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ARTICLES

Crime and Police in Revolutionary Petrograd, March 1917—March 1918: Social History of the Russian Revolution Revisited

In memory of Don Treadgold, my mentor and friend, who died on December 13, 1994

Tsuyoshi Hasegawa

1. Introduction

In two articles and one book on the social life of Petrograd during the Russian Revolution,¹ I have attempted to describe the process of social breakdown at the lowest level of society in revolutionary Petrograd, with particular emphasis on the frightening increase in crime, the powerlessness of the police force to combat crime, and citizens' reaction to crime. These works are mainly based on newspaper articles that appeared in the "boulevard press" in Petrograd. My study was prompted by my dissatisfaction with the prevailing politicism of the social history of the Russian Revolution, and was a modest attempt to dissect the society under the revolutionary turbulence using the problem of crime as the surgical tool. In doing this research, I was entering uncharted territory; no previous works existed to guide me.

When I published my book in 1989, however, I felt I had gone as far as I could go on this topic. The reason was simple: a lack of sources. When I went to the Soviet Union in the 1980s, I requested access to archival materials, but my requests were unequivocally rejected by Soviet archival authorities. Without access to archives, I had no way of verifying the tentative hypotheses I had constructed in these works.

Perestroika, glasnost, and the collapse of the Soviet Union have suddenly opened up new opportunities for this project. I made two short trips to St. Petersburg and Moscow in 1992 and 1993. At two archival depositories, the Tsentral'nyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Sankt-Peterburga—TsGASPb (formerly LGAORSS) in St. Petersburg and the Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii—GARF (formerly TsGAOR) in Moscow, I requested the same archival materials to which the Soviet archival authorities had adamantly denied me access. This time, my requests were granted, and I was able to read the militia records on crime in Petrograd without any restrictions. Glancing through the *opisi* made available to me at these archival depositories, I discovered an enormous body of archival materials related to my topic. The *dela* that might contain important information numbered more than 580. Of these, I had the time to examine only 47,² representing only a fraction of all that are available. This paper should be considered a progress report rather than a definitive treatment of the subject. Its focus is modest: (1) to examine the accuracy of crime reporting in the

boulevard papers, (2) to test the hypotheses I developed in my previous works in light of new information from the newly available archival sources; and (3) to introduce materials that may shed new light on the relationship between crime and police during the Russian Revolution.

2. Archives and the Boulevard Press

One of the major criticisms directed at my early work on this subject was that the boulevard press was an unreliable source for accurately gauging the social conditions at the time of the revolution. My critics pointed out that the press was often sensationalistic, exaggerating crime in the streets.³ My response to my critics was that although the press did indulge in editorial interpretations, the fact of crime itself must be reliable. The boulevard press, including its editorials, I argued, can be considered a reflection of at least a certain section of the society.

Archival sources now prove that I was correct in assuming that the rising crime rate was destroying the social cohesion of Petrograd during 1917, and that the boulevard press did accurately portray the process of social disintegration there. In 1917 there were more than 60 subdistrict commissariats in the city of Petrograd and its immediate outskirts. Every day, subdistrict commissariats reported to the city militia administration, by telephone, major events that had taken place during the last 24 hours [*sutochnyi raport*], and the city militia administration [uprava Petrogradskoi gorodskoi militsii] collated all information of the day in the journal [zhurnal proisshes-tvii po Petrogradu i prigorodu] (hereafter *The Journal of Events*). The records of these daily reports by subdistrict commissariats and the journals compiled by the city militia administration are maintained in the archives. These records indicate that many of the criminal activities reported in the boulevard press did indeed take place. For instance, of 74 criminal acts that were reported in the boulevard press for the two months (from September 1 to October 22) and that I chose to include in my book, 16 cases were recorded in *The Journal of Events*.⁴ We must, however, take into consideration a serious breakdown in the reporting system between subdistrict commissariats and the central city militia administration. During the two months of September and October, the greatest number of subdistricts that reported to the central militia administration in one day was 25 (September 26-27), while the smallest number was 10. This means that only the records of one-third to one-fourth of all the subdistricts were registered in *The Journal of Events*. This represents a relatively high degree of correspondence between the events reported in the boulevard press and the events recorded in *The Journal of Events*. It is likely that careful examination of the daily reports by each subdistrict may uncover more events reported in the press. Thus, there is no reason to suspect that those crime incidents reported in the press were an exaggeration; they certainly did not represent a fabrication. On the other hand, as one can easily expect, the incidents of crime reported in *The Journal of Events* are much more numerous than the number of incidents the boulevard press chose to report on. Let us take an example of the entry of June 27. On this day, no boulevard papers reported criminal incidents important enough for me to include in my book. But it is obvious from *The Journal of Events* that many minor incidents took place throughout

the city. It is possible to assume, therefore, that the crime reported in the boulevard papers represented only the tip of the iceberg. Moreover, in view of the shortcomings in the reporting system, one can also assume that many events that took place in subdistricts escaped from the ledger in *The Journal of Events*, that not all crime incidents were reported even to subdistrict commissariats, and therefore, that the actual crime rate must have been much higher than recorded in *The Journal of Events*. The archival materials thus remove all doubts about the authenticity of crime reporting in the boulevard press.

If my earlier work erred in any way, it was in not recognizing the depth of the crisis caused by crime. In my previous works I took for granted that the boulevard press accurately reported the number of murders committed in the city. I assumed that although sensationalism certainly played a part in crime reporting in the boulevard press, the fact of murders reported in the boulevard press must have been incontestable, and that in view of the seriousness of the crime, the boulevard press must have reported almost all the murder cases in the city. The last assumption turned out to be wrong, however. According *The Journal of Events* for the period between September 1 and October 22, 17 murders took place that were not mentioned in the boulevard press.⁵ In addition, the daily report recorded by the 1st Vyborg Subdistrict Commissariat for October recorded two murders that were not listed in the daily journal of the central administration.⁶ If one adds these figures to the 25 murders reported in the boulevard press, 45 murders occurred during this period. Further examination of the daily report in all the subdistrict commissariats may uncover more cases. The archives thus indicate that the actual situation in Petrograd was more serious than the boulevard press reported.

In my previous works, I constructed a hypothesis based on the crime reporting of the boulevard press that the incidence and the seriousness of crime accelerated beginning in March and reached an unprecedented degree of lawlessness on the eve of the October Revolution. The incidence of murders bears this out. *The Journal of Events* for May-June covered ten murders that were not reported in the boulevard press.⁷ If we add the number of murder cases reported in the boulevard press for May-June, and for September-October, we have the revised figures of 31 and 45 respectively, which means the murder rates per day for May-June and September-October were 0.51 and 0.87 respectively, not 0.45 and 0.58 as I calculated previously.⁸ As I will examine later, the incidence of *samosudy* also increased tremendously.

As for the incidence of thefts, the boulevard newspapers showed discrepancies. *Petrogradskii listok* reported on October 2 that the number of thefts reported in the previous 24 hours reached more than 20, and *Vechernaia vremia* reported 50 thefts on October 7. In contrast, *Gazeta-Kopeika* continued to cite higher numbers: 250 for October 4, 310 for October 7, and 400 for October 11. These discrepancies are puzzling. According to *The Journal of Events* for September-October, thefts are reported as follows: 37 (September 2), 29 (September 3), 31 (September 5), 28 (September 14), 38 (September 15), 26 (September 16), 31 (September 20), 25 (September 24), 19 (September 25), 40 (September 26), 42 (September 27), 24 (September 28), 28 (September 29), 66 (September 30), 28 (October 2), 59 (October 3), 38 (October 4), 38 (October 5), 49 (October 6), 16 (October 7), 44 (October 8), 22 (October 9), 58 (October 10), 24 (October

11), 36 (October 12), 19 (October 13), 52 (October 16), 35 (October 14), 52 (October 15), 28 (October 17), 36 (October 18), 29 (October 19), 40 (October 20), 23 (October 21), 33 (October 22), 26 (October 23), 37 (October 24), and 17 (October 25). Judging from this, the figures given by *Gazeta-Kopeika* seem too high. One wonders where this paper obtained these numbers. On the other hand, the numbers given by *Petrogradskii listok* and *Vechernaia vremia* more or less correspond to the numbers in *The Journal of Events*, although the number given by *Petrogradskii listok* cannot be considered frighteningly high. In my previous works, I cited the figures given by *Gazeta-Kopeika*, and concluded that compared to 40 thefts judged as alarming in June, the number of thefts exponentially increases on the eve of the October Revolution.⁹ Until I locate the sources of *Gazeta-Kopeika*'s claim, I must correct this conclusion.

Incidentally, the highest number of thefts recorded in *The Journal of Events* was 79 for June 25.¹⁰ The average daily number of thefts reported in *The Journal of Events* was 28.5 for April, 25.9 for May, 24.9 for June, 33.1 for September, and 35.0 for October. We can tentatively conclude from this that the number of thefts reported to the central militia administration slightly declined in May compared with April, but increased between June and October. Particularly, the rate of increase in October was alarming. The number of days that recorded more than 40 thefts were 1 in April, 3 in May, 3 in June, 3 in September, and 6 in October. Although we have to approach 200 to 300 daily thefts reported in *Gazeta-Kopeika* with suspicion, it seems safe to assume that the number of thefts was indeed increasing on the eve of the October Revolution. We should not assume, however, that *The Journal of Events* recorded the actual number of thefts that occurred in the city. As I mentioned, two-thirds and three-fourths of subdistricts did not report to the central administration. Moreover, because of the notorious inefficiency of the city militia, many thefts must have remained unreported.

The Journal of Events for June 27 vividly illustrates the problems that Petrograd confronted during the revolutionary days. Aside from crime, a major problem that taxed the militia's labor was drunkenness in public places. Throughout 1917 drunkenness was the primary reason for people being detained in the commissariats. This fact escaped my attention in my previous works, since these incidents, perhaps because they were so common, did not appear in newspaper articles. During the five days from September 30 through October 4, 104 persons were detained in Petrograd for thefts, 2 for injuring others, 319 for drunkenness, 13 for swindling, 13 for purchase and sale of spirits and its surrogates, 44 for public disorder, 3 for gambling, and 40 for fights.¹¹ The comparable figures for October 19 through October 22 were 75 for thefts, 4 for injuring others, 134 for drunkenness, 7 for swindling, 10 for purchase and sale of spirits and its surrogates, 40 for fights, and 27 for public disorder.¹² One can see that drunkenness occupied the uncontested top place. It might be worth remembering that the Russian Revolution was carried out in a drunken stupor, which in a way explained why one of the first major tasks that the Bolshevik regime faced after the October coup was how to combat wine pogroms.

Closely connected with drunkenness was the problem of soldiers. In my previous works, I pointed out that deserters contributed to the increase in crime and the intensification of criminal violence in Petrograd. *The Journal of Events* devoted a

separate column to soldiers. The entry for June 29, for instance, recorded nine cases involving soldiers committing such crimes as the sale of methylated spirits [*denaturat*], drunkenness, theft, armed attack, concealment of salted meat, illegal shooting, insulting a militiaman, and insulting the War Minister. This was by no means an exceptional day, and more or less the same incidents were repeatedly recorded every day in *The Journal of Events*. Some of those detained soldiers belonged to the reserve units that were stationed in Petrograd, and others were deserters. Particularly notable were many soldiers from the 180th Infantry Regiment among the detained soldiers. The separate column of *The Journal of Events* reserved specifically for soldiers strongly suggest that the soldiers constituted a destabilizing element in public order in Petrograd.

Another interesting aspect of *The Journal of Events* is the separate column devoted to the militiamen's conduct. In my previous works I stated that a criminal element had infiltrated the militia organization and that many articles in the boulevard press exposed such cases, particularly in March and April.¹³ But I did not know that the problem was so widespread that it warranted a special column in *The Journal of Events*. According to the commission created in June by the Provisional Government to review the conditions of the Petrograd City Militia, the criminal element constituted one of three important groups, in addition to workers and students, that composed the nucleus of the militia organizations immediately after the February Revolution.¹⁴

If crime was one of the indices of social breakdown, pornography and gambling constituted others. I have already referred to *Petrograd listok's* appeal to establish a theater police for the purpose of controlling pornography.¹⁵ Kel'son, who occupied the position of the assistant chief of the Petrograd City Militia throughout 1917, introduces in his memoirs a petition from a militiaman calling attention to a performance entitled, "The Bolsheviks and the *Burzhui*," which had nothing to do with either the Bolsheviks or the burzhui, but turned out to be nothing but a sex show.¹⁶ This petition is kept in the archives as well.¹⁷ According to the militiaman, the reactions of the audience who witnessed the hard-core pornographic performance of lesbian love-making and anal intercourse on stage varied from "visibly disturbed" to "cackling with excitement," particularly among the soldiers and sailors. As Kel'son states, however, the militia could do nothing to ban pornographic theaters, as freedom of expression was interpreted literally at that time. If the French Revolution witnessed the birth of the "republic of virtue," freedom of expression during the Russian Revolution meant the license to indulge in the basest obscenity in public spaces.

Another aspect of the disintegration of society was manifested in widespread gambling, which I also mentioned in my previous works.¹⁸ Gambling penetrated all segments of society, from high society to the lowest urban poor, with large scale gambling sprees characterizing the decadence of the privileged class. I described a part of such decadence in the Klero murder case.¹⁹ But archival materials describe in more detail how pervasive gambling, drugs, and prostitution were in Petrograd on the eve of the October Revolution. At the end of August, an organization called "the Petrograd Assembly of Intellectual Workers" [Petrogradskoe sobranie intelligentykh truzhenikov] was established. At the founding meeting, the constitution of the society was adopted, and its organization was subsequently registered in the Circuit Court.

