

J.V. Stalin

The October Revolution

(October 24 and 25, 1917, in Petrograd)

Date: November 6, 1918

First Published: *Pravda*, No. 241

Source: J. V. Stalin, *Works*, Volume 4, pages 155-157. Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1953

Transcription: Martin F.

HTML: Mike B. for MIA, 2008

Public Domain: Marxists Internet Archive (2008). You may freely copy, distribute, display and perform this work; as well as make derivative and commercial works. Please credit “Marxists Internet Archive” as your source.

The most important of the events which hastened the October uprising were: the intention of the Provisional Government (after having surrendered Riga) to surrender Petrograd, the Kerensky Government’s preparations to remove to Moscow, the decision of the command of the old army to dispatch the entire Petrograd garrison to the front and leave the capital undefended, and, lastly, the feverish activity of the Black Congress³³ in Moscow, headed by Rodzyanko — activity for organizing the counter-revolution. All this, coupled with the growing economic disruption and the unwillingness of the men at the front to continue the war, made a swift and efficiently organized uprising inevitable as the only way out of the existing situation.

The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party had already in the closing days of September decided to mobilize all the forces of the Party for the organization of a successful uprising. With that in view, the Central Committee resolved to set up a Revolutionary Military Committee in Petrograd, to secure the retention of the Petrograd garrison in the capital, and to convene an All-Russian Congress of Soviets. Only such a congress could succeed to power. The preliminary winning

of the Moscow and Petrograd Soviets, the most influential in the rear and at the front, was an indispensable part of the general plan of organization of the uprising.

Acting on the instructions of the Central Committee, *Rabochy Put*, the Central Organ of the Party, began openly to call for an uprising, preparing the workers and peasants for the decisive battle.

The first open clash with the Provisional Government arose over the banning of the Bolshevik newspaper, *Rabochy Put*. It was shut down by order of the Provisional Government. It was re-opened in revolutionary fashion, by order of the Revolutionary Military Committee. The seals were removed and the commissars of the Provisional Government were sent off. That was on October 24.

On October 24, commissars of the Revolutionary Military Committee forcibly ejected the representatives of the Provisional Government from a number of major government institutions, which resulted in the latter coming under the control of the Revolutionary Military Committee and the disorganization of the whole machinery of the Provisional Government. That same day (October 24) the entire garrison, all the regiments in Petrograd, decisively went over to the Revolutionary Military Committee, with the sole exception of some of the military cadet schools and an armoured car battalion. The Provisional Government showed signs of irresolution. Only in the evening did it dispatch shock battalions to occupy the bridges and succeeded in raising some of them. The Revolutionary Military Committee countered this by sending sailors and Vyborg Red Guards, who removed and dispersed the shock battalions and occupied the bridges themselves. With this, the open uprising began. A number of our regiments were dispatched with orders to cordon off the whole area around the Staff Headquarters and the Winter Palace. In the Winter Palace the Provisional Government was in session. The passing of the armoured car battalion to the side of the Revolutionary Military Committee (late at night on October 24) hastened the success of the uprising.

On October 25 the Congress of Soviets opened, and to it the Revolutionary Military Committee turned over the power it had won.

Early in the morning of October 26, after the bombardment of the Winter Palace and the Staff Headquarters by the Aurora, and after skirmishes between Soviet troops and military cadets in front of the Winter Palace, the Provisional Government capitulated. The moving spirit of the revolution from beginning to end was the Central Committee of the Party, headed by Comrade Lenin. Vladimir Ilyich was then living in hiding in Petrograd, in the Vyborg District. On the evening of October 24 he was called to the Smolny to take charge of the movement. ^A

An outstanding role in the October uprising was played by the sailors of the Baltic Fleet and the Red Guards from the Vyborg District. Owing to their extraordinary courage, the role of the Petrograd garrison was confined chiefly to rendering moral and to some extent military support to the vanguard fighters.

J. Stalin

Notes

^A *Transcriber's Note* Here the Moscow editors have omitted the concluding part of this paragraph in the original article, where Stalin mentions the Trotsky role in the revolution. The last complete English translation of this article was published 1936 by Lawrence and Wishart in the book *The October Revolution*, from which we cite the rest of the paragraph (op. cit p 30):

"All practical work in connection with the organization of the uprising was done under the immediate direction of Comrade Trotsky, the president of the Petrograd Soviet. It can be stated with certainty that the Party is indebted primarily and principally to Comrade Trotsky for the rapid going over of the garrison to the side of the Soviet and the efficient manner in which the work of the Military-Revolutionary Committee was organized. The principal assistants of Comrade Trotsky were Comrades Antonov and Podvoisky."

Trotsky mentions this omission in his *The Stalin School of Falsification* published 1937 (see the section "4. Letter to the Bureau of Party History (Part I)").

The old Stalinist Molotov comments the matter in his conversations with Felix Chuev, published in English translation 1993 under the title *Molotov Remembers: Inside Kremlin Politics*. There we read (page 166):

"The talk switched to Trotsky, and about Stalin's assessment of his activity in the article 'The October Revolution'. It turned out that a whole paragraph had been omitted from Stalin's collected works — Molotov brought his own volume, in which he had written in the margin what had appeared in Stalin's original version — how Trotsky managed to win over the Petrograd garrison."

Source - <https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1918/11/06.htm>