

RUSSIA IN 1917: WHO HELPED THE BOLSHEVIKS' VICTORY?

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Abstract: The relevance of the research is determined not only by the centenary of the Russian revolution and global political instability, but also by the attempts of overcoming the academic science's dependence from the government propaganda. Purpose of the research is to analyze the driving forces of the revolution of 1917 and causes of the Bolsheviks' victory. Research methods: The author uses the dialectics, positivism, principle of historicism, and deconstructivism in the paper. The selection of methods was due to avoiding party and political impact. Marxism was in use in the field of the terms like the masses, classes. Research results The study analyzed actions of social groups and individuals like townsfolk, soldiers and sailors, representatives of all-Russian and regional governing bodies. The paper provides a brief characteristics of the problem's historiography. Th author proposes new explanation to the causes of the rise of the Bolsheviks popularity in late 1917. Practical relevance lies in the fact that this study

explains meaningful and unconscious actions of the government towards possible prevention of revolutionary bursts in future.

Keywords: Russian revolution in 1917, soldiery, townsfolk, the Bolsheviks, V.I. Lenin.

1. Introduction

Russian revolution of 1917 is the most important event of the XX century. Hundreds of books and thousands of papers dealing with it have been published by Russian and foreign authors. Until now, the researchers are being under political influence from the governing bodies in the process of considering various aspects of the crucial points (Buldakov, 2009). It results in the emergence of propagandist popular scientific works. They do not take into account the huge range of problems in Russian society in the early XX century (for example, Nikonov, 2011). The grandson of the famous Bolshevik and Stalin's cohort V.M. Molotov, a modern

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political scientist and delegate V. Nikonov believes that the main driving force of the revolution was the Russian elite that carried the great masses of the people with it. Such rendering of revolutionary events, beneficial to the authorities, does not reflect the whole essence of Russian revolution in 1917.

Soviet historiography was even more influenced by the authorities, since the party approach was the only one in historical science (Gerasimenko, 1995). The work of Soviet historians resulted in the accumulation of important vast historiographic information. However, their ideological valuations could not pass the test of time. The methodological and theoretical dispute in modern science led to the affirmation of the importance of an integrated approach to studying the revolution (Fel'dman, 2015). It is necessary to take into account the logic of the development the day earlier and in 1917, when many political forces tried not to operate the revolution, but to adapt it for their needs (Gerasimenko, 1995).

This paper aims at analyzing the social groups (soldiers and townsfolk) and the activities of certain individuals (members of the Provisional Government and their followers) that

contributed to the Bolsheviks victory in 1917. To confirm the assumptions put forward, the facts of the all-Russian and regional levels are cited. The North Caucasus in that year is taken as an example of the Russian province: this region is a one-off in the country. However, the peculiarities of the “North Caucasian” revolution reflect the specifics all Russia.

2. Methodological Framework

2.1 Sources

The research is based on materials from regional archives (Krasnodar and Stavropol), recollections of witnesses, articles and notes from the central and regional press, as well as statistical data. They illustrate the assumptions made, complement each other, have verifiable data, and are available for confirmation and other investigations. The recollections give valuable historical evidence in the author's interpretation and help to evaluate a complex trend of public mood. Press materials allow one to feel the emotions and feelings of representatives of different groups of the population, representatives of parties and public organizations. The absence of propaganda and ideological censorship

allowed the revolution contemporaries to openly express all their thoughts in 1917. Magazines and newspapers as the main media of the time acted as a tool for shaping public opinion, influencing the moods of both society as a whole, and its individual classes, social strata and groups in particular. The party affiliation of some newspapers allows to see the non-Bolshevik view of the events of the revolution. The statistics illustrate and supplement the research conclusions in terms of studying the number of urban population and soldiers in the North Caucasus.

2.2 Research methods:

The principle of historicism is a methodological basis of the study. It reveals the interaction of the studied phenomena, the cause-effect relations and the context of the epoch. The principle of historicism is the application of materialistic tools in historical research. It is a special case of a general materialistic interpretation of the world's existence.