But it turned out that this club, based in Hotel “Regina,” in the Admiralty District, was nothing but a gambling den, headed by notorious underground criminals Stanislav R. Baum and Aleksandr L. Enshtein.²⁰ The military authorities ordered this club closed on September 2. Shortly thereafter, however, another organization called “Concordia” was established with exactly the same constitution as the “Petrograd Assembly of Intellectual Workers.” The gambling operation was moved to a tavern, “Veselaia Dolina,” where 58 people joined the gambling operations for three days from September 27 until it was raided by the militia on September 30. Nine people were arrested and the club was closed on the order of the Chief of Staff of Petrograd Military District.²¹ A similar gambling club operating under the cover of “the Petrograd Democratic Literary-Artistic Assembly,” was also uncovered by the militia and closed in September. This club operated in the Cafe Ampir, “a notorious gathering place for shady swindlers, cocaine sellers, and speculators.”²² On the eve of the October Revolution, more than 70 such illegal gambling clubs mushroomed in various restaurants and cabarets in the city, where everyone “greedily tried to gamble away the last thing they possessed, grab everything they could, as if they had the premonition that there would soon be an end to all of this.” Even the high officials of the government and the military authority, including Colonel Polkovnik, commander of the Petrograd Military District, and his staff, Anatolii N. Speranskii, head of the Provisional Government’s okhrana, and Boris Savinkov, the military governor of Petrograd, were known to frequent these shady premises.²³

Archival evidence seems to support my hypotheses that the rate of crime had accelerated at an alarming rate, such that on the eve of the October Revolution, the social cohesion of the city was irreparably breaking down.

3. Samosudy

One of my critics pointed out that the number of murders and the number of incidents reported in the boulevard papers did not seem to be so alarming, especially compared with the rate of murders in big American contemporary cities such as Detroit, New York, and Los Angeles. I contend that no scientifically calculated and universally applicable magic number—no per capita murder rate or per capita theft rate—defines permissible levels of crime in any given society. Whether a crime rate is maintained at a tolerable level or exceeds a level essential to the maintenance of social cohesion is determined by various factors such as the rate of crime in the preceding period, concentration and spread of crime, and the efficiency of the police force to combat crime, among others. It is also a matter of people’s perceptions.

As I noted in my previous works, mass migration and the formation of private militia force are signs of social disintegration caused by crime. Most important in illustrating the way people reacted to crime was the emergence of *samosudy*—a mob justice meted out in the streets against criminals. In GARF, three *dela* were devoted to newspaper clippings of *samosudy* throughout Russia.²⁴ I examined the clippings from July through October, and found 28 cases of *samosudy* that were not reported in the boulevard papers I had used in the previous works.²⁵ In addition, the archives of the central city militia administration contain reports of the additional cases of

samosudy, and the daily reports of Aleksandr-Nevskii subdistricts turned up three more cases.²⁶ I am certain that further examination of daily reports of other subdistrict commissariats will uncover many more hitherto unknown cases of *samosudy*. Each incidence of *samosud* vividly unveils the brutality of mass psychology that prevailed in the streets. Two incidents are sufficient to illustrate this. Here is an article from the August 1 edition of *Novoe Vremia*.

Yesterday on the Obvodnyi Canal near Baltic Station there occurred a *samosud* against a hooligan who in a tavern stole a wallet full of money from a soldier. The hooligan, who tried to run away, was caught by crowds, who began to hit him with stones. The crowds then decided to throw the thief into the Obvodnyi Canal. The hooligan swam for a while, then one of the soldiers shot him. He drowned.²⁷

Another *samosud* took place in Tentelevskii Chemical Factory in the Petergof District on June 25. In this factory a consumers' cooperative had served workers and employees since October 1916, formed at the initiative of V. I. Pokhitonov, Technical Director of the factory, with financial support from the management. The coop provided the workers with bread, meat, and other food supplies. At 10 a.m. on June 30, Pokhitonov was summoned by the sanitary commission for inspections of the stored goods. But several men in the commission, who did not belong to Tentelevskii Factory, began to present outlandish demands. Around noon Pokhitonov was seized by the crowd and dragged out on a cart piled with bull's heads and fish found in the garbage, along the Petergof Chaussee, surrounded by 300 to 400 people, as far as the Narva Gate, where he was placed on the top of a tower used for repairing the street car wires. Along the way, the crowd verbally attacked Pokhitonov, some even threatening to shoot him, drown him in River Tarakanovka, or hang him. A convoy of soldiers dispatched by the 1st Petergof Subdistrict Commissariat arrested Pokhitonov to save him from the crowd. Only the intervention of the District Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies secured his release.²⁸ It is difficult to speculate why Pokhitonov was singled out as the target of *samosud*.

Even though the incidence of crime may be much higher in Detroit, New York, and Los Angeles than it was in 1917 in Petrograd, it is difficult to imagine that such mob justice could occur in contemporary American cities. In Petrograd as well as in other Russian cities, such behaviors was not an exception, but a common occurrence. Newspaper clippings in the Ministry of Internal Affairs archives indicate that *samosudy* occurred in Baku, Ekaterinodar, Kiev, Saratov, Mozhaiskii uезд, Ekaterinoslav, Village Tamoshchekino of Belorechenskii volost, Yalta, Arkhangel'sk, Vladikavkaz, Rostov-na-Donu, Novocherkassk, Moscow, Perm, Kislovodsk, Odessa, Novosushchinskii uезд, Krasnoiarsk, Blagoveshchensk, Khar'kov, and Khelson; in other words, in urban centers and small villages alike in all over the Russian Empire. As I showed in my previous works, *samosudy* were one of the most important visible signs of the breakdown of social cohesion. The archival materials emphatically support this conclusion.

If *samosudy* expressed citizens' anger at the powerlessness of the militia, they

sometimes took direct actions against the militia, which bordered on riots. I already referred to the citizens' riot that lasted a couple of days against the 2nd Lesnoi Subdistrict, which could not prevent a gruesome massacre of a *dvornik*, his wife and his three children.²⁹ *The Journal of Events* indicates that a murder of a woman postal worker in the Liteinyi Prospekt in October also provoked a riot by the angry crowds, who refused to let the militia transport the dead body to the hospital.³⁰

4. The City Militia, the Workers' Militia, and the Red Guards

Among the piles of archival materials related to the Petrograd Militia is one obscure letter dated November 11, written in ungrammatical Russian by Rudolf Gorn, a militiaman in the First Narva Subdistrict, addressed to the chief of the Petrograd city militia. Gorn, an artisan living in a men's dormitory on 3rd Rota Street in the Narva District, who apparently had a family in Revel, complained about the refusal of Commissar Mikhalev's to fulfill his promise to pay Gorn's living expenses for August and September. Gorn also expressed his displeasure with his boss's failure to provide him with a revolver. "I don't have any money, and Mr. Commissar is fully aware that I cannot by my own means obtain a permanent revolver or other weapon, which is necessary for the interest of sincere and successful duty against all kinds of crime and for fulfilling accurately and totally your orders and instructions for the service."³¹

This document raises three important issues. First, this militiaman complains about the lack of monetary compensation and of weapons necessary to fulfill his duty. This was not an isolated complaint, but reflected general dissatisfaction on the part of common city militiamen, as I discussed in my previous works. Second, Gorn was an uneducated artisan who could not compose grammatically correct Russian. Furthermore, despite the fact that this petition was written after the Bolshevik seizure of power, Gorn was totally oblivious to this fact, acting as though such a trifle as the October Revolution did not concern him as much as the nonpayment of apartment allowances. Such verbal and political illiteracy raises an obvious questions about the quality of the militiaman. Third, Gorn's letter indicates that the city militia organization continued to exist after the October Revolution, raising the questions about the relationship between the Bolshevik regime and city militia organizations.

(1) Origins of the City Militia

In my previous works I cited, as one of the reasons for the frightening increase in the crime rate, the powerlessness of the law enforcement agency. I further pointed out that this powerlessness resulted from three factors: (1) conflict between the city militia and the workers' militia, (2) decentralization, and (3) the lack of financial support from the City Duma.³² Archival materials convincingly support these hypotheses.

The conflict between the city militia and the workers' militia has been carefully studied by Vitalii I. Startsev, Hasegawa, and Rex Wade,³³ all of whom share focus on the political implications of this conflict. Startsev and Wade are primarily interested in the emergence of the Red Guards and therefore focus on the city militia only to explore its relations with the workers' militia and the Red Guards. As a result, the

problem of crime and the city militia itself have escaped careful attention by historians.

Archival materials found in TsGASPB and GARF do not change substantially the conclusions reached by Startsev and Wade, but in a number of ways refine and supplement their findings. For instance, the City Duma decided to establish the City Militia on February 28 and appointed its commissars in each district of Petrograd, but Kel'son's memoirs describe only some of the militia's gathering places.³⁴ An archival document, on the other hand, contains the list of gathering places in each district and the names of the emissaries [*upolnomochennye*] dispatched to various districts.³⁵ Although it is not a complete list, we now know that more than one emissary was appointed in each district, including V. G. Botzvadze, a flamboyant commissar in the Vyborg District; N. P. Zelenko in Aleksandr-Neviskii District; V. V. Drozdov in the Vasilievskii Island, who was to maintain an independent militia organization supported by the residents' committees, and who was in constant conflict with the workers' militia; M. N. Benua in Kolomenskii District; and N. A. Opiel' in Moscow District. The notion of sub-district commissariat was still absent at this stage.

The city militia owed its birth, however, not so much to the initiative of the City Duma as to the urgings from below. From the city militia's very beginning, the elective, rather than the appointive principle was its guiding spirit. This principle was confirmed by the first meeting of the representatives of the militiamen, held on March 17. At this meeting they decided to elect one militiaman from each apartment building; these elected militiamen establish a subdistrict commissariat and elected a commissar of their subdistrict. In those districts where workers' militia or other militia organizations already existed, the elected militiamen from apartment buildings were to join the existing militia organizations and commissariats of subdistricts. These pre-existing militia organizations could merge into subdistrict commissariats or could maintain their independence. The merger was to be carried out by a council [*sovet*] in districts, where they were to send their representatives. Each subdistrict was to elect its representatives to the district council, and this district council was to elect a district commissar. The subdistrict and district were to serve the same territory as the old police districts. The Militia Council was to be composed of two representatives from each district and representatives from the district soviet of workers' and soldiers' deputies. It would coordinate activities of the city militia, but each district militia council was to maintain its autonomy.³⁶

It is interesting to compare this archival record with another document dated March 19, only two days after this meeting, which includes the complete list of the district and subdistrict commissariats.³⁷ This document illustrates that the city militia found itself under strong pressure from two directions: the Petrograd Soviet and the Provisional Government. In the first place, the title of this document, "Petrogradskaia gorodskaiia narodnaia militsiia: nachal'nik, Professor Iurevich, gradonachal'nik, tovarishch nachal'nik D. A. Kryzhanovskii," is curious. As Kel'son explains, "the Petrograd city militia" became the "Petrograd city people's militia," as a result of the compromise with the representatives of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, who wanted to incorporate the workers' militia into the city militia but had a hard time persuading reluctant workers' militia to accept their policy. The

inclusion of “people’s” before militia provided bait so that the workers’ militia would swallow their recommendation.³⁸ Secondly, the replacement of Kryzhanovskii by Iurevich as chief of the militia is also important, because it indicates pressure from another direction, a subject to which I will return later. The third important point raised by this document is that by March 19, all the district commissariats and subdistrict commissariats had been established. This list enumerates the subdistricts: 5 (Admiralty), 6 (Aleksandr-Neveskii), 4 (Liteinyi), 4 (Spasskii, in addition to the militia in Gostinnyi Dvor, Apraksin Dvor, Marinskii Market, and the State Bank), 4 (Narva), 5 (Petergof), 4 (Vasilievskii Island), 2 (Vyborg), 3 (Okhta), 1 (Poliustrovo), 2 (Lesnoi), 3 (Kazan), 4 (Petrograd), 1 (Elagin Island), 1 (Kamennyi Island), 1 (Novaia Derevnia), 2 (Kolomenskii), 4 (Moscow), 3 (Rozhdestvenskii), 3 (Za Nevskoi Zastavoi), and 1 (Udel’nyi Kolomianskii), which made up altogether 63 subdistrict commissariats.³⁹ The document identifies the name of the commissar and the address of each subdistrict commissariat.

(2) The Struggle between the Gradonachal’nik and the City Duma

As I mentioned above, the City Militia, which was created by the City Duma on February 28, had to withstand pressure from the two directions, first, as well known, from the workers’ militia, and second, less well known, from the *gradonachal’nik*, and behind the *gradonachal’nik*, the Provisional Government. The power struggle that lasted for two months after the February Revolution between the City Duma and the *gradonachal’nik* or between Kryzhanovskii, initially appointed Chief of the City Militia, and Gradonachal’nik Iurevich is essential to an understanding of the relationship between the city militia and the Provisional Government. The militia was created from below, at the urgings of the people themselves, and therefore the election of commissars and militiamen was an important principle that the city militia, including assistant chief Kel’son himself, considered sacrosanct. Thus, the militia’s right place was within municipal self-government; it did not see itself an arm of central government such as *gradonachal’nik*. The Provisional Government, deprived of the right to exert direct control over the militia, repeatedly attempted to transfer its jurisdiction to the central government. The transfer of the city militia administration to the *gradonachal’s tvo* and the replacement of the militia chief by Iurevich were thus its first attempt to place the city militia under its control. This pressure was resented by the city militia. The ambiguous two-month coexistence in the *gradonachal’s tvo* in Mokhovaia 6, where the city militia occupied only two small rooms on the second floor and Iurevich monopolized the entire stately third floor, did not solve the basic conflict, and the two organizations basically existed separately, though housed in the same building. Down-to-earth Kryzhanovskii never reported to pompous Professor Iurevich, who was always surrounded by a large entourage, and who continued to issue his own directives with no one to implement them.

