

Lev Kamenev was born in Moscow, Russia, on 18th July, 1883. The son of a Jewish engine-driver on the Moscow-Kursk Railway. Both his parents had been active in the radical student movement in the 1870s and had known the people involved in the assassination of Alexander II.

Kamenev became involved in radical politics while still at the Tiflis Gymnasium and this appeared on his school reports and initially stopped him from entering university. After an appeal to the Minister of Education, Kamenev was allowed to study law at Moscow University.

At university Kamenev had articles published in magazines calling for students to join with workers to fight for democracy. In February 1902 Kamenev took part in student demonstrations against Nicholas II. The following month he was arrested at another demonstration and was imprisoned in Butyrki. He was released a few months later but was not allowed to continue his university studies. Leon Trotsky, who got to know him during this period compared him to Gregory Zinoviev: "Zinoviev and Kamenev are two profoundly different types. Zinoviev is an agitator. Kamenev a propagandist. Zinoviev was guided in the main by a subtle political instinct. Kamenev was given to reasoning and analyzing. Zinoviev was always inclined to fly off at a tangent. Kamenev, on the contrary, erred on the side of excessive caution. Zinoviev was entirely absorbed by politics, cultivating no other interests and appetites. In Kamenev there sat a sybarite and a aesthete. Zinoviev was vindictive. Kamenev was good nature personified."

Kamenev married Trotsky's sister, Olga Davidovna, and in 1902 moved to Paris. They met Lenin and his wife, Nadezhda Krupskaya, and together they moved to Geneva in Switzerland. Kamenev soon emerged as one of the leaders of the Social Democratic Labour Party in exile. At the Second Congress of the Social Democratic Party in London in 1903, there was a dispute between Lenin and Julius Martov, two of the party's main leaders. Lenin argued for a small party of professional revolutionaries with a large fringe of non-party sympathizers and supporters. Martov disagreed believing it was better to have a large party of activists. Martov won the vote 28-23 but Lenin was unwilling to accept the result and formed a faction known as the Bolsheviks. Those who remained loyal to Martov became known as Mensheviks.

Kamenev joined the Bolsheviks. So also did Gregory Zinoviev, Anatoli Lunacharsky, Joseph Stalin, Mikhail Lashevich, Nadezhda Krupskaya, Alexei Rykov, Yakov Sverdlov, Mikhail Frunze, Maxim Litvinov, Vladimir Antonov, Felix Dzerzhinsky, Gregory Ordzhonikidze, and Alexander Bogdanov. Whereas George Plekhanov, Pavel Axelrod, Leon Trotsky, Lev Deich, Vladimir Antonov-Ovseenko, Irakli Tsereteli, Moisei Uritsky, Noi Zhordania and Fedor Dan supported Julius Martov.

After the meeting in London Kamenev returned to Tiflis where he organised a strike on the Transcaucasian Railway. This resulted in his arrest by the Okhrana and he remained in custody for five months before being deported from Moscow. Although under police supervision in Tiflis he continued to write for Bolshevik newspapers. Kamenev toured Russia making propaganda speeches in support of the Bolsheviks and during the 1905 Revolution organised railway strikes in St. Petersburg. Over the next couple of years he played a prominent role in the campaign against the limited power of the Duma.

In December, 1908, Kamenev moved to Geneva where he worked with Vladimir Lenin and Gregory Zinoviev in the publication of *Proletary*. He also wrote a book, *The Two Parties*, that explained the split between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. In 1912 Kamenev, Gregory Zinoviev and Lenin moved to Krakow in Galicia to be closer to Russia. On the outbreak of the First World War they were forced to move to the neutral Switzerland. After the overthrow of Nicholas II in 1917, Kamenev, Gregory Zinoviev and Lenin returned to Russia and joined with Leon Trotsky and others in plotting against the government being led by Alexander Kerensky. Soon after arriving in St. Petersburg, Lenin and Kamenev published their views on how to achieve a Marxist revolution. Kamenev also joined Zinoviev as editor of *Pravda*.

