

# When Will the Wretched Slaughter End?

Leon Trotsky  
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*This pamphlet was printed as separate articles in the newspaper Rabochii (Worker), numbers 10-12 (September 1-2 and 14-15). Rabochii began to appear instead of Proletarii, which was closed by the government to the accompaniment of joyous howling from the bourgeois press. It is true, for the sake of objectivity, that the government closed [Aleksey] Suvorin's "yellow" paper on the same day.*

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The fourth autumn of the war has reached Russia. Rain is falling, and the autumn wind whistles at the intersections of streets and in the fields. It is gloomy and tense in the cities of our land, and there is no joy in its poor villages. And there, at the front, along the black line of trenches our brothers are dying, Russian workers and Russian peasants. The earth is soaked with rain and blood. The artillery roars with a fiendish howl. People attack, bellowing madly, run away in despair, lose consciousness, fall and die. They die in countless numbers...

And this is already the fourth year. With no end in sight. "It is impossible," say the governments of all countries, "to stop halfway." "We must pursue the war to the end." "We must once and for all clip the wings of the German bird of prey!" say the "patriots" of Russia, England, France, Italy and the United States. "Do you hear that, my German citizens?"—asks the German Kaiser, covered in blood. "Our enemies want to grind us into dust. Gather more closely around my throne, German workers and peasants: we must wage war to the end, to complete victory!" That is how the governments of both camps refer to each other and respond to attack with attack, destruction with slaughter, and death with death. "We must wage war to the end!" And where is the end? The fourth autumn is already soaking the fields of battle with cold rains, but there is no end in sight.

Seven million people have been killed in Europe during the war; six thousand men are killed on average per day. The slaughter has added five million cripples in all the warring countries. Another winter campaign lies ahead. And very soon every nation will hear from the rulers of its country: "Next spring we will begin a great and decisive offensive. We must wage war to the end!"

Long ago the generals, diplomats and politicians of all countries concluded that neither side would achieve complete victory in this war. Germany has a great advantage on land, but she is cut off from all seas. The main fact is that neither side is able to force the enemy to accept peace from the hands of the victor. The Germans have now taken Riga, the front has moved forward a few dozen miles on the bones of fallen soldiers, but the war has not come one inch closer to peace. At terrifying cost, the Italians have advanced somewhat. The French front, at a cost of countless victims on both sides, remains almost in the same place. The war is both senseless and endless. Like a blind horse at a mill wheel, straining every muscle but remaining in the same place, the many-millioned armies of Europe, bleeding to death, cannot move the war forward.

All the governments see and understand this. But they are powerless to make peace. The governments fear peace. They sense that the first day of peace will become a day of tallying the results.

Exhausted soldiers will come out of the bloody pits called trenches, look

round at the impoverished and desolate cities and villages, and together with millions of cripples, with millions of widows and orphans, with millions of old men and women deprived of their last support, will raise their fists toward the governments with curses and threats: "You are to blame for everything, you, Kaisers and kings, presidents and ministers, bourgeois deputies, bankers, and capitalists; you, lying newspapermen, you, archbishops, priests, rabbis and pastors! It is you who called for war, the bloodiest and foulest of all that have ever disgraced our planet. It is you who prepared and advocated war. It is you who sanctified it with the blessings of the church, cathedral, synagogue and mosque! From us and our brothers you took everything: life, health, the fruits of our labors. And in exchange you gave us poverty and new chains!" And under the weight of their own crimes, the governments of all warring nations now worry about one thing: to delay the ominous hour of retribution. Afraid of giving an account of the last three winter campaigns, the governments are preparing a fourth, all the same, just as one who has lost a match prolongs the game in order to delay the hour of defeat.

German mothers and wives go into the streets in crowds, demanding peace and bread. Anxious discontent seizes the starving masses of Germany. And yet the Kaiser forces his army to exert new effort. Instead of bread and peace the German people receive a telegram about the taking of Riga. Hindenburg brings happiness to the German workers and peasants with news that their brothers will soon begin to pave the road to Petersburg with their corpses. "Forward, soldiers!"—Hohenzollern beckons, "There, beneath the wall of the Petropavlovsk fortress, you will find the peace you desire!"

At the very same time, the Russian government declares: now that the German troops are attacking us again, we can talk less about peace than at any other time. "Let whoever is now talking about peace be cursed!" exclaims Minister-Chairman Kerensky at a conference in Moscow. "It will be possible to talk about peace," explain the so-called "patriots," "only when we drive the enemy beyond the borders of Russia."

