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Stalin's Bolshevism: The Year of the Revolution

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This article criticises the thesis that Stalin believed that, as Russia needed an extended period of capitalist development, only a regime dominated by the liberal bourgeoisie was a feasible revolutionary perspective, which, again, turned him into a critical follower of the Provisional Government. In fact, only the socialist perspective contained in Lenin's April policies was new. The hope that the democratic republic would take on a Soviet form, and would be dominated by revolutionary popular parties instead of liberal-capitalist ones, was part of bolshevik doctrine. Before Lenin's return to Russia, Stalin already announced that, in time, the Provisional Government should be brought down and replaced by a Soviet one. And, in October, he did not hesitate to work towards such a take-over. The thesis that he 'missed the revolution' is a myth.

There exists a widespread idea that, prior to Lenin's return to Russia in April 1917, the bolsheviks held on to an orthodox view, to the effect that their country was only ripe for a bourgeois-democratic revolution. Therefore, they had little choice but to critically accept the new Provisional Government. And with his 'April theses', which contained the proposal to enter upon the 'second stage' of the revolution, the stage of Soviets and socialism, Lenin overturned that established doctrine. In this interpretation of the debates of April 1917, Stalin is a prime example of an 'old bolshevik' who did not understand the new tasks of the day, as Lenin understood them. For example, Robert Tucker wrote that Stalin's policy of moderation towards the Provisional Government in March and April 1917 was 'predicated upon the view that the democratic revolution was still incomplete and that the overthrow of the new regime was therefore not yet an operational objective.'¹ In the same spirit Robert Slusser noted that Stalin and the mainstream bolsheviks adhered to the menshevik thesis that the socio-economic conditions in Russia were only suitable for a 'bourgeois

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liberal-democratic revolution', and that, therefore, 'the proper course of action for the workers' parties was to aid the bourgeoisie in carrying through its revolution in order to help create the conditions that would ultimately make possible a workers' revolution leading to the establishment of socialism'.²

The story then continues, that Lenin managed to convince the bolsheviks to follow him in his new, bold course. His subsequent linking up with the radical social-democrat Trotskii, who had always favoured immediate proletarian revolution in Russia, guaranteed the success of his mission. But some of his older comrades, like Stalin again, were only partly convinced, and hesitated to follow their leader in his feverish working towards a bolshevik take-over. In his *Stalin in October*, Slusser argued that, on the eve of the October uprising, Stalin was even unaware of what was going on. He did not realise that on the morning of 24 October the Central Committee of his party had decided to make a grab for power. As a consequence, he 'missed the revolution'.³ This would, then, be the deplorable, almost tragicomic climax of Stalin's semi-menshevik performance during the revolutionary year.

In the present article I will argue, mainly on the basis of widely known and long available material, that this view is untenable, because it inaccurately identifies the question of the Soviet perspective of the Russian revolution with its socialist character. Even before Lenin returned to Russia in April 1917, it was part of bolshevik doctrine that the democratic republic should have a radical, Soviet form. The latter's insistence on this was only a case of formulating more strictly something which was already agreed on among his comrades. Moreover, already before Lenin's return to Russia, bolsheviks such as Stalin realised that the Provisional Government should be overthrown. The main difference between them and Lenin was that Stalin and his comrades did not believe that a new Soviet-democratic republic could quickly enter upon the transition to socialism. However, Stalin accepted this conclusion soon enough. And in October he did not 'miss the revolution' at all. He did not agree with Lenin's tactics, but followed Trotskii's course of a bolshevik take-over at the time of the convening of the Second Congress of Soviets.

BOLSHEVIK DOCTRINE OF THE STATE AND THE REVOLUTION

The Russian social-democrats of the early years of the century saw it as their first task to democratise the state. The idea was that a popular,

democratic revolution would throw up a provisional government that would proceed to organise elections for a Constituent Assembly. The assembly, elected by universal and equal suffrage, would proceed to establish a democratic republic. The Russian social-democrats could base their idea of democracy on an existing Marxist tradition. One of the pillars of Karl Marx's idea of political power was the absolute primacy of the democratic, elected legislative power over the executive branch of government. He identified the governmental bureaucracy with the reactionary powers of the old world: the monarchy, the army and the capitalist ruling class. In this light, Montesquieu's ideal of a division of powers was a trick of those reactionary powers to prevent absolute popular sovereignty.⁴ And Marx insisted that, under a true democratic republic, the bureaucracy should not only be put under control, but also be sharply curtailed, and even broken up, 'smashed'. In its place there should be established institutions of direct democracy, which should be legislative and executive at one and the same time, and of which he saw the 1871 Paris Commune as the model.

In the Second International this conception of the democratic republic was watered down. In his important comments on the so-called Erfurt Program of the Socialist Party of Germany, the leader of 'orthodox Marxism' Karl Kautsky noted that the elected parliament should be fully strengthened with regard to the state administration. He indignantly rejected the illusion of 'state socialists' who hoped to leave the state unchanged. However, it remained unclear as to what further changes would have to occur in the executive apparatus besides the establishment of parliamentary dominance over it.⁵ For Kautsky, modern society could not operate without a 'bureaucratic organisation'. Quoting the radical social-democrat Anton Pannekoek to the effect that Marxism demanded the destruction of the state, Kautsky retorted that the party programme 'does not demand the abolition of the state officials, but the election of the authorities by the people'. And that concerned only the highest officials. Kautsky predicted that, after the take-over of the socialists, the number and social importance of the body of state officials would hardly diminish. The aim was not 'to destroy state power' but to 'capture' it and to 'let the parliament rule the government'.⁶ With this Marx's direct democratism had largely evaporated. The executive power should be controlled by the legislative, rather than be destroyed or absorbed by it.

The programme of the Russian branch of the Second International, the Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party, adopted in 1903, characterised the democratic republic as follows: 'The autocracy

[*samoderzhavie*] of the people, i.e. the concentration of all sovereign state power in the hands of the Legislative Assembly, composed of representatives of the people and forming one Chamber.'

This reflected the Marxist ideal of total popular sovereignty, that is, of complete power of the legislative assembly over the executive branch of government. The flame of Marx's old radical democracy was not completely extinguished. The Russian social-democrats demanded elections of the judiciary, and a militia instead of a standing army. However, the programme did not extend such notions to the governmental bureaucracy as such. There was no reference to any wholesale smashing of the executive apparatus.⁷ Nevertheless, the consciousness of the radicalism of the original Marxist project was not completely lost among the bolsheviks. Commenting in 1906 on the First Russian Revolution, Lenin pointed to the rise of so-called *soviets*, councils through which the workers organised their struggle against the employers and the government. He noted with great satisfaction that these soviets had begun to operate as 'organs of power', confiscating printing presses and government money, and arresting police officers. In Lenin's view they had proven to be the embryos of the revolutionary government.⁸ I ask the reader to take special note of the fact that the bolshevik leader favoured soviets as organs of power as part of the process of *democratic revolution*. Soviet power was not linked to a socialist economic programme.

That he hoped that a democratic state might be based on Soviets, does not mean that Lenin had fully re-absorbed Marx's radical democratism. His treatment of bureaucracy remained an essentially Kautskyan one. The officials should not be sent home, as Marx had desired, but merely be made to hand over their 'independent power', resulting in their 'complete subjection to the people'.⁹ Nevertheless, the leader of bolshevism apparently hoped that workers' councils would provide a foundation for the new democratic state.

