as a shock. He viewed it as a continuation of the retreat from socialism begun during the Civil War. Its roots could be traced to the Ninth Party Congress, which had endorsed one-man management and the employment of technical specialists. By this action, as Miasnikov saw it, Lenin had deprived the workers of their most fundamental revolutionary conquest, the chief lever with which to advance their cause. "The organization of industry since the Ninth Congress of the Russian Communist Party," declared the manifesto, had been carried forward in a "purely bureaucratic way" and "without the direct participation of the working class." The manifesto demanded that the administration of industry be turned over to the workers themselves, beginning with the workers in each factory. It denounced the bureaucrats and apporatchiki for whom such words as "solidarity" and "brotherhood" were empty shibboleths and who were concerned only with increasing their privileges and power. It attacked them at every turn-their insolence and hypocrisy, their contempt for ordinary workers, their pious mouthing of socialist phrases, belied by their bourgeois ambitions and way of life.

In his strong anti-intellectual bias, coupled with his scorn for managers and bureaucrats, Miasnikov resembled Jan Waclaw Machajski, a Polish radical who, at the turn of the century, had foreseen the emergence, in the name of socialism, of a new class of intellectuals and specialists bent on riding to power on the backs of the workers. Miasnikov was thus tarred with the brush

sional Central Organizational Bureau" of the group, of which Miasnikov was the actual founder and guiding spirit. Their first act, in February 1923, was to draw up a statement of principles in anticipation of the Twelfth Party Congress, scheduled to assemble in April. This took the form of a lengthy document, the "Manifesto of the Workers' Group of the Russian Communist Party," based on an unpublished pamphlet by Miasnikov called Treyozhnye voprosy (Alarming Questions), itself an updated version of his 1921 memorandum and Bol'nw voprosy. Miasnikov was thus the principal author of the manifesto, Kuznetsov and Moiseev confining themselves to editorial revision.

The manifesto recapitulated the program of Miasnikov's earlier writings: workers' self-determination and self-management, the removal of bourgeois specialists from positions of authority, freedom of discussion within the party, and the election of new sovicts centered in the factories. As before, Miasnikov protested against administrative high-handedness, the expanding bureaucracy, the predominance of nonworkers within the party, and the suppression of local initiative and debate. He charged that the party leadership had no confidence in the workers, in whose name it professed to rule.

There were, however, some changes. For one thing, Miasnikov's view of civil liberties had narrowed since 1921. While freedom of speech and press remained a high priority, it was to be limited to manual workers. "Let the bourgeoisie keep quiet," declared the manifesto, "but who would dare contest the right of free speech for the proletarian, who has defended his power with his blood?" As for professors, lawyers, and doctors, the best policy was to "bash their faces in ." Miasnikov, furthermore, denounced the New Economic Policy, inaugurated in 1921, as an abandonment of the goals of October and a sellout to the bourgeoisie. The proliferation of bureaucrats and entrepreneurs, with wide scope for profiteering and corruption, filled him with disgust. It was a hateful and unbearable sight, a symbol of the deterioration of the revolution, of the

both the memorandum and Bot'nye voprosy. He saw some truth in Miasnikov's criticisms. The man, though naive, was plainly sincere. He was also an Old Bolshevik, a veteran of tsarist prisons, a hero of the revolution and Civil War. Lenin felt he owed him a reply. He hoped, at the same time, to bring him to heel. Addressing him as "Comrade Miasnikov" and closing "with communist greetings," his tone was friendly but firm. Like a schoolmaster, he spoke now sympathetically, now condescendingly, to his wayward pupil.

Freedom of the press, Lenin sought to convince Miasnikov, would, under existing circumstances, strengthen the forces of counter-revolution. Lenin rejected "freedom" in the abstract. Freedom for whom? he demanded. Under what conditions? For which class? "We do not believe in 'absolutes.' We laugh at 'pure democracy."' Freedom of the press, Lenin maintained, would mean "freedom of political organization for the bourgeoisie and its most loyal servants, the Mensheviks and SRs." The capitalists are still strong, he argued, stronger than the Communists. They mean to crush us. To give them freedom of the press would facilitate this task. But we will not do it. We have no intention of committing suicide. Freedom of the press, according to Lenin, was a "nonparty, antiproletarian slogan." Lenin attributed Miasnikov's espousal of it to a failure of nerve combined with an inability to grasp Marxist theory. Far from adopting a class analysis, Miasnikov had made a "sentimental" appraisal of the existing crisis. Confronted with adversity, he had succumbed to panic and despair. Lenin urged Miasnikov to pull himself together, to calm down and think things over. After sober reflection, Lenin hoped, he would recognize his errors and return to useful party work.

Miasnikov was not convinced by Lenin's arguments. He drafted a strong reply. Reminding Lenin of his revolutionary credentials, he wrote: "You say that I want freedom of the press for the bourgeoisie. On the contrary, I want freedom of the press for myself, a proletarian, a member of the party for fifteen years," and not abroad but inside Russia, facing danger and arrest. Miasnikov told of his

experience in tsarist prisons, his hunger strikes, beatings, and escapes. Surely he had earned a little freedom of the press, "within the party at least. Or is it that I must take my leave as soon as I disagree with you in the evaluation of social forces?" If so, this is a crude way of settling differences. You say, Miasnikov went on, that the jaws of the bourgeoisie must be cracked.

"The trouble is that, while you raise your hand against the capitalist, you deal a blow to the worker. You know very well that for such words as I am now uttering hundreds, perhaps thousands, of workers are languishing in prison. That I myself remain at liberty is only because I am a veteran Communist, have suffered for my beliefs, and am known among the mass of workers. Were it not for this, were I just an ordinary mechanic from the same factory, where would I be now? In a Cheka prison or, more likely, made to 'escape,' just as I made Mikhail Romanov 'escape.' Once more I say: You raise your hand against the bourgeoisie, but it is I who am spitting blood, and it is we, the workers, whose jaws are being cracked."

At this Lenin broke off the correspondence. On August I 1, he sent a telegram to the Perm' Provincial Party Committee, requesting that his letter to Miasnikov, together with Miasnikov's memorandum and Bol'nye voprosy, be read before its members, as well as before the Motovilikha District Committee. Lenin's purpose, it seems clear, was to demonstrate the unreasonableness of Miasnikov's position and to justify the party's efforts to curb him. Miasnikov, however, would not be subdued. In mid-August he staged a walkout of the Motovilikha delegation from a party conference in Perm', handing a note of protest to the Provincial Party Committee, which had been trying to silence him.

This action sealed Miasnikov's fate. On August 22, the Orgburo of the Central Committee, having heard the report of the commission looking into Miasnikov's activities, pronounced his views "incompatible with the interests of the party" and forbade him to disseminate them at future gatherings. Miasnikov was summoned to

Medvedev, and Kollontai, along with two lesser-known Workers' Oppositionists, F. A. Mitin and N. V. Kuznetsov. The congress, however, chose to expel only Minin and Kuznetsov, letting the first three off with a warning. Miasnikov did not go unmolested. Shortly after the congress he was taken into custody by the GPU, becoming the first prominent Communist political prisoner in Soviet Russia. Nor was this all. In the course of his arrest an attempt was made to "escape" him, as he had foretold in his letter to Lenin. Somehow the scheme miscarried: three shots were fired at him, but they failed to find their mark. Characteristically, as soon as he was placed behind bars, Miasnikov declared a hunger strike, as he had previously done under the tsar. Twelve days later he was released.

From this point Miasnikov remained under continuous surveillance. Of his activities during the remainder of 1922, nothing is known. By early 1923, however, he was once again in trouble with the authorities. Miasnikov was now living in Moscow. A year had passed since his ouster from the party and, following the stipulation in the expulsion order, he petitioned the Central Committee for readmission. His request was denied. Miasnikov thereupon appealed to the Executive Committee of the Comintern, which, on March 27, 1923, ruled. that, far from having mended his ways, he had continued to utter opinions of which an "agent of the bourgeoisie seeking to create a schism in the Russian Communist Party" would approve.

Miasnikov had in fact gone even further. In the opening weeks of 1923, he had, as Lenin had all along feared, organized a clandestine opposition. Calling it, despite his expulsion, the "Workers' Group of the Russian Communist Party," he claimed that it, and not the Bolshevik leadership, represented the authentic voice of the proletariat. Joining hands in the venture were P. B. Moiseev, a Bolshevik since 1914, and N. V. Kuznetsov, the former Workers' Oppositionist who, we have seen, had been expelled from the party at the Eleventh Congress for his role in the Appeal of the Twenty-Two. The three men, all workers, constituted themselves as the "Provi-

and Martov had quoted it in their newspaper editorials. Such antiparty tracts -Kollontai's Workers' Opposition was another- provided grist to the mill of those who would again raise the banner of Kronstadt — "only of Kronstadt!" Lenin, speaking after Trotsky, acknowledged the right of the signers of the Appeal of the Twenty-Two to petition the Communist International; they had no right, he insisted, to protest in behalf of Miasnikov, who had violated the decisions of the Tenth Party Congress. Lenin harked back to his correspondence with Miasnikov: "I saw that the man had ability, that it was worthwhile to talk things over with him. But one had to tell the man that if he persisted in criticizing in the same vein it would not be tolerated."

Miasnikov found no defenders at the cotigress. But one delegate, V. V. Kosior, argued that Lenin had taken the wrong approach to the question of dissent. If someone, said Kcisior, had the courage to point out deficiencies in party work, he was marked down as an oppositionist, relieved of authority, placed under surveillance, and- a reference to Miasnikov-even expelled from the party. The party, Kosior, warned, was alienating itself from the workers.

Following Kosior, Shliapnikov and Medvedev of the Workers' Opposition defended the Appeal of the Twenty-Two, They had gone to the Comintern, they explained, because the leadership had rejected their complaints. They had not formed a separate faction, they insisted, nor launched a conspiracy against the Central Committee. A private meeting had been held, Medvedev admitted, to draw up the appeal. "Miasnikov was there with yidu," a voice interrupted from the floor. Yes, acknowledged Medvedev, but our aim was to reform the party, not to divide it.

The congress, following the example of the Comintern, set up a commission, consisting of Dzerzhinsky, Zinoviev, and Stalin, to investigate the matter. On April 2, the last day of the congress, the commission delivered its report in closed session. Finding the signers of the appeal guilty of organizing a faction, it recommended the expulsion from the party of five of their number, Shliapnikov,

Moscow and placed under the control of the Central Committee. Yet even now he refused to yield. In defiance of the Central Committee, he returned to the Urals and resumed his agitation. At the end of August he appeared before a general meeting of Motovilikha party members and succeeded in winning them over to his side. Adopting a resolution against the Orgburo's censure of Miasnikov, they branded his transfer to Moscow a form of "banishment" and demanded that he be allowed "full freedom of speech and press within the party."

Asserting his right of free expression, Miasnikov, in November 1921, published in pamphlet form his memorandum to the Central Committee together with Bol'nye voprosy, Lenin's letter of August 5, his reply to it, the Orgburo's decision of August 22, and the resolution of the Motovilikha party organization against this decision. Labeled "for party members only" and printed in only 500 copies, the pamphlet was intended by Miasnikov not as a charter of rebellion but as a vehicle for the discussion of his views in advance of the Eleventh Party Congress, scheduled to meet the following spring. Miasnikov, at the same time, sought to rally his supporters in Motovilikha and Perm' behind his program. On November 25, moreover, he wrote to B. A.Kurzhner, a sympathizer in Petrograd, urging a campaign of agitation in preparation for the party congress. "We must unite all dissident elements in the party under a single banner," he declared. By now Miasnikov was being watched by the Cheka, and his letter to Kurzhner was intercepted. For Lenin, this was the last straw. Having suppressed the Workers' Opposition with no small difficulty, he feared the emergence of yet another group within the party claiming to represent the true interests of the proletariat. "We must devote greater attention to Miasnikov's agitation," he wrote to Molotov on December 5, "and to report on it to the Politburo twice a month." To deal with Miasnikov, meanwhile, the Orgburo formed a new commission, of which Molotov, himself a native of Perm', served as a member.