On 3rd April, 1917, Lenin announced what became known as the April Theses. Lenin attacked Bolsheviks for supporting the Provisional Government. Instead, he argued, revolutionaries should be telling the people of Russia that they should take over the control of the country. In his speech, Lenin urged the peasants to take the land from the rich landlords and the industrial workers to seize the factories.

Lev Kamenev led the opposition to Lenin's call for the overthrow of the government. In *Pravda* he disputed Lenin's assumption that "the bourgeois democratic revolution has ended," and warned against utopianism that would transform the "party of the revolutionary masses of the proletariat" into "a group of communist propagandists." A meeting of the Petrograd Bolshevik Committee the day after the April Theses appeared voted 13 to 2 to reject Lenin's position.

Robert V. Daniels, the author of *Red October: The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917* (1967) has argued that Lenin now set about changing the minds of the Bolsheviks. "He was distinctly a father-figure: at forty-eight, he was ten years or more the senior of the other Bolshevik leaders. And he had a few key helpers - Zinoviev, Alexandra Kollontai, Stalin (who was quick to sense the new direction of power in the party), and, most effective of all, Yakov Sverdlov."



### **Lev Kamenev**

In September 1917, Lenin sent a message to the Bolshevik Central Committee via Ivar Smilga. "Without losing a single moment, organize the staff of the insurrectionary detachments; designate the forces; move the loyal regiments to the most important points; surround the Alexandrinsky

Theater (i.e., the Democratic Conference); occupy the Peter-Paul fortress; arrest the general staff and the government; move against the military cadets, the Savage Division, etc., such detachments as will die rather than allow the enemy to move to the center of the city; we must mobilize the armed workers, call them to a last desperate battle, occupy at once the telegraph and telephone stations, place our staff of the uprising at the central telephone station, connect it by wire with all the factories, the regiments, the points of armed fighting, etc.”

Joseph Stalin read the message to the Central Committee. Nickolai Bukharin later recalled: "We gathered and - I remember as though it were just now - began the session. Our tactics at the time were comparatively clear: the development of mass agitation and propaganda, the course toward armed insurrection, which could be expected from one day to the next. The letter read as follows: '*You will be traitors and good-for-nothings if you don't send the whole (Democratic Conference Bolshevik) group to the factories and mills, surround the Democratic Conference and arrest all those disgusting people!*' The letter was written very forcefully and threatened us with every punishment. We all gasped. No one had yet put the question so sharply. No one knew what to do. Everyone was at a loss for a while. Then we deliberated and came to a decision. Perhaps this was the only time in the history of our party when the Central Committee unanimously decided to burn a letter of Comrade Lenin's. This instance was not publicized at the time." Lev Kamenev proposed replying to Lenin with an outright refusal to consider insurrection, but this step was turned down. Eventually it was decided to postpone any decision on the matter.

Leon Trotsky was the main figure to argue for an insurrection whereas Kamenev, Gregory Zinoviev, Alexei Rykov and Victor Nogin led the resistance to the idea. They argued that an early action was likely to result in the Bolsheviks being destroyed as a political force. As Robert V. Daniels, the author of *Red October: The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917* (1967) has explained why Zinoviev felt strongly about the need to wait: "The experience of the summer (the July Days) had brought him to the conclusion that any attempt at an uprising would end as disastrously as the Paris Commune of 1871; revolution was inevitable, he wrote at the time of the Kornilov crisis, but the party's task for the time being was to restrain the masses from rising to the provocations of the bourgeoisie."

At a meeting of the Central Committee on 9th October, Kamenev and Gregory Zinoviev were the only members opposed to Lenin's call for revolution. He later changed his mind and took part in the October Revolution that brought the Bolsheviks to power.

In December, 1918, Lenin sent Kamenev to London to explain the policies of the new Soviet government. After one week he was deported by the British government. He moved on to Finland where he was arrested and imprisoned. Kamenev was held until January, 1919, when he was released in exchange for Finns imprisoned in Russia.