In contrast to the mensheviks, the bolsheviks did not believe that the Russian liberal bourgeoisie would be prepared to go along with the working class in the struggle for a democratic republic. The cowardly bourgeoisie was more afraid of the revolution than desirous of democratisation. It would inevitably take shelter under the broad shoulders of the tsar, and join the counter-revolutionary camp. The only reliable ally the proletariat would have in the democratic revolution was the peasantry. The bolsheviks also believed that once a provisional government had been established, the counter-revolution (including the bourgeoisie) would immediately take up the struggle

against it to prevent the elections for a Constituent Assembly from being organised. Therefore, this provisional government needed to be a dictatorship. Lenin developed the formula of the '*revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry*'.¹⁰ In practical terms this would mean a dictatorship of the RSDWP and radical peasant parties.

The bolsheviks and mensheviks agreed that in view of the relatively backward economic circumstances of Russia, the time was not yet ripe for a transition to socialism. Under the new democratic republic, the further development of capitalism, rather than socialism, would be on the agenda. The main measures to be enforced were a redistribution of the land among the peasantry and the introduction of an eight hour working day. Yet, there were differences in accent. Lenin agreed that the revolution could not touch the foundations of capitalism 'without a whole series of intermediate steps of revolutionary development'. The new government should aim for a 'broad and quick, European and not Asian, development of capitalism'. But he added that this should occur in a form not favourable mainly for big capital, but for the peasants and the workers.¹¹ Lenin hoped that the government would not be dominated by the liberal bourgeoisie but by representatives of the radical peasantry. In September 1905 he even suggested that socialism could soon be on the agenda after all. Nationalisation of the land should be tried out. Large-scale capitalist estates should be transferred to associations of the agricultural workers instead of being divided up among the peasants. And in a famous passage he noted: 'from the democratic revolution we will immediately begin to proceed, and precisely to the measure of our strength (of the strength of the conscious and organised proletariat), to the socialist revolution. We favour an uninterrupted revolution.'¹²

But this remained a suggestion that Lenin for the time being did not elaborate upon. Only Lev Trotskii argued for the establishment of a 'worker's government', in which the hegemony of the RSDWP would be guaranteed from the start.¹³ He believed more firmly in 'uninterrupted revolution' than Lenin. In his opinion a revolutionary government in which the social-democrats participated could not avoid overstepping the limits of capitalism, for the simple reason that the workers would demand that.¹⁴ But, like Lenin, he believed that in international isolation a proletarian-socialist project in Russia would be ultimately unsuccessful. The peasants, with their bourgeois mentality, would not accept it when their property was touched.

Shortly before the February Revolution of 1917, Lenin's concept of the democratic state underwent a change. In December 1916 the Leftist bolshevik Nikolai Bukharin wrote in 'Der imperialistische Raubstaat' that according to Marxism, after the revolution the whole state apparatus should be 'destroyed, gesprengt'. According to him, the socialists were as hostile towards the state as the anarchists. The difference between them lay not in their attitude towards the state, but merely in the fact that the former favoured centralisation and the latter decentralisation.¹⁵ Bukharin had offered an earlier version of the respective article to *Sotsial-demokrat*, but Lenin had refused to publish it, as an anarchist aberration.¹⁶ Also in December 1916 Lenin published a small critique of Bukharin's views, insisting that the difference between anarchists and socialists was that the former wanted to abolish the state, whereas the latter believed that the state would only wither away slowly after the expropriation of the bourgeoisie.¹⁷ However, a little later Lenin concluded that he had not been faithful to Marx, and that he owed a debt to Bukharin for making him see this.¹⁸

This exchange has sometimes been summarised in an oversimplified way, as if Bukharin's thesis completely harmonised with the original Marxism of Marx, and Lenin had it all wrong, measured by that yardstick. As a matter of fact, the classical position of Marx and Engels on the matter was more or less midway between the ones taken by Bukharin and Lenin. The time sequence foreseen by the two 'classics' of modern communism was that the proletarian-democratic state should first smash and shatter the old bureaucracy. In that sense Bukharin's conclusion was the orthodox one. He reached back beyond Kautsky to the original Marxism. However, in contrast to the anarchists, Marx and Engels did believe that, initially, some sort of state, a republic of direct democracy, should remain in existence until the time when the capitalist system would be completely overcome. Subsequently that limited state would gradually 'wither away', not be rudely shattered, because it was no longer a bureaucracy but already profoundly democratic. Here Bukharin, with his sweeping statement that Marxism favoured a smashing operation of the state in general, mixed things up. Lenin noted that correctly.

In any case, in early 1917 Lenin had come to realise, following Bukharin, that radical Marxism demanded a complete break-up of the existing state bureaucracy by the workers' councils and the democratic assembly. But it is crucial to my argument to recognise that this did not constitute Lenin's first discovery of direct democracy and anti-bureaucratism as such, but merely his realisation of the full scope of

these concepts in Marx's thinking. As we saw, already in 1906 he explained that the workers' soviets might serve as the embryo of the power structure of the new democratic Russia.

This conclusion is indirectly confirmed if we now take the views of the young bolshevik Iosif Dzhugashvili, the later Stalin, into consideration. That the establishment of a democratic republic was the first aim of the revolution was never in any doubt for him. In 1901 he acknowledged that his party's first mission was to win a 'broad *democratic constitution*', which would provide workers, peasants and capitalists with equal rights.¹⁹ Also, he agreed with Lenin's radical interpretation of the provisional government that was supposed to clear the path for this constitution. An article in *Proletariatis brdzola* of July 1905 was, to my knowledge, the first occasion on which he defended the formula of the 'democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry'.²⁰ Dzhugashvili hailed Lenin's formula as an original Russian contribution to Marxist revolutionary strategy. To reject the liberal bourgeoisie as an ally for the proletariat in favour of the peasantry, distinguished the bolshevik strategy from the one developed in revolutionary France a century before. The mistake of the mensheviks was to slavishly follow the French original.²¹

Unlike Lenin, who hesitated on this point, but in line with most other bolsheviks, Dzhugashvili shared the menshevik view that after the democratic revolution capitalism should first run its course before any thought could be given to the socialist transition. The democratic republic would, surely, 'clear the path to socialism'. It would serve as a 'bridge' to socialism, but only in the sense that it would establish 'political freedom'. The proletarian masses would have full freedom to wage the class struggle. But Dzhugashvili was convinced that the 'further extension of capitalist production and the proletarianisation of the majority of society' formed necessary preconditions for the establishment of socialism.²² However, like Lenin, the later Stalin envisaged the democratic republic in profoundly radical terms. In June 1906 *Akhali tskhovreba* published an article which was probably written by him and expressed this well:

the democratic republic is that political form in which not this or that group of capitalists rules, but the bourgeoisie as a unified and united class. However, in France the political balance swung towards the big bourgeoisie due to the bureaucracy, the standing army, the police etc. [...] there exists no democratic republic anywhere in Europe today. The French republic of 1793 was

democratic, the Paris Commune was democratic, and Russia is on its way towards a democratic republic. [...] Switzerland approaches the type of the 'democratic republic' most.²³

The thesis that in a true democratic republic the *whole* bourgeoisie ruled referred to the peasantry. Democratic Russia would be dominated by this petty-bourgeois class and its parties. It would be a state in which the bureaucracy, standing army and police would be subjected to democracy, and a Jacobin state with Commune-like institutions. On other occasions Dzhughashvili contrasted the big bourgeois-type republican conditions (France) with the 'democratic-republican conditions (which the Russian social-democracy demands)'. The democratic republic would destroy not only the remnants of serfdom and establish an eight-hour working day and heavy taxation of the rich, it would also abolish the standing army.²⁴ After 1907 there is not much of interest to be said concerning Stalin's views on the strategy of democratic revolution in Russia, until he returned to St. Petersburg from exile in early 1917. But we may draw three conclusions about his views on it. First, democratic Russia would be established by workers and peasants through a revolutionary dictatorship over the counter-revolution, which included the liberal bourgeoisie. Second, in the Russian democratic republic the bureaucracy would be subjected to some kind of radical-democratic Commune-like organs. And, third, democratic Russia would be capitalist, though in a form relatively favouring the workers and peasants.

