10 January, the opening day of the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets, will forever be indelibly imprinted in the memory of all participants in this historic assembly.

Within the walls of the Tauride Palace, which have so often resounded to the servile anthem of tsarism, for the first time the music of the *International* sounded forth not as music of the future, but as the solemn song of a victorious proletarian revolution.

And following the international anthem of the workers, like a historic memory of a path already travelled, the sounds of the *Marseillaise* rang out. The *International* succeeded the *Marseillaise*, just as the proletarian revolution leaves behind the bourgeois revolution and the grandson replaces the grandfather to take his place at the feast of life.

For a moment, the immortal shadows of Danton and Robespierre flashed before us as symbols of bourgeois heroism, and from the distance of a historic past, the stern Convention smiled at its worthy great-grandson – the Convention of the Republic of Soviets.

During the period when the State-Dumas dominated, or rather were in bondage, there were many

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1. [From *Pravda*, 25 January 1918.]
2. [The Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers’, Soldiers’ and Peasants’ Deputies met in Petrograd from 10–18 (23–31) January, 1918. The Congress affirmed the ‘Declaration of the Rights of the Toiling and Exploited People’, adopted basic resolutions on socialisation of the land, and approved the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly.]
occasions when the Tauride Palace and the bourgeois parliaments of all countries welcomed diplomatic lies with applause and underlined their solidarity with the bourgeois classes of other powers.

These signs of gratitude were either hypocritical and deceitful—because they were often followed the very next day by the animal-like chauvinistic howls of bankers quarrelling over markets—or else they were carefully weighed and expressed in pounds sterling when they represented the mutual curtseys of robbers who had reached an agreement on how to divide the booty. The bourgeois parliaments were making merchants’ bows to each other, welcoming the ambassadors of capital from other countries.

The All-Russian Congress of Soviets also welcomed ambassadors. But breaking the etiquette of bourgeois hypocrisy, these ambassadors were submitting their credentials to the Congress not in the name of peoples, but on behalf of the revolutionary proletariat of their countries. They all welcomed the Great October Revolution, they all promised support for Soviet power from the workers of the Old and New Worlds, and when they departed amid burning applause from the excited Congress, along with the music of the International they carried away in their spirit the inaudible music of deepest feeling for the brotherhood of peoples, which the bourgeois world did not and could not know. Platten from the Swedish internationalists, comrade Petrov from the socialist party of England, Nissen from the Left-Social Democrats of Norway and Sweden, Williams from the American Socialist Party, Rakovsky from the Social Democrats of Romania—they all addressed the Congress on behalf of the workers of their countries.

But everyone felt someone was missing from the diplomatic corps of the international proletariat. We wanted to see comrade Liebknecht together with us and away from the prison-bed where he is languishing day in and day out with malicious consumption; we would have liked to carry him in the hands of the Revolution to a diplomatic bed in the Tauride Palace. We would have liked to hear comrade Friedrich Adler speaking from the rostrum as the herald of a revolution underway in Austria and to welcome his liberation as its first real victory.

They were not present. But the spirits of Liebknecht, Adler, and MacLean soared among us; they were chosen as honorary chairmen of the Congress, together with comrades Lenin and Trotsky, and they will remain with us in spirit and silently guide the work of the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets.

The Third Congress has gathered under good omens. The proletariat of Austria and Hungary have embarked on a path of revolutionary struggle. We are beginning to build, whereas in the West they have only begun to break things down.

Let us hope that the time will soon come when the first congress of workers’ and soldiers’ deputies from the republics of Europe will gather in Petrograd.

E. Preobrazhensky