On his return to Russia he was elected Chairman of the Moscow Soviet and became a member of the party's five-man ruling Politburo. It was assumed that Leon Trotsky would replace Lenin as leader. To stop this happening Joseph Stalin established a triumvirate composed of Kamenev and Gregory Zinoviev. The historian, Isaac Deutscher, the author of *Stalin* (1949) has pointed out: "What made for the solidarity of the three men was their determination to prevent Trotsky from succeeding to the leadership of the party. Separately, neither could measure up to Trotsky. Jointly, they represented a powerful combination of talent and influence. Zinoviev was the politician, the orator, the demagogue with popular appeal. Kamenev was the strategist of the group, its solid brain, trained in matters of doctrine, which were to play a paramount part in the contest for power. Stalin was the tactician of the triumvirate and its organizing force. Between them, the three men virtually controlled the whole party and, through it, the Government."

In the summer of 1920 Kamenev was sent as head of a Soviet Trade Delegation to London. On 14th August, Kamenev met the British artist, Clare Sheridan. He agreed to sit for her and Sheridan recorded in her autobiography, *Russian Portraits* (1921): "There is very little modelling in his face, it is a perfect oval, and his nose is straight with the line of his forehead, but turns up slightly at the end, which is a pity. It is difficult to make him look serious, as he smiles all the time. Even when his mouth is severe his eyes laugh.... We had wonderful conversations. He told me all kinds of details of the Soviet legislation, their ideals and aims. Their first care, he told me, is for the children, they are the future citizens and require every protection. If parents are too poor to bring up their children, the State

will clothe, feed, harbour and educate them until fourteen years old, legitimate and illegitimate alike, and they do not need to be lost to their parents, who can see them whenever they wish. This system, he said, had doubled the percentage of marriages (civil of course), and it had also allayed a good deal of crime - for what crimes are not committed to destroy illegitimate children?

Clare Sheridan took a holiday with Kamenev on the Isle of Wight. While they were there Kamenev promised her that he would arrange for her to return to Moscow with him. She told her cousin, Shane Leslie, that doing busts of Lenin and Leon Trotsky might bring her world fame. On 5th September 1920, Clare's brother, Oswald Frewen, wrote in his diary: "Puss (Clare) is trying to go to Moscow with Kamenev to sculpt Lenin and Leon Trotsky.... I rather she didn't go but she has got Bolshevism badly - she always reflects the views of the last man she's met - and I think it may cure her to go and see it. She is her own mistress and if I thwarted her by telling Winston, she'd never confide in me again.... I went to the Bolshevik Legation in Bond Street with her and waited while she saw Kamenev. Several typical Bolshies there - degenerate lot."



**Clare Sheridan's bust of Lev Kamenev**

Sheridan and Kamenev arrived in Moscow on 20th September, 1920. Olga Kameneva was on the station to greet him: "We reached Moscow at 10.30 a.m. and I waited in the train so that Kamenev and his wife could get their tender greetings over without my presence. I watched them through the window: the greeting on one side, however, was not apparent in its tenderness. I waited and they walked up the platform talking with animation. Finally Mrs. Kameneva came into the compartment and shook hands with me. She has small brown eyes and thin lips."

Sheridan spent a lot of time with Kamenev in Moscow. This upset his wife and it is generally believed that this was the main reason for their divorce. Kamenev arranged for Sheridan to produce busts of Lenin, Leon Trotsky, Gregory Zinoviev and Felix Dzerzhinsky. According to Robert Service, the



author of *Trotsky: A Biography* (2010), Sheridan lost interest in Kamenev after she began an affair with Trotsky.



**Clare Sheridan in Moscow in 1920**

At the Communist Party Congress in May, 1923, Stalin admitted that the triumvirate existed. In reply to a speech made by a delegate he argued: "Osinsky has praised Stalin and praised Kamenev, but he has attacked Zinoviev, thinking that for the time being it would be enough to remove one of them and that then would come the turn of the others. His aim is to break up that nucleus that has formed itself inside the Central Committee over years of toil... I ought to warn him that he will run into a wall, against which, I am afraid, he will smash his head." To another critic, who demanded more



freedom of discussion in the party, Stalin replied that the party was no debating society. Russia was "surrounded by the wolves of imperialism; and to discuss all important matters in 20,000 party cells would mean to lay all one's cards before the enemy."