MARCH AND APRIL 1917

These conclusions form the basis upon which I can proceed to discuss the proper issue of the present article, namely the course Stalin followed in the revolutionary year of 1917. When Nikolai II abdicated, Petrograd was ruled by the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, dominated by mensheviks and socialist-revolutionaries. In class terms, this was then the 'dictatorship of proletarians and peasants' the bolsheviks had dreamed of for more than a decade. But, to their amazement, the Soviet agreed to the establishment of a provisional government almost exclusively composed of capitalist parties. From a bolshevik point of view, that was unacceptable, because they believed a liberal-bourgeois government would never organise the elections for a Constituent Assembly. It would never agree to construct an authentic

democratic republic of a sufficiently radical type. The logical course for the bolsheviks to take would be to demand that the Soviet immediately appoint another provisional government, consisting exclusively of the RSDWP and peasant revolutionaries, that is, to demand an end to class collaboration.

And that is indeed what happened. Without a word from Lenin, the bolsheviks instinctively rejected the new government. At the time, the Russian Bureau of the Central Committee in Petrograd was dominated by Aleksandr Shliapnikov and Viacheslav Molotov. Its very first proclamation after the revolution was to decide that this was a 'counter-revolutionary' government with which there could be 'no agreements at all'. The Bureau called for the creation of a 'Provisional revolutionary government (dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry)', which was expected to convoke the Constituent Assembly, resulting in the establishment of a democratic republic.²⁵ But, as the majority of the workers and peasants appeared to support the government, the Bureau soon felt obliged to make tactical adaptations. It decided that, while any support for the government was out of the question, active resistance to it was impossible also. And, while it rejected Soviet co-operation with the government through a system of supervision over it, it did plead for finding ways to influence the government in the right direction.²⁶ But this relative moderation was a question of tactics. It had nothing to do with the question of whether Russia was ripe for socialism.

Meanwhile Stalin and Lev Kamenev hurried back to the capital from their exile in Siberia and they took control of the Bureau. On 13 March a telegram from Lenin was read out at the Bureau to plead for a tactic of 'complete distrust, no support for the new government whatsoever' and for 'arming the proletariat'.²⁷ This represented strong support for the original, radical line of the Bureau. But after Kamenev and Stalin's take-over, the bolshevik line developed in the opposite direction. In his articles Kamenev defended the principle of Soviet control over the government and conditional support for it. He pleaded for steady pressure on the government to force it to make peace, and even called on the Russian army to defend itself against the Germans as long as the war lasted. In an article of 16 March Stalin denied that Russia was now in a similar situation as France had been in 1792. The Russian provisional government was no revolutionary government, and he poured scorn on the concept of 'revolutionary defence'. Thus he distanced himself from Kamenev. But he did speak up for 'pressure' on the government to work towards the

establishment of peace, which was contrary to the spirit of Lenin's telegram.²⁸

Two days later Stalin demanded quick elections for a Constituent Assembly, to inaugurate the democratic republic. He did not trust the Provisional Government enough to believe that it would comply with this demand, though. This government represented 'the moderate bourgeoisie which is frightened by the "excesses" of the revolution', and it was not impossible that it would become prepared to serve as a "'legal" shield and cover for the counter-revolution which is organising itself'. Only the workers and the soldiers, that is, the peasants in arms, were trustworthy revolutionary forces, only they could be expected to guarantee the convocation of the Constituent Assembly:

We have need of an all-Russian organ of revolutionary struggle of the whole Russian democracy, sufficiently authoritative so as to be able to weld into one the democrats of the capital and the provinces and to develop at the right moment from an organ of revolutionary *struggle* into an organ of revolutionary *power*, mobilising all living forces of the people against the counter-revolution. Only an all-Russian Soviet of worker, soldier and peasant deputies can be such an organ. [...] we need another armed force, an army of armed workers, naturally linked to the centres of the revolutionary movement.²⁹

And there we have it. Like the radicals Shliapnikov and Molotov, Stalin recognised that the Provisional Government was a bourgeois one, and, like them, he was not prepared to accept its rule in Russia. The new government represented a sham democratic revolution instead of the democratic republic of soviets he wished to see established. Here we see, then, that Lenin's plea in April for Soviet government in Russia would not be new. Moreover, as such it had, again, nothing to do with the question of whether Russia was ripe for socialism or not. From a bolshevik standpoint, the need to overthrow the bourgeois provisional government and its replacement by a new one relying on the Soviets was almost self-evident; not because socialism would be on the agenda but because the capitalist bourgeoisie could not be trusted to organise the elections for the Constituent Assembly. The liberal politicians would somehow make a deal with the old regime and prevent full democratisation of the country.

The only point was that, in contrast to the original proclamation of the Bureau of the Central Committee, Stalin believed that one should

follow a more cautious policy until the moment that the government had proved in the eyes of the masses that it was on a course of betrayal of democracy. The 'right moment' for the Soviet to send it home would only be when it had proved by deeds that it was not prepared to convoke the Constituent Assembly. And, until that time, the Soviet should seek some limited forms of co-operation with the government. But, again, this was merely a question of short-term tactics and manoeuvring. It was unrelated to the fact that the revolution was still in a democratic stage.³⁰

In early March Lenin wrote several 'letters from afar', but in the opinion of *Pravda* his line towards the government was too irreconcilable. It published only one of them and omitted a passage in which all those supporting the new government in the interests of the struggle against tsarist reaction were declared traitors.³¹ The Bureau flatly ignored Lenin's commands not to co-operate with the government in any way. At a bolshevik conference which ended on 2 April, Stalin repeated his tactical line more forcefully. He described it as the task of the Soviet to supervise the Provisional Government. For the time being the government played a positive role as a 'consolidator of the achievements of the revolutionary people'. It would be unfavourable to force the events right now. But that the Provisional Government would eventually turn into a 'bulwark of the counterrevolution', was inevitable. For now, one should stick to a line of part support and part opposition. But once the government had discredited itself, power would be taken. 'The only organ capable of taking power is the Soviet of worker and peasant deputies on an all-Russian scale.'³²

The conference adopted a resolution in which the Provisional Government was described as representing the moderate bourgeois classes, and the Soviet was invited to organise 'vigilant control' over it, to ensure its co-operation in the liquidation of the remnants of the old regime. In another resolution, the government was called on to make a 'peace without annexations'. It also disapproved of any measures leading to disorganisation of the army. Its might ought to be preserved 'as a bulwark against the counter-revolution'.³³ In sum, for Stalin the defeated forces of tsarism were still the main enemy. All forces should be united against them, in order to guarantee that they should not return to power and that the Constituent Assembly was convoked. But he was adamant that the moderate bourgeois government would *not* carry out its promises to this effect. The Soviet should therefore prepare its overthrow and replacement by a worker-peasant

government that would. It should only co-operate with the government for as long as it did not sell out to the counter-revolution.

