

STALIN SPEAKS

The full text of Speeches made November 6-7 and July 3; together with Calls to Action issued by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

32 PAGES - - - 3d.

24 YEARS OF SOVIET POWER

BY W. RUST

A graphic account of the development of the first Socialist State.

2d.

Obtainable from Central Books
Ltd., 2 Parton Street, London,
W.C.1.

Published by the Communist Party of Great Britain,
16 King St., London, W.C.2, and printed by the
Marston Printing Co. (T.U. all depts), at Beech-
wood Works, Beechwood Rise, Watford, Herts.
January 20, 1942.

305

Soviet Leaders by IVOR MONTAGU



VOROSHILOV

Scanned / Transcribed by
The Socialist Truth in Cyprus – London Bureaux

<http://www.st-cyprus.co.uk/intro.htm>

<http://www.st-cyprus.co.uk/english/home/index.php>



Voroshilov

CLEMENT VOROSHILOV (Kli-
ment Yefremovitch Voroshilov),
First Marshal of the Soviet Union, for
fifteen years head of the armed forces
of the U.S.S.R., member of the
Political Bureau of the Central Com-
mittee of the Communist Party of the
Soviet Union, one of the oldest Bol-
sheviks, the type of worker turned
soldier, combines in his person out-
standing political as well as military
leadership. Today, after serving as
Commander-in-Chief of one of the
three fronts into which Soviet defence
was initially divided—the North-West
—and there stemming the onslaught
on Leningrad, Voroshilov is now with
Budyenny organising and training the
great new armies at the rear, but at
the same time is a member of the
“Big Five,” the state Committee for
Defence, and in this capacity flew
from Leningrad during its defence to
take part in the Beaverbrook-Harri-
man-Stalin conversations respecting

Anglo-American-Soviet collaboration.

Voroshilov is a smallish man, sturdily built, with a small neatly-clipped moustache of toothbrush type and a round face. Born in 1881, he is now 60 years old, but when one compared his present appearance with photographs of him taken in early Civil War days, or even as a young worker, he seems scarcely to have altered or aged a bit, except that he has become slightly more burly; his face still wears that careful, modest and slightly shy expression.

Son of Donbas

He was born in the village of Verkhne, in the former Ekaterinoslav province (now the Dnepropetrovsk region), and is thus a true son of the Donbas—the great coal region of the Ukraine. His father was at various times a canal worker, a collier, a railway watchman. His mother was at one time in service. He had little schooling. At the age of 7 he picked pyrites in the mines. Then he became a lamp-hand. Then a spell with a

farmer, and tending a landlord's flocks. At the age of 13 he obtained work at the Lugansk metal works, thus beginning a connection that is now signalled in the new name of Lugansk—Voroshilovgrad.

Crane Operator

Presently Voroshilov became a crane-operator at a cast-iron foundry connected with the railway yards in nearby Alchevsk. Conditions were intolerable. The young man read pamphlets. In 1899, at the age of 18, he organised and led the first strike ever known in the district. Later in the year took place a second strike. This extracted some concessions, but the boy Voroshilov was sacked, his passport labelled "unreliable," and he was obliged to leave the district.

Four years later he came back to Lugansk and obtained work as an electrical fitter in the Hartman machine-building plant attached to the railway building yards there. While here, in 1903, he joined the Russian Social-Democratic Party, and from the

first was an adherent of the Bolshevik group, the supporters of the policy of Lenin. He became actively associated with all the underground activities, meetings, study circles, demonstrations, secret printing, organising and arming of workers' defence squads against the brutality of the Tsarist agents. During this time his party nom-de-guerre was "Volodya." He was arrested and severely handled by the police, but the solidarity of his fellow workers and their threat to strike secured his release.

Workers' Committee Chairman

By 1905 he was chairman of the Lugansk workers' committee. In this capacity he led the active participation of the Lugansk workers in the 1904-5 revolution. There were barricades and street fighting. Two strikes were organised at Hartman's; following the second, Voroshilov was arrested and imprisoned for several months.

Met Stalin

In 1906 Voroshilov was sent by the

Lugansk workers as delegate to the Fourth Congress of the Bolshevik Party in Stockholm, and here the young man of 25 for the first time met Stalin, then aged 27, and Lenin then aged 36. The following year Voroshilov was again at Hartman's, the chairman of its underground union with a membership of several thousands and nearly a thousand in its defence squads. Again he was sent as delegate, this time to the fifth Congress, held in London.

He returned to Russia to find an order out for his arrest. For a time he lived in the country and was hidden by friends. Betrayed by a spy, he was sentenced to three-year exile at Archangel. He soon escaped, and from thereafter, until the First World War, Voroshilov's story is of continual re-arrests and periods of exile, during which he studied intensively among his fellow exiles to complete his political education, and frequent escapes, during one of which he spent six months at Baku, helping Stalin in the organisation of the old workers there.

Munitions Worker

When the war broke out, Voroshilov, living underground, was not called up for military service. He worked in munitions factories, first at Tzaritsyn and then in Petrograd. In February, 1917, Voroshilov was one of the factory workers whose encouragement was decisive in inducing the Ismailov Guards Regiments to take their part, thus deciding the whole Petrograd garrison. When Lenin arrived back in Petrograd in April, 1917, Voroshilov was a member of the reception committee that welcomed him at the station. During the preparatory months that followed, Voroshilov was sent back to Lugansk, became a member of the Soviet there, and organised a Bolshevik newspaper, the "Donetz Proletarian."

Defence of Petrograd

After the October Revolution, the Lugansk Soviet sent him back to Petrograd as their delegate. Here the one-time organiser of workers' defence

squads began his military career as chairman of the Committee for the Defence of Petrograd, and participant in the work of the Extraordinary Commission against the counter-revolutionary foe. In March he went back to Lugansk and took the field with a detachment of guerillas, recruited from the factory Red Guard. Harassing the German armies of occupation, Voroshilov's men fought their way through to Kharkov. Here the Germans attacked them in the front, Krasnov's cossacks from behind. None the less, the Voroshilov detachment managed to hold off a whole enemy army corps, extricate itself and get back to Lugansk, arming itself on the way with machine-guns captured from the pursuing forces by counter-attack!

Military Feat

At Lugansk, Voroshilov's almost "amateur" army was designated the 5th Ukrainian Army, with himself as commander. The position was hopeless—almost. Retreat was necessary, but retreat would have meant the

massacre of tens of thousands of Lugansk workers and their families. Voroshilov resolved on and executed one of the most remarkable manoeuvres of modern times. He evacuated not only the army, but practically the whole population, breaking out of the encircling cossack ring and taking it from Lugansk across the Donetz, the Don and the Volga to Tzaritsyn by rail. The expedition included 15,000 soldiers, 30,000 refugees. The distance is 650 miles. The former railway fitter had 500 trains, some armoured and mounted with guns, some laden with munitions, some bearing the women and children. The journey, fighting all the way, took the participants three months. When they arrived at the Don they found the railway bridge destroyed, and the troops had to stand to and hold the enemy off for a month while a dam was built across the river, rails laid over it, and on to Tzaritsyn. During the entire retreat, Voroshilov's army captured from the enemy much booty, including two aeroplanes!

Commander of Tzaritsyn Front

At Tzaritsyn (now Stalinograd), Voroshilov became appointed Commander of the Tzaritsyn Front, Deputy Commander and member of the Military Revolutionary Council of the Southern Front, Commander of the 10th Army. The defence of the city was vital, for it commanded the route for grain barges up the Volga and on to Moscow. The counter-revolutionary cossacks of Krasnov surrounded the city on three sides, the fourth being the river. The difficulties were not only military, but political. . . . Voroshilov had to contend with disloyalty among many of the military experts taken over from the old army, defeatists and disheartenment among the bargemen and factory workers. He had to get munition factories in the town into full swing. At the crisis Stalin came out to Tzaritsyn to prove a tower of strength and take all this work in hand. Thus enabled to concentrate more upon the

directly military side, the former railway worker who had seen the advantages of trains to mobile operations, commandeered all motor vehicles to maintain contact with the guerillas outside the enemy ring, and organised Budenny's cavalry corps that in the end were to prove the decisive factor.

In 1919, the Germans being driven from the Ukraine, Voroshilov was appointed Peoples' Commissar for Home Affairs of the Ukrainian Soviet Government. At the same time he held the military posts of Commander of the Kharkov Military District and Commander of the 14th Army. In this capacity he smashed a treacherous breakaway by some counter-revolutionary elements concealed in the Red forces and headed by one, Grigoriev, and organised the battles against the German White Guard puppet Petlura and his followers.

Driving Out the Invaders

From the end of 1919 he participated as a member of the Revolutionary Military Council in leadership

of all the operations of the First Cavalry Army, planned by Stalin and led by Budenny, from the drive against Denikin who had by then captured Orel and reached Tula, only a few miles from Moscow, till the end of the Civil War. In October the recapture of Orel and Voronezh; in November of Kursk; in December of Kharkov, Poltava, Novonikolayevsk, the Donetz coal; in January, 1920, of Kiev, Tzaritsyn, Taganrog and Rostov; in May, 1920, the operations on the Polish front; in November the recapture of the Crimea from Wrangle, the famous outflanking of the White fortifications on the Perekop isthmus by the Red Army wading through the sea.