On 5th December, 1923, Leon Trotsky published an open letter where he called for more debate in the Communist Party concerning the way the country was being governed. He argued that members should exercise its right to criticism "without fear and without favour" and the first people to be removed from party positions are "those who at the first voice of criticism, of objection, of protest, are inclined to demand one's party ticket for the purpose of repression". Trotsky went on to suggest that anyone who "dares to terrorize the party" should be expelled.

Gregory Zinoviev was furious with Trotsky for making these comments and proposed that he should be immediately arrested. Stalin, aware of Trotsky's immense popularity, opposed the move as being too dangerous. He encouraged Zinoviev and Kamenev to attack Trotsky whereas he wanted to give the impression that he was the most moderate, sensible, and conciliatory of the triumvirs. Stalin waited until the end of December before addressing the issue. Without mentioning Trotsky, he asked the question: "Did the opposition demand that Lenin's rules, which banned factions and groupings inside the party, believe they should be abolished?" In this way he suggested that Trotsky was arguing against Lenin.

Lenin died of a heart attack on 21st January, 1924. Stalin reacted to the news by announcing that Lenin was to be embalmed and put on permanent display in a mausoleum to be erected on Red Square. Lenin's wife, Nadezhda Krupskaya, immediately objected because she disliked the "quasi-religious" implications of this decision. Despite these objections, Stalin carried on with the arrangements.

The funeral took place on 27th January, and Stalin was a pallbearer with Kamenev, Gregory Zinoviev, Nickolai Bukharin, Vyacheslav Molotov, Felix Dzerzhinsky and Maihail Tomsy. Stalin gave a speech which ended with the words: "Leaving us, comrade Lenin left us a legacy of fidelity to the principles of the Communist International. We swear to you, comrade Lenin, that we will not spare our own lives in strengthening and broadening the union of labouring people of the whole world - the Communist International."

With the decline of Trotsky, Joseph Stalin felt strong enough to stop sharing power with Kamenev and Zinoviev. Stalin now began to attack Trotsky's

belief in the need for world revolution. He argued that the party's main priority should be to defend the communist system that had been developed in the Soviet Union. This put Zinoviev and Kamenev in an awkward position. They had for a long time been strong supporters of Trotsky's theory that if revolution did not spread to other countries, the communist system in the Soviet Union was likely to be overthrown by hostile, capitalist nations. However, they were reluctant to speak out in favour of a man whom they had been in conflict with for so long.

When Joseph Stalin was finally convinced that Kamenev and Gregory Zinoviev were unwilling to join forces with Leon Trotsky against him, he began to support openly the economic policies of right-wing members of the Politburo like Nikolay Bukharin, Mikhail Tomsky and Alexei Rykov. They now realized what Stalin was up to but it took them to summer of 1926 before they could swallow their pride and join with Trotsky against Stalin.

When Kamenev and Gregory Zinoviev eventually began attacking his policies, Joseph Stalin argued they were creating disunity in the party and managed to have them expelled from the Central Committee. The belief that the party would split into two opposing factions was a strong fear amongst active communists in the Soviet Union. They were convinced that if this happened, western countries would take advantage of the situation and invade the Soviet Union.

Under pressure from the Central Committee, Kamenev and Gregory Zinoviev agreed to sign statements promising not to create conflict in the movement by making speeches attacking official policies. Leon Trotsky refused to sign and was banished to the remote area of Kazhakstan.

At the 17th Party Congress in 1934, when Sergey Kirov stepped up to the podium he was greeted by spontaneous applause that equalled that which was required to be given to Stalin. In his speech he put forward a policy of reconciliation. He argued that people should be released from prison who had opposed the government's policy on collective farms and industrialization. The members of the Congress gave Kirov a vote of confidence by electing him to the influential Central Committee Secretariat. Stalin grew jealous of Kirov's popularity. As Edward P. Gazur has pointed out: "In sharp contrast to Stalin, Kirov was a much younger man and an eloquent speaker, who was able to sway his listeners; above all, he possessed a charismatic personality. Unlike Stalin who was a Georgian, Kirov was also an ethnic Russian, which stood in his favour."