Dialectics as an important philosophical concept allows one to see the contradictions and interaction of various social spheres and people's actions. The general historical context of

the research lies within the new local history through the study of a separate local community (the North Caucasus).

The analysis of Russian historiography took place using separate methods of the theory of deconstruction. The historical texts revealed the gaps in certain topics and plots, the withhold of individual events, the omitted analysis of different social groups, the transfer of the emphasis to the the driving forces of the revolution in different historical epochs.

It is no doubt that the positivism is used as an important tool for scientific cognition of the world, and Marxism as a method of understanding the revolutionary ideas that have collided.

3. Results

3.1 General background of the Russian revolution in 1917

To analyze the conditions for the Bolsheviks victory, one needs to identify the causes that led to the revolution of 1917.

Modernization and industrial revolution resulted in the coexistence of new capitalist elements (the beginning of smooth industrialization, dynamic development of separate industries, the formation of monopolies, the formation of the financial sector) with elements of

feudalism (landed estates ownership, absolute monarchy, class benefits). The best to describe the state of Russia at this time is the term “multistructurality”, proposed by K.N. Tarnovsky (1964).

A deep systemic crisis in the public administration of the country is obvious in early XX century. Autocratic power came out to be unable to overcome the systemic crisis caused by attempts to change its civilizational foundations. Russia didn't have any social institution that, despite all the contradictions and conflicts, could keep the political system and society from destructive processes. The monarchy, being the foundation of Russian statehood throughout its history, had lost its mass selectorate at the early XX century and began to lose control over society. The government's loss of trust and moral authority led to the strengthening of despotic repressive methods.

There happened a rapid desacralization of royal power. Russian people saw all their woes in Nikolai II. In eyes of the people, he ceased to be God's vicar on earth and became a laughingstock, object of cartoons and mass criticism (Kolonitsky, 2010). G. Rasputin had seriously corrupted the

authority of the Tsar. The image of the holy elder, no matter what he did, turned into the personification of corruption and confusion in government. British Ambassador J. Buchanan, having sincere respect to the emperor and his wife, whom he knew long before his assignment, noted that since 1915 the Tsarina had serious influence on the government of the country, since the emperor was engaged in military affairs at the Stavka. “The general discontent with the conduct of war naturally turned into attacks on the royal family. Despite the fact that the Tsarina, in her own words, broke with Germany, she was called “heinie”. At the same time, Rasputin was accused of spying for Germany” (Buchanan, 1925).

Having summarized his impressions about the crisis of power in the Extraordinary Commission for the investigation of the unlawful actions of former ministers, A.A. Blok figuratively wrote: “In the waning years of 1916, all members of the body of Russian state were struck by a disease that could no longer go away by itself, nor be cured by ordinary means, but required a complex and dangerous surgery” (Blok, 1921).

Two and a half years of the World War I strained the economic

problems of the country to the limit. Industrial adjustment for military needs led to a noticeable imbalance in the economic structure: the army got almost two-thirds of all industrial output, and only a third remained for the needs of the national economy in the rear (Sidorov, 1973). All this caused a shortage of consumer goods and, as a result, an uncontrollable price increase. The metallurgy industry was a disaster. Since the beginning of the war, the country lacked metals of all kinds (cast iron, steel, wire, non-ferrous metals). By the year 1917, every month came short of up to 8 million poods. It resulted in an offer to purchase metals abroad and cut corners on civil needs, since there was not enough metal produced for military needs (Sidorov, 1973). Labor productivity had declined, so many industrial enterprises failed to fulfill army contracts. In large cities, especially in Petrograd and Moscow, the food crisis became aggravated. Shops saw long queues on the streets.

The main reason for it was transport crisis. As N.G. Vasil'ev believes, as late as the beginning of the World War I, it was possible to record the "backwardness of Russian transport compared with the transport of other

belligerents against the background of the general backwardness of the Russian economy" (Vasil'ev, 1939). Types of transport have developed unevenly. The main burden of transportation fell on railway and animal transport. The new roads construction engineering was extremely primitive and required a considerable number of workers. Dirt roads turned out to be of low quality and depended on the weather conditions. There was a shortage of metal for railways construction. Attempts to rationalize the transport system organization failed. Transport could not cope with the sharply increased volume of transportation, evacuation of the population, the delivery of fuel, raw materials, and food.

