

# What conditions allowed for the rise of stalin politics essay



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Joseph Stalin is often considered the worst perpetrator of genocide of the 20th Century, even when comparing him to the popular character, Hitler. The beginning of a 'sickly' socialist period for the USSR was just about to be started. By 1922 Stalin became the General Secretary of the USSR, despite his newly assigned position, his grotesque actions through his ruling period simply refers on how he represents on one the of the most powerful arguments against socialism.

But certainly the point is, how would such a tyrant be given the whole power of an emerging world superpower? Certainly, answering such a complex question must be answered from the "roots" of the case; therefore, the case being carried out is, what were the conditions in Russia during that time, which made Stalin rise easier? And so that's how we get to the main question of this essay.

The rise of Stalin to power over the communist Russia was a complex period. What I mean by complex is the fact that numerous factors regarding his rise had to be considered.

Stalin always had a close relation with Lenin. Stalin's "strength and ability to exert pressure"[q. 1] were admired by Lenin which would later give him the post of "General Secretary" when the Civil war end.

His new acquired charge wasn't the most powerful and important by that time. However it would be in the following years. His first action to get the power he was seeking was by constructing his position in a safe way. Political patronage could be done because of the charge he had, by arranging his supporters he trusted on higher positions, and removing or decreasing the

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position of the people who opposed Stalin, he could safely guarantee his position on the "General Secretary" charge.

By 1922 Russia adopted a new constitution, it became the USSR. Most of this work was done by Stalin because of the post Lenin gave him. This was a clear example that Stalin was seeking power. This made Lenin increasingly worried on Stalin Constitutional work. However, Lenin couldn't take any actions because his first strokes appeared. By 1923 he withdraws from politics and so finally by 1924 he died, making the struggle for power in the USSR began.[1] The struggle was given by important communist leaders, these were; Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin and Stalin.

Out of all these leaders, Stalin feared Trotsky the most. He had the closest relation with Lenin because both shared the same ideas; he was the most brilliant person from the rest, he was the commissar of war and leader of the Red Army. He was Stalin strongest rival.

Knowing this, Stalin had to play his cards effectively or else he wouldn't get the absolute power of USSR upon Lenin's death.

From 1923 onwards, while Lenin was semi-retired from politics, he was aware from these leaders' tensions so he decided to outline the strength and weak of each leader. This was his Testament. Stalin constantly visited him. Each visit he made, deteriorate his relation with Lenin because of the constant quarrels both had regarding on serious disagreements on policy towards different the different national groups. Because of these quarrels he wrote a postscript about Stalin; excessive power, ambition and suggested

that Stalin should be removed from his charge. This is an extract of his testament;

“ Comrade Stalin, having become General Secretary, has concentrated an enormous power in his hands; and I am not sure that he always knows how to use that power with sufficient caution...

Stalin is too rude and, although we Communist might put up with this, it is hardly a quality that would expect in General Secretary Party. That is why I suggest he be removed from his post”. -

-Adapted extracts from Lenin's Testament and Postscript, written at the end of 1922 and the beginning of 1923.[q. 2]

No one really knew about Stalin personal ambitions, he hide them very well with a low profile attitude, everybody thought about him as a mediocre party member, as the secondary one. It was until 1922 when Lenin realized that Stalin was a real threat to the party.

Stalin knew about the high risks of the testament which would strongly decrease his possibilities of becoming the absolute leader, once Lenin died, Zinoviev and Kamenev persuaded the party leadership not to act on Lenin's advice according to the postscripts he wrote, making Stalin kept his job.

Also, the leaders decided not to publish the testament, mainly because they didn't wanted Trotsky to be the leader because of political reasons.

The political reasons were the political differences between these communist leaders. By 1924, Trotsky had decided that the NEP had been successful and should be ended. He believed it was now necessary to begin an  
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industrialization programme and to start creating large collective farms. In addition, Lenin and the Bolsheviks had always believed that only revolution in economically advanced countries could achieve Communism. Thus, Russia would never be able to become socialist without outside help. After Lenin's death, Trotsky continued to believe in the importance of world revolution. However, Stalin countered Trotsky's theory of permanent Revolution with his own view of socialism in One Country which meant that Russia would have to become industrialized first in order to spread the communism influence to the world. Basically Russia could become Socialist on its own, provided if Lenin's NEP was followed.