Kirov put forward a policy of reconciliation. He argued that people should be released from prison who had opposed the government's policy on collective farms and industrialization. Once again, Stalin found himself in a minority in the Politburo. After years of arranging for the removal of his opponents from the party, Stalin realized he still could not rely on the total support of the people whom he had replaced them with. Stalin no doubt began to wonder if Kirov was willing to wait for his mentor to die before becoming leader of the party. Stalin was particularly concerned by Kirov's willingness to argue with him in public, fearing that this would undermine his authority in the party.

As usual, that summer Kirov and Stalin went on holiday together. Stalin, who treated Kirov like a son, used this opportunity to try to persuade him to remain loyal to his leadership. Stalin asked him to leave Leningrad to join him in Moscow. Stalin wanted Kirov in a place where he could keep a close eye on him. When Kirov refused, Stalin knew he had lost control over his protégé. As usual, that summer Kirov and Stalin went on holiday together. Stalin, who treated Kirov like a son, used this opportunity to try to persuade him to remain loyal to his leadership. Stalin asked him to leave Leningrad to join him in Moscow. Stalin wanted Kirov in a place where he could keep a close eye on him. When Kirov refused, Stalin knew he had lost control over his protégé. According to Alexander Orlov, who had been told this by Genrikh Yagoda, Stalin decided that Kirov had to die.

Yagoda assigned the task to Vania Zaporozhets, one of his trusted lieutenants in the NKVD. He selected a young man, Leonid Nikolayev, as a possible candidate. Nikolayev had recently been expelled from the Communist Party and had vowed his revenge by claiming that he intended to assassinate a leading government figure. Zaporozhets met Nikolayev and when he discovered he was of low intelligence and appeared to be a person who could be easily manipulated, he decided that he was the ideal candidate as assassin.

Zaporozhets provided him with a pistol and gave him instructions to kill Kirov in the Smolny Institute in Leningrad. However, soon after entering the building he was arrested. Zaporozhets had to use his influence to get him released. On 1st December, 1934, Nikolayev, got past the guards and was able to shoot Kirov dead. Nikolayev was immediately arrested and after

being tortured by Genrikh Yagoda he signed a statement saying that Kamenev and Gregory Zinoviev had been the leaders of the conspiracy to assassinate Kirov.

According to Alexander Orlov: "Stalin decided to arrange for the assassination of Kirov and to lay the crime at the door of the former leaders of the opposition and thus with one blow do away with Lenin's former comrades. Stalin came to the conclusion that, if he could prove that Zinoviev and Kamenev and other leaders of the opposition had shed the blood of Kirov". Victor Kravchenko has pointed out: "Hundreds of suspects in Leningrad were rounded up and shot summarily, without trial. Hundreds of others, dragged from prison cells where they had been confined for years, were executed in a gesture of official vengeance against the Party's enemies. The first accounts of Kirov's death said that the assassin had acted as a tool of dastardly foreigners - Estonian, Polish, German and finally British. Then came a series of official reports vaguely linking Nikolayev with present and past followers of Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev and other dissident old Bolsheviks."

Sidney Webb later recalled: "In December 1934 the head Bolshevik official in Leningrad (Kirov) was assassinated by a dismissed employee, who may have acted independently out of personal revenge, but who was discovered to have secret connections with conspiratorial circles of ever-widening range. The Government reaction to this murder was to hurry on the trial, condemnation, and summary execution of the hundred or more persons above referred to, who were undoubtedly guilty of illegal entry and inexcusably bearing arms and bombs, although it was apparently not proved that they had any connection with Kirov's assassination or the conspiracies associated therewith."

Leonid Nikolayev was executed after his trial but Zinoviev and Kamenev refused to confess. Ya S. Agranov, the deputy commissar of the secret police, reported to Stalin he was not able to prove that they had been directly involved in the assassination. Therefore in January 1935 they were tried and convicted only for "moral complicity" in the crime. "That is, their opposition had created a climate in which others were incited to violence." Zinoviev was sentenced to ten years hard labour, Kamenev to five.