On 3 April Lenin returned to Petrograd and everything changed. The next day he presented his 'April Theses', which put an end to Stalin and Kamenev's dominance. The bolshevik leader insisted that, instead of turning into a 'parliamentary republic', Russia should become a 'republic of Soviets'. The police, standing army and officialdom should be removed. All high officials should be paid the average wage of a good worker, and they should be eligible and removable by the electors at all times. Lenin called this a 'Commune-state'. This was a radical formulation of Soviet power, but, as I showed just now, Stalin also had foreseen the establishment of a Soviet republic in the near future. Moreover, Lenin's ideal of the Soviet state was not conceived as a model opposed to the democratic republic, but referred to the radical-popular form he hoped the latter would assume. He argued that '*without* the Soviet of worker and soldier deputies the convocation of the Constituent Assembly is not guaranteed, its success is impossible'. In other words, Soviet power was not presented as an alternative to the assembly but as its precondition. What is more, Lenin did *not* propagate an immediate uprising to establish a new, revolutionary provisional government. Rather he proposed to convince the Soviet of the need to remove all capitalist parties from the government. In the meantime the slogan should be: 'No support whatsoever to the Provisional Government.'

This slogan precluded any further attempts to establish temporary working relations with the government. But, in itself, this slap in Stalin's face represented only a return to the policy laid down in the resolution of the Russian Bureau of early March. However, Lenin's fellow-bolsheviks were really flabbergasted by his wider perspective of a quick transition to socialism under the new democracy. He insisted that the special characteristic of the current moment in Russia consisted in

the transition from the first stage of the revolution, which gave power to the bourgeoisie as a consequence of the insufficient consciousness and organisation of the proletariat, to the second stage of it, which will give power into the hands of the proletariat and the poorest layers of the peasantry. [...] Not the 'introduction' of socialism as our immediate task, but right now only a transition to control by the [Soviets] over social production and the distribution of products.

Such steps should be only preparatory. The workers should for the time being only control the factories, which would remain in private hands. Only banks and land should be nationalised immediately. Large estates should not be split up but administered as a unit by the local Soviets, but a general co-operativisation of agriculture was not yet foreseen.³⁴ Nevertheless, this constituted a return to 'uninterrupted revolution'.

With his 'first stage of the revolution' Lenin did not refer to an economic era of full development of capitalism in Russia, but to the political task of bringing down the tsar. That mission was now accomplished. But, to his surprise, it had not resulted in a provisional revolutionary government of workers and peasants, but in one of the liberal bourgeoisie. He had not foreseen this, for he had not believed that the latter class would ever dare to bring Nicholas down. But now that it had happened, he wanted a revolutionary provisional government after all. In that demand he did not differ fundamentally from Stalin, who also wanted a new Soviet government of workers and peasants, to be reached only through a somewhat more careful tactic. From an orthodox bolshevik perspective, the originality of Lenin's April Theses lay in the fact that he wanted such a government to set course in the direction of socialism, for which he apparently believed support could be found among the poor layers of the Russian peasantry.

In late April the Séventh All-Russian Conference of the (bolshevik) RSDWP convened to discuss Lenin's new strategy. Kamenev agreed that the Soviets were the 'organising centres of our forces and the centres of power'. It was agreed by everyone, that the present government should be replaced by a new one of only workers' and peasant parties, directly relying on the Soviet and aiming for the establishment of a Soviet-democratic republic. Nobody voted against the resolution which adopted 'not a bourgeois-parliamentary republic, but a democratic proletarian-peasant republic' as the goal of the party. Lenin called his tactical differences with Kamenev 'not very big', because both men agreed on the need for an eventual Soviet take-over. Moreover, for his part Lenin agreed with Kamenev that no slogan for a revolutionary overthrow of the government should be given out. The slogan 'Down with the Provisional Government!' was premature. The course was a peaceful one, of convincing the Soviet to replace one Provisional Government with another. The tactical difference was that Lenin insisted on abstaining from any co-operation with the present government. Even attempts to establish control over it constituted a

form of class collaboration, and should therefore be rejected. 'Comr. Kamenev and I are on the same path except when it comes to the matter of control', he concluded.

The second difference concerned the economic perspective of the new Soviet-democratic republic. According to Kamenev, the Soviets represented a bloc of proletarian and peasant forces which should limit themselves to 'unfinished bourgeois-democratic tasks'. He remained adamantly against an 'immediate transformation of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into a socialist one'. And there was an important exchange between Lenin and Aleksei Rykov, with the latter denying and the former confirming that the 'initiative of the socialist revolution' could belong to backward Russia. Lenin insisted that Rykov's views presented an obsolete 'parody on Marxism'. Russian industry could be socialised, and, among the poor peasants, enough support could be found for transitional steps in the direction of socialism.³⁵ To sum up, the April conference confirmed that there were no differences on the *Soviet* perspective, but that there were on the question of *socialism*.

Stalin was strangely silent on these matters. In a short speech he called his own policy of Soviet control of the government 'ridiculous'.³⁶ But it seems that he was less than honest. It appears from notes in Lenin's works, probably made during the 1920s, that in retrospect he still considered the latter's rejection of any form of co-operation with the Provisional Government to have been a Leftist mistake.³⁷ And on the question of the socialist perspective he said nothing at all. It seems that he had not yet made up his mind. The main conclusion to be drawn from the March-April episode is that, in contrast to Lenin, the mainstream bolsheviks such as Stalin, Kamenev and Rykov adhered to the same view as the mensheviks concerning the need of a long period of capitalist development in Russia; but that they were, nevertheless, fundamentally hostile towards the bourgeois Provisional Government which they wanted to see replaced by a new, Soviet one. In that sense they had been 'Leninists' all along, even before Lenin's return to Russia.

TOWARDS OCTOBER

Stalin's performance in the subsequent months leading up to October should be characterised as radical-Soviet and socialist, though without the Blanquist spirit which now took hold of Lenin. When, in June 1917, the bolshevik Central Committee discussed the idea of organising an

armed demonstration of workers and peasants,³⁸ Kamenev and Zinov'ev opposed it, going against Lenin. Stalin, however, though urging caution, supported the idea of a demonstration under the slogan 'All power to the Soviets'. As he said that same day on another occasion: 'It is our duty to organise this demonstration, it will be a review of our forces. At the sight of the armed soldiers the bourgeoisie will take cover.'³⁹ On 9 June an appeal to all workers to take to the streets appeared, written by Stalin. It attacked the 'ten capitalist ministers' and called for a transfer of all power to the Soviets.⁴⁰ The First All-Russian Congress of Soviets, which was in session, demanded that the demonstration be cancelled. The bolshevik Central Committee decided to comply, against Lenin's wish, with this demand. Stalin disagreed with the reversal, and even handed in his resignation from the Central Committee in protest, though this was apparently not accepted.⁴¹

The situation yet turned in favour of the Bolsheviks. When the Congress of Soviets decided to hold a demonstration of its own on 18 June, most of the hundreds of thousands of demonstrators turned out marching under bolshevik slogans. The mood among the workers and soldiers was swinging in the bolshevik direction. Yet, bolshevik fortunes would go through one more reversal before October. On 4 July the Petrograd garrison carried out an armed demonstration in the capital. The bolshevik Central Committee hesitated about what to do, but finally decided to support it under the slogan of 'All Power to the Soviets!' But the event ended with a warrant for the arrest of Lenin and Zinov'ev, who went into hiding. The socialist-revolutionary Kerenskii now became prime minister. This was the climax of a process of the Soviet taking the government ever more directly in hand, without however abrogating its policy of coalition with the liberal-bourgeois politicians.