To solve this conflict, according to Kel’son, two draft proposals for the militia statutes were prepared in April, one by K. L. Bermanskii representing the City Militia and another by the Provisional Government’s commission, composed of law professors. The former maintained the elective principle, while the latter proposed to subordinate the city militia to the *gradonachal’nik*.⁴⁰ The archives contain two undated docu-

ments, the first entitled “Temporary Statute [polozhenie] on Organization [ustroistvo] and Composition of Petrograd City Militia,” and the other “Temporary Statute of Organization and Composition of the Militia of the Cities of Petrograd, Moscow, Kiev, and Odessa.”⁴¹ Although the latter did not contain any provisions that placed the city militia directly in the jurisdiction of the *gradonachal'nik*, it is clear that this was an attempt to exert the Provisional Government’s direct control over the city militia. The former must be the one that Kel’son says was drafted by Bermanskii and adopted by the City Duma. Article One of the Provisional Government’s proposal stated: “The militia in the cities of Petrograd, Moscow, Kiev, and Odessa is the executive organ of the state power that belongs to the jurisdiction of local city self-government.”⁴² Interestingly, the phrase: “is the executive organ of the state power that” was crossed out in pencil. The Bermanskii proposal, on the other hand, began with the general statute [*obshchaia polozhenii*], which consist of three articles: “1: The City Duma belongs to the jurisdiction of the Petrograd City Duma Administration [*Petrogradskoe gorodskoe obshchestvennoe upravlenie*]. 2: The City Mayor [*glava gorodskoi upravly*] is the main chief of police [*glavnyi nachal'nik militsii*]. 3: The City Duma elects chief of city militia, who combines and directs activity of all militiamen of the city duma. The chief of militia is elected for three years.”⁴³ Throughout the government document, “militia chief of districts, and “assistant militia chief of district” were crossed out, and “district commissars” and “district assistant commissars” were penciled in. The government draft accepted the elective principle of the chief of militia (Article 12), but “district chiefs” and “militiamen” were to be appointed by “the chief of militia and the district chiefs” respectively (Articles 13 and 14).⁴⁴ On the other hand, the Bermanskii proposal stated that “the general supervision and guidance of the activity of the militia in the district falls into the jurisdiction of the district duma and the district administration [*raionnaia uprava*]” (Article 11).⁴⁵ Although the district commissars and militiamen were to follow the general rules and instructions approved by the militia council [*sovet militsii*], clearly the real power rested with the district commissariat. Whereas the government draft proposed to provide the militiamen with the salary paid by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Bermanskii proposal refused to reduce the militiamen to the *chinovniki* of the MVD, and maintained its independence as an organ of the city government.⁴⁶ The Bermanskii proposal disqualified the former tsarist police officers from serving as militiamen (Article 17); the government proposal contained no provisions on this. Finally, the Provisional Government’s draft proposed to institute a system of inspectors appointed by the Minister of Internal Affairs, who were to supervise the activities of militia and report to the Minister of International Affairs (Articles 41–45).⁴⁷ In case of illegal activities on the part of militiamen, the inspectors were to present this report to the “local commissar of the Provisional Government,” which meant *gradonacha'nik* in Petrograd (Article 46).⁴⁸ On the other hand, the Bermanskii draft proposed that four inspectors were to be appointed by the chief of militia and report to the chief of militia.⁴⁹

In the end, the Provisional Government lost its battle. The City Duma approved the Bermanskii draft and rejected the government proposal. This was the victory of the “elective principle” and the principle of decentralization. But this principle of decentralization was carried over not merely to the militia’s relations with

the Ministry of Internal Affairs, but also, more importantly, to its relations with the militia chief. As Kel'son observes, the complete autonomy of subdistrict commissariats was established, "removing the militia chief of all power, reducing his role to that of mere servant of the city administration." Herein lies the real reason for the powerlessness of the militia.⁵⁰

Kel'son explains this principle as a necessary evil. This grew out of the desire to remove even the slightest degree of what reminded them of the organization of the former police. It was completely consciously that the chief was deprived of all power. They rendered the municipal police powerless, frightened by the evil past of the omnipresent and omniscient police that controlled all aspects of the life of residents. But they went to the other extreme. The aim to realize complete apoliticalness and passivity was achieved: by law the militia was created in such a way that it could not interfere in anything.⁵¹

(3) Formation of Subdistrict Commissariats

Archival materials confirm the validity of Kel'son's conclusion that in view of the people's energy at the lowest level, it was impossible to impose the principle of centralized police from above. Archival materials shed some light on the way the militia was formed in the Vyborg, Kolomenskii, Vasilievskii Island, and Okhta Districts.

The 2nd Vyborg District was the most militant proletarian district with the highest concentration of large factories including New Lessner, Old Lessner, New Baranovskii, Old Baranovskii, Erikson, Renault, Nobel, Kenig, Lebedeva, Vulkan, Chesher, Struk, Old Parvianian, New Parvianien, Puzyrev, and Ekval among others.⁵² Wade, based on Kel'son's memoirs, emphasizes the role played by Botzvadze, a flamboyant Georgian medical student.⁵³ But the archival materials seem to indicate that his role has been exaggerated and that the workers themselves took the initiative in forming the militia in this subdistrict. On March 5, the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies of the Vyborg District was formed. Its Executive Commission, whose headquarters was located in the sick-fund office of Parvianen on Bol'shoi Sampsonievskaiia Street 48, demanded that the chief of the city police "officially recognize the existing workers' militia of the Vyborg District and give its messenger Aleksandr Bystrov weapons and armbands in the quantity of 2,000." In addition, it demanded that "the city militia not give out any bullets to anyone except those dispatched in the name of the Executive Commission."⁵⁴ Nowhere in this document was Botzvadze's name mentioned. Moreover, the workers in this subdistrict held a meeting at New Lessner on March 19. Botzvadze presided over this meeting, but the workers decided to replace Zeiman and Krolikov as commissars. After this, a new commissariat was created, which was composed of a commissar on militia affairs, five assistant commissars, a commissar on civilian affairs, and his two assistants. In addition, the workers decided to hire a record-keeper [*deloproizvoditel'*] with special education and 6 secretaries [*pistsy*]. The soviet of workers, composed of workers representatives from each factory (two representatives from each factory), was to

supervise the commissariat. Romashevich [Ramishevich?], a worker of New Lessner, was elected new commissar.⁵⁵ On March 20, the joint meeting of the 2nd Vyborg subdistrict commissariat and the executive Commission of the Vyborg Soviet approved Romishevich's election.⁵⁶ The composition of the commissariat of this subdistrict, which included Commissar Ramishevich, four assistant commissars, three secretaries, and others is documented in the archives, and interestingly the official stamps of both the "Commissar of the 2nd Vyborg Subdistrict" and the "Petrograd City People's Militia" are printed on one record, indicating that the subdistrict commissariat had a line of communication with the city militia administration.⁵⁷ The militiamen in this subdistrict were exclusively workers' militia recruited from neighboring factories. There were altogether 704 militiamen, an enormous number, of which 395 militiamen received wages from the City Duma (presumably carrying out militia duty outside their own factory premises) and 319 were workers' militia in the narrow sense.⁵⁸ On April 12, the Vyborg District Soviet removed Ramashevich from commissar, and appointed M. A. Shinkevich in his place.⁵⁹

The 1st Vyborg subdistrict commissariat, established on March 9 with 59 representatives from the sick-funds, cooperatives, and Lutuginskii University, Forestry [Lesnoi] Institute, and Vyborg Commercial School, elected L. E. Zeiman its commissar.⁶⁰ This commissariat appears to have been more cooperative than the 2nd Vyborg Subdistrict Commissariat to the central city militia administration. On March 17, it implemented the order of the militia chief to arrest about 20 criminals who had been freed from prisons during the February Revolution and occupied a public bath on Timofeev Street. For this operation, 200 militiamen were mobilized.⁶¹

The archives clearly indicate the predominance of the workers' militia in the Vyborg District. Regardless of the intention of the militia chief, nothing could have persuaded the workers of the Vyborg District to abandon the elective principle and disband their militia to become an instrument of either the Ministry of Internal Affairs or the City Duma.

In contrast to the workers in the Vyborg District, the middle-class residents in the center of the city dominated the militia organization. The first militia to be established in the central districts was in the 2nd Kolomenskii Subdistrict. Twenty-two representatives held the organizational meeting to establish the 2nd Kolomenskii Subdistrict Public Committee [*obshchestvennyi komitet*] on March 21. They elected Iosif S. Godblat their chairman and created the food supply, militia, and sanitary commissions. A student of the Petrograd University, P. A. Nikifarov, was elected chairman of the military commission.⁶² In the 1st Kolomenskii Subdistrict, elected representatives from each apartment building met on March 24 and elected Aleksandr P. Veretennikov, a deputy to the City Duma, chairman of the "subdistrict committee." They also created three commissions: food supply, militia, and sanitary. A student of the Polytechnic Institute named P. I. Bogdanych was elected chairman of the militia commission.⁶³ After the formation of these subdistrict public committees, a district committee was formed on March 25 and 26 with forty representatives including five delegates from the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.⁶⁴ The District Militia Commission met on April 13, joined by nine members of the Temporary Kolomenskii District Duma, four members of the militia commission, and a representative each

from the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' deputies, soldiers' organizations, the Council of Elders [*sovet starosta*] of Franco-Russian Factory, small businesses, the Petersburg Organization of RSDRP, the second city committee of RSDRP (Kharitonov), and the SR party (Mukhalov). A proposal was presented to establish a militia council [*sovet militsii*] composed of ten representatives each from the district дума and the district soviet. They made a series of decisions, including the following: (1) the 10 to 21 member militia council would serve as the permanent organ for guidance and resolution of complex problems; (2) the militia would be autonomous; (3) militiamen, a district commissar, two subdistrict commissars, and two assistant subdistrict commissars would be elected; (4) two representatives would be sent to the Militia Council under the Chief of the Petrograd City Militia (majority vs. 2 votes against); and (5) these representatives would be elected at the general meeting of the militia council (20 votes for, 8 votes against, 1 abstention).⁶⁵ Unlike the Vyborg District, where the workers predominated, in the Kolomenskii District the relative strength of the workers and the middle class was almost equal. Initially, this produced a compromise to work out a militia organization that was democratic in the sense that all classes of the district had equal rights. Another important feature was that regardless of class origin, everyone accepted the elective principle.

Nevertheless, even in this district, something threatened to destroy the precarious balance. The 2nd subdistrict contained a gigantic Admiralty Shipyard. In this shipyard, the workers had already created the workers' militia already on March 2, with 228 workers as militiamen.⁶⁶ The workers militiamen held a general meeting on April 8 and decided to create the factory militia [*zavodskaiia militsiia*] "for the security of the factory and the territory that belongs to it, for maintenance of order and peace, for defending all and every one from all kinds of violence and offensive arbitrariness and for resisting counterrevolution and other activities that violate freedom of life." The reserve for the militia was composed of 200 to 300 workers, of whom 60 were on active duty. One elder [*starosta*] was elected, and the group was divided into seven groups [*desiatka*] composed of 8 workers, who patrolled the factory territory, accompanied the cashiers on the way to from the bank, and assisted the fire detachment in case of fire. The militiamen on active duty were exempted from factory work but were paid regular wages. In addition, 50 workers were charged with the duty to assist the city militia. Workers-militiamen in the reserves could be called to duty in the 1st and 2nd subdistrict commissariats, when they required assistance. In that case, they would not report to work but would receive regular wages. The chief of the factory militia, who was to be elected, had the right to live in the government apartment that belonged to the factory. But the regular militiamen were to live in their own private apartments. The record of the meeting then clearly reported: "The factory militia has no relations whatsoever with the city militia and follow the instructions of the Chief of the City Militia only for the general militia affairs." Arrests and searches inside the factory could be carried out only with the permission of the factory committee. The meeting also decided to supply weapons to every militiaman.⁶⁷ In this way, the workers' militia created a pocket in the Kolomenskii District where the authority of the city militia could not extend.

In the Vasilievskii Island, two trouble spots were plagued with constant frictions

between the workers' militia and the militia organizations that resisted the control of the workers' militia.⁶⁸ The militia organization was created during the February Revolution in the 1st Vasilievskii Island at the initiative of V. V. Drozdov. This militia was supported by the predominantly middle-class residents' committees [*domovye komitety*] in this subdistrict. When the workers' militia was organized in the rest of the Vasilievskii subdistricts, taking over the district commissariat headed by commissar Iu. V. Alekseev, Drozdov's militia organization clashed with the district commissariat. The workers' militia created the students' militia organization, and dispatching the students' militia in competition with Drozdov's militia force, attempted to discredit the latter. The general meeting of the 1st subdistrict militiamen, attended by 270 to 300 people on April 10, opened in a highly charged atmosphere. One participant named Liubarskii, who was a member of the Drozdov's militia organization, made derogatory remarks about the meeting and was immediately ejected. Representing Drozdov's militia, Shushpanov protested the hostile activities of the students' militia against Drozdov's militia, which wished only to protect interests of the residents. Met with catcalls and parliamentary obstructions, 20 to 25 members of Drozdov's militia headed by Kogan walked out of the meeting. After their walkout, the chairman of the meeting, Alekseev, declared the meeting the founding assembly for the 1st subdistrict commissariat. The meeting elected the militia council composed of nine members, and voted unanimously to elect Alekseev commissar of the subdistrict.⁶⁹

This takeover was strongly protested by the citizens of the subdistrict, who convened the meeting of representatives of the residents' committees on April 18. Two reports were presented, one by Professor V. V. Sviatlovskii, the head of Drozdov's militia, and another by the representative of the students' organization. The meeting decided to form one single unified militia organization "on the elective principle," and carry out the election immediately. It also passed the resolutions to allow the participation of students in the militia organization if they were older than 18 years and secured the permission of the director of the educational institutions, and to recruit soldiers in the ranks of the militia. Also, the representatives unanimously decided that the committee of residents' organizations had the right to be a member of the Militia Council of the 1st Subdistrict with the deciding vote.⁷⁰ After this meeting, 98 militiamen of the Drozdov's militia held a separate meeting, demanding that the Militia Council of the subdistrict be reorganized to include representatives of various organizations such as the residents' committees, the general assembly of the militiamen, the organization of house owners, cooperatives, and the district soviet of workers' and soldiers' deputies. Kryzhanovskii also attended this meeting, endorsing Drozdov's militia.⁷¹ It should be noted that source of the conflict was precisely the elective principle. The residents felt their right was violated by the arbitrary takeover by the workers' representatives of Drozdov's militia. If Kryzhanovskii wanted to endorse Drozdov's militia, he had no choice but to endorse the elective principle.

