CHAPTER II

THE BOLSHEVIK PROGRAMME: REVOLUTIONARY TRANSITION AND STATE FORMATION
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Communist regimes and movements all over the world have a historical tradition of defining their programmes. The programmes identify long term goals and define the general directions of social, economic and political development of the society. They also serve as a guide to the radical transformation of societal conditions through a revolution (peaceful or violent) or what may be called the building of socialism in a post-revolutionary society.

As far as their ramifications are concerned, the programmatic documents simultaneously serve as propaganda material and contain an actual plan for realization of defined goals. Alluding to the 1919 Programme of Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), Lenin described the functions of the programme as follows:

"The mere translation of our programme will provide the most effective answer to the question as to what has been done by the Russian Communist Party, which is one of the units of the international proletariat. Our programme..."
will serve as extremely effective material for propaganda and agitation.... 1

The programme as a rule reflects on the contemporary reality and charts the future course of action. The cognizance of existing reality is no less important than the proclamation of the objectives to be achieved and the strategy to be followed for the realization of set goals. The vital aspect of the programme is its preamble. It is explanatory and definitive since it describes and also defines the existing reality. On this vital aspect the discussion between Lenin and Bukharin on the programme to be adopted after the October Revolution highlights its importance.

The Seventh Congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) had on its agenda an important item regarding the revision of the party programme. During the discussions in the Congress on the Draft of the programme Bukharin introduced an amendment to the Resolution on the Party Programme. Bukharin's amendment was for a description of socialist society in its developed form (communism). Lenin, while disagreeing with Bukharin rejected his amendment very categorically and he cautioned:

The bricks of which socialism will be composed have not yet been made.... The programme describes what we have begun to do and the succeeding steps

that we wish to take. We are not in a position to give a description of socialism and it was incorrect that this task was formulated. 2

Once again, Lenin reiterated this position in his Report on the Party Programme in the Eighth Congress of the Party in March 1919. Incidentally, he was again replying to Bukharin on the contents of the preamble of the programme. He emphatically said: "we must state what actually exists; the programme must contain what is absolutely irrefutable, what has been established in fact. Only then it will be a Marxist Programme." 3 A programme notes the achievements of the past, comprehends the current stage of development of the society and visualizes the future. Thus, it is some kind of a blend of reality and utopia.

In this chapter, we will discuss first of all, the historical background of the Bolshevik programme of 1919 followed by an examination of the evolution and formation of the Soviet system after the October Revolution. The Party Programme and the framework for analysis as established in the preceding chapter will become our points of reference in examining the nature of state power as reflected in the correlation of class forces, and as comprehended, and defined

2 Ibid., vol. 27, p. 148.
3 Ibid., vol. 29, p. 168.
by the programme and the tasks assigned to the new state power in carrying out revolutionary transformation of the society. Furthermore, we will attempt to trace the trajectory traversed by the Soviet state in its subsequent evolution as a result of changing nature of correlations between various forces like classes, party and trade unions. To what extent these changing correlations influenced the evolution of the Soviet state and the elements of the state system (Soviets, apparatus of the state) - as reflected in the actualities of the times and in the debates within the Russian Communist Party which comprehended or at least tried to capture those actualities - and their relationships with the civil society during the various periods of changes in the latter - will be evaluated by making the 1919 Programme of the Russian Communist Party as a frame of reference.

HISTORICAL LEGACY OF THE 1919 PROGRAMME OF THE RUSSIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (BOLSHEVIK)

For a better appreciation of the post-revolutionary programme of the Russian Communist Party, a survey of the whole question of state power as contained in the ancestral documents of the Marxist-Leninist movement is imperative. The 1919 programme, though adopted by the Bolsheviks after the promulgation of the first proletarian constitution during the revolutionary fervour of war communism, essentially inherited the legacy of its ancestors.
To develop a proper perspective of the process of the evolution of the Soviet state in the context of the post-revolutionary programme, it is quite necessary to refer to the programmatic documents of the Marxist-Leninist movement. The question of state and political power was the main refrain of these documents. The reference to the earlier programmatic documents can hardly be overstressed because not only the socialist regimes but also the Marxist movements all over the world derive legitimacy by invoking these documents.

The Communist Manifesto written in 1848 still remains, so far, the most famous programmatic documents written by Marx and Engels. The Manifesto called upon the proletariat to forcibly overthrow the all existing social conditions. The Manifesto thus exhorted the proletariat "that the first step in the revolution by the working class is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to win the battle of democracy". After a successful revolution the proletariat must "use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the state, i.e., of the proletariat organised as the ruling class".

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5 Ibid.
The specific programmatic outline of the manifesto contained such important measures for implementation as:

abolition of property in land, a heavy progressive or graduated income tax, abolition of inheritance, centralisation of credit in the hands of the state, by means of a national bank with state capital and an exclusive monopoly, centralisation of means of communication and transport in the hands of the state, extension of factories and instruments of production owned by the state, equal liability of all to labour and establishment of industrial armies, especially for agriculture, gradual abolition of the distinction between the town and the country by a more equitable distribution of the population over the country, free education for all children in public schools and abolition of children's factory labour in its present form. 6

Though the Manifesto contained the issue of centrality of state, nevertheless, it had no blueprint for political transformation, i.e., what kind of political and state structure would be needed by the proletariat to constitute itself as the ruling class. It is only in 1872 that Marx and Engels added a preface to the German Edition of the Manifesto in which they made one important qualification: "One thing especially was proved by the Commune", viz., that "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the readymade state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes" 7

6 Ibid., pp. 126-7.
7 Ibid., p. 99.
and they refer to the civil war in France for this quote.

Marx's criticism of the draft programme of the German Workers' Party was not in itself a programme. His formulations in the Critique of the Gotha Programme regarding the nature of political power and withering away of the state are very important, though not elaborated in details. Yet they find reference in almost all the programmes of the Soviet Communist Party. About the transitory nature of the post-revolutionary state, Marx specifically stated:

Between Capitalist and Communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat. 8

Here Marx also reaffirms his conviction that the destruction or withering of the state is fundamental for human freedom: "Freedom consists in converting the state from an organ super-imposed upon society into one completely subordinate to it". 9

The key Marxian concept of withering away of the state is also mentioned by Engels in his letter to A. Bebel, which also discusses the Gotha Programme of the German


9 Ibid., p. 25.
...it is pure nonsense to talk of a free people's state: so long as the proletariat still uses the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist. 10

The above discussion clearly reveals the key Marxist thinking on the transitory nature and the socialist state. But it is the 1903 Programme of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party that defined the transitory nature of the state power after the social revolution more concretely. The preamble of the programme dealing with the theoretical issues indicated the possibilities for a socialist revolution as created by the material and technical conditions under the capitalist production relations. It would be a social revolution that would abolish the division of society into classes. The nature of political power conquered by the proletariat is conceptualized as the dictatorship of the proletariat. And it is deemed to be the essential condition for the social revolution. E.H. Carr aptly notes the fact that "it was the first time that the dictatorship of the proletariat had been formally inscribed in any party programme". 11


The programme specifically analysed the peculiar objective conditions prevailing in Russia and identified capitalism as the dominant mode of production, which also preserved in its fold the numerous vestiges of the old pre-capitalist order. The immediate aim regarding state was defined by the programme as the overthrow of the Tsarist monarchy and to create a democratic republic. The political demands in the programme included, inter alia, 12 a sovereign legislature assembly, equal and universal suffrage, freedom of religion, speech, press and association, separation of church and state and free and universal education. Economic demands included, eight hour day, prohibition of child employment, protection of women against injurious work, old age state insurance etc., and the freeing of peasantry from all kinds of feudal obligations.

The programme, thus defined very neatly and concretely the short-term, aims (establishment of a democratic republic) and long term objectives (socialist revolution -- dictatorship of the proletariat) in spite of initial differences

between Lenin and Plekhanov. Nevertheless, the programme left some theoretical issues unraised and certain questions unanswered. Soon after the unsuccessful revolution of 1905 a controversy erupted in Russia between various parties and individuals, around the following issues which were either vaguely treated or not treated at all in the programme:

(i) Relationship between the bourgeois democratic revolution and the socialist revolution.

(ii) The role of various classes in the two revolutions and particularly the nature of political relations - the alliance between the workers and peasants.

(iii) Nature of state power in the post revolutionary society

Point number (i) which raised the question about the stages of revolution had an answer in the Communist Manifesto. It clearly demarcated the various stages of revolution as follows:

(a) The bourgeois revolution would overthrow the feudal order and its political absolutism. It would establish bourgeois capitalism and a bourgeois democracy. The

birth and growth of the proletariat would be the natural outcome of capitalism;

(b) Under the conducive conditions provided by bourgeois democracy, the proletariat would overthrow the capitalist system and establish socialism.

According to his E.H. Carr, this 'tidy scheme' about the successive stages of revolution was given a rethinking by Karl Marx himself in the context of Germany of the 1840s. In Germany a bourgeois revolution had not taken place on the lines of Britain and France. But a nascent industry had already come into being in Germany and the ranks of the proletariat were swelling rapidly. In the context of developments in Germany, Marx combined the tasks of bourgeois revolution with that of a proletarian revolution. In other words, Marx was against the compartmentalisation of revolution in Germany into a bourgeois democratic and socialist one, according to the scheme of stages of revolution envisaged by the Communist Manifesto. Rather he was in favour of combining the tasks of the bourgeois democratic revolution with the socialist revolution. To put it, differently, Marx was speaking of a 'continuous' or 'permanent' revolution. On this issue E.H. Carr opined:
In 1844 Marx had questioned the possibility of keeping the German revolution within the limits of a bourgeois revolution... and declared that Germany could be emancipated only through the revolutionary proletariat. And after the fiasco of 1848 had revealed the helplessness of the German bourgeoisie, Marx drew the link between the bourgeois and proletarian revolutions in Germany closer still.  

To further clarify Marx's position on the question of combining the bourgeois democratic and proletarian revolution, Carr added:

In his address to the Communist League in March 1850, he (Marx) argued that the failure of 1848 had imposed a dual task on the German workers: first to support the bourgeoisie in its democratic struggle against feudalism and to give to that struggle the acutest possible form; and secondly, to maintain an independent party ready to take up the socialist struggle against bourgeois capitalism as soon as the bourgeois democratic revolution was completed.  

Marx's position on the need for a continuous revolution is amply vindicated in the following passage:

While the democratic petty bourgeoisie wants to end the revolution as rapidly as possible... our interest and our task consist in making the revolution permanent until all the more or less possessing classes are removed from authority.

14 Carr, n. 11, p. 24.
15 Ibid., p. 25.
until the proletariat wins state power, until the unions of proletarians not only in one country, but in all the leading countries of the world is sufficiently developed to put an end to competition between the proletarians of these countries and until at the very least the chief productive forces are concentrated in the hands of the proletarians. 16

Thus, what Karl Marx said about the continuous revolution in Germany under the hegemony of the proletariat found some kind of a parallel in Russia after the failure of the bourgeois revolution in 1905.

Points number (ii) and (iii) were so complicated issues owing to the peculiar development of Russian society that after the Bolshevik seizure of power the Soviet Communist Party remained preoccupied with them even after consolidating the gains of the revolution. The social democratic movement in Russia plunged into a controversy after the 1905 revolution. Various tendencies held different positions on the above mentioned vital issues. While all the political factions and groups agreed that Russia faced a bourgeois democratic revolution, they, however, parted company on the political conclusions they drew from them.

The Mensheviks remained almost indifferent to the experience of 1905. Though they recognized the bourgeois

16 Karl Marx, "Address to the Communist League; March 1950", cited in Carr, n. 11, p. 25.
character of the revolution, but maintained that the logical outcome of the situation would be the transfer of political power to the bourgeoisie. They visualized a prolonged period of interregnum between the bourgeois democratic revolution and a socialist revolution. This would be a period of parliamentarism and the function of the party in the current period, as defined by Martov, a Menshevik leader, would be "to stir bourgeois democracy to political life, to push it forward and to radicalize bourgeois society". The Mensheviks thus awarded the leadership of the revolution to the bourgeoisie. In this context, Leonard Schapiro aptly remarks, "One of the casualties of 1905 was the menshevik belief in the 'hegemony' of the proletariat...." Trotsky defined it as 'hypocrisy' and Plekhanov called it as 'absurd'.

Leon Trotsky not only questioned most of the Menshevik assumptions but propounded his own theory which later came to be known as the theory of "Permanent Revolution". He agreed with the Bolsheviks on the question of the class leadership of the revolution. His diagnosis of the

17 Cited in Carr, n. 11, p. 65.
18 Leonard Schapiro, n. 13, p. 83.
peculiarity of the evolution of the Russian social structure made him firmly believe that the Russian bourgeoisie was incapable of assuming the revolutionary leadership of the revolution. 20 Therefore, the proletariat would by its own political supremacy in the revolution be forced to carry the Russian revolution to its logical conclusion, i.e. from bourgeois to the socialist stage. Trotsky believed that the transition from bourgeois to socialist revolution would be automatic. The proletariat, once in power and as the leading force, according to Trotsky, would destroy "the border-line between maximum and minimum programme". He described the process of democratic revolution running into the socialist one in Our Revolution, written in 1905 as an objective reality created by the correlation of class forces in Russia as under:

Our liberal bourgeoisie comes forward as a counter-revolutionary force even before the revolutionary climax. At each critical moment, our intellectual democrats only demonstrate their impotence. The peasantry as a whole represents an elemental force in rebellion. It can be put at the service of the revolution only by a force that takes state power into its hands. The vanguard position of the working class in the revolution, the direct connection established between it and the revolutionary countryside...The complete victory of the revolution means the victory of the proletariat. This in turn means the further uninterrupted character of the revolution. 21

20 Ibid., p. 182.
21 Cited in ibid.
The possibility of the dictatorship of the proletariat grew out of the bourgeois democratic revolution. And this process was described by Trotsky as "permanent revolution". Since the weak Russian bourgeoisie was incapable of solving the problems of the peasantry, therefore, according to Trotsky, the dictatorship of the proletariat appeared probable and even inevitable on the basis of the bourgeois revolution, precisely because there was no power and no other way to solve the tasks of the agrarian revolution. But this exactly opens up the prospect of a democratic revolution growing over into the socialist revolution. This was Trotsky's prognosis in 1905.

The proletariat would thus transform the bourgeois democratic revolution (known as minimum programme) into the socialist one (maximum programme). This process Trotsky held, would be "uninterrupted and permanent". He was uncompromising on the question of the leadership of the proletariat in the revolution. The nature of state power, according to Trotsky, would be the dictatorship of the proletariat. And on the question of nature of transitory state power, Trotsky stated in unequivocal terms:


23 Ibid., pp. 80-81.
...there can be no talk of any sort of special form of proletarian dictatorship in the bourgeois revolution, of proletarian democratic dictatorship or dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. The working class cannot preserve the democratic character of its dictatorship without refraining from overstepping the limits of its democratic programme. Any illusions on this point would be fatal.... 24

The question of political relationship or alliance between the proletariat and peasantry was defined by Trotsky in the following terms:

...the proletariat leads the countryside, draws it into the movement, gives it an interest in the success of its plans. The proletariat, however, unavoidably remains the leader. This is not "the dictatorship of the peasantry and the proletariat", but the dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the peasantry. 25

But Trotsky struck a note of caution regarding the role of non-proletarian masses in the revolution by explaining their character in the following lines:

The policy of the intellectuals, owing to their socially intermediate character and their political elasticity; the policy of the peasantry, in view of their social diversity, their intermediate positions and their primitive-ness; the policy of the urban petty-bourgeoisie, once again owing to its lack of character, its intermediate position and its complete lack of political tradition - the policy of these three social groups is utterly indefinite, unformed, full of possibilities, and therefore, full of surprises. 26

24 Ibid., p. 80.
25 Ibid., p. 197.
26 Ibid., pp. 69-70.
Trotsky was thus apprehensive of the role of the peasantry in the revolution because of its social diversity and vacillating character. However, Trotsky had been accused for underestimating the revolutionary potentialities of the Russian peasantry. And also for denying any possibility of an alliance between it and the proletariat. Issac Deutscher refutes this charge very confidently:

For this charge no support can be found in his (Trotsky's) own words....If the 'alliance' with the peasantry is to be understood as the Bolsheviks understood it in and after 1917, then Trotsky certainly stood for it in 1906. 27

In Deutscher's opinion Trotsky "did not rule out a governmental coalition of socialists and representatives of the peasantry; but to the latter he assigned the role of junior partners". 28

During 1905, Lenin was in agreement with other articulate groups and parties on the necessity and general desirability for a radical democratic change. Likewise, he also agreed with others on the class nature of the 1905 revolution. According to him: "In its social and economic


28 Ibid., p. 154.
essence the democratic revolution in Russia is a bourgeois revolution."\textsuperscript{29}

Lenin's prognosis of the developments in 1905 flowed from his diagnosis of the social and economic development of Russia. The preamble of the 1903 Programme of the party also contained this analysis. The programme had identified 'capitalism' as the 'dominant mode of production', but also preserving in its fold 'vestiges of the old pre-capitalist order'. These vestiges hampered the economic progress and interfered directly with the many sided development of class struggle of the proletariat. The immediate task of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, the programme envisaged was, therefore, to overthrow the monarchist state and to create a democratic republic. The overthrow of the monarchist state would be conducive for the development of the class struggle. The programme left the question of role and relation of various class forces in the fulfilment of this task ambiguous. As already noted, this ambiguity in the programme led to the emergence of variety of political alternatives.

The piecemeal constitutional and political measures, believed Lenin, would not tilt the balance of forces in

\textsuperscript{29} Lenin, n. 1, vol. 9, p. 111.
favour of the proletariat without a simultaneous assault and transformation of the economic conditions which had so long sustained autocracy and landlordism. He laid emphasis on the accomplishment of anti-feudal tasks of the democratic revolution which would pave the way for the free development of class struggle in the agrarian sector. He insisted: "To clear the way for the free development of the class struggle in the countryside, it is necessary to remove all remanants of serfdom, which now overlie the beginnings of capitalist antagonisms among the rural population, and keep them away from developing". 30

For Lenin, the objective of this revolution in history, according to Neil Harding, was "to smash the economic, social and political power of landlordism and autocratic monarchism". 31

Democratic Revolution and the Role of Social Classes

Lenin's political strategy emanated from his analysis of the agrarian question and its radical solution as the main objective of the democratic revolution. Lenin's thinking on this key issue of the revolution posed another very important question to him: which classes and political

30 Lenin, ibid., vol. 6, p. 146.
parties had an objective interest in the abolition of landlordism and which would strive to preserve it?

**The Bourgeoisie**

Lenin's analysis of the role of the bourgeoisie in 1905 exposed its dual character in the democratic revolution. According to Lenin, the Russian bourgeoisie did have democratic aspirations and was to a certain extent anti-autocratic, but to certain limits. At favourable junctures this class, if allowed, would compromise with the Tsar and establish a constitutional monarchy with a notorious division of powers and would retain the upper hand.

Lenin characterized the bourgeoisie as inconsistent, self-seeking and cowardly owing to its historical evolution, its dependence on the Russian state and role in the democratic resolution. He wrote:

> Of course, the bourgeoisie does not always reveal a clear understanding, but by and large, its class instinct enables it to realise perfectly well that, on the one hand, the proletariat and the "people" are useful for its revolution as cannon fodder, as a battering ram against the autocracy, but that, on the other hand, the proletariat and the revolutionary peasantry will be terribly dangerous to it if they win a "decisive victory over Tsarism" and carry the bourgeois democratic, revolution to completion. 32

32 Lenin, n. 1, vol. 9, p. 119.
As soon as its narrow, selfish interests were met, the bourgeoisie would turn towards the autocracy, against the revolution and against the people. The vacillating nature and the political impotency of the bourgeoisie incapacitated it for "carrying through the democratic revolution to its consummation". Furthermore, the role of the bourgeoisie is concretely summarized by Lenin in these words:

...it stands between the Tsar and the people and would play the part of 'honest broker' and steal into power behind the back of the militant people. That is why the bourgeoisie appeals to the Tsar one day, and to the people the next, making 'serious' and 'business like' proposals for a political deal with the former, and addressing empty phrases about liberty to the latter. 34

Proletariat

Given the historical weakness of the bourgeoisie, the task of completing the democratic revolution, according to Lenin, fell on the proletariat. He wrote:

The very position the proletariat holds as a class compels it to be consistently democratic. The bourgeoisie looks backward in fear of democratic progress which threatens to strengthen the proletariat. The proletariat has nothing to lose but chains, but with the aid of democratism it has the whole world to win. 35

33 Ibid., p. 99.
34 Ibid., pp. 180-81.
Thus to Lenin, the proletariat as a class would be the consistent fighter for democracy.

To prevent the bourgeoisie from recoiling from democracy, and to carry forward the democratic revolution, Lenin insisted that the proletariat must rouse the peasantry. Certain sections of the peasantry in spite of their instability but unlike that of the bourgeoisie, were an important ally of the proletariat. The firm alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry, in Lenin's opinion, was not only possible but also inevitable, because -

at present the peasantry is interested not so much in the absolute preservation of private property as in the confiscation of the landed estates, one of the principal forms of landed property. Without thereby becoming socialist, or ceasing to be petty-bourgeois, the peasantry is capable of becoming a whole hearted and most radical adherent of the democratic revolution. 36

The peasantry, Lenin further believed, would become the bulwark of the democratic revolution provided the proletariat is not defeated by the treachery of the bourgeoisie. The sheer enlightenment of the peasantry by the revolution would help it in the recognition of its permanent interests. Unlike Trotsky, Lenin believed that

36 Ibid., p. 98.
"the more enlightened the peasantry becomes, the more consistently and resolutely will it stand for a thorough going democratic revolution. A democratic republic will become the peasantry's ideal as soon as it begins to throw off its naive monarchism...."³⁷

Thus Lenin removed the ambiguity which the 1903 programme had left regarding the balance of class forces in the democratic revolution. Another important gap which remained unplugged in the programme of the RSDLP was the question of the nature of the state.

Democratic Revolution and Nature of the State

The immediate aim of the Russian Social Democracy, as stated in the programme was to overthrow the Tsarist monarchy and to create a democratic republic. The treacherous role of the bourgeoisie as vindicated by the events in 1905 was perhaps not visualized by the RSDLP in 1903. Lenin defined the task of the party in the contemporary Russian realities as follows:

At present the party of the advanced class cannot but strive most energetically for the democratic revolution's decisive victory over Tsarism. And a decisive victory means nothing else than the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. ³⁸

³⁷ Ibid., p. 99.
³⁸ Ibid., p. 86.
Thus, Lenin argued for the establishment of a democratic republic under the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry.

The Relationship between the Bourgeois Democratic and the Socialist Revolution

The low level of Russia's social and economic development and also the low level of class consciousness in Lenin's opinion made the immediate and complete emancipation of the working class (the realization of maximum programme) impossible. According to Lenin, there was no escape for Russian society from democratic revolution and political democracy. He castigated those who entertained the anarchist idea of reaching socialism by skipping the stage of democratic revolution under the contemporary conditions in Russia in the following words:

Whoever wants to reach socialism by any other path than that of political democracy, will inevitably arrive at conclusions that are absurd and reactionary both in the political and economic sense. 39

We may agree with Neil Harding's observation that "Lenin was not an advocate of permanent revolution at this time. He could, indeed, hardly have been more insistent in denying

39 Ibid., p. 29.
the possibility of jumping stages and positing socialist goals for immediate achievement". 40

However, in one of his writings Social Democracy's Attitude towards Peasant Movement, Lenin spoke of the possibility of democratic revolution running into a socialist one. He wrote: "We stand for uninterrupted revolution. We shall not stop half way..." 41 But Leonard Schapiro and David Lane have treated this remark as an isolated statement and believe that Lenin in 1905 had more regard for traditional Marxist doctrine. 42 While according to E.H. Carr, "Lenin never seems to have used the phrase again. But the idea remained". 43 Notwithstanding the above statements, Lenin by 'interrupted revolution', perhaps meant that after a bourgeois-democratic revolution, a struggle for socialism would continue uninterrupted, in accordance with the measure of the strength of the class-conscious and organized proletariat. He insisted on the absolute necessity of strictly demarcating the stages of democratic and socialist revolutions.

40 Harding, n. 31, p. 198.
41 Lenin, n. 1, no. 9, p. 237.
43 Carr, n. 11, p. 68.
Nevertheless, he did not deny the possibility of intermingling of certain elements of the two revolutions:

However, can it be denied that in the course of history, individual and particular elements of the two revolutions become interwoven? 44

Lenin corroborates his statement by citing the example of Europe where during the course of democratic revolutions, a variety of socialist movements strove to establish socialism. While certain democratic tasks which were left untouched by the democratic revolutions in the past, would be fulfilled by the future socialist revolutions in Europe. Lenin, positing this question in 1905 to the fellow social democrats, proved to be somewhat less prophetic in the context of socialist revolution in Russia in 1917. The socialist revolution in Russia failed to undo to large extent, which was left undone in the field of democratism. For a long time to come the Soviet political system grappled with this problem, owing to a large extent both to the objective conditions in the 1920s and subjective intervention in the 1930s.

The issue of correlation of forces in the two revolutions, the democratic and socialist, which remained

44 Lenin, n. 1, no. 9, p. 85.
untouched in the programme was clearly defined by Lenin in 1905. The crux of Lenin's model regarding the tactics the social democrats must follow and also the issue of leadership and alliance of the classes is summarized by the following passage:

The proletariat must carry the democratic revolution to completion, allying to itself the mass of the peasantry in order to crush the autocracy's resistance by force and paralyse the bourgeoisie's instability. The proletariat must accomplish the socialist revolution allying to itself the mass of the semi-proletarian elements of the population, so as to crush the bourgeoisie's resistance by force and paralyse the instability of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie. 45

The above discussion provides some kind of a backdrop to the post-revolutionary ideology, political line and strategy and tactics followed by the Bolshevik Party. It also serves as a curtain raiser for the programme adopted by the Russian Communist Party in 1919. Such important programmatic issues as the character of the revolution, nature of the state, role of various social classes and their alliances - which were debated before the October Revolution again became prominent during and after the revolution. Not only the controversies on these issues became fiercest but the debates also became polemical and sometimes even animated

45 Ibid., p. 100.
within the Bolshevik Party. Variety of other Russian political parties and groups and even individuals either entered into polemics with the Bolsheviks on these issues or took up ideological cudgels against them. In the earliest phase (1917-1921), in particular - when the Bolshevik regime was desperately struggling for its survival - and after Lenin's death or to be more precise until 1928-29, in general, so crucial these issues became, that the Bolshevik Party plunged into crises again and again.

REVOLUTIONARY TRANSFORMATION, CHANGING CLASS RELATIONS AND EVOLUTION OF SOVIET SYSTEM

On 25 October 1917, Lenin announced to a meeting of the Petrograd Soviet the victory of the Workers' and Peasants' Revolution. 46 On the same day, the second All-Russian Congress of Soviets decreed the transfer of all power throughout Russia to Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. 47 On the next day (26 October 1917), the Congress issued decrees on Peace and Land, and also approved and endorsed the formation and composition of the Sovnarkom - the first Workers' and Peasants' Government, which became famous and popular as the Council

46 Lenin, n. 1, vol. 26, p. 239.
of people's Commissars.\textsuperscript{48} The All-Russia Central Executive Committee issued the another most important decree on 'Regulations on Workers' Control' which placed decision-making in the hands of Workers' Committees,\textsuperscript{49} though industry was not nationalized wholesale.

The Soviet state organs were created by the decisions and decrees of the second All Russian Congress of Soviets. They were given constitutional recognition by the Fifth All Russian Congress of Soviets in July 1918 by adopting the first Soviet Constitution, thereby laying the legal and constitutional foundation of the first workers and peasants regime.

The Organs (Apparatus) of the Soviet State

The constitution of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic (RSFSR) through its proclamation defined the nature of the Soviet state as a 'Republic of Soviets of Workers', 'Soldiers', and 'Peasants' Deputies' (Article I).\textsuperscript{50}

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid., pp. 249, 258 and 263.

\textsuperscript{49} Izvestia, 16 November (29), 1917.

All power was vested in the Soviets not only at the Centre but in the localities as well. The constitution defined the chief aims of the Russian Soviet Republic as "the abolition of all exploitation of man by man, the complete elimination of the division of society into classes". \(^\text{51}\)

In order to achieve this aim - which is repeated in Article 9 - the chief task of the constitution during the transition period was -

to establish a dictatorship of the urban and rural proletariat and the poorest peasantry in the form of a powerful All-Russian Soviet government with a view to crushing completely the bourgeoisie, abolishing the exploitation of man by men, and establishing socialism, under which there will be no division into classes and no state power. \(^\text{52}\)

Article 9 of the constitution, therefore, defined the class relations, i.e., political power (the dictatorship of the proletariat/peasantry against the bourgeoisie), and emphatically stated the need for a powerful All-Russian Soviet government, or in other words, a powerful state apparatus to realize the aims of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Helene Carrere D'Encausse discovers in

\(^\text{51}\) Ibid., p. 26 (Article 3).
\(^\text{52}\) Ibid., p. 28 (Article 9).
Article 9, a clue to the 'problem of centralisation',\(^{53}\) (the Soviet state became more and more centralized during and after the period of war communism) because of too much emphasis on a powerful Soviet state.

The state structure elaborated in the constitution rested on the mass organizations - the Soviets. The Workers' Soviets which first appeared in 1905, though for a brief period, became model for the Bolshevik party. In 1905 itself they were considered by the Bolsheviks as a prototype of the Paris Commune. During the February Revolution of 1917, the Soviets sprang up in towns and villages and spontaneously mushroomed after the October Revolution. The structure of the Soviet state organs as contained in the 1918 constitution was as follows:

(i) **The Sovnarkom (Council of People's Commissars)**

The first Workers' and Peasants' government was formed on 26 October 1917. For a few months (November 1917- until summer of 1918) some left socialist revolutionaries were included in the Sovnarkom. But their growing hostility towards the Bolshevik policies - particularly to the signing of Brest-Litovsk treaty with Germany - alienated them and

led to their removal. Thereafter, the Sovnarkom became an exclusively Bolshevik affair.

The Sovnarkom was essentially conceived as an executive organ and was entrusted with the task of carrying out the affairs of the RSFSR (Article 37). It was to notify all its decision to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee (Article 39). The later was vested with the right to annul or suspend any order or decision of the former (Article 40). The Sovnarkom was to be responsible to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of Soviets (Article 46). Another very important and notable constitutional aspect for the organization and functioning of the Sovnarkom was the principle of collective leadership (A Collegium attached to each Commissar - Article 44). The Collegia was to run the individual Commissariats. The Bolshevik attempts to translate the principle of collective leadership started in the early days of revolution. The individual Commissariats were to be managed by the Collegium, consisting of the People's Commissar, his deputies and senior officials, to be approved by the Council of People's Commissars. The Collegia originally functioned as policy making bodies within various Commissariats. The Collegia - the principle of collective leadership - were designed to oversee the functioning of
the 'one-man management' which had already begun to make large inroads into the management of state and economic administration with the beginning of civil war and war communism. Constitutionally speaking, this was a serious attempt towards the democratization of executive power and administration. The Collegia were designed as advising bodies with the constitutional and legal right to appeal the decisions of the Commissar to Council of People's Commissar and to the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee (Article 45). But in practice, the decision making process became centralized in the form of 'one-man management' negating the objectives of dictatorship of the proletariat.

(ii) **All-Russian Central Executive Committee**

The All-Russian Central Executive Committee was created by the Second Congress of the Workers' and Soldiers' Soviets. The first Soviet constitution of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic ratified this body. The constitution provided that the All-Russian Central Executive Committee was to carry out the functions of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets between its sessions (Article 30), and to appoint the Sovnarkom (Article 35).
(iii) The All-Russian Congress of Soviets

The highest constitutional authority or the supreme power was the All-Russian Congress of Soviets (Article 24). It was to meet at least twice a year (Article 26). It composed of representatives of city Soviets on the basis of one deputy to every 25,000 voters and of provincial Soviets on the basis of one deputy to every 125,000 inhabitants (Article 25), thus tilting the balance in favour of the urban working class.

(iv) Local State Structure: Congress of Soviets and Soviets of Deputies

Chapters 10 to 12 of the Constitution contained the organization and power of regional, provincial, country and district Congresses of Soviets (Article 53). Article 57 elaborated the structure of Soviets of deputies in town and villages. The jurisdiction of local organs of power was defined by Article 61.

The Constitution of the RSFSR though elaborated the structure of organs of Soviet power and defined their jurisdiction and powers but completely ignored the judicial institutions (judiciary), since it was not based on the theory of separation of powers. The organs of Soviet state power emerged due to the spontaneous uprising of the
proletariat and the initiative taken by the Bolshevik party. They were not the creation of a constituent assembly. The Constitution of RSFSR ratified them and gave them the legal and constitutional sanctity.

The Process of Building Socialism: The Programmatic Vision

The concrete thrust of building socialism in Russia in the 1919 programme centred firstly and most importantly, on the process of institution building. This process involved the destruction of the old state apparatus and the creation of a new one. The prototype of the new state apparatus which was being established in Russia after 1917 had emerged during the revolution of 1905, in the form of Soviets. The Bolshevik Revolution destroyed the old political institutions and "the Soviet democracy transformed mass organisations precisely of the classes oppressed by capitalism, of proletarians and poorest peasantry or semi-proletarians, i.e., the vast majority of the population, into a single and permanent basis of the state apparatus, local and central, from top to bottom". 54

The dictatorship of the proletariat was to be realized through the hierarchical structure of the Soviets. The Soviets were vested with both legislative and executive powers. By combining these powers into the Soviets the programme boasted of abolishing the "negative features of parliamentarism". The Soviets were created in the towns, countryside and the army as well.

In the sphere of jurisprudence the programme envisaged the setting up of people's courts, and the judges to be elected by the people. In fact the programme incorporated the slogan "judges elected from the workers and only by the workers".

The programme assigned the most important task of building socialism to the trade unions. "The tasks of organising apparatus of socialized industry must first of all rest upon the trade unions", the Programme stated. The role of the trade unions in building socialism was defined by the programme as follows:

Trade unions, which are already according to the laws of the Soviet republic and established practice participants in all local and central organs for the administration of industry, must actually concentrate in their hands the entire administration of the whole public economy as a single economic unit.

55 Ibid., p. 59.
56 Ibid., p. 63.
The trade unions, thus securing an unbreakable union among the central state and administration, the economy and the broad masses of workers, must attract the latter on a large scale to the direct management of the economy.... 57

The programme, therefore, perceived the trade unions as an integral part of the Soviet economic apparatus.

The army, which was also considered as an oppressive organ of the bourgeois state, received quite a significant attention in the 1919 Programme. In military matters, the programme outlined the means by which a "class army" would be turned into an "all-people's militia", and the Red Army was conceived by the programme as an important "instrument of the proletarian dictatorship". 58

The economic and social aspects of the building socialism included inter-alia, in the programme were: 59

(i) Equality of women with men. The programme envisaged that women would be increasingly freed of domestic duties through the provision of, house communes, public kitchens, central laundries and nurseries etc.

57 Ibid., p. 66.
58 Ibid., p. 62.
59 Ibid., pp. 60-71.
(ii) In the economic sphere the objectives of the programme were defined as organization of large-scale socialist agriculture along with the improved individual farming and a resolute struggle would be waged against the rural bourgeoisie. The less prosperous peasants would be encouraged to align with poor peasants and to organize themselves into party cells.

(iii) The programme envisaged the replacement of private trade by a centralized distribution apparatus through a single network of consumers' communes.

(iv) In the sphere of industrial production, the economic activity would be guided by a 'general state plan'. The task of the expropriation of the bourgeoisie would continue, though to a large extent it had been accomplished.

(v) In the sphere of education, free and compulsory school education for all up to the age of seventeen and a higher education for all who wanted to study was the main objective of the programme.

(vi) The protection of workers' health, free medicines to all and necessary medical legislation in this regard was another social concern of the programme.
The programme also dealt with the national question where it urged closer relations between the Soviet nationalities. It proclaimed the full equality of nations and recognized "the right of colonies and dependent nations to self-determination". But it cautioned that the question of self-determination must be judged from a "historical-class point of view". The programme specifically warned that "particular care and attention must be exercised by the proletariat of those nations which were oppressing nations, towards the remanents of national feelings of the working masses of the oppressed or dependent nations". In the religious affairs the main objective of the programme was to liberate the minds of the masses "from religious prejudices" and "to organise on a large scale, scientific educational and anti-religious propaganda". But the programme also contained a warning: "It is however, necessary to carefully avoid offending the religious susceptibilities of the believers, which leads only to the hardening of religious fanaticism."

60 Ibid., p. 61.
61 Ibid.
62 Ibid.
63 Ibid., p. 65.
The programme did not contain any separate section on foreign policy and international affairs. But its support to the Communist International implied its support to the working class movements all over the world, and its support to the peoples of colonies struggling for national independence. A close scrutiny of the contents of the 1919 Programme clearly suggest that the realisation of a communist society was its immediate goal. The policies pursued by the Bolshevik party during the middle of 1918 and onwards influenced the drafting of the programme when the civil war and war communism were at their zenith. During the period when the Programme was adopted, there was some kind of a military enthusiasm all over the country. Everything was done on the orders of the state. And this euphoria - military and political - caused the lack of perspective rather loss of it in the Programme. The Programme completely ignored the question of transition in a 'backward, small-peasant country' like Russia, though the preamble of the Programme did take note of the specific socio-economic conditions in Russia. The policies pursued by the Communist Party as reflected in the Programme, completely ignored the problem of stages of transition from a predominantly backward peasant economy to a socialist one. Related to the stages of transition in Russia was the most crucial issue of alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry. The Programme
failed to take note of the tensions that could arise between the former and the latter, and how the dictatorship of the proletariat would mediate to ease these tensions.

Programmatic Perspective on Political Power and the Process of the Evolution of the Soviet State

The post-revolutionary programme of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) was adopted in March 1919 by its Eighth Congress. Though conceived earlier, it was adopted at a very crucial juncture when the revolutionary fervour was at its zenith and the ongoing civil war was threatening the very existence of the Soviet regime. The programme was an exercise in defining the class relations (political power) during the transition period. How and in what form, the political power would be exercised was another important programmatic concern. The programme also perceived the problems of transitariness and tried to project their solutions.

Before we discuss programmatic perspectives on political and state power, it is quite relevant here to make a distinction between the two.

64 The decision to revise the 1903 Programme of the RSDLP was taken by the Seventh (April) All Russia Conference of the RSDLP (B) in April 24-29 (May 7-12) 1917. See V.I. Lenin, Collected Works, n. 1, vol. 24, pp. 277-9.
Political Power

Political power is first and foremost a relation between classes. Lenin defined it as "a relation of classes and not a concrete political institution implementing this relation".65 Political power is class power and should not be identified with a particular political and legal institution. Depending on concrete historical conditions the same political power (class power) can be translated into reality through a variety of political institutions (state apparatus). Also, political power is the actual ability of a given class to implement its will as expressed in its policies and law.

State Power

State power is a form of political power. It has the monopoly right to promulgate laws and directives which are mandatory for the entire population. Its notable attribute is that it uses a special apparatus of coercion and also persuasion as the means of securing observance of the laws and directives. State power is dependent on political power. It cannot be consolidated and properly exercised (for the class for which it is meant) without the consolidation of political power.

65 Ibid., p. 44.
The preamble of the programme/October Revolution as its starting point and defined the nature of class-relations and political power. It stated: "The October Revolution of 25 October (7 November) 1917, in Russia, established the dictatorship of the proletariat, which assisted by poor peasantry and semi-proletariat began to lay the foundation of a communist society." The preamble began with a very optimistic note welcoming the October Revolution and with it, according to the programme "there had begun the era of a world-wide proletarian communist revolution". But before it elaborates the aims of the dictatorship of the proletariat it takes note of the concrete social reality in which the dictatorship of the proletariat is established. The chief characteristic of the social reality, according to the programme was that "majority of the population consists of petty bourgeois strata".

Firstly, the programme makes it very clear that the nature of political power after the revolution was the dictatorship of the proletariat, and the poor peasantry and semi-proletariat supported the former in establishing it.

66 "The Programme of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)", n. 54, p. 54.
67 Ibid., p. 58.
Therefore, in the changed circumstances, it was not only the question of class relations between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie (the former exercising dictatorship against the latter) but also the problem of class relations between the proletariat and the peasantry which had assisted it (proletariat) in capturing power. The programme, therefore, conceived the poor peasantry and the semi-proletariat as some kind of a junior partner. Though, officially or rather constitutionally the peasantry was recognized as a co-ruling class.

The 1918 Constitution proclaimed Russia as a 'Republic of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies (Article I). In other words, the government in constitutional terms was a workers' and peasants' government. Nikolai Bukharin and E. Preobrazhensky also corroborated this point in ABC of Communism which they wrote in 1919 in collaboration. They described the new government as 'the Workers' and Peasants' Government'.68 The essential point is that the concrete reality which affected the process of the evolution of the Soviet state and the nature of the state power was the nature of the relations that the peasant

population, the determining social force, maintained with the proletariat. The second aspect of the concrete reality which the programme highlighted, was the massive presence of the non-proletarian, petty-bourgeois strata (consisting mainly of poor peasants). Therefore, the recognition of the objective reality in the programme necessitated the alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry for the realization of the aims of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Lenin returned to this theme (alliance between proletariat and the peasantry) time and again.

The Eighth Congress which adopted the programme in fact devoted considerable space on its 'Attitude to the Middle Peasants', which held the key to this alliance, in the form of a 'resolution'.69 The Congress through this resolution urged the need for display of a considerate attitude towards the middle peasants and to make an effort towards agreement with them. The other most important point in the resolution was not to confuse the middle peasants with the Kulaks and not to direct any decrees of the Soviet government against the former which meant to be directed against the latter. The agreement between the proletariat and the middle peasants, the programme noted, was one of the important conditions 'for

a painless transition to the abolition of all exploitation in the period of decisive struggle waged by the proletariat to overthrow the bourgeoisie'.

The programme took note of the concrete reality in which the dictatorship of the proletariat was being realized, namely, (a) peasantry as an ally of the proletariat in a predominantly agrarian society, and (b) 'the partial revival of bureaucratism within the Soviet System'. But the actual course of events, which we shall discuss in a shortwhile, posed two problems, (i) the clash of interests between the proletariat and the peasantry which affected above noted point (a), and (ii) duality of function of the proletariat as ruler and ruled, as sovereign and subject of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This problem was related to point (b). To put it differently, the dictatorship of the proletariat (the proletariat as ruling class) was not only a question of dictatorship against the bourgeoisie, but also a question of relation between the proletariat and the masses. Lenin made this point very clear, while praising Preobrazhensky and Bukharin for their book ABC of Communism at the Eighth All-Russian Congress of Soviets and pleaded for supplementing the

70 Ibid., p. 217.

71 "Programme of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)", n. 54, p. 60.
existing programme with an economic one (Plan for Electrification). He reminded the delegates that the existing programme which defined the aims and objectives of the dictatorship of the proletariat was essentially "an explanation of the relations between classes and masses". 72

War Communism, Centralization of Economy and Polity

The October Revolution initiated the process of radical transformation of the Russian society. The old state apparatus was in the process of being destroyed and the new Soviet one was in the making (urban and rural Soviets). The workers had taken control of enterprises and factories and the peasants seized the land in countryside. The Bolsheviks had no readymade administrative machinery available to them, particularly in the countryside. The internal counter-attack of the white guards against the new regime combined with the intervention of major western powers in an infant post-revolutionary society torn by imperialist war, created chaotic and anarchic conditions. The Brest-Litovsk treaty and the agrarian policies of the Bolsheviks created political wedge between the Bolsheviks and the Left Socialist Revolutionaries. In July 1918, the Left SRs openly revolted

against the Bolshevik regime. The country was in the throes of a civil war. The shortage of food items in the town and in the army was the main consequence of the civil war. The old distribution apparatus for food had been destroyed and there was prohibitive private trade. The peasants who formed the base of the revolution were unwilling to deliver food to the towns as there was nothing available to them in the form of consumer goods and clothing.

The supply of foodgrains to the towns and army became a question of life and death for the new regime. The impact of the civil war in industry was more direct and disruptive. The major industries became supply organizations for the Red Army and nothing was left to be supplied to the countryside. In order to overcome the difficulties during the civil war the government resorted to certain drastic measures which came to be known as 'War Communism'.

Maurice Dobb lucidly captures the main components of the policies pursued during the period of civil war, which formed the 'quintessence of war communism' as under:


74 Dobb, ibid., p. 105.

75 Ibid.
(i) Substitution of requisitioning and centralized allocation of supplies for the ordinary mechanism of the market combined with,

(ii) hypertrophy of centralized administration of economic life and progressive replacement of money as a means of exchange by direct allocation of supplies and the payment of wages in kind, and

(iii) the compulsory requisitioning of agricultural produce and centrally organized allocation of supplies, alike for industry, the ordinary consumer and the army.

In the given circumstances, according to E.H. Carr, "there was no alternative but to intensify the method of requisition".76 And the survival instinct of the new regime created a situation 'when the military necessity ruled all and problems of industry were virtually identified with the problem of military supplies'.77 The Central Executive Committee of the Soviets issued two very important decrees, to ensure the supply of foodgrains. The decree of 14 May 1918 asked the poor peasants (not employing other citizens labour) to bring before the revolutionary tribunal all those peasants who had surplus grain stores but refused to deliver

76 Carr, n. 73, p. 152.
77 Dobb, n. 73, p. 96.
them up at the fixed prices. This was followed by another decree on 11 June which created the Committees of the Village Poor. The strategic intention behind their creation was to secure allies inside the village. In this way the supply policy would apparently look like something not imposed upon the village from outside but carried out by the poor peasants themselves who identified their interests most closely linked with the urban proletariat and with the defence of the revolution. These decrees created political schism between Bolsheviks and the Left-Socialist Revolutionaries. The latter openly revolved against the revolution. Moreover, the measures contained in these decrees were more often directed against the middle peasants, not merely against the Kulaks. As a consequence, the hostility of the middle peasants increased towards the regime. In many areas there were armed clashes between workers' detachments engaged in the collection of supplies and the local peasantry. Maurice Dobb analysing the problem of food shortage comments that "the policy of compulsory requisitioning was not a creation of the Soviet government. Nor was the problem of food shortage a creation of the civil war." 78 According to him, "what was new was the strictness with which the requisitioning policy came to be enforced and what the civil war did was

78 Ibid., p. 104.
to accentuate the food shortage to a point where it became the dominant obsession of the economic policy".\textsuperscript{79}

The revolutionary enthusiasm exhibited by the Peasants' Committees, where they were effective, created the problem of exercise of power. The committees along with workers' detachments often clashed with the local Soviets, thereby resulting in a struggle for power. The Central Executive Committee took note of the existence of 'dual power' and on 2 December 1918 declared the disbanding of the committees. The Central Executive Committee through the same declaration asked the peasant committees to play an active role in organizing the elections to the local Soviets and the re-elected Soviets should remain the only organs of power.

