

TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS RELATED TO RUSSIA'S 1917 REVOLUTION

Problems of Socialist Organization

- 1) "Spontaneity" in thought and action is shaped by objective conditions PLUS already existing ideas and conceptions (often emanating from pre-existing institutions and organizations).
- 2) The dynamic of revolution involves an interplay between:
 - a. objective conditions;
 - b. "spontaneous" moods, beliefs, actions;
 - c. alternatives and pathways articulated by revolutionary organizations.
- 3) The interplay in point #2 can culminate in mass action, leading to revolution.
- 4) Evolving experiences help change popular conclusions.
- 5) There is a lag between conceptions, institutions, and organizations formed in an earlier period and new conclusions shaped by changing circumstances.
- 6) A revolutionary organization that is disciplined and coherent, with ideas in harmony with changing circumstances, can become increasingly influential – and eventually predominant.
- 7) Diversity paired with genuine freedom and democracy helps generate revolutionary change.
- 8) Diversity within a revolutionary organization and within its milieu (for example, the larger movement) fosters the complexity, fluidity, and freedom of thought necessary for revolutionary mass action, and for the ultimate creation of a revolutionary regime.
- 9) Tension between aspirations and consequences – if unresolved – leads to deepening crisis.
- 10) Deepening crisis can bring a narrowing of diversity, freedom, democracy – undermining the revolutionary qualities of an organization and a regime.