Another trouble spot in the Vasilievskii Island was Golodai, the fifth subdistrict that was detached from the 2nd subdistrict. The nature of the conflict there is not clear, but it appears to have concerned with the personality of the elected commissar as much as class conflict. In Golodai the first militia organization was headed by an

actor, G. G. Ge. The archives contain a document issued by the Militia Council of the Vasilievskii Island on March 9 entrusting Ge to create the commissariat in Golodai and instructing him to organize the election of “subdistrict commissars,” organize security in Golodai, and issue identifications, permits, and references [*udostovereniia, razresheniia, i spravki*]. Incidentally, this document enumerates the tasks that fell under the jurisdiction of the militia aside from maintenance of order, including: issuing certificates of residence, birth, death, marriage, divorce, free passage in the city and to the City Duma, and signature; issuing permits for garbage disposal; automobile transit for repair; issuing orders to the housing authority to repair buildings, heat apartments, meet sanitary standards, clear streets; carrying out searches (but only with proper search warrants); administering registrations of building security, and carrying out decisions of court orders.⁷² Ge was approved as commissar of the Golodai subdistrict at the meeting of the elected members of the militia council of the Vasilievskii Island on March 26.⁷³ Golodai had a mixed population, including a small number of permanent middle-class residents, together with a contingent of workers who came to work at the Pipe Factory and other factories in Golodai but who lived on the other side of River Smolenki. Ge seems to have received the support of the workers, at least initially, as the workers’ representatives met on March 24 and passed the resolution extending their confidence to Ge.⁷⁴ But this provoked resentment of the house-owners in the residential district called New Petrograd. About 60 house-owners of New Petrograd met on March 26. Accusing Ge of being closely connected with the tsarist police, they formed an investigation commission to examine the circumstances of Ge’s election. Here again, the center of their complaints was that Ge’s election violated the elective principle.⁷⁵ The militia council of the Vasilievskii Island militia passed the resolution not to recognize Ge as its commissar on its March 31 meeting. Ge protested to the militia council, citing the autonomy of subdistrict. Ge insisted that the subdistrict elected him in the legally constituted meeting composed of the representatives of the workers and the residents’ committees, and that as for financial matters the subcommittee should be responsible only to the organization that gave it money—that is, the administration of the chief of the city militia, Kryzhanovskii.⁷⁶ In the end, Ge lost his battle. At the meeting of the Council of the Commissariat [Soviet Komissariata] of the 5th subdistrict on April 26, Ge was removed as commissar, and Timofeev, receiving 12 votes, became new commissar.⁷⁷

In the Okhta District, a district commissariat was established on March 8 by the Okhta District Soviet, but the district commissariat only had a clerical office. The actual militia duty was conducted autonomously by three subdistrict commissariats: Bol’she-Okhta, Malo-Okhta, and Isakovskii. Despite the enormous areas they policed, these commissariats succeeded in reducing crime in Okhta. For the first months, they issued 150 protocols, and registered only 31 cases of criminal acts (8 thefts by break-in, 20 thefts, and 3 trade of spirits). The militiamen elected from nonworkers’ organizations numbered 100 in the Bol’she Okhta subdistrict, 44 in the Malo-Okhta subdistrict, and 46 in the Isakovskii subdistrict, altogether 190 militiamen in the Okhta District. The Okhta commissariat concluded an agreement with the workers’ militia in the following factories: Promet, Okhta Ammunition, Russian-American Metal Factory, and Benua, on the condition that the workers’ militia should have proportional repre-

sentation on the militia council. The posting duty was shared equally by the city militia and the workers' militia. The worker militiamen, who carried out the city militia duty, were to receive 1 ruble per hour from the city budget. Each militia post was manned by one militiaman, who worked at the post for four hours (at a wage of 1 ruble per hour) and four hours as reserve (50 kopeck per hour). Night posting was carried out by the soldiers hired from the 1st Reserve Infantry Regiment in stationing in the District (1 ruble per night). Food was not provided except for tea and sugar. Three-shift posting was recognized as essential to maintaining order in Okhra in view of the enormous number of deserters.⁷⁸

The detailed analysis of the militia organizations in the Vyborg, Kolomenskii, Vasilievskii Island, and Okhta District indicates that Wade's following characterization was accurate:

As a result of worker resistance to being wholly incorporated into the City Militia or to giving up arms, by mid-March the militia situation settled into a complex organizational pattern that was to last until October. In general, in working-class districts one found almost exclusively workers' militias, usually organized around the factory and placing as much emphasis upon safeguarding the factory grounds as upon patrolling the city area around it. In the middle-class districts in the city center, by contrast, one found a regular paid City Militia, composed of varied social elements, maintaining order and striving to create a Western-type nonpolitical police force. This neat dichotomy, however, breaks down on close examination. Some factory-based workers' militia units accepted directions from and subordinated themselves to the City Militia authorities, although they retained varying degrees of autonomy. Others rejected all subordination. Within the City Militia there were units made up largely of workers but operating strictly within the City Militia framework. Many districts were divided between workers' militia and City Militia commissariats by subdistricts. In some subdistricts even further division took place as certain streets, buildings, and areas were patrolled by autonomous workers' militia units while other streets and buildings were guarded by the City Militia. In such areas there were parallel militia structures, with an ad hoc territorial division of the subdistrict. Finally, though these lines of division and authority generally followed those established during the February Revolution, there was some shifting and reorganizing, as well as recurring efforts by city officials to close down or more tightly control worker units.⁷⁹

Also, the detailed analysis of these districts and subdistricts confirms that the underlying motivations of all militia organizations—whether workers' militia or city militia—were the elective principle and the principle of decentralization. Kel'son was absolutely correct in stating that these principles emerged spontaneously from the initiative of those who created militia organizations during and after the February Revolution, and no attempts to resist these strong currents succeeded.

(4) The Commission to Review the City Militia

The struggle between the City Duma and the *gradonachal'nik* finally ended with the Provisional Government's reluctant decision to abolish the *gradonachal'nik* in April, when jurisdiction over the city militia was transferred back to the City Duma. Nevertheless, despite the Provisional Government's decision to abolish it, the *gradonachal'stvo* continued to exist in the very body that was supposed to execute its abolition, and this body served as a liaison between the city militia and the Provisional Government. Thus, the Provisional Government lost the direct control over the police force in the capital. When it faced political crises such as the June demonstration, the July Days, and the Kornilov Affair, the Provisional Government had no police force to rely on except for the garrison troops, whose reliability was questionable at best.⁸⁰

On May 28, the Provisional Government decided to create a commission to review the Petrograd City Militia under its Militia Administration. The review commission began its activity on June 4, and between June 5 and June 20 surveyed 35 subdistrict commissariats in the city to investigate the compositions of the commissars and militiamen, and to compare relationships between militiamen and their chiefs, posting duty, struggle against crime, registration of population, and maintenance of order in the subdistricts. The final report of this commission describes in detail the conditions of the city militia and its relations with the workers' militia. Since this document offers the best analysis of the subdistrict commissariats in the city, I will summarize it in detail below.

In its introduction, the report stated that the "maintenance of public and personal security in Petrograd is so varied that on the one hand there exist subdistrict militias, where security of person and property is sufficiently guaranteed, if not completely, but on the other hand there exist other subdistricts where the existence of the militia itself threatens the security of citizens."⁸¹ The report divided the subdistricts into three categories: 12 subdistricts of the city center, where the militias were most reliable and effective in maintaining order, 20 subdistricts in the outlying areas and suburbs, which "require attention" and often acted like the third category, and 3 subdistricts of the workers' districts, where the militia itself constituted a threat to security.⁸²

In the center of the city, which included the Admiralty, Aleksandr-Nevskii, Kazan, Liteinyi, Moscow, and Spasskii Districts, "both the outside duty of the militias and the internal work of commissariats were carried out on the healthy basis of state order [*na zdrazykh nachalakh gosudarstvennosti*] and respect for individuals."⁸³ More than half of the commissars of these districts were university educated (seven lawyers, one architect, one former *uezd zemstvo* administration, one engineer, and one merchant). The assistant commissars showed the same pattern, although two assistant commissars of the Admiralty Districts were students. Senior militiamen in these districts were mostly intellectuals, and by moral standards completely reliable commissars. Although lacking technical preparation, these senior militiamen carried out criminal investigation with zeal. Five to ten senior militiamen served in each district, the number of which did not necessarily corresponded to the number of junior militiamen. For instance, 7 senior and 58 junior militiamen served in the 1st Admiralty subdistrict compared to 10 senior and 165 junior militiamen in the 4th Moscow

subdistrict. The ratio of senior to junior militiamen was 1 to 8, therefore, in the former subdistrict, and 1 to 16 in the latter. The number of junior militiamen varied from subdistrict to subdistrict. For instance, 45 junior militiamen served in the 1st Kazan subdistrict and 164 in the 4th Moscow subdistrict. Since the population in the former was 80,000 and the latter 100,000, the numbers did not correspond to population.⁸⁴ At the end of April, the militia chief instructed all the commissariats to get rid of criminal elements and those who were not fit for militia service from the ranks of the militiamen. In some subdistricts, this reappointment [*perenabor*] had been carried out, others were implementing it, but some others which had still not even started the purge. The reason for this delay was the difficulty of getting personnel committees organized, since they had to be composed of representatives of both the district дума and the district soviet. This reappointment did not greatly change the composition of the militia, since practically all militiamen could satisfy the minimal requirement—recommendation by some public organization or political party. The percentage of soldiers occupying the ranks of militiamen was relatively high in the central subdistricts. The high percentage of students in the ranks of militiamen, on the other hand, would mean that when the militia was reorganized on a legal basis, it would result in the dismissal of 20 to 25 percent of militiamen.⁸⁵

One of the problems facing the commissars was that they had no disciplinary power. Only the collegial council could impose punishment for infractions on the part of militiamen. Nevertheless, in the central subdistricts the moral quality of militiamen was generally so high that this discipline had not been necessary. Therefore, the passivity of commissars with regard to their disciplinary power might be a wise decision on their part in this revolutionary period. The relationship between militiamen and commissars was not always smooth, however. In the 1st Aleksandr-Nevskii subdistrict the militiamen began threatening a strike against Kryzhanovskii's order for reappointment. In the 3rd Liteinyi subdistrict, the militiamen elected their own chief, independent of the commissar. Only the commissar of the 4th Liteinyi subdistrict enjoyed disciplinary power.⁸⁶

The militiamen in the central subdistricts were not supportive of the all-city conference of militiamen, which voiced radical opposition to the city militia and registered strong protest against Kryzhanovskii's order for reappointment. One militiaman of the 2nd Spasskii subdistrict did attend the conference, but his influence on his colleagues was negligible. The commissar of this subdistrict emphasized that "nonpartisanship in fulfilling the duty is considered one of the basic foundations of the militia work."⁸⁷ Representatives from the 3rd Moscow subdistricts had walked out of the conference, finding it too partisan and too "Bolshevik-oriented." The attempt of the conference to prevent reappointment in the 3rd Liteinyi subdistrict did not succeed. The militiamen in the central subdistricts were interested only in conference resolutions dealing with increase in wages and the improvement of working conditions. The moderate and reliable character of militiamen was demonstrated by their ability to quell the attempts by the workers' militia to take over certain posts in the 3rd Kazan subdistrict did not succeed, and by their participation in the 3rd Moscow subdistrict in the liquidation of anarchists who had seized the printing office of "Russkaia Volia." In the 4th Liteinyi subdistrict, the militiamen ousted the Bol-

sheviks, who wanted to establish the bureau of the party committee in the commissariat during the election campaign for the district дума, while the militiamen of this subdistrict cooperated with the assistant commissar at the time of arrest of the soldier who stopped the automobile of the Kadet Party and destroyed its party literature.⁸⁸ On the other hand, their nonpartisanship was demonstrated by some instances in which the militiamen protected Bolsheviks who were at risk of *samosud* by the crowd.

The militia posts corresponded to the former tsarist police posts, but the number of militiamen manning these posts varied. In the 2nd Kazan subdistrict 10 posts were manned by 47 militiamen, whereas in the 1st Spasskii subdistrict 11 posts were manned by 100 militiamen. One of the most serious problems facing the central subdistricts was “the extreme insufficiency of weapons.” It should be noted that often the militiamen on posting duty were not equipped with weapons. In the 2nd Kazan subdistrict only 20 revolvers were given to 47 militiamen.⁸⁹ The insufficiency of weapons in the central subdistricts contrasted sharply with the abundance of weapons in the outlying workers’ militias.

Militiamen in the central subdistricts were also vulnerable due to their inexperience in criminal investigations. In the 3rd Liteinyi, the 2nd and the 4th Moscow subdistricts special mobile detachments [*letuchie otriady*], exclusively composed of students, were organized to combat criminals.⁹⁰ Particularly important in combating crime were the 1st Aleksandr-Nevskii subdistrict and the 2nd Moscow subdistrict, where more than 3,000 people were arrested in the three months before the review. Criminal investigations in the central subdistricts, as in the entire city were carried out unsystematically without any technical leadership, since there was no regular contact between subdistricts and the Criminal Militia. Technical and legal leadership was particularly weak, which made preparing files for court proceedings difficult.⁹¹

With regard to the sale of spirits, all the subdistricts were engaged in an intensive struggle against it, and the 3rd Liteinyi subdistrict expressed dissatisfaction with the Temporary Court’s failure to mete out strict punishment for the offenders. Lockup cells were the same dark box-shaped storerooms with grated doors found in the former police headquarters, and it was impossible to keep those arrested longer than overnight. Some subdistricts sent the arrested immediately to the nearest prisons.⁹²

As for the central subdistricts, the report concluded that in view of the intellectual compositions of the commissars and reliability of the militiamen, the city militia performed their duties well, and that if their activities did not always guarantee the security of citizens, it was because “the city militia was not organized until now into one administrative whole.” It further emphasized that “the complete isolation of the central subdistricts from the administratively unified city militia, its chief, and its administration could be explained only by the deliberate and methodical abdication of the chief of the city militia and his administration from all life of the militia.”⁹³

Among the rest of the 23 subdistricts, the 2nd and the 4th Aleksandr-Nevskii, the 1st Kolomenskii, the Krestovskii, the 1st Lesnoi, the 1st Narva, and the 4th Spasskii subdistricts functioned relatively well. The commissars in these subdistricts were less satisfactory than those of the central subdistricts, who had extremely varied backgrounds. In the 1st Narva subdistrict, the entire commissariat was composed of

workers, but the record-keeper was a lawyer; in the 2nd Lesnoi subdistrict, the commissar was a worker and his assistants were a lawyer and a candidate in economics; in the 4th Spasskii subdistrict, the entire staff of the commissariat and the senior militiamen were students; and in the Krestovskii and the 1st Lesnoi subdistricts, the commissar was an engineer, but his assistants were a student and a worker.⁹⁴ The militiamen in these districts were mainly students, invalids who were on leave status from the army, former workers or workers who worked simultaneously at factories and in the militia, and former clerks. Basically, three main groups formed the main forces of the militia immediately after the February Revolution: students, workers, and the criminal elements. In subdistricts where students and workers played a major role, fewer illegal searches occurred, militias in areas where the influence of the workers and students was weak were easily infiltrated by the criminal elements.⁹⁵ By the time of Kryzhanovskii's order for reappointment on June 1, a significant number of criminal elements had been removed from the ranks of militiamen, but many more unreliable militiamen remained. It was natural that the militiamen who met at the all-city conference at the Durnovo dacha protested against this reappointment, since they were the targets of removal.⁹⁶