Now that the government, dominated by mensheviks and socialist-revolutionaries began to suppress the Bolsheviks, Lenin gave up his hope that the Soviet could ever be convinced to establish a government without liberal or conservative parties. In four theses (prepared for publication by Stalin) he withdrew the slogan of 'All power to the Soviets', because in his view these organs had irrevocably compromised themselves through their collaboration with the bourgeoisie.⁴² And he concluded a few days later:

After the experience of July 1917 it is precisely the revolutionary proletariat which must independently take state power into its

hands [...] Power for the proletariat, support of it by the poorest peasants or semi-proletariat – that's the only way out [...] In this new revolution Soviets can and must appear, but *not* the present Soviets.⁴³

In other words, instead of a broad coalition government of social-democrats and socialist-revolutionaries appointed by the Soviet, Lenin now called for a 'worker's government', such as Trotskii had aimed for from the beginning of the century. In practice this would come down to a bolshevik dictatorship, because Lenin no longer found majority Soviet support essential. But the party leadership was not prepared to follow its leader in his desperate tactics. His theses were discussed at an extended meeting of the Central Committee on 13–14 July. There seem to have been two tendencies, the one in favour of retaining the slogan of 'All power to the Soviets!', and the other of those prepared to comply with Lenin's demand and withdraw it at least on paper. Stalin was probably among the second group.⁴⁴ The meeting ended without firm decisions. The adopted resolution called for the 'concentration of all power in the hands of revolutionary proletarian and peasant Soviets', without saying whether these would be the current Soviets or new ones.⁴⁵ Clearly the Central Committee refused to cut the party's ties with the existing Soviet network.

From 16 to 20 July the Petrograd organisation of the bolshevik RSDWP convened at a special conference to discuss the new situation. In his speech Stalin agreed with Lenin's judgement that the chances of peaceful formation of a broad socialist government were lost. The old policy of coalition with the mainstream mensheviks and socialist-revolutionaries should be abandoned. He proposed instead a new, more exclusive 'scheme of unification of the left flank of the revolution'. Moreover he adopted the Trotskii-Lenin formula of proletarian minority rule: 'Comrades who say that the dictatorship of the proletariat is impossible because the proletariat constitutes a minority of the population have a mechanical understanding of what a majority is.' But Stalin did not believe in a single-handed Bolshevik *coup d'état*. The revolutionary government would be one of a 'class, leading along the poorest layers of the peasantry', not a 'dictatorship of our party'. Stalin apparently did not want the party to take power without the sanction of the Soviets. Only when asked directly, he admitted that the slogan 'All power to the Soviets' was no longer appropriate. But he added, 'We are of course for those Soviets where we are in the majority. And we'll try to create such Soviets.'⁴⁶

Stalin had now absorbed Lenin's radical interpretation of the Soviet-democratic state, and he was not prepared to give it up again. On 27 July he wrote in favour of a 'people's republic without a standing army, without a bureaucracy, without a police'. There should be a popular militia and a system of elected officials.⁴⁷ After Lenin and Zinov'ev's temporary disappearance, Stalin once again played a leading role in the bolshevik Central Committee. At the Sixth Party Congress, opening in late July, he presented the political report, in which he came close to rejecting Lenin's conclusions openly. He acknowledged that the demand to give all power to the leading organ of the Soviets in Petrograd, the Central Executive Committee, was futile because it was hopelessly corrupt. But he added: 'And that's the only point we make. The question of overthrowing the Soviets is mere fantasy.' It was laid down in a resolution that the Soviets would be defended against 'counter-revolutionary onslaughts'.⁴⁸ Stalin and his colleagues took the sting out of Lenin's tactical about-turn. Instead of working towards a *coup d'état*, the Central Committee hoped yet to draw the Soviets to the side of the bolsheviks, and *make them* establish a Bolshevik government.⁴⁹ The Sixth Party Congress was also the occasion for Stalin to speak up unequivocally for the socialist perspective of the Russian revolution. Together with Bukharin, he was the most prominent figure there to defend this thesis emphatically.⁵⁰

Meanwhile, the so-called Kornilov Affair in August forced public opinion to the left. Though Lenin and Zinov'ev did not dare to re-emerge, the Bolsheviks were the main party to profit from the affair. On 31 August the bolshevik Central Committee adopted a resolution to be proposed to the CEC to the effect that the Soviets should abandon their policy of 'conciliationism'. All bourgeois politicians should be removed from the Provisional Government. The 'democratic republic' ought to be finally proclaimed, and it was to dedicate itself to a radical programme which included 'workers' control' and the nationalisation of various branches of industry. This put the Central Committee back on its course of 'All Power to the Soviets!'. And it was an immediate success. Though the CEC did not accept the resolution, the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets did.⁵¹ During September the bolsheviks gained the majority in these two strategic Soviets. On 6 September Stalin wrote in *Rabochii put'* that 'the Soviets and Committees which had died have come back to life', and three days later he predicted a break between the Soviets and the Provisional Government.⁵²

This rising Bolshevik influence in the Soviets opened the road to the formation of a Bolshevik provisional government. Between 12 and 14 September Lenin notified the Central Committee that, now that the bolsheviks had acquired a majority in the two main Soviets, they could and should take state power into their hands.⁵³ But when on 15 September the Central Committee discussed Lenin's call for a bolshevik uprising, no-one supported it.⁵⁴ The committee put its faith in the fact that the party would probably be in the majority at the coming Second Congress of Soviets. As editor of the party's newspaper *Rabochii put'*, Stalin adhered to the line of the Central Committee, of pushing the Soviets to the formation of a new government. Under his editorship, articles by Lenin which had a bearing on an uprising were not fully published, or with considerable delay.⁵⁵ On 17 September Stalin wrote again that the Soviets which seemed to have died were coming alive. 'Once again they take the steering wheel, leading the revolutionary masses. *All Power to the Soviets* – that is the slogan of the new movement.'⁵⁶

Meanwhile Lenin was writing angry letters to the Central Committee accusing it of waiting for the Congress instead of organising an uprising.⁵⁷ On 10 October the committee convened in Lenin's presence for the first time again. The leader had sneaked out of his hiding place for a brief moment. According to Trotskii's account, he tried to convince Lenin that the bolshevik take-over should take place simultaneously with the Congress of Soviets in which the bolshevik majority was assured. But Lenin insisted that the uprising must be carried out earlier and independently of the congress. Lenin was alone in this. Stalin probably took Trotskii's position. A resolution was adopted to the effect that an armed uprising was on the agenda. It was important in that it expressed the aim of a bolshevik government. But, as a decision for an uprising, it was hollow, for it was not laid down whether the uprising would precede the Soviet congress or coincide with it. Ten of the attending members of the committee, including Stalin and Trotskii, voted in favour. Two, Zinov'ev and Kamenev, were against the motion because they still wanted a socialist coalition government.⁵⁸

The Central Committee in effect ignored the resolution, or silently assumed that it referred to the time of the Soviet congress. On 13 October Stalin repeated: 'Finally the moment has arrived when the slogan "All power to the Soviets!" must be realised.' The new Soviet government, a 'dictatorship of the proletariat and the revolutionary peasantry', would entail more than simply the formation of a 'new

"cabinet" of "socialist" ministers'. It would be an 'open, mass dictatorship'.⁵⁹ On 16 October the Central Committee met again in Lenin's presence. Nothing had been done in the meantime about an uprising. The discussion repeated itself. Stalin had this to say:

The day of the uprising must be well chosen [*tselesoobrazen*]. [...] We could say that we must wait for an attack [by the government, E.v.R.], but we must understand what an attack is; driving up the prices of bread, sending the cossacks to the Don region etc. All that already constitutes an attack. [...] What Kamenev and Zinov'ev propose leads objectively to providing the counter-revolution with the opportunity to organise itself; we'll retreat endlessly and lose the whole revolution. Why shouldn't we give ourselves the possibility of choosing the day and the conditions [...]?⁶⁰