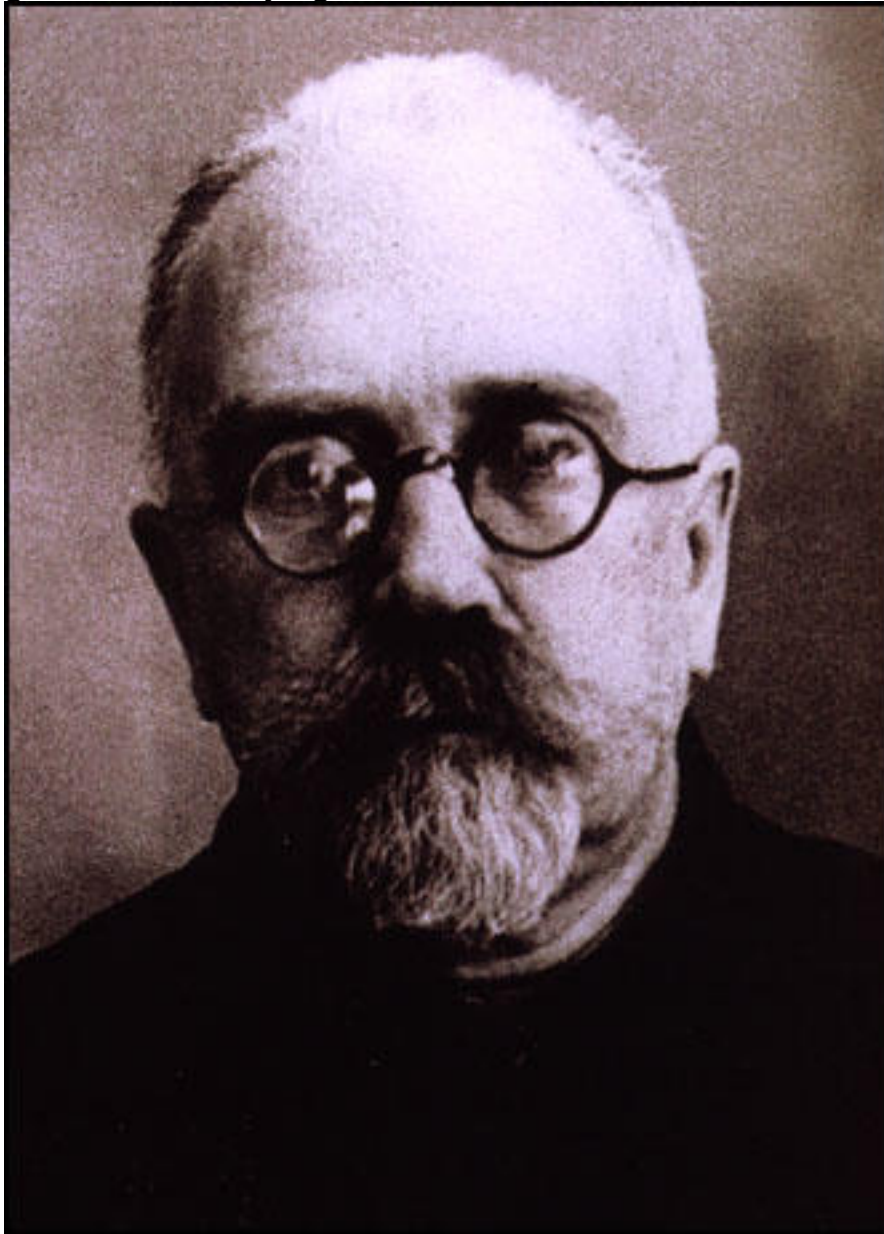
Genrikh Yagoda now had the task of persuading Kamenev and Zinoviev to confess to their role in the death of Kirov as part of the plot to assassinate Stalin and other leaders of government. When they refused to do this Stalin had a new provision enacted into law on 8th April 1935 which would enable him to exert additional leverage over his enemies. The new law decreed that children of the age of twelve and over who were found guilty of crimes would be subjected to the same punishment as adults, up to and including the death penalty. This provision provided NKVD with the means by which they could coerce a confession from a political dissident simply by claiming that false charges would be brought against their children.