In these subdistricts, militiamen reacted to posting duties with less enthusiasm. Militiamen in these subdistricts were better armed than those in the central subdistricts, but their weapons were insufficient nonetheless and there was no time for target practice. On the other hand, the militiamen who had some relations with the Red Guards were better armed, and could use holidays for target practice.⁹⁷

The struggle against crime was conducted less systematically than in the central subdistricts, partly because of the mixed composition of the militiamen and partly because of the nature of these outlying districts. For instance, in the 1st Lesnoi subdistrict, methodical searches and raids succeeded in getting rid of practically all of subdistrict's thieves, while the militia in the 2nd Lesnoi subdistrict was too small to keep order in this enormous territory. Terrorized by the soldiers of the bicycle battalion and the 1st machine gun regiment, this militia was totally powerless in combating thievery, drunkenness, and deserters.⁹⁸

The commissariats under the influence of the workers' militia and the Red Guards included the 3rd Narva; the 3rd Vyborg; the 1st Okhta; the 1st, the 2nd, the 3rd, and the 4th Petrograd; and the 1st, the 2nd, and the 3rd Rozhdestvenskii subdistricts, but the degree of influence varied. The 3rd Narva subdistrict had a massive number of militiamen (364 men) who were paid one rouble per hour, whether commissar or junior militiaman, by Treugol'nik and the Putilov Factory. These militiamen had not been reappointed. In the 3rd Vyborg subdistrict, the entire staff of the commissariat was composed of workers, some of whom were Bolsheviks. Many militiamen were also Bolsheviks, but according to the commissar, the entire militia fulfilled their obligations accurately and undeviatingly, according to the laws and measures enacted by the Provisional Government and the City Duma. The wages were normal here—300 rubles a month for 6 senior militiamen and 250 rubles for 80 junior militiamen. The number of weapons distributed here was enormous: 200 Italian rifles, 2,000 cartridges, and 100 revolvers with 1,000 bullets, which they had received from the chief of the city militia. The 1st Okhta subdistrict was similar to the 3rd Vyborg subdis-

trict, except that a majority of the militiamen here were youths of less than 20 years old. All of them belonged to the Red Guards, and on Sundays, they went out for target practice. Nevertheless, the commissariat was functioning satisfactorily. These sub-districts recognized the chief of the city militia, but no leadership was forthcoming from the city militia administration.⁹⁹

All three subdistricts of the Rozhdestvenskii District clearly distinguished between posting duty and administrative duty. The latter was performed by mobile detachments composed of students. The main tasks of the mobile detachments were the filing [*proizvodstvo*] of inquiries and criminal investigations, and the commissar fulfilled supervision over posting militiamen through the mobile detachments. The second peculiarity of the Rozhdestvenskii subdistricts lay in the fact that the posting duties were fulfilled by workers' militiamen.

Although the commissars of the Rozhdestvenskii District were mostly intellectuals, the commissariats were not sufficiently organized, which was dangerous in view of the existence of a large number of criminal dens, suspicious teahouses, and taverns that required constant observation and frequent raids. Cooperation with the military authorities was not effective, since the guards of the 1st machine-gun regiment were so lax that there were grounds to suspect that the jailbreaks of the arrested were carried out with the assistance of the guards.¹⁰⁰ The weapons given to the militiamen in the Rozhdestvenskii subdistricts were totally insufficient: only 45 rifles.

As in the Peski, the city militia in the Petrograd Side functioned side by side with the workers' militia, but the difference in proportion was great. While in the Rozhdestvenskii District, the workers' militia had 10 posts, in the Petrograd Side, they had 45 posts. The workers' militia in the Petrograd Side had its own council, composed of 12 residents, 15 workers, and 15 soldiers, which presided over the entire district. There were 135 permanent militiamen in the workers' militia, and three senior militiamen were called "chiefs of guard" [*karaul'nye nachal'niki*]. Almost all militiamen were workers, except for 10 soldiers and 2 students. Although the city militia existed in every subdistrict, the workers' militia was recognized as the official militia, which received wages from the central city militia administration. The commissariat of the workers' militia carried out criminal investigations and brought the arrested to their own workers' militia commissariat, not to the city militia subdistrict commissariats. But in the second subdistrict, a special students' criminal detachment was formed, maintaining permanent contact with the Criminal Militia and the Counter-Intelligence Division.¹⁰¹ The workers' militia in this district carried out posting duties, covering the entire Bol'shoi Prospekt from the Kamenoostrovskii Prospekt to Vvedenskaia Street, the area that was far from the workers' quarters.

The workers' militia did not recognize the jurisdiction of the city militia and did not allow the city militia commissars to interfere in its affairs. From the point of view of maintenance of security, their posting work was ineffective. But they were abundantly provided with weapons, for during March the Petrograd Soviet released 1800 rifles and 55 revolvers to them from the armory. Since all the members of the workers' militia belonged to the Red Guards, they received shooting training on Sundays, and all the weapons were maintained in the factories' Red Guards organizations.¹⁰² The city militia also existed in the Petrograd Side, but the composi-

tion was extremely mixed, the commissariats were not effective, and its militiamen were poorly armed.¹⁰³

In the last category of subdistricts were the Vyborg District and the Vasilievskii Island, where the workers' militia dominated exclusively. In the 1st Vyborg subdistrict the subdistrict Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, which was formed in the first days of the revolution, elected the commissar and his assistants. The number of militiamen was as high as 900 in the beginning, but was later reduced to 392. All militiamen received wages from the city administration. In the beginning, the intellectual element headed by Botzvadze dominated the commissariat, but after he left, "the cultural forces disappeared." At the moment of this review, the entire commissariat consisted of workers, and all the militiamen were workers, who received wages (240 rubles) from the city. They manned 75 posts with supplementary help from the factory militias if necessary. They were sufficiently armed, with 400 rifles and 100 revolvers. The militia was particularly concerned with the emergence of such criminal acts in the subdistrict as drunkenness, the sale of spirits, contraband, and prostitution. The subdistrict commissariat maintained contact with the chief of the city militia, and reported the daily events, and even proposed to carry out reappointments of militiamen. But the loyalty of this subdistrict militia could be illustrated by their attitude toward the anarchists' occupation of the Durnovo dacha. The commissar and his assistant maintained neutrality.¹⁰⁴

Although there were 251 workers-militiamen in the 2nd Vyborg subdistrict, it was more difficult to maintain order there than in the 1st Vyborg subdistrict, because the population was more troublesome. Trade of surrogates of spirits was widespread, as well as drunkenness and gambling, which often involved deserters. Soldiers routinely interfered in the militia, and there were cases of *samosudy* against thieves. Contact of this commissariat with the chief of militia was maintained only to receive money from the city. In the 3rd Vyborg subdistrict the militia was also exclusively composed of workers, but it was smaller, composed of only 80 junior and 3 senior militiamen. Unlike the 1st and 2nd Vyborg subdistricts, this commissariat cooperated with the central city militia administration.¹⁰⁵

The Vasilievskii Island had a purely class-oriented militia that combined the four subdistricts and that was led by "the Soviet of the Vasileostrovskii city people's militia," but only in the 1st Vasileostrovskii subdistrict did there exist an autonomous city militia, which was called Drozdov's militia [*Drozdovskaia militsiia*] or the Kadet militia, and which received financial support directly from the central city militia administration. The Soviet of the Vasileostrovskii militia, considering the "bourgeois" character of the 1st subdistrict militia dangerous, created a special students' militia composed of 90 militiamen, and charged them to stand the posting duty in an attempt to undermine the authority of Drozdov's militia.

Of the four subdistricts, the most radical was the 2nd subdistrict headed by Bolshevik Commissar Ivanov, who played an important role in the all-city conference of the militiamen. Ivanov also championed the resistance to Kryzhanovskii's order to reappoint the militiamen. Before June 15, there were 212 militiamen in this subdistrict, but this number was reduced to 154 junior and 4 senior militiamen after June 15, presumably as a result of Kryzhanovskii's order of reappointment despite Ivanov's

protest. All the militiamen belonged to the workers' militia, and supported the slogans of the all-city conference. The commissariat was regarded more as a revolutionary school than as the organ to maintain the security of the society and citizens. Although a part of the militiamen joined the Red Guards, there was no official relationship between these two groups. Crime in the subdistrict was constantly spreading, but it was impossible to fight with crime rationally, since the subdistrict refused to have any connections with the Criminal Militia, regarding it as an institution of the old regime.¹⁰⁶

The commissar of the 3rd Vasileostrovskii subdistrict was a student, while the commissar of the 4th subdistrict was a worker. The district Soviet established a judicial commissariat to deal with administrative-legal aspects of militia work, but this hardly served as a corrective for the general situation, since the judicial commissar, barrister Neustoev, in the 2nd subdistrict, ran into great difficulty with the rest of the commissariat when he expressed disagreement with the decisions of the all-city conference of the militiamen.¹⁰⁷ Whereas the Vasileostrovskii district дума considered only 63 posts necessary for maintenance of order, the "city people's militia of Vasilievskii Island" occupied 132 posts. Instead of the normal number of militiamen, which was supposed to be 300, the people's militia commanded 717 militiamen, who received wages from the city in addition to the regular wages from the factory.¹⁰⁸ It was also characteristic that although according to the record of the five subdistrict commissariats only 31 revolvers and 77 rifles were supposed to have been provided to the militiamen in this district, practically all militiamen were armed with their own revolvers, which they had acquired during the days of the revolution. These commissariats reacted to the Chief of the City Militia with contempt. When asked whether the activity of the 2nd Vasileostrovskii subdistrict militia was at variance with the instructions of the Chief of the City Militia, the commissar replied: "No, it is not at variance, since we do not accept his instructions."¹⁰⁹

The report concluded that the current condition of the city militia and the inaction of the Chief of the City Militia had incalculable negative consequences not only for the security of citizens of the city, but also for the state order [*gosudarstvennost'*] itself. The militia was organized so that the city was financially supporting workers' militias that were destroying the city militia. A good example was that the 80 to 90 militiamen of the students' militia in the 1st Vasileostrovskii subdistrict, specifically designed to discredit the "Kryzhanovskii's militia," was supported by the city budget. In fact, there was no accurate accounting of how many excessive militiamen the city was supporting under its budget, nor was there any rational system of distributing the militia expenses in proportion of the population.¹¹⁰ As a result, the city and the factories were in effect supporting the Red Guards.¹¹¹ The city had already spent 546,350 rubles in March, 1,151,270 rubles in April, and 2,078,919 rubles in May to pay the expenses for the city militia, but no commissariat, either in the center of the city or in the outlying subdistricts, had established any proper accounting system to verify exactly what amount was paid to what militiaman.¹¹² In some subdistricts, a large sum of money was expended and nothing at all was accounted for. For instance, 173,873 rubles and 83 kopecks were paid to the commissar of the 1st Vyborg subdistrict, 262,372 rubles 83 kopecks to the commissar of the workers' militia of the

Petrograd Side, and 183,420 rubles 17 kopecks to the Petergof district, without any specific breakdowns.¹¹³ This carelessness in handling the financial matters bordered on criminality, but it was merely one manifestation of deeper problems with the militia administration. The Chief of the City Militia could not function as an administrative center to subordinate all the other unified organs, instruct them, supervise them, and extend necessary support. In fact the administration of the Chief of the City militia seemed completely unconcerned with these matters: no instructions had been issued, nor was any conference of commissars ever convened.¹¹⁴ To make matters worse, the Chief of the City Militia also ignored recommendations from the government. For instance, already on March 17, the Main Administration of Militia Affairs of the Provisional Government demanded that the Chief of the Petrograd City Militia take appropriate measures that it properly arm the militiamen standing on duty at the center of the city, facing the most difficult task of maintaining order. These militiamen were severely underarmed, whereas the militia trying only to advance their class interests were armed to the teeth.¹¹⁵

The report drew the following conclusions:

1. that the Petrograd City Militia is not in the position to guarantee the security of the person and property of citizens in view of its present organization, absence of the law that regulates its activity, and the unfitness of the greater parts of its militiamen;
2. that therefore it is extremely important that the law on the creation of the militia, announced in the section VIII of the Provisional Government's Decree [*postanovlenie*] of April 17, 1917, shall be issued as soon as possible;
3. that in issuing this law, it is important to issue detailed instructions about the clearly defined activities of the militiamen and about the record keeping of its organs;
4. that it is important to establish the uniforms of the militiamen and provide arms with them; and
5. that it is essential that the Petrograd City Militia must reconstitute its personal compositions at its reorganization.¹¹⁶

It is easy to recognize the highly tendentious nature of this report, which is too quick to criticize the inaction of the chief of the city militia and too hostile to the workers' militia. And this tendentiousness made the writers of this report overly exaggerate the reliability of the central subdistrict commissariats. *Samosudy*, which seemed conversely related to the effectiveness of the given commissariat, took place more frequently in the central subdistricts than in the outlying subdistricts. Nevertheless, this report is extremely valuable since it comprehensively describes, if through jaundiced eyes, the objective reality that existed in Petrograd at the subdistrict level. It makes it clear that the most important determining factor in the militia organizations in Petrograd was the political dynamics at the subdistrict level. Once the subdistrict militia organizations were created by initiative from below, it became almost impossible to dislodge their influence. Despite its shrill voice criticizing Kryzhanovskii and his administration, the review commission itself did not have any

specific proposal for reorganization of the Petrograd City Militia. In fact, the more it emphasized centralization and pyramid-like subordination of subdistrict commissariats to the central authority, whether the Provisional Government or the City Duma, the more likely it was to provoke the resistance not only of the workers' militia but of the city militia as well.