The unresolved agrarian issue became the most important problem for Russia. It could not be resolved leaving landed estates ownership untouched, while the autocratic power through its very reforms supported this important social layer in every possible way. Another trouble for the government was the increased activity of the liberal opposition. In the Duma, the leaders of the Progressive Block sharply criticized the tsarist ministers for their inability to lead the country to victory, making direct

allegations of treason. At the same time, convinced of the Tsar's unwillingness to make any concessions to the block, the liberals began to work out plans of Nikolai II dethronement. The revolution of 1905-1907 was constantly recalled in the public consciousness and gave examples of protest behavior.

3.2 Revolution's driving forces

Urbanization had a strong influence on the country's development. Cities and townsfolk actively fought their way to a separate niche in the existing society. Representatives of dozens of different nationalities, used to living at a certain distance from each other, became neighbors in the big city. The beginning of such co-residence in the North Caucasus was inevitably complicated by outbursts of nationalism, an inescapable companion of a cosmopolitan region. Urban environment destroyed the peasant patriarchal mentality, tearing away the "new" townsfolk from their traditional lifestyles.

According to statistics for the last third of the XIX century, the urban population of Russia doubled and amounted to 16.8 million people at the early XX century. In addition, the population in cities in the North

Caucasus grew at a rather high pace: in Ekaterinodar it increased from 9.5 thousand to 65.7 thousand people over 30 years, in Vladikavkaz - from 3,4 thousand to 43,8 thousand people (Rossiya, 1991). By 1917, the total urban population in the Kuban was 256.8 thousand people or 8.4% of the total population of the region (Ratushnyak, 2000). In the Stavropol Territory, the administrative center remained the largest city. Its population grew in 3.3 times (Ocherki, 1986). In general, Ekaterinodar, Stavropol, Vladikavkaz, Grozny, Port-Petrovsk (now Makhachkala), Pyatigorsk, Kislovodsk, Maykop, Novorossiysk, Tuapse, Temir-Khan-Shura (now Buinaksk), Armavir, Mozdok, and a number of smaller cities gathered up to 11% of the total population of the region. Despite the multiple prevalence of rural residents over the urban ones, the activity and initiative of the townsfolk counterbalanced such numerical superiority by 1917. Together with the demographic explosion, all this led to an overstrain in the social structure of the society in the early XX century, both in Russia in general and in the North Caucasus in particular.

The well-known historian and psychologist S. Moskovichi vividly describes this period: “The stable world of the family, neighborhood and villages showed signs of strain and began to fall apart. In its fall, it carried away its traditional religious and political foundations, as well as spiritual values. Deracinated from the city, from their land, the people, gathered in unstable urban conglomerates, became the mass. With the transition from tradition to modernism, a lot of anonymous individuals, social atoms, deprived of connections with each other, are launched on the market” (Moskovichi, 1998). The founder of sociological science P. Sorokin, being a contemporary of these processes and one of the active leaders of the revolution, noted that “for millennia people got used to to the rural environment, not to the urban one. However, transferred by the will of history with all his luggage of old instincts into the city, a person feels like lying on a “bed of thorns” to which his reflex system is not at all adapted” (Sorokin, 1992).

Urban residents became a new social force that changed the situation in the country. This is the period that formed the prototype of a mass society

not in the classical Marxist interpretation (the working mass, the peasant mass), but as the union of completely different people in a limited space. In this space traditional religious norms are weakened, morals are transformed, family values are completely different. Cities become sources of cultural and spiritual breakdown of the country. All the revolutionary impulses that affected the North Caucasus and the whole of Russia came from cities. Way back in the middle of the XXI century, the pressure on the government and the entire state system came from the village, from the unsettledness of the peasant question, from the feudal survivals that had bothered everyone, from the tense opposition: the Cossacks (aboriginal peasants) and non-Cossacks. By at the beginning of the new century, the townfolk take the initiative in changes. Meetings and processions are held in the cities. The newspapers are issued in the cities and sent to the surrounding villages. The first urban party cells appear, then come few rural units. Numerous technical innovations that dramatically changed the consciousness of all mankind appeared in the cities. Electric lighting and telegraph, photo salons and cinemas, gramophones and