More than three years have passed as the German army, by advancing and retreating, has reached its present positions. Do we have any reason to think that we will drive the Germans back to the borders of 1914 in less than three years? And in the event that our offensive is successful, won't the German government then say: now that the Russian troops are once again threatening the borders of Germany, we must abandon any thought of peace!

And what if this winter, and the following spring, military actions prove to be unfavorable for us? What then? Where and when will peace be made? What can the Russian and the toiling masses of the whole world hope for? Or is it the case that Europe and Russia are condemned to bleed themselves to death? Whole peoples clutch at one another, tear each other to pieces, cry out with unbearable pain, yet find no salvation. And those who stand over the people, their governments, both monarchist and republican, apply all their strength as before to stun the consciousness and the conscience of their subjects, using military exhortation and the disciplinary lash. We see how the interests of war in Russia are served by reintroducing at the front the very death penalty that had barely been cancelled; now, after the fall of Riga [1], the question is directly posed of

introducing the death penalty on the home front. The war is devouring not only human life and possessions, but our revolution in its entirety along with the great hopes it has awakened.

Prolonging the war means the end for Europe and, most of all, for Russia. All the warring countries will emerge from the war in shambles. It will take decades to restore what is being destroyed now. But the wealthier countries, like Germany and England, will recover more quickly. Meanwhile, our backwards Russia, in total desolation from a war that is beyond her strength, might become the spoils of foreign capitalists—German, British or American, what difference does it make? Regardless of the course of military operations at the front, the longer the war continues, the more surely it will turn Russia into a colony. Peace and only peace can save the revolution, Russia and all of Europe!

“Does that mean bowing down to Wilhelm? Giving him everything that he has managed to seize?”

No, we turn not to Wilhelm. We seek neither the good graces nor the friendship of the Berlin butcher. But neither do we expect any kindness from all the other governments who wade up to their waist in the blood of their own people. Nor do we have any confidence in our own government which has grown out of the revolution but then passed over to the side of its bitterest enemies. We turn not to governments with words of admonition, and we seek no mercy from our enemies. No, we turn to the people, to men and women workers, to soldiers and peasants, with an appeal to double and triple their efforts in the struggle for peace.

Governments come and go like foam on an ocean wave. But here the fate of hundreds of millions of people is being decided, the fate of future generations, the fate of all mankind. The predatory madmen and reckless cowards who stand at the head of warring states repeat with maniacal stubbornness: “War to the end!” Let the heads of these criminals be struck by the nation-wide call: “An end to war!”

## **Lies and the Truth**

Equally in all the warring countries, the popular masses are suffering and dying from the war. And everywhere they are being deceived from above. They are told that this is a war for justice, for independence and for freedom. They say in Russia that this is a war for the revolution. Not true! The people were dragged into the slaughter not for their freedom, but for the interests of their oppressors. And now the people continue to shed their blood because some capitalists still hope to get the upper hand, and others, having failed to achieve their goals, fear peace as much as the judgment day. If we Russians were actually fighting for the revolution, would we be able to act hand in hand with British imperialists, American stockbrokers or French money-lenders, all of whom are sworn enemies of the Russian Revolution? And would our own Purishkeviches, Rodziankos, Miliukovs, Guchkovs, General Kornilovs [2] and Alekseyevs demand a continuation of the war if the war genuinely strengthened the revolution rather than strangled it? Not true! Deception! We are fighting not in the name of an idea, not for the sake of popular interests, but under the lash, at the command of imperialists, both Russian and allied, just as the soldiers of Germany and Austria kill and die under the lash of their own dynasties, their own nobility and their own bourgeoisie. This war is the mutual extermination of capitalist slaves who are driven into the fire by slaveholders. Such is the genuine truth about the war!

## **Fake Socialists**

The propertied classes and their servants carefully conceal this truth from popular consciousness. All countries have witnessed the emergence of many such “socialists,” who help their own bourgeoisie throw dust in the eyes of the toiling masses. These “socialist-patriots” in Germany support the bloody work of Hindenburg. In France and England, they hold sessions in ministries with the capitalists and urge the workers to obediently shed their blood. Finally, in Russia these “socialists,” who have renounced socialism in practice, seem to hold in their hands the greater part of governmental power. Kerensky, Savinkov, Chernov, Avksentiev, Skobelev, Prokopovich... are, after all, ministers from the two “socialist” parties: the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. And it is these socialist-patriots who not only sow false ideas about the war among the people, but punish with death and hard labor those who fight against the war. These are not our people, they are not friends of the people. No, they are deserters, defectors to the camp of the bourgeoisie.