(5) Deterioration of the City Militia in the Summer

As Kel'son insists, the city militia was different from Lafayette's "national guards" in the French Revolution in that it consciously strived to maintain political neutrality. It is not surprising, therefore, that during the July Days most of the city militiamen stood on the sideline, refraining from either joining the Bolsheviks' side or from actively supporting and joining the Provisional Government's suppression of the Bolsheviks. It is interesting to see how *The Journal of Events* described the situation in the city during the July Days. *The Journal of Events* for July 3 included the following items in the "Important Events" column:

- | | | |
|---|-------------|---|
| 2 | Al. Nevskii | A protocol was made for the break-in of the apart. Golovchiner in Glasovaia Street 2. To the Criminal Militia. |
| 1 | Spasskii | Student I. Shutanov fired a shot at crowds of sailors. Reported to the Investigating Commission of the Ex. Com. of Petrograd Soviet. |
| 1 | Liteinyi | Statement entered by chauffeur V. Ivanov about the armed soldiers' driving away his automobile from Mokhovaia 14. Statement entered about a theft of cloth worth 3,600 rubles from a workshop of Special Commission, Gagarinskaia Street 16. |
| 2 | Narva | Break-in of apart. of Ed. Petkevich (Troitskii Pr. 18). Statement sent to the Chief of Criminal Police Porokhovskii on two automobiles with weapons and 9 machine guns appeared sailors and workers with the placard, "Down with the Provisional Government." Invaded the commissariat, demanded liberation of the arrested Bolsheviks, who were not there. Driven out of the commissariat, and left. |
| 2 | Al. Nevskii | On order of the Food supply Commission a search conducted in a hotel (Glazovaia 40). 12 boxes of ducks seized. Reported to the Temporary Court. 2 protocols written about the arrested persons who were freed by the crowds. |
| 1 | Spasskii | A statement taken by a cabman about a secret transport of 2 barrels of lard and 5 barrels of ham from the barracks of the Novocherkasskii Regiment to the store, Burtsev, on Sennaia Square. |
| 3 | Kazan | Armed demonstrators appeared in the automobiles, Nos. 33-67, 3-78, 61, 19-72, 30-49, 17-17, 8-96. At the Theater Square a broken automobile, No. 172, found, which belonged to the Nikolaevskii railway. |
| 2 | Al. Nevskii | House 107 on Ligovka was searched by the sailors of the Kronstadt Garrison. From Apt. 31 various items and food products were |

taken. A part of items was seized in the Commissariat.¹¹⁷

Altogether 24 persons were detained, and of these 9 were detained for drunkenness, and 9 for thefts. It is important to note that no one was detained for political reasons. *The Journal of Events* for July 5 listed only three events in the "Important Events," column, including a break-in, a fire, and a public speech by German spies.¹¹⁸ It is clear from this record that the city militia did not actively participate in the Provisional Government's suppression of the Bolsheviks' demonstration.

The neutrality of the militiamen during the July Days deeply concerned the new Chief of the City Militia, N. V. Ivanov. On July 5, Ivanov issued a decree. Citing instances when the militiamen did not fulfill their duties, Ivanov threatened that such militiamen would be dismissed immediately, their wages stopped, and their credentials and armbands revoked.¹¹⁹ Taking advantage of the setback of the Bolsheviks and the workers' militia during the July Days, the Provisional Government attempted to reimpose its centralized control over the militia. On July 17, the Provisional Government issued the new militia law in the name of Acting Minister of Internal Affairs Tseretelli, which rejected the elective principle, and made the Minister of Internal Affairs responsible for appointing all militiaman. As I argued in my previous works, this move provoked profound resentment not merely among the militiamen in the outlying subdistricts, but also among the militiamen in the central subdistricts.¹²⁰ From then on, the prestige of the city militia precipitously declined. The general decline of prestige could be detected by the militiamen's increasingly shrill demands for weapons, boots, and uniforms, frequent instances of attack on militiamen, and the city militia's effort to find a way out of this impossible situation by relying more and more on the military force to police the capital. Militiaman Gorn's complaint cited in the beginning of this section can be best understood in this context.

The archival materials indicate the city militia's frantic efforts to requisition uniforms from the Navy ministry and the fire department.¹²¹ In September and October militiamen were often attacked by hooligans and criminal elements, attacks they could not counter because they were not sufficiently armed. The dissatisfaction felt by the city militiamen led to the threat of a strike by militiamen on the eve of the October Revolution.¹²² On August 6, the 1st Liteinyi subdistrict commissar petitioned to the Chief of City Militia about "extreme, urgent necessity of providing the militiamen with revolvers for self-defense and whistles for calling for help to other militiamen." This report described militiamen carrying out patrol duties without any arms, even at night.¹²³ On October 20, the 1st Lesnoi subdistrict commissar requested dispatch of 50 revolvers, but the Chief of the City Militia answered that "the city militia administration did not have any possibility of complying with this request."¹²⁴ In this response, one can sense the absolute powerlessness of the city militia administration. In such a situation, the only thing the city militia administration could do was to refer all police matters to the military authority. On September 20, citing the difficulty of recruiting the contingent of militiamen in the war situation and in view of the importance of maintaining the security of persons and property in the capital, Ivanov requested that the Petrograd Military District decommission 300 soldiers for the militia duty.¹²⁵ On the eve of the October Revolution, three-fifths of the militia

posts in the capital were filled by the soldiers.¹²⁶

5. The Bolshevik Regime and the City Militia

Wade argues that after having played a major role in suppression of the immediate military threat against the Bolshevik regime, the Red Guards played a less important role:

One of the major functions of the Red Guards after the October Revolution was to take over the general responsibility for maintaining public security, broadly defined. That included taking action not only against thieves but against suspected counterrevolutionaries as well, requisitioning food, protecting liquor stores from looters, and even participating in the beginning of the Cheka, the political police. In effect, the Red Guards functioned as a replacement for the old city militias, which disappeared after the October Revolution—suddenly in some places, gradually in most. Workers' arm bands, sailors, and soldiers filled the vacuum. Although the Bolshevik leaders had vague theories of arming all the people and of general militia service, and although the new People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs decreed on October 28 that all soviets of workers' and soldiers' deputies should establish workers' militias, there does not appear to have been any clear plan of how this was to happen at first. Rather it was an organic process, accompanied by decisions by local officials to use the Red Guards for this purpose. Popular opinion played a role also, especially in industrial centers, where sentiment for patrols of armed workers was especially strong. In December and January, more systematic attention finally resulted in a series of decrees formally abolishing what was left of the old city public militias in the Petrograd and Moscow regions, and replacing them with the Red Guards or other workers' *druzhiny*.¹²⁷

Wade is correct to emphasize (1) that the Bolshevik leaders did not have any prior plan as to how to organize their own police forces after the assumption of power; and (2) that the relationship between the city militia and the new power depended very much on the local situation. Wade seems to underestimate, however, the resilience of the city militia after the October Revolution. The city militia did not disappear voluntarily, and even continued to exist despite the opposition of the Red Guards and the Bolshevik-dominated district soviets, fulfilling an important police function in some subdistricts. Although it is impossible for me at this time to draw definitive conclusions about the relationship between the Bolshevik regime and the city militia, the process by which the Bolshevik regime finally eliminated the remnants of the city militia, while quelling eruptions of serious crimes in the streets, deserves the close attention of historians.

Immediately after the assumption of power, at 13 : 40 on October 25, the Military Revolutionary Committee (VRK) issued the following decree: "The security of revolutionary order in the districts is concentrated in the hands of local soviets of workers' and soldiers' deputies. The duty of the commissariats of militia has been abolished.

The Commissars for security of revolutionary order are appointed by the district soviets. All the local militias are now at the disposal of these commissars, who act under the rigorous control of the district soviets of workers' and soldiers' deputies. [Maintain] exceptional security of liquor stores."¹²⁸ Despite this decree, however, the local city militia organization continued to exist.

One of the reasons why the VRK directive did not immediately result in the abolition of the city militia was that the militia helped to fight violent crime that erupted in Petrograd after the October Revolution. To the extent that the city militia was useful for restoring a semblance of order, it was useful for the Bolshevik regime, and the result was cooperation between the Red Guards and the city militia. Thus, for about two months, the city militia and the Red Guards coexisted uneasily side by side.

It is difficult to obtain an accurate sense of how crime was affecting city life immediately after the October Revolution, since most of the boulevard newspapers were often suppressed by the Bolshevik regime. One can catch a glimpse of city life, however, through the boulevard newspapers which intermittently appeared during these days. In my previous works I hypothesized that the crime rate, particularly violent crime, increased to a frightening degree after the October Revolution, that the "wine" pogroms that exploded in Petrograd immediately after the October Revolution threatened the legitimacy of the revolutionary regime more seriously than Wade indicates, and that the problem of crime was an important factor that the Bolshevik regime exploited to create a political machine of terror.¹²⁹ These hypotheses are partially validated by archival materials.

A cursory glance at *The Journal of Events* for December 1917 is sufficient to conclude that the October Revolution opened the floodgate for violent crime. Here is a brief list of the events for December.

- December 1 A murder occurred during the time of robbery (3rd Liteinyi); a wine cellar at Gogol Street was broken into by sailors (2nd Admiralty); Hotel "Grand-Stol" was broken into by Red Guards (without order); (2nd Admiralty); 3 p.m. 7 armed robbers broke into the office of beer-manufacturing company, Kalinnin, and ran away with 21,200 rubles. Three robbers were shot to death, while the rest escaped (3rd Narva); an unauthorized search was perpetrated (2nd Liteinyi); an attack on a wine cellar, Fokhtsia (4th Spasskii); two self-proclaimed anarchists broke into an apartment of Geideman (Kamenoostrovskii Pros. 1) (3rd Petrograd).
- December 3 Stretensko-Dmitrenskaia Church in the Edinoversheskoe Cemetery was broken into by unknown men. A guard, Anton Zakharev was fatally wounded (Bol'shoi Okhta); an attack was made on an wine cellar (Mytinskaia St. 11) (2nd Rozhdestvenskii).
- December 4 A store was broken into (4 Spasskii).
- December 5 An attack on a food store took place (Liteinyi Pros. 15) (1st Liteinyi); an attack was perpetrated on the wine-cellar of Savva Petrov, Panteleimon St. 15. Wine worth 874,000 rubles was destroyed (1st Liteinyi); there was an attack on a wine-cellar of Nigunov Zhukovskaia

- 10 (2nd Liteinyi); a pogrom is continuing on beer factory, Bavaria, with uninterrupted shooting (4th Petrograd); a wine cellar at Milionaia 23 was destroyed (1st Admiralty); there is continuing looting of wine cellars, Bosh and Count Shuvalov at Pushikinskaia 10 (1st Moscow); during a fire in cartridge factory, Zabelina, 7 were killed and 40 wounded (2nd Okhta).
- December 6 A guard was killed in a guard box, the second guard seriously wounded (5th Vasileostrovskii).
- December 7 Unknown anarchists were arrested for carrying a revolver and a bomb; there was a wine pogrom against Shal' (Malen'kii Pr. 48) (Petrograd); a militiaman was arrested by Red Guards for drunkenness (Rozhdestvenskii).
- December 8 Petr Putriainen was murdered in a flophouse (Pushkinskaia 7) (1 Moscow); on the order of the Admiralty District Soviet, wine-cellars, Rashko-Rozhinov and Shlanov, were destroyed (1st Admiralty); at 3 o'clock at night there was a fight between a Red Guard Zelenko and a militiaman Mordoshev. Ten other Red Guards came to rescue Zelenko, and attempted to take away a weapon from Mordoshev. A shoot-out between the two lasted for five minutes. Mordoshev was disarmed. This matter was referred to the Military revolutionary Court. (3rd Narva).
- December 9 Smirnov and Navimov were arrested for armed robbery of a club at Zhukovskaia 24 (2nd Liteinyi); there were 3 thefts (2nd Vyborg).
- December 11 A corpse of a baby was found in apartment 13, Moskow St. 9 (2 Moscow); A Chinese Yan Gakui was arrested for murder of senior dvornik, Teatral'naia 2 (2nd Spasskii).
- December 14 The dead body of a baby was found in Anichkov Palace (2nd Spasskii); a gang of armed men attacked chainaia, Bavaria (3rd Rozhdestvenskii).
- December 17 A Red Guard, S. Viktor detained for threatening a citizen Lobanov with weapon (1st Petrograd).
- December 19 At 4 p.m., three armed men committed a murder during a robbery, Vozenberg St. 25; robbers, Panov, Samsonov, and Frolov were killed while running away; a woman's body was found in Mitrofonnevskoe Cemetery (4th Narva).
- December 20 The dead body of a baby was found in apartment 3, Rozhdestvennkaia 3 (1 Rodzhestvenskii); at 3 p.m. crowds caught a thief, V. Bogdanov, who had attempted to steal at Eliseev; crowds threw the thief into the Fontanka (3rd Spasskii).
- December 21 R. Sil'm, A. Sai, and A. Tupitsa were arrested for shooting Nikolai Ivanov with revolvers (2nd Vyborg); a Red Guard, Ermolai Vasiliev was arrested for drunkenness (3rd Narva); the dead body of an unknown man was found near the slope along the sidetrack of the Nikolaevsk Railway (3rd Petergof).
- December 23 Sailors and soldiers of Keksgolm Regiment undertook a wine pogrom on the wine-cellar belonging to the Yacht Club, Morskaia 31. Every-

- thing was destroyed. Militiamen's intervention was of no use (2nd Admiralty).
- December 26 A dining hall at Tarakanovke, a sailor, M. I. Volshchenko attacked his roommate, V. Menke, and shot him to death with a revolver (2nd Narva).
- December 27 Three soldiers drank a bottle of methyl alcohol. One soldier died, and the other two were hospitalized (2nd Vyborg); on the shore of the Obvodnyi Canal across the Kalashnikov Warehouse, the dead body of a man, partially dismembered, was found; in the hotel "Uncle Tom's Cabin," a soldier, Nikolai Drozhenikov killed a woman, "Deli," by stabbing her on chest (3rd Rozhdestvenskii).
- December 28 The dead body of a worker, Maksim T. Bolonenskii, was brought to the Obukhov Hospital (4 Narva).
- December 29 The dead body of a baby was found at the corner of Nevskii and Liteinyi (1st Liteinyi).
- December 31 A search was conducted at Apt 21, Sadovaia 59, on the order of the Vasileostrovskii Soviet of the Commissariats for the purpose of confiscation of gold, silver, and other valuable materials (4 Spasskii); the dead body of a baby was found at the corner of Kniazheskaia and Kropotkinskaia (Udeln'minskii).¹³⁰

The boulevard newspapers I reviewed mentioned almost none of these events. In view of the breakdown in reporting routine between the subdistrict commissariats and the central city militia administration, I suspect that many more serious events remained unreported. This confirms my suspicion that right after the October Revolution, the floodgate was broken, and a wave of serious crime emerged. It was no wonder, then, that even though it had issued a decree to abolish the city militia, the Bolshevik regime had to rely on local efforts for policing the streets. At the local level, therefore, the city militia and the Red Guards maintained an ambiguous coexistence. The archival materials describe local variations in detail.

A detailed report of the 3rd Spasskii subdistrict commissar, V. Markov, to the central city militia administration contains an interesting example of the relationship between the subdistrict militia organizations and the Red Guards. On October 26, the atmosphere became tense when the news was brought to the commissariat that militia inspector E. S. Maier had been killed and the chief of the city militia had been wounded. There was no way of verifying these rumors. That evening, however, the soldiers and the sailors of the Red Guards carried out searches of ill-reputed taverns along the Fontanka, behaving themselves fairly "correctly." At noon the following day, four people in civilian clothes appeared in the commissariat. Handing the commissar a paper signed by the Revolutionary Military Committee, they told Markov that he was dismissed, and that in his place a certain "Comrade Zuev" had been appointed. Declaring that only the City Duma could dismiss him, Markov called the City Duma, which declared the VRK's order illegal. After they left, Markov posted a notice: "In accordance with the City Duma's decree [*postanovlenie*], I inform you that all power in the city belongs to the City Duma and the commissars appointed by it.

No one has the right to issue voluntarily orders that belong to a different physical force.” One and a half hours later, an automobile carrying armed people arrived at the commissariat and sharply assailed Markov for posting such a counterrevolutionary appeal. When they seized these notices from the desk of the duty officer, Markov intervened, and ordered the militiamen to take arms. One of them announced to Markov that he was under arrest. When Markov threatened the use of force, they left, but as they were leaving the commissariat, they suggested that Markov’s assistant, S. I. Freidin become the new commissar in Markov’s place. Freidin answered that he would not recognize either them or the VRK, and that he would rather quit the militia service together with others. When he contacted the Committee of the Public Safety and A. N. Voznesenskii, chairman of the Spasskii District Duma Administration, he learned that the VRK would not use force against the militiamen. Voznesenskii suggested that the militiamen stay in their posts.

Day and night, the Red Guards arrested the drunks and petty criminals. During these patrol actions for the most part they behaved “correctly,” although in some instances, they behaved questionably, as when they threw a thief into the Fontanka, and often they took material evidence in the form of spirits with them. The Committee of the Public Safety began to meet every day. Markov and Freidin attended these meetings, but they received only moral support. The morale of the commissariat began to erode quickly due to the lack of accurate information and the absence of direction from the center. Even Voznesenskii finally decided to take the side of the VRK.

On October 29, unknown soldiers brought “Order No. 1 for the Defense of Petrograd” to the commissariat. This order was issued in the name of the Commissar for Defense of Petrograd, Lieutenant Colonel Muraviev on November 1, and was followed by Order No. 2 on November 3.¹³¹ Markov refused to post this order, but the Red Guards left him alone. All this time, the militiamen, who were mostly from the Petrograd Guard Regiment, which played a major role in the Bolshevik coup, fulfilled their duty faithfully, and remained friendly with Markov and his assistants.¹³²

This report suggests that even after the October Revolution, the Bolshevik regime did not resort to the immediate takeover of the city militia, and that the subdistrict commissariats continued to function more or less normally, at least in some parts of the city. The erosion of the commissariats was caused more by the lack of direction from the City Duma and the Committee of Public Safety than by the attack of the Red Guards. Other archival materials also indicate that the VRK dismissed the commissars of subdistricts, although in a number of cases, the VRK was forced to reinstate the commissars they had dismissed.¹³³ As in the 3rd Spasskii subdistrict described above, in many central subdistricts the commissars appointed by the VRK did not play an important role, leaving the commissariats alone without interference. Such was the case in the 1st and 3rd Liteinyi, 3rd Spasskii, 4th Spasskii, and 1st Moscow subdistricts.¹³⁴ In the 1st Moscow subdistrict, city militiamen rescued a Red Guard who was in danger of being subjected to a *samosud* by the crowd after he fired a shot at the crowds to disperse them.¹³⁵ In some subdistricts, the Red Guards and the city militia worked together to maintain order.¹³⁶

Only in the 2nd Vyborg District, did the Bolshevik takeover of the commissariat

seem successful. The militiamen in the 2nd Vyborg subdistrict held the meeting on November 2, after senior militiaman Kuchmenko issued a decree dismissing those militiamen who were negligent in fulfilling their duties from militia service in the 2nd Vyborg subdistrict. The meeting was presided over by Arkhipkin, who spoke about the current situation in which the two hostile irreconcilable powers—the “Temporary Revolutionary Committee” and the remnants of the government of Kerenskii—competed with each other. Arkhipkin expressed his hope that despite Kuchmenko’s decree, all the militiamen would fulfill their own proletarian duty faithfully. The Soviet of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies was not sure of the ultimate loyalty of the militiamen. “The Vyborg District Soviet would not require the militiamen’s active demonstration of support, but only demand that they stay at their posts and defend the citizens from pogroms, violence, robberies, and murders.” Arkhipkin then supported Kuchmenko’s decree. Some opposed the decree, but the overwhelming majority supported it.¹³⁷ It is important to note that even here the Bolsheviks were careful not to “bolshevize” the militia organization immediately.

The VRK’s arbitrary decisions provoked resentment and protests from the city militiamen in the beginning of November. On November 6, the militiamen of the 3rd Vasileostrovskii subdistrict passed the following resolution:

The city militia must always remain neutral and independent from the political upheaval [*perevorot*] that is taking place and it can work in complete agreement with the Revolutionary Committee in the matter of the residents’ security of property and person. Therefore, we consider it necessary to request that the Vasileostrovskii District Soviet of Workers’ and Deputies dismiss the new commissar, restoring the administration of the commissariat to Commissar E. N. Gol’berg. This is the only way to restore the activity of the commissariat that has been violated, and this solution will be supported by the majority of the commissariat.¹³⁸

The militiamen of the 1st Admiralty subdistrict met on November 8, and protested the VRK’s arbitrary dismissal of commissars and assistant commissars of various subdistricts, including the 1st Admiralty subdistrict. They passed a resolution, declaring (1) that the militiamen in this subdistrict were civil servants of the city government; (2) that the city militia should maintain political neutrality in enforcing the law without joining any political groups; (3) that the militiamen continued to support Commissar Semenovskii and his two assistants, and would resist any attempts by any political organizations to dismiss them; and (4) that the militiamen would fulfill only the order of the mayor and the Chief of the City Militia, considering any other orders illegal.¹³⁹

We cannot dismiss these resolutions as merely the reflection of “bourgeois” militiamen hostile to the Bolshevik regime. According to the investigation of the Provisional Government’s commission, the influence of the workers’ militia was already predominant in June in the 3rd Vasileostrovskii subdistrict. The Vasileostrovskii militiamen’s resolution was conciliatory toward the Bolshevik regime, whereas the resolution of the Admiralty district’s militia’s resolution directly challenged its

legitimacy. Both resolutions, however, upheld two important principles of the city militia: the principle of subdistrict self-determination, including the elective principle, and the principle of political neutrality.

It is precisely these principles, however, that eventually doomed the city militia. These principles were clearly incompatible with the Bolshevik regime, which stood for revolutionary centralization. It was inevitable that sooner or later the city militia that pledged allegiance to the City Duma, rejecting the authority of the Bolshevik regime, would be attacked by the Bolsheviks. But it is important to note that these principles also contributed to the collapse of the city militia from within. The subdistrict self-determination deprived the city militia of organizational coherency, and maintaining the principle of political neutrality in the highly politicized revolutionary situation was impractical—even suicidal—in the face of the political power that was determined to annihilate every organization that deviated even the slightest from its political line. Each subdistrict commissariat was isolated and looked for leadership and guidance from the Chief of the City Militia and the City Duma. It was impossible, however, for either the City Duma or the central city militia administration to provide such leadership, for throughout the months since the February Revolution, the Chief of the City Militia and the City Duma had been emasculated precisely by the principle of subdistrict self-determination. When the central administration of the City Duma was taken over by the Red Guards on the order of the VPK on November 8, the city militia lost its central coordinating body.¹⁴⁰ This did not immediately mean the disappearance of the city militia, however. City militia organizations seem to have existed through the end of January, when the Bolshevik regime decided to abolish the city militia once and for all. The disappearance of the city militia also coincided with the draconian decision by the Bolshevik regime to shoot criminals on the spot without trials.¹⁴¹

6. Conclusion

Archival materials clearly support the hypotheses that I developed in previous works. They indicate that the boulevard newspapers were accurate barometers for social disintegration during the Russian Revolution. The frightening increase in crime, particularly violent crime and the incidence of *samosudy*, can be abundantly documented in the archival materials, even though the record keeping of the militia administration suffered from serious deficiencies. The analysis of archival materials also makes it clear that from the very beginning, the city militia operated under the principles of subdistrict decentralization and political neutrality. Neither the Provisional Government nor the City Duma could undermine these principles. It was only after the Bolshevik assumption of power that these principles were seriously challenged by the central power which was prepared to apply naked force to suppress them. The question of crime and police during the Russian Revolution, then, raises important questions about the nature of state and state power during the Revolution, questions which require further archival research and an entirely new approach, for they cannot be examined within the framework of traditional social history.

Notes

- 1 “Hanzai, keisatsu, samosûdo: roshia kakumeika no petorogurado no shakaishi eno ichishiron,” *Surabu Kenkyû*, 34 (1987), pp. 27–55; *Roshia kakumeika petorogurâdo no shimin seikatsu* (Tokyo: Chûôkôronsha, 1989); and “Crime, Police, and Mob Justice in Petrograd during the Russian Revolution of 1917,” in Charles E. Timberlake (ed.), *Religious and Secular Forces in Late Tsarist Russia* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1992), pp. 241–271.
- 2 See the list at the end of this paper.
- 3 One of the earlier critics demonstrated the issue of *Petrograd Listok* that had the big headline accusing Lenin of being a German spy, and questioned whether such a tendentious paper should be used as a serious historical source.
- 4 See Hasegawa, *Roshiakakumeika petorogurado no shimin seikatsu*, pp. 195–264; TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 10.
- 5 TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 10, listy (hereafter ll.), 12, 21, 26, 40, 66, 78, 86, 94, 98, 102, 118, 122, 126, 143.
- 6 TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 65, ll. 40 ob, 8.
- 7 TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 12, ll. 13, 20, 25, 33, 39, 48, 57, 62. 63, 65 ob.
- 8 Hasegawa, “Hanzai, keisatsu, samosûdo,” p. 32.
- 9 Hasegawa, “Hanzai, keisatsu, samosûdo,” p. 31; *Roshia kakumeika petorogurâdo no shimin seikatsu*, p. 313; and “Crime, Police, and Mob Justice in Petrograd during the Russian Revolution of 1917,” *Petrogradskii listok*, June 14, 1997.
- 10 TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 12, l. 93.
- 11 TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 3, l. 60.
- 12 TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 3, l. 61.
- 13 Hasegawa, *Roshia kakumeika petorogurâdo no shimin seikatsu*, pp. 28–29, 47, 57, 60, 83, 85, 88–89, 92–93, 98–99.
- 14 GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 8, l. 55.
- 15 Hasegawa, *Roshia kakumeika petorogurâdo no shimin seikatsu*, pp. 102–103.
- 16 Zigfrid Kel’son, “Militsia Fevral’skoi revoliutsii: Vospominaniia,” *Byloe*, No. 2 (30) (1925), pp. 170–171.
- 17 TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 3, l. 52.
- 18 Hasegawa, *Roshia kakumeika petorogurâdo no shimin seikatsu*, pp. 11, 105, 157–158, 161–162, 220, 225,
- 19 Hasegawa, *Roshia kakumeika petorogurâdo no shimin seikatsu*, pp. 54–56, 57–58; Hasegawa, “Hanzai, keisatsu, samosûdo,” pp. 34–35.
- 20 GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 35, ll. 10, 10b, 11, 12, 12 ob, 13; GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 15, ll. 4a, 4b, 4v, 4g, 4d, , 4zh, 4e, 4z; GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 15, ll. 8, 8 ob.
- 21 GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 35, ll. 24, 26, 26 ob, 29, 29 ob. 30, 34 ob, 35, 35 ob, 36, 36 ob, 37, 37 ob, 38, 38 ob, 39, 39 ob. It is also important to note that this order came from the military authority, not from the militia. It appears that the Petrograd military district assumed direct responsibility for security of Petrograd since the end of August.
- 22 GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 35, 54 ob.