These remarks leave no doubt as to Stalin's support for a bolshevik take-over. He even suggested that it might precede the Soviet Congress, which would mean that he would have joined Lenin's tactic. But, then again, he did not state that such timing was imperative.⁶¹ The Central Committee adopted a new resolution, expressing confidence that 'the CC and the Soviet' would determine the favourable moment for the armed uprising. This formula suggests that Trotskii's approach of attuning the take-over to the Congress of Soviets was adopted. The resolution was again adopted against Zinov'ev and Kamenev's votes. This time a 'Military-Revolutionary Centre' was established to lead the uprising. It consisted of five men, one of whom was Stalin. But it was supposed to function as part of the recently established (and Bolshevik controlled) Military Revolutionary Committee of the Petrograd Soviet – which is additional proof of acceptance of Trotskii's tactics.⁶² However, the bolshevik centre never became operative, and Stalin played no role in the military preparation for the uprising.⁶³

Some time between 20 and 23 October Lenin agreed to carry out the uprising through the Soviet Committee, but he continued to demand that it happen *before* 25 October, the day the Congress was to open. According to Alexander Rabinowitch, Trotskii continued to reject a take-over *before* that date. His tactic was to provoke the government enough so as to let it launch an attack on the Petrograd Soviet. The uprising could then be presented as a defence measure by the Soviet. The climactic struggle might take place while the Congress was already in session, perhaps even after it had proclaimed a new government. In this scheme there was no date. Rabinowitch also

concluded that Stalin supported Trotskii's tactic.⁶⁴ And there is every reason to believe that this was the case. In 1920 he admitted it that the tactic of the Central Committee had been to convoke the congress of Soviets, then begin the uprising and declare the congress to be the organ of revolutionary power. Lenin had not agreed and had urged the Committee to hold the uprising straight away. But 'we *praktiki*, ... despite all of Il'ich's demands, did not obey him, we continued on the road of strengthening the Soviets and carried the matter forward to the congress of Soviets of 25 October, to the successful uprising'.⁶⁵

Meanwhile Trotskii's plan unfolded. On 21 October the Military Revolutionary Committee, of which he was one of the chairmen, formally declared that it would take authority over the Petrograd garrison. This was mutiny and the government could do nothing but take the bait. They rejected the Soviet claim, whereupon the Committee took full control of the troops. In response, on the morning of 24 October the ailing Provisional Government finally went into action. It shut down the printing plant of *Rabochii put'*, disconnected the telephone lines of the Smol'nyi, where the bolsheviks had their headquarters, and ordered the arrest of the commissars whom the Military Revolutionary Committee had sent to the garrison units.⁶⁶

That was it. But that morning the majority of the latter Committee headed by Trotskii decided against an all-out uprising and in favour of a defensive posture.⁶⁷ The Central Committee also convened that morning, in Lenin's and Stalin's absence. Kamenev proposed that, on that day, all members of the committee ought to remain at the Smol'nyi. It was decided to send troops to open up the printing plant and ensure publication of *Rabochii put'*. Furthermore, tasks were distributed among those present, such as 'observation' of the government, contacts with the Left SR's and with the organisations of workers in postal and railway services. A reserve centre in another building was organised in case the Smol'nyi headquarters was taken over by the government. The committee stuck to the idea of organising a high-profile military defence against the government, bordering on an offensive but without really going over that line. *No decision for an uprising, for an offensive operation, was taken.*⁶⁸

In his biography of Stalin, Trotskii called the session of the Central Committee the one that 'directly launched the insurrection'. By giving the session such significance, he made Stalin's absence into something significant, which it was not. Trotskii added that no one mentioned Stalin or proposed any sort of appointment for him. He simply dropped out of the game.⁶⁹ The reason for Stalin's absence was that he

was at the *Rabochii put'* offices, which had just been under attack, and where he made sure that the paper could still appear with his editorial in it.⁷⁰ He did not need to be given an assignment as he was the only Central Committee member already at his post. Slusser follows Trotskii in describing the CC session as the one where last-minute preparations and assignments for the seizure of power were made. And he believed that, due to his absence, Stalin may have been ignorant about the whole operation as it was happening.⁷¹ Slusser's claim is based on Stalin's 24 October editorial for *Rabochii put'*:

After the victory of the February revolution power remained in the hands of the landlords and the capitalists [...] We must correct this mistake right now. The moment has come when a further delay threatens the whole cause of the revolution with disaster. We have to replace the present government of landlords and capitalists with a new government of workers and peasants. [...] gather all your forces, rise up to a man, as one man, organise meetings, elect delegations and explain your demands through them to the Congress of Soviets, which opens tomorrow in the Smol'nyi. [...] The old government will make room for a new one peacefully to the degree to which you come out strong, organised and powerfully. [...] We must have a new government, elected by the Soviets, removable by the Soviets, responsible towards the Soviets. Only such a government can guarantee a timely convocation of the Constituent Assembly.⁷²

According to Slusser, this was out of line with reality because nothing was said about any armed uprising.⁷³ However, all Bolsheviks from Lenin to Kamenev wanted the Congress to proclaim a new government the next day. And the fact that Stalin did not call for an armed uprising is not surprising, for the simple reason that *no decision about an armed uprising had been taken*. During the day, bolshevik armed forces fortified themselves on the bridges across the Neva and other strategic spots. But they did not launch an offensive against the government.⁷⁴

In the afternoon Stalin and Trotskii addressed a meeting of bolshevik delegates at the Smol'nyi for the forthcoming Congress of Soviets. Stalin assured his comrades that the purpose of the military actions was defensive. He noted accurately that there were two tendencies in the Military Revolutionary Committee, one favouring an immediate armed uprising, and the other to gather forces first. The Central Committee supported the latter.⁷⁵ Slusser comments that Stalin

was apparently unaware of the fact that the Central Committee had held a meeting earlier in the day. However, the fact that he did not mention this does not indicate that he was not aware of it. It is simply unbelievable that Stalin addressed a meeting of bolshevik delegates together with Trotskii and was unaware of what was going on. Slusser also holds that Stalin's remarks about the defensive nature of the military operations show that he did not realise that the Military Committee had assumed responsibility for an uprising.⁷⁶ But Stalin's remarks were in line with Trotskii's, who said on the same occasion that he did not intend to arrest the government that day. His plan was 'to defend ourselves and gradually to expand our sphere of authority so as to build a solid foundation for tomorrow's Congress of Soviets'. The Congress would create a new Provisional Government.⁷⁷ Thus, Stalin operated in close harmony with Trotskii. Slusser's conclusions are therefore untenable.

Since the afternoon meeting at the latest, Stalin was at the Smol'nyi Bolshevik headquarters.⁷⁸ Meanwhile Lenin was still in hiding, and he was getting tremendously agitated. In the evening he wrote a hysterical letter to the Central Committee, arguing that now everything hung by a thread. Congresses, even congresses of Soviets, did not decide matters, 'It is necessary to arrest the government this evening, this night, whatever the cost [...] We can't wait!! We may lose everything!!'⁷⁹ When Lenin finally arrived at the Smol'nyi around midnight, no decision for an offensive against the government had been taken. The atmosphere at the moment of his arrival has been described by one of those present 'as if we were waiting for something, as if yet something else should happen, after which the real uprising would begin'. With Lenin's arrival, the situation changed completely. The military operations suddenly turned offensive, and after a few hours power in the capital lay largely in the hands of the Military Committee and thus of the bolsheviks.⁸⁰

Thus Lenin single-handedly pushed through his so-called revolution. But if he had not reached Smol'nyi in the evening, most likely the Congress of Soviets, which had a small bolshevik majority,⁸¹ would have voted in a bolshevik provisional government the next day anyway. Throughout 1917 it had been the understanding between the government and the Soviet that the former derived its legitimacy from the latter. The Soviet was the main factor to determine the composition of the government. Measured by that yardstick, the new bolshevik regime was simply the next Provisional Government, and a more or less legitimate one at that. Strictly speaking, it only turned into a

dictatorship when the Constituent Assembly was dissolved early the next year. From this perspective, the military activities which the bolsheviks undertook during the night of 24 to 25 October and which have entered world history as the 'October Revolution', were not only no revolution, but not even a real *coup d'état*. They did not create a new reality but expressed one that had already come about, namely the 'bolshevisation' of the majority of the Soviets. If this is an adequate analysis, then the 'October revolution' was, really, a non-event.

The myth of Stalin 'missing the revolution' is based on a suggestive combination of events. There is, firstly, the fact that his membership of the so-called 'Military-Revolutionary Centre' was meaningless. He played no role in the military aspect of the take-over. Secondly, he was absent from the Central Committee meeting on the morning of 24 October. Thirdly, his *Rabochii put'* editorial of that day did not mention any uprising. And fourthly, in the afternoon of the same day he insisted that no decision on offensive operations had been taken. But I hope to have shown that all of these events, though true in themselves, do not add up to a proof of the thesis. Stalin's role in the 'October revolution' was indeed modest. He was the editor of the party's newspaper. But he was fully aware of what was going on, and he acted in accordance with the line of Trotskii and the Central Committee majority. That line was to urge the Congress of Soviets to appoint a new, bolshevik Provisional Government. That Stalin held on to this confirms, once again, the importance he attached to the idea of a Soviet state. In fact, the Soviet idea was the leitmotif running through his activities throughout 1917 from March to October.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, in this article I have criticised the thesis that, as a typical 'old bolshevik', Stalin believed that Russia needed an extended period of capitalist development, which was only thinkable under the political rule of the liberal bourgeoisie, and which, again, turned him into a critical follower of the Provisional Government almost automatically. Against this I argued, that only the *socialist perspective* contained in Lenin's April policies was new. The hope that the democratic republic would take on a *Soviet form*, and would be dominated by revolutionary popular parties instead of liberal-capitalist ones, was part of bolshevik doctrine already. Lenin only formulated it more sharply. Before the latter's return to Russia, Stalin had already announced that, in time, the Provisional Government should be brought down and replaced by

a Soviet one. And, in October, he did not hesitate to work towards such a take-over by the Soviets, and harmoniously participated in that venture. He did not need to be convinced of its timeliness. It was a perspective he had stood for all along.

NOTES

1. Robert C. Tucker, *Stalin as Revolutionary. 1879–1929: A Study in History and Personality* (New York/London, 1974), p.164.
2. Robert M. Slusser, *Stalin in October: The Man Who Missed the Revolution* (Baltimore/London, 1987), p.54.
3. Slusser, op. cit., pp.238f.
4. See Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Werke*, Vol.5 (Berlin, 1971), pp.194–7, 236–7, 401–4.
5. Karl Kautsky, *Das Erfurter Programm in seinem grundsätzlichen Teil erläutert* (Berlin/Bonn/Bad Godesberg, 1974), pp.124–5, 212, 216–17.
6. Karl Kautsky, *Die soziale Revolution*, Vol.II, *Am Tage nach der sozialen Revolution* (Berlin, 1902), p.16; 'Die neue Taktik, IV. Die Eroberung der Staatsgewalt (Schluss)', *Die Neue Zeit*, Vol.2, No.46, XXX, 16 Aug. 1912, pp.725, 727, 732.
7. *Kommunisticheskaia partiia Sovetskogo Soiuza v rezoliutsiiakh i resheniiakh s'ezdov, konferentsii i plenumov TsK*, Vol.1, 1898–1925 (Moscow, 1953), pp.40–41 [KPSS].
8. Lenin, V.I. *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, Vol.12, *Oktiabr' 1905-aprel' 1906* (Moscow, 1960), pp.317–18 [PSS].
9. PSS, Vol.10, p.333.
10. See PSS, Vol.10, pp.11, 13, 18. See also KPSS, Vol.1, pp.77–8.
11. PSS, Vol.10, pp.26, 28; Vol.11, pp.34–6, 40, 44, 74.
12. PSS, Vol.11, p.222.
13. Leon Trotsky, *The Permanent Revolution & Results and Prospects* (New York, 1978), p.70.
14. Ibid., pp. 80, 104–5, 115.
15. See PSS, Vol.33, pp.333, 336–7. The full text of the article, with Lenin's comments can be found here (pp.331–8).
16. See Sidney Heitman (ed.), *Nikolai I. Bukharin: A Bibliography* (Stanford, CA, 1969), p.29.
17. V.I. Lenin, *Sochineniia*, Vol.XIX, 1916–1917 (Moscow/Leningrad, 1929), p.296.
18. PSS, Vol.49, pp.388, 390–91.
19. I.V. Stalin, *Sochineniia*, Vol.1, 1901–1907 (Moscow, 1946), p.31 [Sochineniia].
20. *Rossiiskii Tsentr Khraneniia i Izucheniia Dokumentov Noveishei Istorii*, f.71, op.10, d.169, ll. 214, 216 [RTsKhIDNI].
21. *Sochineniia*, Vol.1, pp.149f; Vol.2, pp.10f; see also pp.60f.
22. *Sochineniia*, Vol.1, pp.256, 268, 342–3. See also pp.220–21, 223. Decades later Stalin acknowledged that, at the time, he had not appreciated Lenin's suggestions of uninterrupted revolution. See *ibid.*, pp.xii–xiii.
23. RTsKhIDNI, f.71, op.10, d.183, ll.105–06. For a discussion of Stalin's authorship: ll.109–14.
24. *Sochineniia*, Vol.1, p.343; see also RTsKhIDNI, f.71, op.10, d.181, ll.130–32.
25. 'Protokoly i rezoliutsii Biuro TsK RSDRP(b) (mart 1917g.)', *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, 1962, No.3, pp.136–7.
26. Ibid., pp.141–3.
27. Ibid., p.145.
28. *Sochineniia*, Vol.3, pp.5–6, 8.
29. Ibid., pp.12–14.