## **Internationalists**

But in every country there are other socialists, true and honest fighters for the interests of the workers, irreconcilable enemies of the exploiters and their wretched war. They are socialist-internationalists. They tell the people the truth. They call things by their real names: the foul slaughter is not cast in revolutionary colors, predators are called predators and pillaging is called pillaging. They want deals neither with their own conscience, nor with the propertied classes who are devoid of any conscience. The internationalists summon the working class masses of all lands to irreconcilable struggle against war and the imperialist governments.

“The main enemy of the people is in their own country!” exclaimed the revolutionary leader of the German proletariat, Karl Liebknecht. The more firmly, decisively and courageously the working class inside each country begins to fight against its own bourgeoisie, against its military plans and diplomatic tricks, the sooner the hour of peace will strike! The same appeal was made to the Austrian workers by Friedrich Adler, the heroic fighter against the Habsburg monarchy and its criminal servants. In all warring countries, the internationalists over the last three years have found a way into the souls of the masses who have been deceived by the bourgeoisie. The unfortunate soldier who sits in water-soaked trenches, hungry, covered in lice, surrounded by his own waste and awaiting death from a piece of shrapnel or some foul-smelling gasses—this soldier will feel with all his soul the truth in the revolutionary exhortations of the internationalists.

## **Think Hard, Soldier, and Understand!**

Today’s society is constructed in such a way that an insignificant minority has at its disposal both the labor and the lives of the great majority. The bourgeoisie, in a strong position with its capital, its knowledge and its guile, is in command in all countries. It is the bourgeoisie, in its own interests, that sends armies to be slaughtered. It is the bourgeoisie that domesticates many of yesterday’s “socialists,” makes them their obedient servants and with their help deceives the people. Only a struggle against the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois order can bring the people peace. The working class must drive the bourgeoisie out of power and, having taken the direction of the matters of the state into its own hands, be done, first of all, with the war, and then with the entire

bourgeois order.

The bourgeoisie of all countries senses that retribution for its countless crimes is near at hand. For this reason, they now hate the leaders of the people, revolutionary social-democrats, with ten-fold hatred. They arrest them, put them on trial, send them off to hard labor, and where possible, shoot them; and in all countries they pour poisonous slander upon them. About Karl Liebknecht, the bourgeois German newspapers wrote that he had been bought by the British government. Austrian patriots declared Friedrich Adler to be an agent of tsarist Russia. The British socialist [John] Maclean, only recently released from prison, has been called by British chauvinists nothing less than a hireling of the Kaiser. And in Russia, for its loyalty to the cause of the international working class, the party of social-democratic internationalists (Bolsheviks), is denounced as “Germanophile” by various reactionary scoundrels (the Miliukovs, Pereverzevs, Aleksinskys, Burtsevs), while its leaders are accused of dealings with the German government. And Kerensky is joined by Avksentiev and Skobelev in persecuting the Bolsheviks just as shamelessly as the German Kaiser persecutes the supporters of Karl Liebknecht, our German friends.

### **Not All Socialists are the Same!**

This must be understood most of all by every worker and every soldier. In the Bible it is said that not everyone who cries out “Lord, Lord!” will enter the kingdom of heaven. And we can now say, on the basis of bitter experience, that not everyone who calls himself a socialist is a socialist in practice.

The SRs are considered “socialists.” The Mensheviks call themselves social-democrats. But just as steel is tested on flint, socialism is tested in war. There are “socialists” who support the war; they fraternize with the bourgeoisie; they hide from the people the plans and appetites of the bourgeoisie (their secret treaties and so forth); they demand from the army the blind execution of these secret plans. Socialists in words, they are servants of the bourgeoisie in deed. Such are the SRs and Mensheviks. Their ministers introduced the death penalty and harsh new criminal laws. Their leaders, headed by Tsereteli, vote for continued preservation of capital punishment. The Mensheviks and SR-ministers arrest Bolsheviks, hold them in prisons without charge or investigation; they close Bolshevik newspapers and condone foul bourgeois slander against the Bolsheviks. And all this is done because our party, the Bolshevik Party, fights irreconcilably against the war.