- 23 Zigfrid Kel'son, "Padenie vremennogo pravitel'stva," *Byloe*, No. 6 (34) (1925), p. 200.
- 24 GARF, f. 1791, op. 6, 1917g., d. 44, 45, 46, Gazetnye vyrezki i vypiski o proizvodimyykh samosudakh na mestakh.
- 25 GARF, f. 1791, op. 6, 1917g., d. 44, l. 5 (*Petrogradskaia gazeta*, June 29), l. 6 (*Malen'kaia gazeta*, September 29); GARF, f. 1791, op. 6, d. 45, l. 12 (*Petrogradskaia gazeta*, July 2), l. 17 (*Russkaia volia*, September 3), l. 44 (*Russkaia volia*, July 4), l. 47 (*Rech'*, July 7), l. 49 (*Petrogradskaia gazeta*, July 7), l. 64 (*Petrogradskaia gazeta*, July 9), l. 86 (*Sotsial-demokrat*, July 16), l. 25 (*Zhivoe slovo*, July 29), l. 34 (*Novoe vremia*, August 1), l. 48 (*Zhivoe Slovo*, August 5), l. 65 (*Petrogradskaia gazeta*, August 2), l. 75 (*Zhivoe slovo*, August 13), l. 83 (*Zhivoe slovo*, August 17), l. 91 (*Gazeta-Kopeika*, August 20), l. 149 (*Zhivoe slovo*, September 17), l. 150 (*Rech'*, September 19), l. 117 (*Otechestvo*, September 22), l. 118 (*Novoe vremia*, September 22), l. 119 (*Novoe vremia*, September 22); GARF, f. 1291, op. 6, d. 46, l. 1 (*Novoe vremia*, October 3), l. 3 (*Narodnaia pravda*, October 2), l. 14 (*Novoe vremia*, October 8), l. 15 (*Novoe vremia*, October 8), l. 25 (*Rech'*, October 12).
- 26 TsGASPB, f. 131, op. 1, d. 9, ll. 40, 118; GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 4, ll. 410, 412; TsGASPB, f. 131, op. 1, d. 23, ll. 14, 18; TsGASPB, f. 131, op. 1, d. 24, l. 85; GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 18, ll. 123, 123 ob, 124, 124 ob.
- 27 GARF, f. 1791, op. 6, d. 45, l. 34 (*Novoe vremia*, August 1).
- 28 GARF, op. 5141, d. 18, ll. 123, 123 ob, 124, 124 ob.
- 29 Hasegawa, *Roshia kakumeika petorogurâdo no shimin seikatsu*, pp. 224, 226, 227-228.
- 30 TsGASPB, f. 131, op. 1, d. 9, l. 122.
- 31 GARF, op. 5141, op. 1, d. 16, ll. 78, 78 ob.
- 32 Hasegawa, *Roshia kakumeika petorogurâdo no shimin seikatsu*, pp. 318-319; Hasegawa, "Hanzai, keisatsu, samosûdo," pp. 40-42.
- 33 V. I. Startsev, *Ocherki po istorii petrogradskoi Krasnoi gvardii i rabochei militsii (mart 1917-aprel' 1918)* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1965); Tsuyoshi Hasegawa, "The Formation of the Militia in the February Revolution of 1917 in Russia," *Slavic Review*, 32, no. 2 (1973), pp. 303-322; Rex Wade, *Red Guards and Workers' Militias in the Russian Revolution* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984).
- 34 Kel'son, "Militia Fevral'skoi revoliutsii," *Byloe*, 29, No. 1 (1925), p. 162. Wade uses Kel'son, describing the gathering places for the city militia. Wade, p. 44.
- 35 TsGASPB, f. 131, op. 1, d. 3, l. 57.
- 36 TsGASPB, f. 131, op. 1, d. 3, l. 30. This archival material is the same as the one partially cited by Kel'son. See Kel'son, "Militia Fevral'skoi revoliutsii," *Byloe*, 30, No. 2 (1925), p. 159.
- 37 TsGASPB, f. 131, op. 1, d. 3, l. 31.
- 38 Kel'son, "Militia Fevral'skoi revoliutsii," *Byloe*, 29, No. 1 (1925), p. 172.
- 39 At least two subdistricts were added to this list, the 3rd Vyborg subdistrict and the Golodai (5th) Vasileostrovskii subdistrict. This makes the number of subdistricts altogether 65.
- 40 Kel'son, "Militia Fevral'skoi revolution," *Byloe*, 30, No. 2 (1925), p. 161.
- 41 GARF, f. 406, op. 2, d. 20, ll. 1-4; TsGASPB, f. 131, op. 1, d. 2, ll. 41-47.

- 42 TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 2, l. 41.
- 43 GARF, f. 406, op. 2, d. 20, l. 1.
- 44 TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 2, l. 41.
- 45 GARF, f. 406, op. 2, d. 20, l. 1ob.
- 46 TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 2, l. 43.
- 47 TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 2, ll. 46-47.
- 48 TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 2, l. 47.
- 49 GARF, f. 406, op. 2, d. 20, l. 1 ob.
- 50 Kel'son, "Militsia Fevral'skoi revoliutsii," *Byloe*, 30, No. 2 (1925), p. 162.
- 51 Ibid.
- 52 See "Zavody vkhodiashchie vo 2-oi Vyborgskii raion," GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 37, l. 15.
- 53 Wade, p. 45; Kel'son, "Militsia fevral'skoi revoliutsii," *Byloe*, 29, No. 2 (1925), pp. 174-175.
- 54 GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 37, l. 2.
- 55 Ibid., l. 8, 8 ob.
- 56 Ibid., l. 6.
- 57 Ibid., l. 13.
- 58 Ibid., l. 14.
- 59 Ibid., l. 12.
- 60 Ibid., l. 12.
- 61 Ibid., l. 5.
- 62 GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 1, l. 14.
- 63 GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 37, l. 30.
- 64 GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 1, l. 15.
- 65 Ibid., ll. 19, 19 ob.
- 66 Ibid., l. 31.
- 67 Ibid., ll. 24, 25, 26, 27, 27 ob, 28.
- 68 GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 2, ll. 11, 23.
- 69 TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 2, ll. 66, 66 ob.
- 70 GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 2, l. 11.
- 71 GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 2, l. 23.
- 72 GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 37, ll. 16, 16 ob., 17.
- 73 Ibid., ll. 15.
- 74 Ibid., l. 24.
- 75 Ibid., ll. 19, 19 ob., 20.
- 76 Ibid., ll. 26, 26 ob.
- 77 Ibid., l. 28.
- 78 GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 16, l. 5, 5 ob., 6, 6 ob.
- 79 Wade, p. 68.
- 80 Kel'son, "Militsia Fevral'skoi revoliutsii," *Byloe*, 30, No. 2 (1925), pp. 151-157.
- 81 GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 8, ll. 40-41.
- 82 Ibid., l. 41.
- 83 Ibid.
- 84 Ibid., ll. 42-44.

- 85 Ibid., ll. 44-45.
86 Ibid., ll. 45-46.
87 Ibid., ll. 46-47.
88 Ibid., l. 47.
89 Ibid., l. 49.
90 The most important of all these “mobile detachments,” however, was the one in the 2nd Kolomenskii subdistrict, which was created on April 1. For the activities of this detachment, see GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 10, ll. 1, 2, 2 ob, 3, 4, 5.
91 GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 8, 11.49-50
92 Ibid., l. 52.
93 Ibid., l. 53.
94 Ibid., ll. 54-55.
95 Ibid., l. 55.
96 Ibid., l. 56.
97 Ibid., ll. 57-58.
98 Ibid., l. 59.
99 Ibid., ll. 59-60.
100 Ibid., l. 63.
101 Ibid., l. 64.
102 Ibid., l. 65.
103 Ibid.
104 Ibid., ll. 66-67.
105 I am not certain at this point where the 3rd Vyborg subdistrict existed.
106 Ibid., l. 69.
107 Ibid., l. 70.
108 Ibid.
109 Ibid., l. 71.
110 Ibid., l. 72.
111 Ibid., l. 73.
112 Ibid., ll. 73-74.
113 Ibid., l. 74.
114 Ibid., l. 75.
115 Ibid.
116 Ibid., l. 76.
117 GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 38, l. 17.
118 Ibid., l. 19.
119 GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 18, l. 163. pp. 41-42
120 Hasegawa, “Hanzai, keisatsu, samosûdo,” pp.4
121 GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 16, ll. 42, 43, 44, 46; TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 2, l. 155.
122 See Hasegawa, *Roshia kakumeika petorogurâdo no shiminseikatsu*, chapter 4 passim.
123 GARF, f. 5141, op. 1, d. 18, l. 150 ob.
124 TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 2, l. 165.
125 Ibid., l. 151.
126 Ibid., l. 167.

- 127 Wade, pp. 314-315.
- 128 *Petrogradskii voenno-revoliutsionnyi komitet*, 3 vols. (Moscow, 1966), p. 109; TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 5, l. 17.
- 129 See Hasegawa, *Roshia kakumeika petorogurâdo no shiminseikatsu*, chapter 5.
- 130 TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 11, ll. 1, 2, 5, 9, 13, 17, 21, 25, 27, 29, 37, 49, 63, 69, 75, 77, 79, 81, 89, 101, 105, 109, 112, 120.
- 131 "Prikaz po oborone Petrograda, No. 1," TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 8, l. 25; "Prikaz po oborone Petrograda, No. 2," *ibid.*, l. 26.
- 132 TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 5, ll. 24, 24 ob., 25; TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 7, ll. 15, 15 ob.; TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 94, ll. 28, 28 ob., 29.
- 133 This took place at least in the following subdistricts: the 3rd Vyborg, 1st and 2nd Okhta, 1st Lesnoi subdistricts. TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 8, ll. 37, 37 ob.
- 134 TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 8, ll. 18, 18 ob., 45.
- 135 TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 94, ll. 28, 28 ob., 29.
- 136 This was the case for the Porokhovskii District. TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 8, l. 37 ob.
- 137 *Ibid.*, ll. 14, 14 ob.
- 138 *Ibid.*, l. 53.
- 139 *Ibid.*, ll. 58, 58 ob.
- 140 TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 7, l. 23; TsGASPb, f. 131, op. 1, d. 8, ll. 30, 30 ob., 39.
- 141 Hasegawa, *Roshia kakumeika petorogurâdo no shiminseikatsu*, pp. 299-300.

List of archival materials used for this work

TsGASPb

- fond 131. Petrogradskaia gorodskaia militsiia
- op. 1 d. 2 Protokoly i proekty polozhenii ob organizatsii i vooruzhenii militsii, 13 marta 1917-1 ianvaria 1918
- d. 3 Predlozheniia i proekty rezoliutsii ob organizatsii organov militsii, 3 ianvaria 1917-1 avgusta 1917
- d. 5 Rezoliutsii obshchegorodskikh konferentsii (I-i i II-i) obshchego sobraniia militsionerov IV-go Gavanskogo podraiona, 27 maia 1917-10 oktiabria, 1917
- d. 7 Raporta o proisshestviiakh po gorodu v oktiabr'skie dni 1917 g, 2 oktiabria 1917-10 noiabria 1917 g.
- d. 9 Zhurnaly zapisi sobytii za iun'-iul'-avgust 1917 g, 4 iulia 1917 g.-16 avgusta 1917 g.
- d. 10 Zhurnaly proisshestvii po Petrogradu i prigorodam, 1 sentiabria-12 noiabria 1917 g.
- d. 11 Zhurnaly proisshestvii po Petrogradu i prigorodu za dekabria 1917 g.
- d. 12 Doneseniia stola proisshestvii militsii po gorodu za aprel'-iul' 1917 g.
- d. 13 Iskhodiashchee telefonogrammy i rozyske raznykh lits, o proisshestvii i dr.

- d. 14 Zaiavleniia, svedeniia o proisshestviiakh i perezpiski i organami militsii i kontrrazvedyvatel'nam i organami okrainakh, 12 marta-14 dekabria
 - d. 15 Raporta raionov i zaiavleniia grazhdan o raznykh proisshestviia kra-zhakh, 22 apreliia-24 oktiabria, 1917 g.
 - d. 16 Sutochnye raporty 1-go Admiralteiskogo podraiona za mart-avgust 1917 g, 17 mart-30 avgust
 - d. 17 Tozhe za sentiabr', 1 sentiabvria-19 sentiabria
 - d. 18 Tozhe za oktiabria, 1 oktiabria-1 noiabria
 - d. 19 Tozhe za noiabr'-dekabr'
 - d. 20 Tozhe II-go Admiralteiskogo podraiona za iul'-avgust 1917 g.
 - d. 21 Tozhe za sentiabr'
 - d. 22 Tozhe I-go Aleksandr-Nevskogo podraiona za noiabr' i dekabr' 1917 g.
 - d. 23 Tozhe II-go A-N podraiona, sentiabr'
 - d. 24 Tozhe III-go A-N podraiona, aprel'-avgust
 - d. 25 Tozhe za sentiabr'
 - d. 26. Tozhe za oktiabr'
 - d. 27 Tozhe noiabr'
 - d. 28 Tozhe IV-go A-N podraiona, aprel'-avgust
 - d. 60 Tozhe 1-go Vyborgskogo podraiona za aprel'-avgust 1917 g.
 - d. 64 Tozhe II-go Vyborgskogo podraiona za sentiabr'
 - d. 65 Tozhe za oktiabr'
- op. 3 d. 15/32 Delo o proizvodstve obyskov i oblav v sadu "Olimpiia," kafe "Ampir" i raione Ligovskoi ul., 3 iulia-9 avgusta 1917 g.

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fond 406. Glavnogo upravleniia po delam militsii, MVD Vremennogo pravitel'stva

- op. 1 d. 38
 - d.240
 - d.242 Deloproizvodstvo lichnogo sostava
 - d.243
- op. 2 d. 10
 - d. 20
 - d. 596
 - d. 600 Delo o zaniatii anarkhistami doma generala Likhtenburgskogo, dachi Durnogo indoma Rodokanaka s iulia 1917-13 oktiabria 1917 g.

fond 1791. Glav. upravlenie po delam militsii, 6 otdela

- op. 6 d. 44 Gazetnye vyrezki i vypiski o proizvodimyykh samosudakh na mestakh
- d. 45 Gazetnye vyrezki i vypiski o proizvodimyykh samosudakh na mestakh
- d. 46 Gazetnye vyrezki i vypiski o proizvodimyykh samosudakh na mestakh

f. 5141. Upravlenie Petrogradskoi gorodskoi militsii

- op. 1 d. 1 Protokoly zasedanii raionnykh komissariatov Petrogradskoi gorodskoi militsii o vyborakh komissarov i svedeniia o lichnom sostave raionnykh komissariatov gor. Petrograda
- d. 2 Protokoly obshchikh sobranii grazhdan i chlenov domovykh organizatsii, militsionerov i zasedanii sovetov militsii I-go raiona Vasil'evskogo ostrova ot 18 i 19 apreliia 1917 g.
- d. 4 Protokoly doznanii i perepiski s komissariatami raionov i posledstvii prestuplenii ugolovnogo kharaktera
- d. 8 Doklad komissara Glavnogo upravleniia po delam militsii s rezul'tatakh revizii Petrogradskoi gorodskoi militsii
- d. 9
- d. 10 Doklad o deiatel'nosti letuchego otriada pri komissariate II-go Moskovskogo podraiona s 1 apreliia po 17 iunia 1917 g.
- d. 15
- d. 17
- d. 18 Perepiska s komissarom Vremennogo pravitel'stva po g. Petrogradu, Petrograd. gor. upravoi, Petrogr. Sovetom, komissariatami raionov Petrograda i drugimi uchrezhdeniiami
- d. 20
- d. 24
- d. 25
- d. 26
- d. 28
- d. 35 Perepiska s shtabom Petrogradskogo voennogo okruga, glavnogo-komanduiushchim i litsami i deiatel'nosti razlichnykh klubov i veselitel'nykh zavedenii
- d. 38 Svedeniia o proisshestviiakh za 21 iunia-10 iulia 1917 g, sostavlennykh po raionnykh komissariatov