The war time measures were applied to the industry also. The nationalization of major branches of industry which started in June 1918 continued until it embraced not only large-scale and medium sized industry, but even small factories. Other measures adopted by the government included elimination of free exchange of commodities, establishment of state monopolies in the exchange of various types of commodities. The establishment of the state monopolies on a very extensive scale completely destroyed the supply

\textsuperscript{79} Ibid.
apparatus. The measures adopted by the government also created administrative problems in the industry. The 'workers control of industry', the product of the Soviet government's decree of 14 November 1917, resulted in anarchy while a tussle was going on between Glavki (Glavni Upravelnya: Sub departments of the Supreme Economic Council, to administer an industry or a branch of industry) and the provincial Sovnarkhozy (Regional Council) on the question of the administration of industry. Sapronov, the leader of the 'Democratic Centralists' group attacked the 'glaviki' at the Eighth Party Congress in 1919, arguing that "they represented an attempt to substitute 'organisation by departments' for 'organisation of Soviets'". 80

The period of civil war and war communism witnessed the emergence of two trends and tendencies, i.e., revolutionary democratism and centralization of the state apparatus, the Bolshevik party included. The culmination of these trends were the result of the Bolshevik attempt to create a social and political framework which could cater for popular participation in the decision-making process, initiative from below and local control. The second attempt was to

80 Cited in Carr, n. 73, p. 184.
produce, allocate and coordinate the distribution of resources, that would meet the needs of the population and increase the social wealth. The civil war conditions threw out of gear the entire economy of Russia and the fulfilment of the second task became really a Herculean one for the government and resulted in the centralization of the system, and hindered the Bolshevik attempt of democratizing the society and polity.

Programmatic Perspective and the Process of Evolution of the Soviet State

The preceding analysis makes it clear that in the earlier phase, i.e. from October 1917 until May 1918, revolutionary democratism - workers' control, factory committees, initiative by the local Soviets, etc. - was the growing tendency and dominant trend towards the evolution of the Soviet state. The chaos created by the civil war, foreign intervention and political schism between Bolsheviks and Left SRs, were the factors largely responsible for the revolutionary democratism degenerating into anarchy. The measures adopted by the government to overcome the chaos and anarchy ultimately led to the centralization of the decision-making process. The centralizing tendencies were already underway before the programme was written.
The programme was written at a time when the two tendencies, democratism and centralization were struggling against each other and in fact the latter had overtaken the former. This was not the feature peculiar to the Soviet institutions but the communist party was also caught in these contradictory currents.

The policies pursued by the Bolsheviks during the period of war communism as discussed earlier created tensions in the Smychka (Worker-Peasant alliance). There was growing realization in the party about the mistakes of war communism. The pressing problem before the party was to prevent the breakdown of worker-peasant alliance. Bolshevik party not only confronted the tensions in Smychka but also was divided into various factions and platforms. The restoration of the Smychka with the peasantry was the crux of the existing difficulties. To restore the mass of the peasantry to the position of allies, it was necessary to correct the mistakes of war communism. The New Economic Policy adopted by the Tenth Congress of the Communist Party in 1921 was a corrective step in that direction. The Congress voted the abolition of compulsory requisitioning of agricultural produce from the peasants and its replacement by a graduated tax in kind and also permitted a limited form of local trade. Though Bukharin and Trotsky supported the New Economic Policy but
other economic theorists such as Pytakov and Preobrezhensky retained their doubts. They raised two theoretical objections to NEP. The first was the apparent sacrifice of a planned economy, based on heavy industry to the prosperity of persons who were regarded as the natural enemies of socialism - the peasant small holders. The second objective and the most important one was that the political super-structure of every society is determined by its economic base. If the economic base was now to become the free market, a prosperous peasantry and light industry would inevitably change in conformity with the base, and alongside of revived capitalism the political features of the bourgeois state would replace socialism.

Another faction in the party called the "Workers' Opposition" regarded NEP as a betrayal of the workers in the interests of the inferior peasants.

The doubts raised by the Workers' Opposition and Left Communists about the introduction of New Economic Policy centred around theoretical issues about the stages of transition in post-revolutionary Russia which was predominantly a pre-capitalist small peasant country. As noted earlier, even the 1919 Programme of the Russian Communist

81 Cited in Schapiro, n. 13, p. 212.
Party had ignored or overlooked this vital problematic. In 1921 Lenin cleared the confusion reigning in the Party and corrected the mistaken view prevalent among large sections of the Party on the following two important theoretical issues regarding the problems of transition, viz.,

(a) whether the war Communism was a permanent feature in the direct realization of Communism, and

(b) whether the NEP was a temporary retreat or a definite and protracted stage in the transition to socialism in Russia.

Lenin considered war Communism to be an aberration and not a definite stage of transition. The NEP to him was a definite and long lasting stage of transition to socialism and then to communism. The NEP was not, according to Lenin, a temporary retreat and a short lived phenomenon. Lenin's statement on the "Fourth Anniversary of October Revolution" in 1921 clearly vindicated his position on the New Economic Policy and provided a perspective on the problems of transition to socialism:

Borne along the crest of the wave of enthusiasm, rousing first the political enthusiasm and the military enthusiasm of the people, we expected to accomplish economic tasks just as great as the political and military tasks we had accomplished by relying directly on this enthusiasm. We expected - or perhaps it would be truer to say that we presumed without having
given it adequate consideration - to be able to organize the state production and the state distribution of products on Communist lines in a small peasant country directly as ordered by the state. Experience has proved that we were wrong. It appears that a number of transitional stages were necessary - state capitalism and socialism - in order to prepare - to prepare by many years of effort - for the transition to communism. 82

Lenin's admission of the Bolshevik's mistaken view about war communism and also as reflected in the Party Programme was in fact a criticism of the Programme itself, though indirectly. Too much reliance on the state led to the omnipotence of the state in all sphere of social and economic life in Russia. The introduction of New Economic Policy demanded not only a revision of the 1919 Programme but also a new perspective on the nature of the Soviet state (dictatorship of the proletariat). The heralding of a new era in the form of NEP, introduced new elements in the correlation of class forces in Russia and demanded fresh theoretical insights on the nature of Soviet state and political power.

82 Lenin, n. 1, vol. 33, p. 58.
The switchover from war communism to New Economic Policy was in fact a recognition of the disturbed class relations between proletariat and peasantry. The change in policies raised serious doubts in the minds of some of the Bolshevik leaders about the dictatorship of the proletariat or to be more precise about the nature of the Soviet state. During a debate on 'Trade Unions' in December 1920, Lenin tried to clear the doubts about the nature of the Soviet state. Replying to Trotsky on this question, Lenin said: "Comrade Trotsky speaks of a 'Workers' State'. May I say that this is an abstraction... The whole point is that it is not quite a workers' state.... For one thing, our is not actually a workers' state but a workers' and peasants' state." 83 Bukharin not satisfied with Lenin's explanation retorted by asking the question "What kind of State? A Workers' and Peasants' state?" 84

Trotsky and Bukharin in particular, persisted with the idea of a workers' state despite the changed policies and objective social realities. Returning to the same problem in his speech on 'The Party Crisis' in January 1921, Lenin once more attempted to define the nature of the

84 Cited in ibid., p. 24.
Soviet state. Lenin in fact admitted flaws in his earlier explanation and revised his opinion about the nature of class relations and state as under:

A workers' state is an abstraction. What we actually have is a workers' state, with this peculiarity, firstly, that it is not the working class but the peasant population that pre-dominates in the country, and, secondly, that it is a workers' state with bureaucratic distortions. 85

The above formulation, in fact, concretized Lenin's ideas. This helped him to clarify the concrete reality of the Soviet state which was affected by the nature of the social relations that the peasant population maintained with the working class. The Programme adopted in 1919 did take note of the social reality existing in Russia and the dictatorship of the proletariat as being exercised in a country where "majority of the population consists of petty bourgeois strata". 86

The problem confronted by the Bolsheviks was the contradiction between the massive presence of the peasants and the proletarian character of the political power. This aspect of the problem was again emphasized by Lenin in the

85 Ibid., p. 48.

86 "The Programme of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)", n. 54, p. 58.
Tenth Congress of the Communist Party in 1921. He described Russia as "a country with mass of peasants, with workers in a minority, proletarian vanguard bleeding and in a state of prostration". 87

Besides, the tensions in the alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry the Russian Communist Party was also seized with the problem of bureaucratic distortions which had crept into the Soviet system. This problem was recognized as early as 1919 in the Programme. The causes identified by the programme were -

- the low standards of culture of the masses,
- the absence of necessary experience in state administration on the part of responsible workers.
- The pressing necessity, due to critical situation of engaging specialists of the most advanced section of the workers, all led to the partial revival of bureaucratism within the Soviet system. 88

The problem of bureaucratism injected new element to the nature of the Soviet state rather to the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In fact, the Programme itself suggested various measures to fight this evil. The measures mentioned in the programme were: 89

88 "The Programme of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)". n. 54, p. 60.
89 Ibid., pp. 60-61.
(1) Every member of the Soviet is obliged to perform a certain duty in state administration.

(2) These duties must change in rotation, so as gradually to embrace all branches of administration.

(3) All the working masses without exception must be gradually induced to take part in the work of administration.

Despite the measures suggested in the Programme in 1919, to fight the revival of bureaucratism, the problem by 1920-21 became a malaise which was eating the vitals of the Soviet system. In the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party, Lenin accepted this fact, as he did before, in these words: "We do have a bureaucratic ulcer; it has been diagnosed and has to be treated in earnest." 90

While the problem of alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry and the party's attempt to save it by the introduction of New Economic Policy on the one hand, and the problem of fighting bureaucratism on the other, were going on, at the same time various democratic and centralizing tendencies were working against each other. The conditions of war communism and civil war had thrown the production

system out of gear. During this period, production was under workers' control. This system was replaced by one man management. The resolutions of the Ninth Congress of the Party held in March 1920 endorsed this tendency. Speaking at the Congress, Lenin emphatically said: "For the work of the administration, of organising the state, we need people who are versed in the art of administration, who have state and business experience, and that there is nowhere we can turn to for such people except the old class." 91

The Congress also categorically stated and made it clear that the factory Committees were to look after mainly to the problems of labour discipline, propaganda and workers education. 92

Bukharin a "left communist" in 1918 and the co-author of ABC of Communism, vindicated his views in favour of centralism and one-man management. He wrote that in a period when -

the emphasis of the proletarian task is transferred to the sphere of economic construction, where the basic fabric of the economic apparatus is already saturated with worker-administrators and where the workers' organisations have already become the foundation and pivot of these apparatuses,


92 The Resolutions of the IX Congress of the Communist Party held in March-April 1920, are given in Gregor, n. 54, pp. 102-04.
then of necessity curtailing collective management, even leading in some cases of individual control (i.e., one-man management). This latter situation is neither administration of the rights of the class neither a diminution of the role of its organisations. It is a contracted, condensed form of workers' control of industry. 93

To Bukharin, at that point of time there was no need to concentrate on the class position of the proletariat. He went on to say:

...Attention no longer needs to be focused on the problem of consolidating the class position of the proletariat - basically this question has been solved. Here the difficulty is not to change the principle behind the relations of production, but to try to find the form of management which will secure maximum efficiency. The principle of broad electivity from below is replaced by the principle of careful selection in the light of technical and administrative length of service, competence and steadfastness of the candidates. At the head of workers' management boards are the individuals in charge - workers or specialist engineers....In such a system no engineer can fulfil any other function than the one required of him by the proletariat. 94

The issue of appointment of the managers or specialists was vehemently opposed by trade union leaders.


94 Ibid., p. 143.
A group within the party calling itself the workers' opposition argued that the workers were being deprived of any control and that a new bureaucratic administrative mechanism was taking over the workers' state; this group argued that the unions should absorb the administrative and managerial structure; the unions through a series of committees and councils should be responsible for industrial policies. This was the only way to safeguard the interests of the workers. Alexandra Kollontai, the most-vocal spokesperson of "Workers' opposition" vehemently criticized the principle of one-man management as "a product of individualist conception of the bourgeois class. The one-man management is in principle an unrestricted isolated free will of one man, disconnected from the collective". 95 Kollontai also demanded that "the party must reverse its policy to the elective principle". 96

From the above discussion, it is clear that Lenin and his supporters wanted to put back the crippling economy on rails by appointing specialists and engineers as heads of the enterprises. This step was specifically meant to overcome anarchy, to increase industrial production and to


96 Ibid., p. 58.
raise efficiency. This measure also meant fixing a single centre of accountability and responsibility. This step very well fitted in the overall framework of New Economic Policy, though it went against the principle of collegial management as formulated and incorporated in the Party Programme as under:

Trade Unions, which are already according to the laws of the Soviet republic and established practice participants in all local and central organs for the administration of the industry, must actually concentrate in their hands the entire administration of the whole public economy as a single economic unit. It is equally necessary to place the bourgeois experts in an environment of comradely common work, side by side with the mass of ordinary workers led by class-conscious communists, and thus to assist the mutual understanding and closer relations between manual and intellectual workers formerly separated by capitalism. 97

The principle of collegial management versus one-man management, the role of trade unions, increasing bureaucratization of the state and party and above all the introduction of New Economic Policy were the burning issues which divided the party in various factions. On these crucial issues the factions in party fought ideological battles. Ultimately the Tenth Congress of the party banned all

97 "The Programme of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)", n. 54, pp. 68-69.
factions in the party. In his report to the Congress, Lenin justified the suppression of various factions in the party.

He argued:

It is no time to argue about theoretical deviations when one of them is bound up with the tremendous preponderance of peasants in the country, when their dissatisfaction with the proletarian dictatorship is mounting, when the crisis in peasant farming is coming to a head, and when the demobilisation of peasant army is setting loose hundreds and thousands of broken men who have nothing to do, whose only accustomed occupation is war and who breed banditry. At the Congress, we must make it quite clear that we cannot have arguments about deviations and that we must put a stop to that. . . . The atmosphere of the controversy is becoming extremely dangerous and constitutes a direct threat to the dictatorship of the proletariat. 98

Consequently, on Lenin's insistence the Congress adopted a resolution "On Party Unity" which banned all the factions in the party. Point-6 of the resolution stated:

The Congress orders the immediate dissolution without exception, of all groups that have been formed on the basis of some platform or the other, and instructs all organisations to be very strict in ensuring that no manifestations of factionalism of any sort be tolerated. Failure to comply with this resolution of the Congress is to entail unconditional and immediate expulsion from the party. 99

99 Gregor, n. 54, p. 121.
The harsh measures approved by the Tenth Congress overshadowed multitude of good intentions born out of the exigencies of the situation and inspired by the victory of the Bolsheviks in the civil war. In E.H. Carr's opinion, "These measures, approved and sponsored by Lenin himself in the crisis atmosphere of the Tenth Party Congress of March 1921, were enormously to increase the disciplinary power of the inner group of the party leaders."\(^{100}\)

The ban on factions in the party later on strengthened the centralizing tendencies and bureaucratic practices. Simultaneously a struggle was going/to fight the bureaucratic revivalism in the Soviet system. A decree in April 1919 created a People's Commissariat under state control to fight the bureaucratic excesses according to the party programme. In February 1920, the Commissariat took the definitive form when it became the "Commissariat for Workers' and Peasants' Inspection" (Rabkrin). This Commissariat was given the constitutional status when it was included in the USSR Constitution adopted in 1924 (Article 37).\(^{101}\) Rabkrin was

\(^{100}\) Carr, n. 11, p. 208.

\(^{101}\) Unger, n. 50, p. 67. Full text of the 1924 Constitution of the USSR is given in this work.
created to fight excessive bureaucracy in the institutions of the Soviet state with the help of workers and peasants elected by the same assemblies which elected the delegates to the Soviets. Therefore, this important measure, though not mentioned in the programme, was in accordance with the provisions in the programme to fight bureaucracy. The programme spoke about the 'involvement of every member of the Soviet in state administration'. The Rabkrin was meant to keep a check on the administration. Therefore, parallel with the development of power, the idea of a popular control over power coexisted. The Rabkrin which was under Stalin's control put into his hands a great engine of control over the entire machinery of the state. It soon became a commissariat above all Commissariats, the eye of the party which watched the whole administrative machine. When Stalin left this Commissariat, it had already become a bureaucratized institution. It was a highly inflated body. According to an estimate, the Rabkrin composed of some 12,000 officials who harassed their colleagues.

In 1923, Lenin suggested the transformation and renovation of Rabkrin. He was critical of the Soviet state

102 "The Programme of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)", n. 54, p. 60.

103 D' Encausse, n. 53, p. 144.
apparatus. In his recommendations to the Twelfth Party Congress about the Soviet state apparatus, he wrote: "Our state apparatus is to a considerable extent a survival of the past and has undergone hardly any serious change." Lenin proposed that the membership of the Rabkrin should be restricted, and its staff should be specially screened for conscientiousness and knowledge of the state apparatus. Lenin also recommended the amalgamation of Rabkrin with Central control commission. This amalgamation, according to Lenin "will obtain high authority", for the Rabkrin whose task was to supervise both the party and the state. The centralized and bureaucratic functioning also came under severe criticism from Lenin. About the state of affairs in the party he told the Congress "our central committee has grown into a strictly centralised and highly authoritative group". He also admitted existence of the deep rooted malaise of bureaucratism in both party and the state. He wrote: "Let it be said in parantheses that we have bureaucrats in our party offices as well as in Soviet offices".

104 Lenin, n. 1, vol. 33, p. 481.
105 Ibid., p. 482.
106 Ibid., p. 484.
107 Ibid., p. 494.
Lenin's recommendations and suggestions for the reformation of the party and state institutions had the main concern of maintaining the workers' and peasants' alliance. This concern multiplied because of the increasing isolation of the party and Soviet system from the masses. Though the main aim of the Bolshevik Party as defined in the 1919 Programme was to involve the masses into the task of administration and thereby strengthening the unity of two classes, the workers and peasants, to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat. To preserve the unity of these two classes, Lenin warned the party. He wrote to the Congress:

"In our Soviet Republic, the social order is based on the collaboration of two classes: the workers and peasants, in which the "Nepmen", i.e., the bourgeoisie, are now permitted to participate in certain terms. If serious class disagreements arise between these two classes, a split will be inevitable. But the grounds for such a split are not inevitable in our social system, and it is the principal task of our central committee and central control commission, as well as of our party as a whole, to watch very closely over such circumstances as may cause a split, and to forestall them, for in the final analysis, the fate of our Republic will depend on whether the peasant masses will stand by the working class, loyal to their alliance, or whether they will permit the "Nepmen" to drive a wedge between them and the working class, to split them off from the working class. The more clearly we see this alternative, the more clearly our workers and peasants understand it, the greater are the chances that we shall..."
avoid a split, which would be fatal for the Soviet Republic. 108

During the period of New Economic Policy when the issue of worker-peasant alliance reigned supreme in the party, the problems of centralization and bureaucratism also added to the complexities of the evolving nature of the Soviet state. Again on the nature and kind of state Russia should have, Lenin wrote:

We must strive to build up a state in which the workers retain the leadership of the peasants, in which they retain the confidence of the peasants, and by exercising the greatest economy remove every trace of extravagance from our social relations. 109

Lenin also recommended, "we must reduce our state apparatus to the utmost degree of economy. We must banish from it all traces of extravagance, of which so much has been left over from Tsarist Russia, from its bureaucratic capitalist state machine". 110

The above mentioned recommendations made by Lenin were in fact meant to implement the democratic aspects in
the 1919 programme which spoke about the bringing in the state apparatus closer to the masses. In this regard Lenin wrote: "These are the lofty tasks that I dream of for our workers' and peasants' Inspection. That is why I am planning the amalgamation of the most authoritative Party body with an 'ordinary' People's Commissariat."\textsuperscript{111}

The preceding analysis brings into sharp relief the process of the evolution of the Soviet state which was full of contradictions. The leadership clearly accepted that the proletarian state was highly bureaucratized, as the party programme accepted it earlier, though in a mild form. There was no attempt on the part of the Bolshevik party to clearly define the nature of the Soviet state. The party was caught in contradictions. On the one hand, the leadership was arguing that only criticism, initiative and action by the working people, could destroy the bureaucratic features of the proletarian state, on the other it was providing weapons which could be used to prune both healthy and unhealthy growth.

\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., p. 502.
The changed situation in Russia after the introduction of New Economic Policy demanded a new Party Programme and a new definition of the nature of the Soviet state. Though we have come across references to this aspect, but a systematic and programmatic understanding was clearly lacking on the part of the Russian Communist Party. Bukharin, of course, emphasized the need for the revision of the party programme. In Bukharin's opinion the policy changes introduced by the New Economic Policy must be given a programmatic perspective. In an article in Pravda in 1923 he called for the revision of the 1919 Programme. His ideas were in sharp contrast with the still dominant party sentiment. Bukharin argued that not only the 1919 Programme but also Preobrezhesky's and his own ABC of Communism which became a party canon had been outdated by the New Economic Policy. "We now see how we shall come to socialism...not as we thought earlier but by a much more firm and solid path." 112

Bukharin's call for the revision of the party programme was justified. Because the focus in the 1919

112 Pravda, 25 January 1923.
Programme was on hierarchy, discipline and state control. On the other hand, the principles of New Economic Policy meant the replacement of civil strife by civil peace under the leadership of the proletariat. Bukharin's call for the revision of the 1919 Party Programme went unheeded and this programme, though irrelevant in the new circumstances, still remained.

After Lenin's death a fierce controversy arose in the Party about the strategy of development. It took the form of debates during the period 1924-1928 and later on came to be known as the "industrialization debate". The debate revolved around choice of sectoral priorities and naturally the question of worker-peasant alliance remained in the centre of the debate. The main issue debated was: whether it was necessary and more urgent to develop heavy industry than to expand agriculture and light industry, which more directly raised popular consumption levels and economic incentives. The settling of this issue raised more questions about methods of capitalist accumulation, rural collectivization, mandatory planning role of market forces, external forms of organization and remuneration and choice of technologies.

These issues were finally resolved in favour of heavy industrialization and collectivization by the Fifteenth Congress of the Party in 1927. This Congress
passed a resolution for 'strengthening of the production of means of production',\textsuperscript{113} i.e., the heavy industry. The resolution of Congress further stated: "Those branches of heavy industry must develop most rapidly which in the shortest time strengthen the economic might and defence capacity of the USSR,...and promote reorganisation of agriculture on the basis of higher technology and collectivisation of the economy".\textsuperscript{114} The Congress approved the collectivization of agriculture and "ordered all party organisations and party workers to intensify their assistance to Kolkhoz construction and to strengthen the Sovkhozes...".\textsuperscript{115}

The 1919 Programme which was somewhat irrelevant during the brief phase of New Economic Policy became relevant during the period of industrialization and collectivization initiated during 1928-29 with the introduction of the First Five Year Plan. The industrialization and collectivization were some kind of a revolution from above. Administrative measures were used to procure delivery quotas from the peasants. The peasants were forced to join collective and state farms, and Kulaks as a class was annihilated. There were purges in the party and the Bolsheviks old guard

\textsuperscript{113} Gregor, n. 54, pp. 322-3.
\textsuperscript{114} Ibid., p. 322.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., p. 333.
were either expelled from the party or killed by the Stalinist leadership.

In 1936 a new Soviet Constitution was adopted which proclaimed the Soviet State as a 'Socialist State of the Workers and Peasants' (Article 1). The 1936 Constitution made the 1919 Programme irrelevant and obsolete. The Eighteenth Congress in 1939 appointed a Committee under Stalin to re-write the programme. The need for a new programme was felt because the class structure of the Soviet society had changed, as also the nature of the Soviet state.

The Congress felt that the Soviet "socialist society is composed of two classes that are friendly with one another; workers and peasants; the dividing line between them - and between these classes and the intelligentsia as well are fading and gradually disappearing". The Congress also noted that

the working class has undergone a radical change, being transformed into a completely new class, which has annihilated the capitalist economic system and established socialist ownership of the means of production. The peasantry being transformed into a completely new peasantry, whose overwhelming majority consists of Kolkhoz peasantry. The intelligentsia

116 Unger, n. 50, p. 140.

has also changed and new intelligentsia is bound by all of its roots to the working class and peasantry. 118

Until 1952 nothing was heard about the new party programme. At the 19th Party Congress, L.M. Kaganovich was asked by the Central Committee to submit a report for the revision of the Party Programme. In his report Kaganovich repeated the same arguments which the 18th Congress Party in 1939 had advanced for the revision of the Party Programme. He briefed the Congress about the "fundamental changes that have taken place both in the sphere of international relations and in the sphere of the construction of socialism in the USSR", 119 since the Eighth Congress in 1919 when the second party programme was adopted. The changes in the years since the Eighth Party Congress had turned the country from a backward agrarian into a mighty industrial and collective farming socialist power, "the socialist system of economy completely prevails", 120 Kaganovich told the Congress. He also reiterated that "the many propositions set forth in our Party Programme and the tasks expounded therein, have already been accomplished in this period, and no longer correspond to

118 Ibid., p. 201.
119 Pravda, 14 October 1952.
120 Ibid., 14 October 1952.
present conditions and new Party tasks. That is why it is urgently necessary to revise our Party Programme\textsuperscript{121}. The Congress, therefore, took a decision to revise the 1919 Programme.

In the first part of this chapter we have surveyed the theoretical and historical background of the 1919 Programme of the Russian Communist Party. This Programme had an ancestral legacy in the Communist Manifesto, the Critique of the Gotha Programme and the 1903 Programme of the RSDLP. The aims and objectives of a proletarian party were concretely defined in these programmatic documents. Besides, strategic and tactical issues like the role and tasks of various classes in a social revolution were also analysed in detail. With these documents providing a theoretical background, ideological controversy erupted in the Russian working class movement after the 1905 revolution. The controversy revolved around programmatic issues like the stage, nature and character of the Russian revolution and on strategic and tactical issues like the role and tasks of various social classes and parties in the social revolution. The unsuccessful revolution in 1905 in Russia telescoped the

\textsuperscript{121} Ibid.
most important question about the stages of revolution from a bourgeois democratic to a socialist one. The tidy scheme about the stages of revolution, i.e., the bourgeois democratic against the feudal-absolutism and the socialist revolution against capitalism in the context of England and France provided the first alternative. The second alternative was provided by Karl Marx's analysis of the development of German society, where because of the peculiarities of social and economic development, the tasks of bourgeois democratic and socialist revolutions intermingled. The controversy between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks in general and between Lenin and Trotsky in particular, revolved around the second alternative. This survey brings into sharp relief such important questions as the role and tasks of different classes in the transformation of the Russian society as these questions provided a theoretical background to the 1919 Programme.

The second part of this chapter has dealt with the evolution of Soviet structure followed by a survey of the concrete historical conditions in which the 1919 Programme was adopted by the Russian Communist Party.

The scrutiny of the 1919 Programme reveals that on the thrust of the Programme was the direct realization of a communist society. The Programme lacked a perspective on the
stages of transition in Russia. The actual realization of the
Programme, however, soon became problematic because of the
civil war and the policies pursued by the Bolshevik
regime during the period of war Communism. The proclaimed
aims and the actual process of evolution of the Soviet state
were divergent in nature. During the initial period after
the October Revolution, the main feature of the evolution of
the Soviet state was revolutionary democratism. Later on,
the centralizing tendencies overtook the Soviet system.

Later on, we have discussed the attempts of the
Bolshevik leadership to correct the mistakes of war
Communism. The policies pursued during 1918-1920 posed a
threat to the dictatorship of the proletariat and the
smychka was on the verge of breaking down. The introduction
of New Economic Policy was a corrective step to preserve the
alliance between the working class and the peasantry. We
have also brought into sharp focus the fact that Lenin
considered War Communism as an aberration and the NEP as a
definite and long lasting stage of transition to socialism
in India.

The changed circumstances after the introduction
of NEP made the Programme irrelevant, if not wholly, at least
partly. Though Lenin recognized the deformities of the
Soviet state but no serious attempts were made by the Party to overcome them. After the introduction of NEP there was confusion about the nature of the Soviet state. The changed circumstances not only demanded a revision of the existing Party Programme but also a revised definition of the nature and character of the Soviet state. Though the debates in the party from 1924 to 1928 were focussed on the problems of transforming the economy of USSR and the role of various social classes in this task, but no serious attempt was made to rewrite a new Party Programme.

The events following the initiation of the process of industrialisation and collectivization in 1928-29, through administrative command methods of the state, again made the 1919 Programme somewhat relevant. Stalin used this Programme because of its emphasis on strict discipline, hierarchy and state control over all aspects of life.

In 1936, a new Soviet constitution was adopted but the existing Programme was not revised until 1961. The struggle between the democratizing and centralizing tendencies, which marked the evolution of the Soviet system until 1928-29 was completely taken over by a totalitarian and bureaucratic command system by 1936.
In the following chapter we propose to deal with the new Party Programme which was adopted in 1961. And then we will evaluate the nature and character of the Soviet state which was characterized as the "state of the whole people" in the context of the 1961 Programme and the unfolding socio-economic processes in the USSR.