Can we consider Kerensky, Avksentiev, Tsereteli, and Chernov socialists? Never! These are direct enemies of the working class. But are there not still among the workers, and especially among the soldiers, no small number of SRs and Mensheviks? That is absolutely true. But that is a different matter: the worker-Menshevik or the soldier-SR is not our enemy. We must explain to them that they gave their trust to unreliable parties, and that their leaders are traitors to the cause of the working class. And they must understand this, because the Mensheviks and SRs are for the war, and continuation of the war will bring unavoidable death to all peoples, and, most of all, to the Russian people, who are the poorest and most exhausted.

“A curse upon anyone who now talks about peace!”—exclaimed the socialist-revolutionary Kerensky. Well, so be it, we are not afraid of any curses, either from the priests or from the SRs. We not only talk about peace, we are leading a struggle for peace. And together with the people we curse those who launched this war and who drag it on without end. In our struggle, we do not fear persecution: we grew accustomed to this during tsarism. And we firmly believe in our victory. The wave of

revolution raised Kerensky to the height of power, and now he imagines that he can direct the course of history and command the proletariat. A pathetic mistake! The next wave, to which he is so opposed, will sweep him under and show to him that the working class is everything, and he, Kerensky, is merely an upstart, that is, a non-entity.

### **“You are Calling for Desertion!”**

That is the slander they often direct at us. They lie in suggesting that we advise soldiers to stick their bayonets in the ground and run from the trenches. What nonsense!... Of course, it may have happened that some ignorant soldier, after reading in a bourgeois newspaper that the Bolsheviks are calling for desertion, believed it and threw down his rifle. However, this is not our propaganda, but the propaganda of the dishonest bourgeois press, which tries to attribute to us its own rotten falsifications. Could it possibly be that the desertion of individual soldiers or the insubordination of individual units might stop the war? Soldiers desert because of exhaustion, despair, or fear, but not because of Bolshevism. After two months of widespread defamation and slander against us, even the head of the war ministry, Savinkov, our enemy, was forced to acknowledge that when they come under fire, Bolshevik regiments fight just as well as others, and some have left three quarters of their men on the field!... And while our soldiers perish in countless numbers in this disgraceful slaughter which they did not initiate, the bourgeois newspapers (“Rech’,” “Novoe Vremia,” “Vechernee Vremia,” “Birzhevka,” “Russkaia Volia,” “Russkoe Slovo”...) continue to lie and hurl slanders at the army being crucified. There is nothing lower than the “patriotism” of these bourgeois traitors!...

But if the soldier-internationalists are dying along with all the others, at least they are not deceiving themselves. They know well that this war is not our war. While not trusting the ruling classes at all, they are preparing for the time when, through the common efforts of workers and soldiers, together with the soldiers and workers of Germany and other countries, they put an end to the war and put its initiators on trial.

### **We, the Internationalists, Were against the Offensive; We Pointed to Other Ways**

Yes, on the eve of the offensive of 18 June, we internationalists openly and decisively warned against it. “Kaiser Wilhelm,” we repeatedly said, “has for good reason not dared over the last four months to attack the Russian revolution he hates so much: he lacked confidence in his own troops.” “We must use this time of uncertainty,” we said. “In practice we must show the German, Austrian and all workers in general that the Russian Revolution is conducting an absolutely new, honest, popular and democratic foreign policy. That it recognizes no seizures or forms of violence. That it recognizes none of the old predatory agreements. That it supports the revolution in any country, “allied” or “hostile.” That it offers all nations an immediate and honest peace. And in order to show these are not empty words, that the Russian Revolution does not intend to play games, it was necessary immediately to publish the secret treaties, sweep the bourgeois minister-imperialists out of the Provisional Government, and refuse to pay the war-time loans borrowed by tsarism.

A bold and decisive domestic policy should have corresponded to this: it was necessary to dissolve the State Duma and State Council; to declare a democratic republic; to abolish all class distinctions; to transfer the

landowners' land to the disposal of peasant land committees; to introduce a one-time property tax; to clamp down on all state profiteers (embezzlers) and so forth. Such a policy would raise to an enormous height not only the internal forces of the revolution, but also its international authority. The toiling and oppressed masses in the entire world would be filled with the greatest sympathy toward the Russian Revolution and with an enthusiastic yearning to emulate it, to follow in its footsteps. On the other hand, the Russian Revolution would provoke horror and hatred in all the ruling classes throughout the world. By this action, the imperialists and oppressed masses of all countries would immediately be split into two camps, and our revolution, having driven a wedge into the war, would accelerate the arrival of the European revolution.