Stormed Kronstadt

In March, 1921, Voroshilov was taking part in the 10th Congress of the Bolshevik Party when news was brought of a White uprising in the naval port of Kronstadt, the key to Leningrad. At the head of a group of delegates, Voroshilov led the attack across the icebound sea and stormed

the ports. Then the delegates returned to the Congress, where Voroshilov was elected a Member of the Central Committee. Later the same year found him defending the Far East in battle against Manchurian war lords egged on by Japan.

In 1922, Voroshilov became Commander of the North Caucasus military district, in 1924 of the Moscow military district. Toward the end of the next year Michael Frunze, the first military leader-in-chief of the young Soviet state, died. As successor, Voroshilov was appointed Peoples' Commissar of Military and Naval Affairs and chairman of the Revolutionary Military Committee, posts which in 1934 were merged in that of Peoples' Commissar for Defence of the U.S.S.R., which he also occupied until May, 1940, when he was succeeded by Timoshenko and himself became Chairman of the Defence Committee of the Soviet Union, together with Vice-Chairman of the Council of Peoples' Commissars—that is Soviet Vice-Premier.

Head of the Armed Forces

Thus for 16 years, ever since the death of Frunze, Voroshilov has stood uninterruptedly at the head of the armed strength of the Soviet state. His has been the task to build up the mighty force which today has the task of withstanding, in the interest of the whole of the civilised world, the German military machine with its backing of the captured industry of almost all Europe.

In his speech to the Supreme Soviet in 1939, he was able to say:

"The modifications that have taken place in this field during the last five years have attained the following result: our army is so well armed and technically equipped, its cadres and its personnel are so well trained as a whole, that no hostile machinations, from whatever source, can alarm the Soviet people today. . . . Comrades, the Red Army is a giant force. . . . As one man the Red Army is ready at any moment to fulfil its sacred duty of defender of the state where the

working class has been victorious; as one man it is ready joyfully to sacrifice its life for the great cause of Lenin and Stalin. The guarantee that the enemy will be smashed and annihilated . . . is the moral and political unity of our Red Army with the Soviet people . . . the fact that the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army is a first-class army, better equipped technically than any other and perfectly trained."

How many thousands of Soviet workers and visiting workers from across the seas are familiar with that trim yet unassuming military figure who at May Day and on the November 7th anniversaries would ride out on his charger to take the Red Square parade! His unique position in the esteem of these thousands lies in his record and character, not that only of a worker turned military commander—he is not the first in history—so much as the craftsman who has mastered each new technical demand upon him, as good a fighter in battle as he has been fighter for Socialism, as fine a horseman and crack shot (he has two

Orders of the Red Banner for marksmanship among his decorations!) as once he was electrical fitter. How well he has carried out his job these last 16 years, history is now proving. And in organising with Budyenny the new forces and the new armies that are to reinforce those today bearing the brunt he is completing a task that none could better inspire.

Dates :

- 1881 Born in the Dnepropetrovsk region.
- 1894 Metal worker's apprentice in Lugansk.
- 1899 Organised first strike.
- 1903 Joined Russian Social Democratic Party, Bolshevik Group.
- 1903-1907 Led underground work in Lugansk, participated in 1905 revolution.
- 1906 Delegate to Stockholm Congress of Bolshevik Party, met Lenin and Stalin.
- 1907 Delegate to London Congress of Bolshevik Party.
- 1907-1914 Arrests and exiles, including at Archangel; escapes and more underground work, including at Baku.
- 1915-1917 Munition worker and underground activity.
- 1917 Participated February uprising in Leningrad; member Lugansk Soviet; Chairman Leningrad Defence Committee.
- 1918 Led Lugansk Red Guard against German occupationists.

1918-1919 Military Commander; retreat to Tzaritsyn and Defence of Tzaritsyn with Stalin.

1919-1920 Commissar for Home Affairs of Ukraine; member of Military Revolutionary Committee of First Cavalry Army; operations against Denikin, on Polish front, against Wrangel, etc.

1921 Delegate to 10th Congress of Communist Party; elected member of Central Committee; suppression of Kronstadt rising; operations on Manchurian frontier.

1922-1925 Successively Commander of North Caucasus and Moscow military districts.

1925 People's Commissar for Military and Naval Affairs, and Chairman Revolutionary Military Soviet.

1926 Elected member of Political Bureau of the Central Committee.

1934 People's Commissar for Defence of the U.S.S.R.

1935 Appointed first Marshal of the U.S.S.R.

1940 Vice-Chairman of the Council of Peoples' Commissars and Chairman of the Defence Committee.

1941 Member of the State Committee for Defence of the U.S.S.R. and Commander-in-Chief of the North-Western Front; later experiences of new supplementary armies.

Decorations include: Two Orders of Lenin for outstanding service to the revolution; four Orders of the Red Banner of the U.S.S.R.; two Orders of the Red Banner for sharpshooting; three Orders of the Red Banner for various of the republics.

Elected, December 1937, Deputy to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. for the Minsk city electoral district in Byelorussia.