30. See also D.A. Longley, 'The Divisions in the Bolshevik Party in March 1917', *Soviet Studies*, Vol.XXIV, July 1972, No.1, p.68.
31. PSS, Vol.31, pp.503-4; see also V.E. Evgrafov, 'Nekotorye voprosy taktiki partii v marte-nachale apreliia 1917 goda', *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, No.3, 1962, p.52.
32. 'Protokoly Vserossiiskogo (martovskogo) soveshchaniia partiinykh rabotnikov. 27 marta-2 apreliia 1917 goda', *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, No.5, 1962, pp.111-12.
33. Ibid. ('Okonchanie'), *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, No.6, 1962, pp.136-7, 141.
34. PSS, Vol.31, pp.112, 114-17.
35. *Sed'maia (aprel'skaia) vserossiiskaia konferentsiia RSDRP (bol'shevikov). Petrogradskaia obshchegorodskaia konferentsiia RSDRP (bol'shevikov). April' 1917 goda. Protokoly* (Moscow, 1958), pp.75-6, 79-80, 107, 111-12, 235-6, 258.
36. Ibid, p.101.
37. In his draft theses of 4 March 1917 Lenin had written that no blocs or agreements of whatever kind with Kerenskii, Potresov and other 'defencists' should be entered into. In a 1924 copy of them Stalin wrote: 'And subsequently we entered into them ("on compromise").' In a 1925 copy he commented on the same passage: 'Well, well! And the "infantile disease"? And "compromises"?'. Furthermore in his letter of 22(9) March Lenin had uncharacteristically praised the idea of a workers' and soldiers' 'Committee of supervision' over the new government. Again Stalin commented in both copies: 'The "control", which we subsequently rejected'; and: 'There it is! ... ("control")'. See RTsKhIDNI, f.558, op.3, d.183, pp.322, 342; d.177, pp.12, 31; see also p.32. Stalin also attached importance to it that, before July 1917, Lenin had not demanded an armed uprising against the Provisional Government. See: *Sochineniia*, Vol.6, pp.380-82, 388-9. In an undated copy of Iaroslavskii's *History of the VKP(b)* he wrote: 'You have to note, that in his [April] theses [Lenin] did not propose the overthrow of the Prov. gov-nt.' Before July there had been no slogan 'Down with ...'. See RTsKhIDNI, f.558, op.3, d.381, pp.224, 227. And in an undated copy of Trotskii's *The October Revolution*, Stalin also commented in the margin that during the demonstrations in June 1917 the bolsheviks had not marched under the slogan 'Down with the provisional government'. See *ibid.*, d.362, pp.20, 22.
38. See Joel Carmichael (ed.), *The Russian Revolution: A Personal Record by N.N. Sukhanov* (Princeton, NJ, 1984), pp.403f; Richard Pipes, *The Russian Revolution* (New York, 1990), pp.414-15.
39. D.A. Chugaev et al., *Revoliutsionnoe dvizhenie v Rossii v mae-iune 1917 g. Iiun'skaia demonstratsiia* (Moscow, 1959), pp.486, 491; see also Carmichael, op. cit., p.405.
40. Chugaev et al., op.cit., p.495
41. A.M. Sovokin, 'K istorii iun'skoi demonstratsii 1917g.', *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, May 1966, No.5, pp.49, 52; Carmichael, op. cit., p.405.
42. PSS, Vol.34, p.2. For Stalin's work on the theses see A.M. Sovokin, 'Rasshirennoe soveshchanie TsK RSDRP(b) 13-14 iulia 1917 goda', *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, 1959, No.4, p.128.
43. PSS, Vol.34, p.16.
44. Sovokin, op. cit, 1959, p.133.
45. KPSS, Vol.1, p.370.
46. *Sochineniia*, Vol.3, pp.118, 120, 122, 124-5. See also Robert H. McNeal, *Stalin's Works: An Annotated Bibliography* (Stanford, CA, 1967), pp.48-9.
47. *Sochineniia*, Vol.3, p.154.
48. *Shestoi s'ezd RSDRP (bol'shevikov). Avgust 1917 goda. Protokoly* (Moscow, 1958), pp.113, 122, 256-7.
49. In 1924 Stalin acknowledged that Lenin had wanted to prepare 'an uprising outside the Soviets', but the Central Committee and the VI Congress of the party took a more careful line, having decided that there was no foundation for considering a revival of the Soviets to be excluded. See *Sochineniia*, Vol.6, pp.340-41.

50. See *Shestoi s'ezd RSDRP (bol'shevikov) ...*, pp.14, 103–5, 111–12, 114, 128, 134–5, 138, 142–3, 250, 257, 283, 285.
51. *Protokoly Tsentral'nogo komiteta RSDRP(b). Avgust 1917-fevral' 1918* (Moscow, 1958), pp.37–8, 257.
52. *Sochineniia*, Vol.3, pp.272, 284; see also p.292.
53. *PSS*, Vol.34, p.239.
54. See *Protokoly Tsentral'nogo komiteta ...*, p.55; Pipes, op. cit., p.472.
55. See P.N. Pospelov et al. (eds.), *Istoriia kommunisticheskoi partii Sovetskogo Soiuza*, Vol.3, *Kommunisticheskaiia partiia- organizator pobedy velikoi oktiabr'skoi sotsialisticheskoi revoliutsii i oborony sovetskoi respubliki. Mart 1917-1920g. Kniga pervaiia (mart 1917-mart 1918g.)* (Moscow, 1967), pp.298–9; see also Slusser, op. cit., p.223.
56. *Sochineniia*, Vol.3, p.297. See also pp.272, 284, 292.
57. *PSS*, Vol.34, pp.280–82, 340.
58. See Pipes, op. cit., p.482; Leon Trotsky, *Stalin: An Appraisal of the Man and His Influence* (London, 1947), p.229; *Protokoly Tsentral'nogo komiteta ...*, pp.84–6, 88, 90.
59. *Sochineniia*, Vol.3, pp.368–70.
60. *Protokoly Tsentral'nogo komiteta ...*, pp.99–100.
61. For an analysis of the dispute on 16 October, see Alexander Rabinowitch, *The Bolsheviks Come to Power: The Revolution of 1917 in Petrograd* (New York, 1978), pp.221–3.
62. *Protokoly Tsentral'nogo komiteta ...*, p.104; on the establishment of the Soviet committee and Lenin's initial refusal to organise the uprising through it see Rabinowitch, op. cit., pp.231–3, 237; Pipes, op. cit., pp.478–80.
63. Trotsky, op. cit., pp.232–3.
64. Rabinowitch, op. cit., pp.224–5, 234–6, 246.
65. *Sochineniia*, Vol.4, pp.317–18.
66. Pipes, op. cit., pp.486–90; Rabinowitch, op. cit., pp.241–8.
67. Rabinowitch, op. cit., pp.250–51; A.M. Sovokin, 'V.I. Lenin v dni oktiabria', *Voprosy istorii KPSS*, No.4, April 1987, p.55.
68. *Protokoly Tsentral'nogo komiteta ...*, pp.119–21; see also: Rabinowitch, op. cit., pp.251–2.
69. Trotsky, op. cit., pp.233–4.
70. The editorial was produced after the government attack, see P.V. Volobuev et al. (eds.), *Politicheskie deiateli Rossii 1917. Biograficheskii slovar'* (Moscow, 1993), p.305.
71. Slusser, op. cit., pp.239–40.
72. *Sochineniia*, Vol.3, pp.388–90.
73. Slusser, op. cit., p.242.
74. See Rabinowitch, op. cit., pp.267–8; Sovokin, op. cit., 1987, pp.55–7; Pospelov et al., op. cit., p.320.
75. Cit. in Slusser, op. cit., p.243.
76. Ibid., pp.244, 247.
77. Cit. in Rabinowitch, op. cit., p.253.
78. David Sagirashvili met him there around midnight, and he said: 'The matter is decided, our victory is guaranteed.' See D. Sagirashvili, 'Stalin (Iz vospominanii i razmyshlenii)', *Vestnik instituta po izucheniiu istorii i kul'tury SSSR*, No.2(9), March–April 1954, pp.67–8.
79. *PSS*, Vol.34, p.435.
80. Pospelov et al., op. cit., p.322; E.A. Lutskii, 'Memuarnye istochniki o zasedanii TsK RSDRP(b) 24–25 oktiabria 1917 g.', *Sovetskie arkhivy*, No.4, 1980, p.28; Rabinowitch, op. cit., pp.268–9; Carmichael, op. cit., p.620.
81. See Pospelov et al., op. cit., pp.329–31; Pipes, op. cit., pp.496–9.