Edward P. Gazur, the author of *Alexander Orlov: The FBI's KGB General* (2001), claims that Alexander Orlov later admitted: "In the months preceding the trial, the two men were subjected to every conceivable form of interrogation: subtle pressure, then periods of enormous pressure, starvation, open and veiled threats, promises, as well as physical and mental torture. Neither man would succumb to the ordeal they faced." Stalin was frustrated by Stalin's lack of success and brought in Nikolai Yezhov to carry out the interrogations.

Orlov, who was a leading figure in the NKVD, later admitted what happened. "Towards the end of their ordeal, Zinoviev became sick and exhausted. Yezhov took advantage of the situation in a desperate attempt to get a confession. Yezhov warned that Zinoviev must affirm at a public trial that he had plotted the assassination of Stalin and other members of the Politburo. Zinoviev declined the demand. Yezhov then relayed Stalin's offer; that if he co-operated at an open trial, his life would be spared; if he did not, he would be tried in a closed military court and executed, along with all of the opposition. Zinoviev vehemently rejected Stalin's offer. Yezhov then tried the same tactics on Kamenev and again was rebuffed."

In July 1936 Yezhov told Kamenev and Gregory Zinoviev that their children would be charged with being part of the conspiracy and would face execution if found guilty. The two men now agreed to co-operate at the trial if Stalin promised to spare their lives. At a meeting with Stalin, Kamenev told him that they would agree to co-operate on the condition that none of the old-line Bolsheviks who were considered the opposition and charged at the new trial would be executed, that their families would not be

persecuted, and that in the future none of the former members of the opposition would be subjected to the death penalty. Stalin replied: "That goes without saying!"



**The last known photograph of Lev Kamenev**

The trial opened on 19th August 1936. Five of the sixteen defendants were actually NKVD plants, whose confessional testimony was expected to solidify the state's case by exposing Zinoviev, Kamenev and the other defendants as their fellow conspirators. The presiding judge was Vasily Ulrikh, a member of the secret police. The prosecutor was Andrei



Vyshinsky, who was to become well-known during the Show Trials over the next few years.

Yuri Piatakov accepted the post of chief witness "with all my heart." Max Shachtman pointed out: "The official indictment charges a widespread assassination conspiracy, carried on these five years or more, directed against the head of the Communist party and the government, organized with the direct connivance of the Hitler regime, and aimed at the establishment of a Fascist dictatorship in Russia. And who are included in these stupefying charges, either as direct participants or, what would be no less reprehensible, as persons with knowledge of the conspiracy who failed to disclose it?"

The men made confessions of their guilt. Lev Kamenev said: "I Kamenev, together with Zinoviev and Trotsky, organised and guided this conspiracy. My motives? I had become convinced that the party's - Stalin's policy - was successful and victorious. We, the opposition, had banked on a split in the party; but this hope proved groundless. We could no longer count on any serious domestic difficulties to allow us to overthrow. Stalin's leadership we were actuated by boundless hatred and by lust of power."

Gregory Zinoviev also confessed: "I would like to repeat that I am fully and utterly guilty. I am guilty of having been the organizer, second only to Trotsky, of that block whose chosen task was the killing of Stalin. I was the principal organizer of Kirov's assassination. The party saw where we were going, and warned us; Stalin warned as scores of times; but we did not heed these warnings. We entered into an alliance with Trotsky."

Kamenev's final words in the trial concerned the plight of his children: "I should like to say a few words to my children. I have two children, one is an army pilot, the other a Young Pioneer. Whatever my sentence may be, I consider it just... Together with the people, follow where Stalin leads." This was a reference to the promise that Stalin made about his sons.

On 24th August, 1936, Vasily Ulrikh entered the courtroom and began reading the long and dull summation leading up to the verdict. Ulrikh announced that all sixteen defendants were sentenced to death by shooting. Edward P. Gazur has pointed out: "Those in attendance fully

expected the customary addendum which was used in political trials that stipulated that the sentence was commuted by reason of a defendant's contribution to the Revolution. These words never came, and it was apparent that the death sentence was final when Ulrikh placed the summation on his desk and left the court-room."