telephones, trains and cars, and many other things somehow modernized people's minds. Life in the cities has become much more intense, Russia itself has received new impulses for the connection of its remote regions. The transport network once connected different and distant worlds, and the travel to the city for the Cossacks and peasants was no longer a big problem. In the whole, the village experienced the most powerful influence of the urban lifestyle and culture.

One should see a constant increase in the force of impact while analyzing the influence of citizens on revolutionary Russia. This is a directed flow from the city "to the rest of" Russia. A small number of urban residents outbalanced the entire rural mass on the account of their passionarity. Peasants actively influenced the life of the country only at the end of the Civil War, when famine and death reduced the number of townfolk. The introduction of the NEP was the last act of the authorities that catered to the needs of rural residents.

World War I added social tension to the lives of Russians. By 1917, the total strength of the Russian army was about 11–12 million people, of which 5.5–6 million were part of the field army

(Drobizhev, 1978). No operations were conducted on the territory of the North Caucasus, so that's where the combat service support units were located. Also, the units were taken out there for rest, numerous hospitals were lodged, many soldiers were recovering. The Caucasus reserve cavalry regiment, 39th infantry division, 233 Donskaya infantry squad, 111, 112 and 113 infantry regiments were among the large military units. The largest military posts were located in Ekaterinodar, Novorossiysk, Stavropol, Pyatigorsk, and Grozny. A number of separate units were concentrated on the coast of the Black Sea where they kept guard of the coast. A replacement of the troops of the Caucasian front was carried out by the Vladikavkazskaya railway and through the ports of Novorossiysk and Tuapse. As a result, the numerous military formations were constantly crossing the region.

The possession and management of weapons, the acquired habit of violence, the blunted death expectation threshold, and the opportunity to take initiative have contributed to the formation of a mobile way of thinking. The front line contributed to the marginalization of soldiers, freeing them from class

prejudices (Porshneva, 2000). This process was accompanied by the militarization of the consciousness of service men, inevitable during the war period, the depreciation of Christian ethical norms and values, the fall in the value of human life.

The unsuccessful course of the World War I aggravated the irreversible changes in the soldiers' consciousness. Short-term success of the first months was replaced by long retreats and protracted battles, the negative impact of which was not mitigated by the Brusilov Offensive. Soldiers and Cossacks were weaned "from the habit of unhesitating obedience to their superiors", their instinct of a small owners was dulled (Ul'yanov, 1920; Likhnitsky, 1931).

In their mind a controversial image of war was formed. In this image the evil and hatred of an unnecessary war were combined with the habit of solving all problems with weapons. Both the front-line soldiers and the home front workers had equally negative attitudes to the war, but the formation of such a position went on differently in them. The front-line soldiers, who had fully gone through the hardships of the war, were physically and mentally exhausted, gradually accumulating the desire for an

early end of the war. The soldiers of the logistic military posts, having scarce information of the present state of affairs at the front line, did not want to get into the area of combat operations. If the first ones had already passed the test of war, the latter were afraid of it. War was a disaster that must be avoided in every possible way for them. Such trends made both military categories be the convenient objects of propaganda, primarily of the Bolshevik agitation work.

This is confirmed by the testimony of Gaydenko, the former soldier of the 233rd Donskaya troop. According to his words, "the Cossacks returned from the front line with revolutionary slogans and Bolshevik ideas, and soldiers who abandoned army by themselves and in large groups were all Bolsheviks" (DCCHKT). Soldiers from numerous convalescents, who introduced the Bolshevik ideas of ending the war in a revolutionary way into the soldiery of the combat service support units, acted in the same field. As a result, there were confrontations between the front-line soldiers and logistic soldiers who called for the continuation of the war. The front-line soldiers, returning to their native villages, became

unconscious agitators of the Bolshevik tactics.

