

Source: Frank Golder, Documents of Russian History, 1914-1917, pp. 388-90. Citing Izvestiia No. 4, (16 March 1917) for this first explanation and then Protokoly, pp. 296-7, for Order Number 2 itself.

## THE PETROGRAD SOVIET OF WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' DEPUTIES.

### OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS

Order No. I of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, published in the last number of the "Izvestiia," defines in full the mutual relations of soldiers and officers. Nevertheless there are those who, at this critical historical moment, are trying to disturb the unity which has been achieved at the price of so many sacrifices. We have in mind the proclamation, fortunately not widely scattered, signed in the name of the two Socialist parties.

Let us compare the two documents [Order No. I and the Proclamation] .

The "Order" defines the position of the officers. It gives them authority only in time of military service. When drilling, when on duty, when in war, the soldiers and all lower ranks must observe military discipline. Off duty and off service, the officers have no power over the soldiers. The soldier has become a citizen; he has ceased to be a slave. This is the idea of the "Order":

In the above-mentioned proclamation, we note a strange rage against the officers, without excepting even those who have come out on the side of the people and are actually our friends...

We have no doubt, we firmly believe, that the intelligent comrade soldiers will pay no attention to these calls and will not follow the advice of the light-minded authors of this leaflet.

## ORDER No. II

To the troops of the Petrograd district, to all the soldiers of the guard, army, artillery, and navy, for strict execution, and to the workers of Petrograd for information:

In explanation and amplification of Order No. I, the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies has resolved

1. Order No. I of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies proposed to all companies, battalions, and other military units to elect committees (company, battalion, etc.), appropriate to each particular unit, but that Order did not provide that these committees should elect the officers of each unit. These committees are to be chosen in order that the soldiers of the Petrograd garrison may be organized and enabled, through their committee representatives, to share in the general political life of the country and, specifically, to make **known** to the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies their views regarding the necessity for action of any kind. The committees must also attend to the general needs of each company, or other unit.

As regards the question of the limits within which the interests of the military establishment may be compatible with the right of the soldiers to choose their own commanders, it has been submitted for consideration to a special commission.

All elections of officers up to the present time and confirmed, or submitted for confirmation, by the army authorities, must remain in force.

2. Pending the time when the question of elective commanders is definitely settled, the Soviet grants to the committees of the various units the right of objection to the appointment of any officer. Such objections must be addressed to the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, by whom they will be laid before the military commission in which representatives of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, together with other public organizations, are participating.

3. Order No. I showed the significance of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies as an institution directing all the POLITICAL actions of the soldiers of Petrograd. To this elective organ of their own choice, the soldiers are bound to submit in matters of their

public and POLITICAL life. As for the military authorities, the soldiers are bound to submit to all their orders that have reference to the military service.

4. To remove the danger of an armed counter-revolution, the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies presented the demand that the Petrograd garrison, which won for Russia her political liberty, be not disarmed, and the Provisional Government has assumed the obligation to prevent such disarmament, in accordance with its official declaration. In conformity with this declaration, company and battalion committees are required to see to it that the arms of the Petrograd soldiers are not taken from them, as was indicated in Order No. I.

5. Reaffirming the demands made under points 6 and 7 of Order No. I, the Executive Committee notes the fact that some of these are already being carried into effect by the Provisional Government.

The present Order is to be read to all companies, battalions, regiments, ships' crews, batteries, and other combatant and non-combatant commands.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE PETROGRAD SOVIET OF WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' DEPUTIES

This is a true copy of the original:

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MILITARY COMMISSION OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT