



VLADIMIR LENIN

20 First Legislative Acts of
THE RUSSIAN BOLSHEVIK
REVOLUTION

ILLUSTRATED



**THE DECREE ON PEACE BY VLADIMIR LENIN,
THE DECREE ON LAND BY VLADIMIR LENIN
AND OTHERS**

20 First Legislative Acts of the Russian Bolshevik Revolution

Decrees were legislative acts of the highest Soviet institutions, primarily of the Council of People's Commissars (the highest executive body — Sovnarkom) and of VTsIK (the highest legislative body between sessions of the Congress of Soviets).

The Bolshevik Initial Decrees were announced as soon as the Bolsheviks declared their success in the October Revolution (October 26, 1917). The Decrees seemed to conform to the popular Bolshevik slogan “Peace, Land and Bread”. The slogan succinctly articulated the grievances of the Russian peasantry, armed forces and proletariat.

The Bolsheviks were not opportunists but benevolent idealists; the point of the Decrees was to bring about a better quality of life for the Russian people. Regardless of which view is the more accurate account, it is clear from these opposing perspectives that the history of the Initial Decrees is a politically charged issue. This is perhaps because historians use the Decrees to try to discern whether the implementation of Marxist thought has totalitarian tendencies.

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Vladimir Lenin

To the Citizens of Russia!

The Provisional Government has been deposed. State power has passed into the hands of the organ of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies—the Revolutionary Military Committee, which heads the Petrograd proletariat and the garrison.

The cause for which the people have fought, namely, the immediate offer of a democratic peace, the abolition of landed proprietorship, workers' control over production, and the establishment of Soviet power — this cause has been secured.

Long live the revolution of workers, soldiers and peasants!

Revolutionary Military Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies

10 a.m., October 25, 1917.

Vladimir Lenin

To Workers, Soldiers, and Peasants!

The Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers and Soldiers' Deputies has opened. The vast majority of the Soviets are represented at the Congress. A number of delegates from the Peasants' Soviets are also present. The mandate of the compromising Central Executive Committee has terminated.^[1] Backed by the will of the vast majority of the workers, soldiers, and peasants, backed by the victorious uprising of the workers and the garrison which has taken place in Petrograd, the Congress takes power into its own hands.

The Provisional Government has been overthrown. The majority of the members of the Provisional Government have already been arrested.

The Soviet government will propose an immediate democratic peace to all the nations and an immediate armistice on all fronts. It will secure the transfer of the land of the landed proprietors, the crown and the monasteries to the peasant committees without compensation; it will protect the rights of the soldiers by introducing complete democracy in the army; it will establish workers' control over production; it will ensure the convocation of the Constituent Assembly at the time appointed; it will see to it that bread is supplied to the cities and prime necessities to the villages; it will guarantee all the nations inhabiting Russia the genuine right to self-determination.

The Congress decrees: all power in the localities shall pass to the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants'

Deputies, which must guarantee genuine revolutionary order.

The Congress calls upon the soldiers in the trenches to be vigilant and firm. The Congress of Soviets is convinced that the revolutionary army will be able to defend the revolution against all attack of imperialism until such time as the new government succeeds in concluding a democratic peace, which it will propose directly to all peoples. The new government will do everything to fully supply the revolutionary army by means of a determined policy of requisitions and taxation of the propertied classes, and also will improve the condition of the soldiers' families.

The Kornilov men — Kerensky, Kaledin and others — are attempting to bring troops against Petrograd. Several detachments, whom Kerensky had moved by deceiving them, have come over to the side of the insurgent people.

*Soldiers, actively resist Kerensky the Kornilovite! Be on your guard!
Railwaymen, hold up all troop trains dispatched by Kerensky against Petrograd!*

*Soldiers, workers in factory and office, the fate of the revolution and the fate of the democratic peace is in your hands!
Long live the revolution!*

The All-Russia Congress of Soviets
Of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies
The Delegates from the Peasants' Soviets