Defectors, convalescents, soldiers on leave - these are three different categories of soldiers that may be combined according to one feature. They brought news, different political views, they themselves recognized the state of people, that is, they were a kind of informational bridge between the region, the country and the field army. Moreover, the defectors possessed more pronounced anarchic principles, often initiating trouble and unrest. They were already renegades and dropouts. soldiers on leave and convalescents also took an active part in local life, but there was more constructivism in their actions: they still had a social core, so some of them still agreed to return to the front line. In general, the majority of soldiers already got used to solving their problems (for there were life and death issues at the front line) by force, not taking into account state laws and social traditions. Such mechanism of solving emerging problems subsequently played its destructive role, when the number of soldiers and supporters of their methods exceeded a critical mass.

Numerous meetings and gatherings became a characteristic

feature of the country and the region.

They were attended by both the defectors and soldiers from the field army. In the late autumn of 1917, in the Voronezhskaya stanitsa of the Kuban region, the whole Cossack population attended the meeting. This population was invisibly divided along the age line: young soldiers and Cossacks of the older generation who remained in reserve. One of the elderly during a fierce dispute said that all the front-line soldiers were infected with Bolshevism. The front-line soldiers made him repeat it, and then cried: "Are we the ones infected? We stayed in the trenches for three years; we were entrusted with the destiny of Russia. You only nourished, gorged yourselves and fattened" (Vol'naya Kuban'). As a result, there almost began a melee, and the excitement did not settle right away.

An interesting similar characteristic was given to the front-line Bolsheviks by the Kuban revolutionist L.V. Balkevich: "For us it was clear that these were not Bolsheviks, or, as they said then, they were Bolsheviks, but not Communists. Such a deep narrow-minded division, however, had some ground. They were understood as people who were opposed to the existing

government, who put forward extreme slogans, but who did not have a plan and a reasoned conscious socialist idea” (SAKT). He pronounced the contemporaries’ interpretation of the basic idea of Bolshevism as a complete replacement of existing order by a new one. Soldiers were the first to fully support the new way of Russia’s development. However, until the end, they still didn’t fully realize what it would result in. The Bolsheviks took advantage of the destructive power of “a man with a gun” by leading and directing him. This force based on a sharply negative attitude towards war and hatred to those who supported it.

Another example of the decisive role of soldiers in revolution is the process of establishing Soviet power in the Stavropol province. By November 1917, there were only 200 Bolsheviks in the Stavropol Territory, only due to the city organization of RSDLP (b). However, the Soviet power was established peacefully in the province on January 1, 1918. Of course, the rapid consolidation of the Bolsheviks was due to the transfer of the 2 Karsky rifle regiment to Stavropol in these months. Its soldiers disarmed several groups of cadets and officers and took an active

part in the meetings of the last days of December (SACHST). The 111th Infantry Regiment, transferred from Grozny, also actively participated in the events. These forces joined the 112th Infantry Regiment that stayed under the influence of the Bolsheviks of Stavropol for more than six months. A sharp increase in the soldiery affected the the voting on December 31, 1917, showing the victory of the Bolsheviks.

The units of the 39th Infantry Division drove a wedge in the Terek region. The contemporaries described it as a completely demoralized and deprived of the military and human appearance. The division left from the front line intact and dispersed throughout the North Caucasus “to conduct revolution in someone else’s house eating free Cossack grub to their hearts’ content, since they had guns” (Pisarenko, 2016).

Two new mass formations in Russia in the early XX century (townsfolk and soldiery), demanding the satisfaction of the output of their energy, exceeded the threshold of the elasticity of society, its ability to digest the active and energetic social layers. The loss of internal connections (blood ties, kinship, neighborhood) in these communities

united them with the purposes of existence only. For the urban population, such goals were the possibility of having more rapid influence on the authorities and, as a result, the improvement of their position. Most soldiers wanted to end a difficult and pointless war. Presence of conscious and unconscious goals required their implementation, and the Russian state could not withstand the pressure of two new communities. The old state system failed to meet the expectations of the two most active layers. It was an absolutely new power that could solve the set tasks. Such power were the Bolsheviks in October, 1917.