There now began for Miasnikov tribulations that never ended. On February 15, 1922, the Orgburo commission, having completed its investigation, recommended his expulsion from the party. This recommendation was referred to the Politburo, which, on February 20, declared Miasnikov expelled for "repeated violations of party discipline," and especially for attempting to organize a faction within the party, contrary to the resolution on party unity passed by the Tenth Congress. The Politburo, however, added the proviso that, should Miasnikov reform his ways, he might apply for readmission after a year. For the first time, then, the penalty prescribed by the Tenth Congress for factionalism had been imposed. This was the first instance, moreover, except for that of S. A. Lozovsky in 1918, who was reinstated the next year, where Lenin actually expelled a well-known Bolshevik of long standing.

The following day, February 21, 1922, Lenin instructed Kamenev and Stalin to publish his letter to Miasnikov, or at least substantial extracts, to show that, before expelling Miasnikov" he had endeavored to reason with him. For there was still widespread reluctance within the party to take extreme measures against veteran members, especially one with Miasnikov's reputation for courage and dedication. Lenin himself shared these hesitations, Yet his patience with Miasnikov had been exhausted. Russia stood alone in a hostile world, surrounded by enemies on all sides. The hoped-for revolution had not erupted in the 'West. In such circumstances, Lenin felt, to criticize the Central Committee, to call for democratic procedure, was to play into the hands of the counterrevolutionaries. Furthermore, if Miasnikov's demands were granted, if freedom of the press and free elections to the soviets were permitted, the party would be swept from power and a reaction inevitably follow, of which the Bolsheviks, Miasnikov included, would be the first victims. Such was Lenin's position. For Miasnikov, Lenin's "defense of the revolution" was in reality the defense of the leadership's monopoly to power. In Lenin's demand for party unity he saw an excuse to silence dissent. Miasnikov persisted in his criticisms. On February 26, 1922, less than a week after his expulsion from the party, he joined a group of dissenters, including Shliapnikov, Medvedev, and Kollontai of the Workers' Opposition, in filing a petition with the Executive Committee of the Communist International. This petition, known as the Appeal of the Twenty-Two, was partly occasioned by Miasnikov's excommunication. In strong terms it denounced the Central Committee for muzzling criticism, flouting workers' democracy, and admitting nonworkers into the party in such numbers as to alter its proletarian characters. On March 4, at the recommendation of a special commission whose members included Vasil Kolarov of Bulgaria, Clara Zetkin of Germany, and Marcel Cachin of France, the Comintern Executive Committee pronounced these complaints unfounded. Upholding Lenin and the Bolshevik Central Committee, it rejected the Appeal of the Twenty Two as a "weapon against the party and the proletarian dictatorship." At home Miasnikov had also been busy. In his factory at Motovilikha he secured the election of a new workers' committee, with an anti-Leninist majority. A general meeting of the Motovilikha party organization, apparently at his instigation, passed a resolution endorsing the Appeal of the Twenty-Two, and one party cell, on March 22, issued a denunciation of bourgeois managers and "bureaucratic rulers."

Matters came to a head at the Eleventh Party Congress, which, opening on March 27, was the last in which Lenin participated. Miasnikov was sharply taken to task; Molotov, Trotsky, and Lenin all spoke against him. For six months, complained Molotov, the Central Committee had engaged in "talks, consultations, exchanges of views" with Miasnikov, in an effort to persuade him to accept the "general party line." All in vain. Molotov called for a purge of the party to remove such "unstable" elements from its ranks. Trotsky, acting as chief prosecuting attorney, lashed out at Miasnikov for giving aid and comfort to the enemy. It was no accident, he declared, that the Polish government had broadcast extracts from Miasnikov's pamphlet, or that Chernov, Miliukov,