But the backward layers of our workers, and especially the soldiers and peasants have still not understood us. They have been sending into the Soviets a majority of SRs and Mensheviks. They, in turn, have united with the bourgeoisie, and the bourgeoisie has demanded and obtained an offensive at the front.

We, internationalist-Bolsheviks, predicted both orally and in print, that this offensive would be the best gift to the Kaiser. "Look," he must have inevitably said to the German soldiers, "the Russian Provisional Government is attacking us hand in hand with the British, French, Italian and American imperialists who are openly striving to shatter Germany; therefore, you cannot harbor any trust in the Russian Revolution." Wilhelm has received the opportunity to respond to our offensive with a counter-offensive. The moral and ethical force of the Russian Revolution has been undermined, and the Kaiser has shown greater material and physical force. As a result there are colossal losses, a breach in the front, the fall of Riga, and Petersburg is facing a grave threat.

### **Who, Then, is to Blame?**

The answer is clear: the Provisional Government, which has been dancing to the tune of the Kadet imperialists, is to blame. The parties of the SRs and Mensheviks are to blame for supporting the criminal adventure of the offensive. Our party shares none of the blame. We were in a minority. Power was not in our hands. We could only issue warnings. We fulfilled our duty, and our conscience is clear. Let the soldiers, workers and peasants who entrusted leadership and power to the SRs and Mensheviks now sternly demand an accounting from them.

### **The Situation in Our Country**

From the very beginning of the revolution, the situation in our country was very difficult. It deteriorated not by the day, but by the hour, due to the complete inactivity of the Provisional Government which did not dare to implement—against the will of the bourgeoisie—a single serious reform. This was compounded by the consequences of the ill-fated offensive, and the situation became exceedingly ominous. What will tomorrow bring us?

The government, joined by the Mensheviks and the SRs, cries out: "Now is no time for politics, all forces and resource must be concentrated on defense!" These are hypocritical words, words of deceit. Defense is unthinkable without politics. All that is needed is good politics. Yet the defensive policy of the Provisional Government is just as fatal, just as contrary to the interests of the people, as the policy of the offensive.

If the government were genuinely revolutionary, a government of the people and of the workers, then it would have immediately tried to restore

the lost authority of the revolution. The more ominous the situation, the bolder and more decisive are the measures that are needed to emerge from it. The first order of the day would be to carry out the program outlined above: to break from the domestic imperialists and their allies, to declare conditions for an immediate peace and to reinforce them from within through measures of agrarian and financial revolution. This would be the strongest blow to Wilhelm that we are now able to deliver!

### **Is the Present Government Capable of Such a Policy?**

No! It is fully in the clutches of the bankers, allied diplomats and the counter-revolutionary general staff. The government summons the proletariat to participate in defense; meanwhile, the government itself has disarmed the workers and set Cossacks and Junkers against them. The government calls for people to refrain from "politics." At the same time it conducts the politics of *Derzhimorda* [police-type thuggishness]: it arrests Bolsheviks, closes workers' newspapers, and indulges in tyrannical behavior, persecution, and slander.

"Now is not the time for politics!"—say Kerensky and Avksentiev, but at the same time they conduct the politics of the landowners: they arrest land committees in various localities for encroachment on the land of the nobles. And these people still dare to say that they are waging a revolutionary people's war!

In such circumstances, responsibility for defense, just as previously for the offensive, falls fully on the government and the parties supporting it, the SRs and Mensheviks.

For us, the party of revolutionary social-democracy, the fate of the country, freedom and the independence of the Russian people are no less near and dear than to the parties of Kerensky and Tsereteli. But it is precisely for this reason that we remain even now, in days of the greatest trials, irreconcilably opposed to the policy of the Provisional Government, which undermines both the revolution and the defense. Our sole salvation remains as before the struggle for the soonest cessation of the war. The entire experience of the last three years tells us that the slaughter can be stopped only by the pressure of the growing revolution in Europe. All your efforts, workers and soldiers, must be aimed at supporting the revolutionary proletarian movement in the West, nourishing it and pushing it forward. It is necessary that the honest socialists, the revolutionary workers in Germany, know that you are waging the same struggle that they are.

The fall of Riga is a cruel blow. The fall of Petersburg would be a misfortune. But the fall of the international politics of the Russian proletariat would be fatal.

### **Men and Women Workers! Soldiers!**

We cannot allow the fate of our country be dependent on the policy of Kerensky and the strategy of Kornilov. Tomorrow Kerensky might hand over the nation to the counter-revolution, just as yesterday Kornilov gave Riga to the Germans. We need a force that would be capable of correcting the mistakes of all the Kerenskys and all the Kornilovs. That is the revolutionary force of the international proletariat. Petty sages, political cowards and Philistines do not want to believe in this force. But for us, outside this force there is nothing reliable and trustworthy. If Hohenzollern, despite all the efforts on defense, crushes us due to the superiority of his artillery, his technology and his organization, wouldn't

that then mean death for the Russian people? No, in Europe there is a countervailing force to all the Hohenzollerns. In the inhuman travails of this war, there is more anger that is accumulating in the working-class masses of Europe than has ever been seen in all of history. Karl Liebknecht and Friedrich Adler are only the forerunners of the working class in Germany and Austria rising up for gigantic battles. And we must meet these battles halfway. The 183,000 working men, women, and soldiers who voted for our party in Petersburg in the elections to the city duma [3], are a reliable base of support for the International. The Moscow workers who conducted their protest strike during the days of the "State" conference, are also a glorious base of support. As long as these forces exist, broaden and grow stronger, the revolution has not perished. We need only to stand unflinchingly at our post, under the banner of a new Third International.

With false composure, governments talk about the inevitability of a fourth winter campaign. And how will the people respond to this? How will the armies react? The revolutionary events in Europe may develop earlier than many people think. We have no right to be discouraged.

Advanced workers and soldiers! Arouse the backward, enlighten the ignorant. In the thunder of horrific events at the front, explain the truth to the people, show them the true path of salvation. It is necessary that the people themselves take power into their own hands. And by the people we mean the working class, the revolutionary army and the village poor. Only a workers' government will put an end to the war and save our land from destruction.

Do not trust the bourgeois enemies! Do not trust false friends, the SRs and Mensheviks. Rely only on yourselves: that is your watchword.

Forward! Into battle! Lift higher the red banner!

The day is near when, in the fraternal embrace of the workers of all lands, not only the war, but the capitalism that gave birth to it, will be crushed.

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Notes by the editors of Trotsky's *Works* in 1924:

[1] Riga was abandoned by our troops on 21 August (3 September). On 22 August, the military command issued the following statement:

"On the morning of 21 August our troops abandoned the city of Riga and at the present time continue to retreat eastward. Disorganized masses of soldiers are rushing in an unrestrainable flood along the Pskov highway."

The abandonment of Riga served as a pretext for the bourgeoisie to conduct a campaign over the disintegration of the army and to demand the introduction by Kerensky of the death penalty even in the rear. At the same time, the bourgeois press began agitating just as furiously and just as hopelessly for the introduction of iron discipline at the front.

[2] Kornilov: Prominent tsarist general who commanded one of the armies on the Austrian front during the imperialist war. In July 1917, Kornilov was appointed supreme commander. This marked the beginning of the immediate work by the bourgeoisie and the generals in preparing a counterrevolutionary coup. At the end of August, in accord with the Kadets, Kerensky's political allies, and with the full knowledge of Kerensky's right-hand man Savinkov, Kornilov began a march on Petrograd, having removed units from the front under the guise of using them to crush a Bolshevik rebellion. Imprisoned later in the city of Bykhov, Kornilov escaped after the October Revolution and organized Junker-Cossack detachments along the Don at the beginning of 1918. During one of the military operations, Kornilov died. His place was taken by General Alekseyev, Kornilov's predecessor as supreme commander.

[3] The elections to the city duma that took place at the end of August 1917 showed the enormous influence of our party. At a time when the SRs suffered a serious defeat in comparison with the May elections, and the Mensheviks just barely gathered twenty thousand votes, our party received eleven times more than the latter, amounting to one third of all

votes:

"The Bolsheviks, so recently trampled in the mud, accused of treason and venality, shattered morally and in real terms, filling the prisons of the capital to this day... they were the main and singular victor, having won votes away from all the other parties. After all, it seemed that they had been destroyed forever, and they would never rise again. Already, people had almost stopped noticing them... Where did they come from this time? What kind of strange and devilish witchcraft is this?"

That is the general impression that Sukhanov gives of these election results (Book V, pages 193-194).



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