3.3 The Bolsheviks' antagonists and growth of their popularity

The Bolsheviks' opponents constantly imputed them to the overriding financial opportunities, beginning with the revolution of 1905. Japanese and German intelligence agencies, Russian and American bankers and industrialists, numerous intermediaries looking like scammers, helped the Bolsheviks to seize power. Similar versions appeared in the summer of 1917 and actively developed in emigrant literature (Katkov, 1997; Mel'gunov, 2007). The new publications

studying this problem in detail are still being issued, and each time they are presented as the latest methodological approaches. For example, the American historian Sean McMeekin published the book "The Russian Revolution: A New History" in the year of revolution's centenary (McMeekin, 2017). Having analyzed a lot of the data from the archives, he finally became convinced of the foreign financial support of the Bolsheviks. However, despite all the source provision of these theories, they have a significant disadvantage. All of them study a single reason for the victory of the Bolsheviks but not the numerous ones, while an objective study of the whole complex of causes of the 1917 revolution shows a complex knot of contradictions, unresolved by either the emperor, nor the Provisional Government.

Moreover, the representatives of the Provisional Government and its supporters had made several fatal mistakes in 1917, and gave the Bolsheviks important arguments in their favor. These include the red tape with the holding of elections to the Constituent Assembly, delays in resolving the land issue and, most of all, the focus on continuing the war. Keeping in mind the

ongoing economic downturn, one can get objective data of the fall of 1917, which determined the Bolsheviks victory. However, these data do not answer to the question of the growing popularity of the Bolsheviks in the popular masses. The theory about the aid from the German money does not answer this question either. In fact, after August, 1917, a clear change in public moods is outlined: numerous elections to regional councils lead to a sharp increase in the number of Bolshevik participants by the fall. The widely known II Congress of Soviets approved all the decisions of the Bolsheviks, while it was attended by the representatives of other countries!

The socialist views were definitely popular among the population, since they gave a new direction to the life of the whole country. Both the regional Soviets, delegates to the Second Congress of Soviets, and the elections to the Constituent Assembly of fall-winter of 1917 showed that the overwhelming majority of Russian citizens choose social-democratic ideas. However, circumstance does not help to answer the question of the Bolsheviks victory, since the Socialist-Revolutionaries Party was even more popular than the Socialist Party. Where is the answer?

The stormy summer of 1917, when Petrograd first began to roil, and then the whole country followed, was an extremely important historical microperiod. The unsuccessful offensive on the front line, the popular demonstrations that led to the bloody events in Petrograd in early July marked the beginning of a new stage of the Russian revolution. The central issue of all these events was the question of war. The people showed that it does not want to fight under by no means outside the domestic country (Buldakov, 1997).

This crisis, like the others in 1917, gave rise to very different responses throughout the country, mostly of anti-Bolshevik nature. A joint meeting of public and party organizations of the city of Stavropol, held in July 1917, sent a telegram to the Chairman of the Provisional Government: “The meeting of representatives of all the socialist parties and democratic organizations of Stavropol expresses sharp condemnation of the desire of the Bolsheviks and part of the Petrograd military unit to impose its will on the country, contrary to the decisions of congresses of peasant, workers and soldiery delegates. The Assembly considers the armed influence

on the Provisional Government to be a disastrous act for the liberation of the country. The Assembly protests against this act, approves of the actions of the government and supporting central committees of the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Delegates, and for its part is ready to support all measures of the central and local executive power aimed at eliminating anarchy and disorganization that are harmful to the aim of freedom and the renewal of Russia”(SAST).