The following day Soviet newspapers carried the announcement that all sixteen defendants had been put to death. This included the NKVD agents who had provided false confessions. Joseph Stalin could not afford for any witnesses to the conspiracy to remain alive. Edvard Radzinsky, the author of *Stalin* (1996), has pointed out that Stalin did not even keep his promise to Kamenev's sons and later both men were shot.

Most journalists covering the trial were convinced that the confessions were statements of truth. *The Observer* reported: "It is futile to think the trial was staged and the charges trumped up. The government's case against the defendants (Zinoviev and Kamenev) is genuine." The *The New Statesman* commented: "Very likely there was a plot. We complain because, in the absence of independent witnesses, there is no way of knowing. It is their (Zinoviev and Kamenev) confession and decision to demand the death sentence for themselves that constitutes the mystery. If they had a hope of acquittal, why confess? If they were guilty of trying to murder Stalin and knew they would be shot in any case, why cringe and crawl instead of defiantly justifying their plot on revolutionary grounds? We would be glad to hear the explanation."

#### PRIMARY DOCUMENTS:

**(1) *The Granat Encyclopaedia of the Russian Revolution* was published by the Soviet government in 1924. The encyclopaedia included a collection of autobiographies and biographies of over two hundred people involved in the Russian Revolution.**

Kamenev's acquaintance with Lenin and the impression made by the series of lectures and papers the latter gave during the visit, had a decisive influence on his future career. Learning that Iskra would in future be published by Lenin in Geneva rather than London, Kamenev left Paris for Switzerland, where he spent several months on a detailed study of revolutionary social democratic literature.

**(2) Victor Serge, Year One of the Russian Revolution (1930)**

In the last days of September the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks (Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Sverdlov, Yakovleva, Oppokov, Zinoviev, Kamenev) met in Petrograd, in the apartment of Sukhanov. Even the principle of the insurrection was in dispute. Kamenev and Zinoviev (Nogin and Rykov, who were of the same opinion, being absent from this meeting) stated their view that the insurrection might perhaps itself be successful, but that it would be almost impossible to maintain power afterwards owing to the economic pressures and crisis in the food supply. The majority voted for the insurrection, and actually fixed the date for 15 October.

**(3) In his book *Stalin*, Isaac Deutscher described the way Lev Kamenev and Gregory Zinoviev defended Joseph Stalin from the attacks made on him by Lenin just before his death.**

Zinoviev addressed the Central Committee, "Comrades, every word of Lenin is law to us. We have sworn to fulfill everything the dying Lenin ordered us to do. You know perfectly well that we shall keep that vow. But we are happy to say that in one point Lenin's fears have proved baseless. I have in mind the point about our General Secretary (Stalin). You have all witnessed our harmonious cooperation in the last few months; and, like myself, you will be happy to say that Lenin's fears have proved baseless."

Kamenev followed with an appeal to the Central Committee that Stalin be left in office. But if this was to happen it was not advisable to publish Lenin's will at the congress. Krupskaya protested against the suppression of her husband's testament, but in vain. Trotsky, present at the meeting, was too proud to intervene in a situation which affected his own standing too.

**(4) Robert V. Daniels, Red October: The Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 (1967)**

Another new figure in the recast Bolshevik faction was Lev Kamenev, the same age as Zinoviev and like him from a Jewish family (Rosenfeld). He was married to Trotsky's sister—a fact that did not prevent the two men from being political adversaries. Throughout his life Kamenev was a cautious and conservative personality, with a dignified beard, but he worked diligently for the cause. He was one of the few Bolsheviks elected to the Duma in 1912, along with Lenin's flamboyant favorite, Roman Malinovsky - who later turned out to be one of the numerous police agents planted in the party. Kamenev went to Siberia in 1914 when the Bolshevik Duma deputies

were arrested for opposing the war, and remained in exile until the February Revolution liberated him.