Even before Lenin's death, Stalin, Kamenev and Zinoviev joined forces known as the "Triumvirate" in order to prevent Trotsky becoming the next leader of the party. In 1924, the leaders began their campaign against Trotsky by publishing the disagreements between Trotsky and Lenin in the years of 1903-17. Trotsky and his supporters were known as the Left Opposition. Using Stalin's control of the party organization and the 1921 ban against factions, the three leaders began to remove Trotsky's supporters from influential positions. Trotsky was increasingly outvoted and isolated. In 1925, he was forced to resign from his powerful position as Commissar of War.

After the fall of Trotsky; Zinoviev and Kamenev were becoming suspicious of Stalin's motives and policies. In particular, they now realized that Stalin was using his position to appoint and promote his own supporters. In April 1926 both leaders join forces with Trotsky in what was known as the United

Opposition against Stalin. Their plan was to restore party and Soviet  
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democracy, and to end the NEP. Stalin rapidly joined forces with Bukharin and the right to maintain the decisions taken in 1927. By using his control of party Congresses and elections, Stalin was able to outvote his ex-partners. By December, Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev and other left-wing Communist had lost important positions and had been expelled from the party.

Stalin then began to turn against Bukharin and the Right-wing supporters. Towards the end of 1927, Stalin began to indicate that he favored a change in economic policy. He decided to adopt Trotsky's earlier suggestions for a programme of industrialization and the ending of NEP. Bukharin continued to defend the existing policies, so Stalin began to use his position to remove Bukharin's supporters. In desperation, Bukharin turned to Trotsky, who had been exiled to Siberia earlier in 1928. Bukharin was particularly worried about Stalin wanted to execute his opponents, and suggested Trotsky to join forces to restore party and Soviet democracy before it was too late.

However, their supporters would not cooperate, and Bukharin was defeated. In 1929, Trotsky was expelled from the Soviet Union making Stalin the last important leader, giving him the whole power.

During this whole process of Stalin rise to power, all the leaders, Trotsky Kamenev, Zinoviev and Bukharin underestimated Stalin. This was his most powerful weapon against the leaders. He exploited this advantage especially when they ignore the fact that they give him the post of General Secretary, a post that was very high of importance.

Another critical reason that helped Stalin, was that, despite his bad orator skills, during all these period, the struggle took place behind the " people <https://assignbuster.com/what-conditions-allowed-for-the-rise-of-stalin-politics-essay/>

eyes” this meant that it was always inside the secretariat, making useless to be a brilliant person like Trotsky to explain his ideas to the public or give speeches, another great advantage to Stalin.

In conclusion I strongly believe that many factors had to be taken in consideration that let Stalin rise to power. He had a low-profile attitude; this effect over the other leaders was an incredible advantage. The leaders underestimated Stalin, thought him as secondary role person who simply wouldn't have the required power. He used this advantaged effectively while the rival struggle between leaders happened.

The environment where the struggle for power took place was another advantage for Stalin. Despite his lacked for orator skills or a brilliant mind, those qualities weren't needed because the struggle took place inside the secretariat “ behind closed doors”, so it was blind to the nation.

Stalin was very lucky enough by the fact of being given the charge of “ General Secretary” before Lenin had his first stroke. Later, after Lenin was aware of the constant move he made making his supporters have a higher charge inside party, but unfortunately, after his first stroke, we was unable to control Stalin. By the time Lenin was recovering he couldn't do anything to Stalin as he already put his supporters in high charges in the secretariat.

Finally, he planned very well the way he was going to get to the top of the absolute power of the Soviet Union as it was clearly shown on how he could get rapidly rid of his most important rival leaders and especially Trotsky. He took advantage of each crucial moment that appeared to him. His

manipulative skills were basically the key to success.

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