In the analysis of the the events of the summer of 1917, a mass campaign in Russian newspapers, launched in mid-July, draws special attention. Starting from July 12, anti-Bolshevik materials have appeared in every issue of central and provincial newspapers. “Moskovskie vedomosti” stated that “Lenin stabbed the new regime in the back” (Natsional’noe bedstvie, 1917). The socialist-revolutionary newspaper “Trud” cited the resolution of the Council of Peasants' Deputies, in which the Bolsheviks were characterized as counter-revolutionary forces carrying on dark agitation for the spread of anarchy. It also provides the data on the public response to the events of July from different parts of Russia, reporting on the

outrages and bashing of the Bolsheviks (Trud, 1917). The newspaper “Rech” quotes the resolutions of the Petrograd military unit and the 14 cavalry divisions that unanimously blamed the Bolsheviks for the erosion of the credibility of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers 'and Soldiers' Delegates (Rech, 1917). These were the most windowed estimates at the very beginning of the information war unleashed against the Bolsheviks. The Stavropol newspaper “Severokavkazskiy krai” no longer minced its words: Bolshevism was called “a shameful phenomenon of the Russian revolution, implanted by William's agents”. The Bolsheviks’ supporters were barred from their love for the Motherland, they had haze in their heads, love for thrill, darkness and “a great appetite for all sorts of grips” (Bolsheviki, 1917). Later on, a Stavropol journalist said about V.I. Lenin that he had built his ideological structures on “human dullness, on profound ignorance, on animal egoism, on congenital cowardice, and on immeasurable stupidity” (Bezhavshiy vozhd’, 1917).

Every day in every issue of the newspapers heard the Bolsheviks' sonorous and straight-from-the-shoulder

allegations of espionage and treason. According to all the writers (and many wrote it quite sincerely), the days of the Bolsheviks were numbered, and they left the political arena of the country. Leaders were hiding, newspapers were closed, and people were negative. However, it seemed that such a massive information attack led to an opposite result. All the opponents of the Bolsheviks, without realizing it, actually promoted their leaders and programs. Let us imagine that an average peasant in a province hears the same allegations in the village reading room every day. One day he involuntarily would ask: who are the Bolsheviks, and what do they advocate, and who is their leader? An answer would be that they are for peace, the improvement of the workers' position, for equality, the abolition of private property, and so on. It turns out that for all the pressing questions of the majority of Russians the Bolsheviks give very suitable answers. Everything resulted in an opposite effect: instead of compromising materials supposed to eliminate political competitors, their mass and free advertising took place. There emerged a mechanism of latent influence, because even negative articles presented the basic methods and ideas of

the Bolsheviks. People remembered the names of V.I. Lenin and L.D. Trotsky. People kept in minds that the Bolsheviks existed, that they were speaking in words for the people, for ending the war, that they were ready for decisive actions and called for radical actions from the authorities of all levels. At the same time, the Bolsheviks themselves never stopped their political activities. V.I. Lenin delivered speeches every day, wrote articles, letters, and led a rich political life. It was he who contributed to the consolidation within the party and to its progressive movement towards the seizure of power with his daily work.

All this turned out to be a unique combination of multidirectional information flows that coincided in both the subject and the object of data transmission. The negative image of the Bolsheviks created by their opponents remained on paper and evaporated along with the exhaled air at the meetings. The words, symbols and images, which later turned into a strong ideological core, were introduced into the collective mind of the Russian citizens.

4. Discussion

Soviet historians wrote about the important role of soldiers in

revolutionary events in the 1920s. North Caucasian researchers G. Ladokha, N. Yanchevsky, F. Golovenchenko emphasized the active activity of the RSDLP (b) party in 1917 in the region, noted that the predominance of forces toward the Bolsheviks was outlined here only towards the end of the year. In November-December 1917 there was a massive return of the front-line soldiers who had a strongly negative attitude towards the war and saw the reasons for this in the ruinous policies of the bourgeoisie (Ladokha, 1923; Yanchevsky, 1924; Golovenchenko, 1927).

Indeed, later the focus on studying the driving forces of the Russian revolution has changed. Since the 1930s, the revolution in Russia and in the Northern Caucasus was conducted by the Bolsheviks, the proletarians, the peasants, and soldiers who joined them. The main generalizing treatise of the pre-war period, “The History of the Civil War in the USSR”, the whole first volume and part of the second one deal with the revolution. According to the authors and editors, among whom was I.V. Stalin, the revolution brought the contradictions of imperialism and their aggravation during the World War I. The

main driving forces of the revolution were workers and soldiers led by the Bolsheviks. It was namely the RSDLP party that was described as the main active group in creating and extending the revolution (Istoriya ... 1935).

Later all historical works were in line with “The Brief Course in the History of the AUCP (b)” published in 1938. The emphasis was put on the decisive role of the Bolsheviks, who correctly directed all the active strata throughout the country and the North Caucasus. In the thesis research of V.P. Khitrova and G.E. Ul’ko the Bolshevik Party was the center of all revolutionary events, regardless of its quantitative composition. At the same time, without the RSDLP (b), soldiers on the Black Sea coast, in the Kuban and Stavropol Territory could not properly decide on power (Khitrov, 1949; Ul’ko, 1955).

An important feature of Soviet historiography was the personalization of revolutionary merit. Recognizing the decisive role of the masses in conducting the revolution, separate individuals began to stand out. They were declared the main organizers of dynamic actions, while many famous revolutionaries were declared enemies of the revolution for political reasons. The revolution and the

civil war in the North Caucasus knocked out a large number of Bolsheviks who had not had time to remember and write anything (N. Anisimov, M. Vlasov, M. Morozov, A. Sheripov, U. Buinaksky, G. Andzhievsky, A. Yakovlev). Many of those, whose memories and works were published, were later repressed (Ya. Poluyan, E. Kovtyukh, U. Aliev, A. Takho-Godi). Memories of the leader of the Stavropol Bolsheviks A. Ponomarev were constantly kept in the archives and were not yet published. The recollections of the Kuban Bolshevik V. Cherny were categorized as “inaccurate” because of the point about the Kuban's weak readiness for revolutionary events. Therefore, it is not surprising that the central figures of a single region were S. Ordzhonikidze and S. Kirov, who performed all correct revolutionary actions (Razgon, 1941).

A three-volume study by I.I. Mints about the revolution in general terms followed an established pattern. Numerous complex and crisis phenomena that put the country in a difficult situation were identified, the active role of the Bolsheviks was mentioned, and the main force of the revolution - soldiers joined the rebels

only influenced by the workers (Mints, 1977).

This simplified approach has kept for many years in the generalizing works, monographs and collected works (Kuz'min, 1956, Oktyabr'..., 1977).

Among the works of Russian historians of the 90s who expanded the source base and presented new methodological approaches, one may single out an integrated study by V.P. Buldakov (1997). Considering the socio-psychological characteristics of the Russian revolution in 1917, he shifts the emphasis from the Bolshevik and Workers' Party to the army and low lives, i.e. people who didn't belong to any class, beyond the usual moral framework, who were not burdened with property and easily used violence against their opponents.

This work substantiates the hypothesis about the decisive role of soldiers in the Bolsheviks' victory in 1917. Another active group was the townsfolk whose importance was practically ignored by historians. The activities of the Provisional Government and its supporters in discrediting the Bolsheviks was very important, because it led exactly to the opposite goal: they became even more popular than before

the scandal in July 1917. The combination of pressure from active social groups and erroneous actions of the authorities resulted in the Bolsheviks' victory in October 1917.

These assumptions differently consider the driving forces of the Russian revolution and make its historical analysis important for understanding the subsequent revolutionary situations.

5. Conclusion

As a result, the Bolsheviks received help from different sides in the political struggle for power. The tsarist government left two powerful social forces (townsfolk and soldiery), a bulk of unresolved social and economic problems, and continuing World War I. The Provisional Government and the Petrograd Soviet of Workers 'and Soldiers' Delegates, added free agitation, actually promoting their opponents, at the same time aggravating the economic situation without solving any important problems. Finally, one can not deny the foreign aid, which in any case should be viewed as a last part among a number of factors that contributed to the Bolsheviks' victory.

The conclusions made would be useful not only during the lessons of

Russian history in classroom, but also in analyzing the political events of our time to prevent the emergence of crisis situations.

The problem of departing from the party-propaganda approach in studying revolutionary events and creating new theoretical and descriptive works of a complex character was clearly identified. These are namely an attempt to be as far from political influence as possible, and the desire to follow a historical source, that may lead to objective results.

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